

BUSINESS

connections



Fiber Brings More Mbps to the Mountains at Bolton Valley Resort



OFFICE LOCATIONS:

Waitsfield Business Office
3898 Main Street, Waitsfield

Hinesburg Branch Office
14 Thornbush Rd, Hinesburg

BUSINESS HOURS:

Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

BUSINESS TEAM:

Tom Mathews, Sales Manager
802-496-8537, tmathews@wcvt.com

Alan Jones, Advertising Sales Manager
802-496-8328, ajones@wcvt.com

Kris Merchant, Business Account Executive
802-496-8554, kmerchant@wcvt.com

Mike Pedone, Sr. Directory Sales
802-496-8398, mpedone@wcvt.com

Don Niznik, Directory Sales
802-496-8362, dniznik@wcvt.com

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Editorial and Circulation Contact:
Kurt Gruendling, Vice President of
Marketing and Business Development,
Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom,
PO Box 9, Waitsfield, VT 05673,
802-496-8305, kgruendling@wcvt.com.

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Postmaster send changes to:

Kurt Gruendling
Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom
PO Box 9
Waitsfield, VT 05673



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“Dashing through the snow” is the first line of the cherished Christmas carol, “Jingle Bells.” The words bring to mind picturesque scenes of outdoor fun in the snow, and inspire me to wish all of you a happy holiday season from all of us at Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom. But there’s more to it than that. I’m beginning my letter with this line since “dashing” is something we seem to do a lot of these days. The pace of business (and life in general) is becoming increasingly faster. We can either keep up or fall behind.

That’s why the topic of speed takes center stage in this December issue of *Business Connections*. It starts on page 3 with a look at how upgrading your Internet speeds can help your business operate more productively. Think your current speeds are good enough? You may want to think again after reading this article.

WCVT is able to bring customers faster Internet speeds because of our investment in our core fiber-optic network. You can find out more about the continuing work on this network, and other related infrastructure, on pages 4 and 5. These WCVT projects are a reflection of our commitment to investing in the local communities we serve and meeting your ever-changing communications needs now and in the future.

On page 6, we spotlight Bolton Valley Resort in Bolton Valley, Vt. This family-friendly ski village needed faster Internet speeds in order to streamline their booking process and enhance the visitor experience. WCVT and Bolton Valley worked together to make this happen through a recent fiber build-out to the resort’s remote location. Which means this ski season, guests will be dashing down the slopes and dashing around the Web with equal ease.

How can we help your business get more done in less time? Give us a call and we’ll start developing solutions—quickly.

Sincerely,

Gregg Haskin
President & CEO
Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom



Increase Your Internet Speed to Increase Productivity

Bandwidth is vital for small business growth and competitiveness

Are your current Internet speeds keeping up with the demands of your employees and customers? Ask yourself these questions:

- Does it take too much time for your staff to do online research or receive large files?
- Are your employees frustrated with the Internet speeds at your business?
- Do your customers have to wait on the phone while their account information is being loading or transactions are being processed?
- Is your staff unable to effectively use video conferencing for collaboration?

If you answered, “yes” to one or more of these questions, it may be time to consider increasing the speeds of your Internet connection. But before you explore what a higher bandwidth would do for your business, it’s important to understand the terminology.

What exactly is bandwidth? The term refers to how much data you can send through a network or modem connection. Bandwidth is usually measured in bits per second, such as 10Mbps (10 million bits per second). You can think of bandwidth as a highway with cars traveling on it; the highway is the network connection and the cars are the data. The wider the highway, the more cars can travel on it at one time and the faster they get to their destinations. The same principle applies to computer data—the more bandwidth, the more information that can be transferred within a given amount of time.



Richard Pitonyak, Technical Support Supervisor, assists a customer in setting up her GMA email on her iPad

The bottom line is this: An increasing amount of business activity is now done online, and data-intensive applications require faster data speeds. If you want to stay ahead of your competition, you need to be traveling as fast, or faster, than they are. By equipping your business with more bandwidth from Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom, your employees can move data more quickly and efficiently, resulting in a better overall experience for your customers.

More than 65 percent of WCVT customers are currently located in areas with access to Internet packages offering speeds up to 18Mbps. For example, our Elite High-Speed package offers download speeds of up to 12Mbps, while our Extreme High-Speed package offers download speeds of up to 18Mbps. WCVT customers served via fiber-to-the-home technology may have even higher speeds available to them. What’s more, we are currently upgrading the capacity of our fiber-optic network to meet the growing bandwidth needs of our customers.

Ready to pick up the pace of productivity at your business? For details on the availability of higher Internet speeds at your location, contact one of our business account representatives:

Tom Mathews, Sales Manager,
802-496-8537, tmathews@wcvt.com

Kris Merchant, Business Account Executive,
802-496-8554, kmerchant@wcvt.com



Our Moretown Village remote switching site sustained the most damage.

WCVT Network is Upgraded and Tested

We're working hard to meet multiple challenges

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom continues to make significant investments in our infrastructure to provide our customers with enhanced communications services. Much of our recent work has been on our core fiber-optic network, and we wanted to give you an update of our progress.

Capital projects focus on speed and reliability

The evolution of technology and the speed of change go hand in hand and certainly never seem to slow down. We have been hard at work trying to get as much of our outside plant construction completed before, as they say in Vermont, the "snow flies."

According to Gregg Haskin, President and CEO of Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom, "This has been an unbelievably busy construction season. We have been focusing on several major projects including upgrading the capacity of our core fiber-optic network, upgrading our routers with state-of-the-art Multi Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) routers, installing a new Internet Protocol (IP) Softswitch, and turning up new fiber-to-the-home customers. It's been busy, to say the least."

Haskin continues, "Our central office switch is the 'heart and brains' of our network. It handles all calls that are routed through our network and provides all existing calling features and unified messaging services. The next-generation Softswitch will power many new features and services down the road."

Hurricane Irene puts network through the test

Our thoughts and prayers go out to everyone who was affected by the aftermath of Hurricane Irene. The amount of destruction was truly unbelievable in many of the local communities we serve, and we recognize the strength and perseverance it takes to weather such a storm.

WCVT crews were on hand during and immediately following the storm to make sure our network stayed operational. Our Moretown Village remote switching site sustained the most damage. WCVT technicians worked together and had it up and running on generator power early that Monday morning following the storm, August 29, 2011. All facilities damaged by the storm were repaired as quickly as possible, since we realize the critical role our communications network plays during extreme weather emergencies.

Power outages and road washouts presented us with accessibility issues as we attempted to repair damaged facilities in many locations. It also reminded us of what it must have been like for Alton Farr (grandfather of our current WCVT President and CEO, Gregg Haskin) during the 1927 flood when he canoed up the Mad River to repair the lines.

As noted earlier, WCVT has made significant investments in our core fiber-optic network, recently completing the installation of new fiber-optic and routing equipment. This storm was a true test of these upgrades, and we were very pleased that our network never blipped.

High-speed Internet services and the landline network proved essential for keeping people connected to loved ones and emergency personnel during and after the storm. Our network is perpetually evolving and we continue to make improvements to provide faster speeds and more redundancy — to keep you connected when you need it the most.

These are just a few of the network projects we are currently working on to ensure that we can continue to meet all of your current and future communications needs. If you have questions or would like additional information on specific services available to you, please don't hesitate to contact one of our business account representatives:

Tom Mathews, Sales Manager, 802-496-8537,
tmathews@wcvot.com

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802-496-8554, kmerchant@wcvot.com

*Pictured top: WCVT recently installed this Internet Protocol (IP) Softswitch
Pictured bottom: Juniper's core fiber-optic network now features expanded capacity*



WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES

It's now more important than ever before to support our local businesses. When you buy local, everyone benefits. Please support the community by doing business with these new neighbors.

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- 434-7300 Deep Sea Rolling Comfort – Huntington
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- 453-7412 Polo International Inc – New Haven
- 453-7541 Verde Mountain – Bristol
- 453-8400 Law Office of Kevin T. Brennan – Monkton
- 482-2115 Malone Properties – Hinesburg
- 482-2199 Full Moon Farm – Hinesburg
- 482-4010 116 Wine & Spirits – Hinesburg
- 482-4886 Kinney Drugs – Hinesburg
- 482-7020 Hinesburg Laudromat Plus – Hinesburg
- 496-6999 Something Sew Right – Waitsfield
- 496-7842 Sugar Momma's – Warren
- 496-9138 HigherMind Media Works – Waitsfield
- 496-9794 Marsh Hollow Candleworks – Warren



Bolton Valley Resort

A new fiber connection brings more Mbps to the mountains

Pictured left: Bolton Valley Resort offers 71 Alpine trails for skiing and riding, as well as about 100km of Nordic terrain

Pictured right: The beautiful Green Mountains surround Bolton Valley Resort

In business since the late 1960s, Bolton Valley Resort is situated on more than 5,000 private, wooded acres surrounded by the Green Mountains of Vermont. Its remote location offers spectacular views and is perfect for family ski vacations filled with outdoor recreational activities. However, the remote location has presented certain challenges related to communications services. Namely, Bolton Valley Resort was previously limited to DSL Internet service. But that's about to change due to a recent fiber build-out by Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom.

John Shook, IT Manager for Bolton Valley Resort, says, "The addition of fiber was finally completed this summer and we're pretty excited about it around here. WCVT installed the fiber to a certain point, and then the resort picked it up from there and brought it inside to our new server room. Soon we will start getting symmetric 10Mbps x 10Mbps Internet speeds with plenty of room to grow, giving Bolton Valley Resort the mission-critical connection needed to host things in-house such as our reservations servers."

Historically, Bolton Valley Resort had to use a third-party reservation service in order for its guests to book rooms online. The procedure often required website visitors to place a phone call to check on current information or confirm their reservations. Says Shook, "Moving forward, our new fiber-optic Internet connection will enable us to take over these

reservation functions in-house, and give us access to real-time data. This will make the process of booking rooms much more convenient for our guests."

Soon we will start getting symmetric 10Mbps x 10Mbps Internet speeds with plenty of room to grow..."

— JOHN SHOOK, IT MANAGER, BOLTON VALLEY RESORT

The faster Internet speeds via the fiber connection will also provide a better Internet experience for visitors at Bolton Valley Resort. Explains Shook, "Last ski season, we often had between 200 and 400 Internet users online at the same time. In the past, this amount of online activity would drag down our Internet speeds. This year, we're looking forward to a much faster connection where those kinds of problems won't be an issue," notes Shook.

As it turns out, Bolton Valley Resort won't be the only organization benefitting from the new fiber connection. Shook says, "This project is also going to benefit Smilie Elementary School that's located nearby; it got a fiber deal as well. It's going to be great for all of us to have access to next-generation bandwidth."

For more information on how WCVT can keep you connected, please call 800-496-3391 or visit www.wcvt.com.

WCVT in the Community

Being a local business means that our customers are also our neighbors and friends. Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom feels strongly that community involvement is not just a nice thing to do; it is the right thing to do. If your project is looking for help, contact Alan Jones at 802-496-8328 or ajones@wcvt.com to see if we can lend a hand. Here are some highlights of recent and upcoming activities:



WCVT Employees Help Rebuild After Storm

We are very proud of our employees who spent countless hours helping friends and neighbors after the recent flooding that devastated many of Vermont's communities. In addition, employees made financial contributions that were matched by the WCVT Contributions Committee and donated to various nonprofits assisting with flood relief in the communities we serve. Vermonters are resilient, and we will rebuild these communities together!



Annual WCVT Giving Tree Helps Area Children

Each year, WCVT employees work hard to spread holiday cheer. Our annual Giving Tree serves approximately 400-500 children in local communities throughout our service area each holiday season. Employees and the company's Contribution Committee donate gifts, which are then distributed through various local charitable organizations providing holiday cheer for local children in need.



Another "Spooktacular" Halloween Party

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom hosted our 6th annual children's Halloween party on Friday, October 28, at the Bristol Elementary School. Once again, we had approximately 200 people on hand to enjoy games, face painting, and good food! Many thanks to the WCVT employees who volunteered their time to assist with this event.



How We Met Mollie

A few days after Hurricane Irene struck the Valley, an injured dog named Mollie was found outside of our office in Waitsfield. After making her comfortable, we transported Mollie to a local veterinarian. A car had apparently hit her, causing a broken pelvis and four broken ribs. Costly surgery by an orthopedic surgeon was required.

The search was on to find the dog's owner. Ads were placed and calls were made, but all attempts were

unsuccessful. Good news came when a family came forward that was willing to adopt Mollie and pay half of her medical bills. WCVT employees coordinated a fundraiser to pay the rest.

Happily, Mollie is now living with a Valley family; a special thanks goes to them. Thanks also to these WCVT employees and dog lovers: Susan Blanchette, Lisa Wimble, Charlene Peirce, and Brian Moulton. Because of them, Mollie is now healthy and has a forever home.

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