

## Geauga County Streamlines Connectivity and Improves Services with TWCBC Fiber Circuit Solution

NEW NETWORK INCREASES COUNTYWIDE EFFICIENCY, SAFETY AND REVENUE

*“Time Warner Cable Business Class provided us with a cost-effective foundation for our telecommunications initiatives. Everything we have in place now, we built on that foundation. We have used technology to better serve our community by increasing efficiency, safety and accessibility. The best part is, we are only using about 20 percent of our 1 Gigabit fiber capacity – we can do a lot more, and we certainly plan on it.”*

— Tracy A. Jemison,  
County Auditor, Geauga County

Located 40 miles east of Cleveland in Northeast Ohio's snow belt, Geauga County is known for its rustic charm. Given its population of 94,602, including one of the world's largest Amish communities, one might not expect it to be among the most tech-savvy counties in the U.S. However, the award-winning office of County Auditor, Tracy A. Jemison, has proven so with a telecommunications infrastructure that has improved County operations and even generated a new revenue stream.

### BACKGROUND

When Internet access became a business priority, every department within Geauga County government set up its own connection. The networks couldn't communicate directly, so each office maintained its own database of key information, making it very difficult to cross-reference data. This fragmentation also made it difficult for departments to offer new Internet-based solutions to customers, leaving County residents with the sole option of heading into town and standing in line for everything from applying for dog licenses to scheduling home inspections.

Meanwhile, the County Auditor's office also contended with the complexities of paying multiple Internet and phone carrier bills for different levels of service at different times each month. The inefficiencies of contracts with multiple carriers made those services unnecessarily expensive and limited the growth potential of the County's telecommunications network. Auditor Jemison knew that there was significant room for improvement.

### SOLUTION

Jemison began working with Steve Decatur, chief technology officer at the Geauga County Department of Information Technology, on a telecommunications platform that could serve the needs of every County division. The foundation for this platform would be a fiber circuit large enough to connect all the offices and support their requirements for speed, access and reliability. Jemison and Decatur reviewed several options, none of which offered the right combination of flexibility and capacity. The County looked into the possibility of laying its own fiber to create a tailor-made network, but found it to be cost prohibitive. Time Warner Cable Business Class (TWCBC) stepped in with the ideal solution: Geauga County could lease a 1 Gigabit TWCBC fiber circuit, including installation and maintenance, all within the County's budget.

## About Time Warner Cable Business Class

Time Warner Cable Business Class, a service of Time Warner Cable, is available in 27 states which include some of the most technologically advanced, best-clustered cable systems in the country with more than seventy five percent of the company's customers in systems of 300,000 subscribers or more. The company offers voice, data, video and security solutions to provide a full complement of business communications tools. Having an established national presence, along with dedicated local teams, the company provides award winning customer service. Supporting enterprise, government and small to medium-sized businesses with a consultative approach, Time Warner Cable Business Class is focused exclusively on individual business needs.



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With funding and support from the Geauga County Commissioner's office, the TWCBC circuit was laid and Decatur and his group went to work creating a network to incorporate the County's various applications. In addition to providing all divisions with Internet connection and a common e-mail platform, Cisco voice software overlay allowed for everyone to source phone service from the connection as well. One by one, County offices stopped contracting with individual telecommunications providers and joined the consolidated network. A site-to-site Virtual Private Network (VPN) also allowed the County to establish connections with offices that were not reached by the fiber and previously had no access to the Internet.

### RESULTS

TWCBC's fiber connection has given Geauga County the technological foundation to support its commitment to more efficient operations and greater value for residents. The new network set-up is costing 60 to 70 percent less than individual connections, allowing the County to improve on current services and offer new options to residents. Some of these enhancements include:

- **Optimized IT Resources** – One network to service means less IT time spent on maintenance and more on online services for County residents.
- **Operational Efficiency** – County divisions now utilize a common database, eliminating the duplicated information collecting of the past.
- **Cost Effectiveness** – Leasing fiber from TWCBC allows the County to implement what would otherwise be too expensive, e.g., built-in courthouse cameras that can be remotely monitored from the Sheriff's office.
- **Data Security** – Redundancy and intrusion prevention measures built into the network ensure all sensitive information stays secure and private.
- **Connectivity** – Law enforcement agencies and courts have more open lines of communication, reinforcing the safety and security of County residents.
- **Resident Safety** – REVERSE 911<sup>®</sup> and AMBER Alert<sup>™</sup> notifications now reach individuals faster due to the Sheriff's ability to make 30 simultaneous calls instead of the previous seven.
- **Catching Criminals** – Information on moving suspects reaches every police department in the County almost instantly on shared communications lines.

The TWCBC fiber circuit's capacity and speed combined with the enthusiasm and cooperation of the Sheriff has also allowed Geauga County to implement a videoconferencing system for County courts. Suspects can now be arraigned, interviewed or counseled via videoconference. This saves the County the costs of police escorts and transportation and gives County police more time for patrolling the community. The service has also made the County's jail the placement of choice for neighboring Cuyahoga County, where jail capacity is at a premium, thanks to the cost savings and increased safety associated with this arrangement. Geauga County now brings in \$2 million in annual revenues from out-of-county prisoner placements, making its jail a profit center – a rather unique distinction.

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