

BUSINESS

# connections

## Excellence is the Policy at Palmer Insurance Agency

*L to R: Rebecca Bora, bookkeeper; Anjali Root, customer service representative; and David Palmer, owner/operator*





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# BUSINESS connections

No matter what business you're in, you spend part of your time as a teacher. Think about it. You teach new employees how to perform their jobs, and you teach new customers what your business offers and what these products or services can do for them.

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom is doing some teaching in this June issue of *Business Connections*. The lessons begin on page 3 with the article, **You'll Like What's in Zimbra Email**. We wanted you to learn the background of this email transition and what it means for you.

The inspiration for this issue's theme came from the **Business Spotlight on Palmer Insurance Agency** on page 4. Owner/operator Dave Palmer feels strongly that teaching his clients about insurance and investments is an invaluable part of the service he provides. Similarly, our Sales Manager Kris Merchant makes sure he keeps Palmer up to date on communications technology that could help Palmer Insurance Agency be more efficient.

You'll find **FAQs on Hosted IP Phone Service** on page 5 and **Avoiding Wireless Woes** on page 6. Check out these articles to increase your knowledge of two important communications topics. Then learn what Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom has been up to recently in the community on page 7.

We strive for partnerships with our customers that are built on us learning about your business and you learning about our technology. Bring us a challenge and we'll do our homework.

Sincerely,

Gregg Haskin  
President & CEO  
Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom





# You'll Like What's in Zimbra Email

You'll also like *what isn't in it*—advertising

**A**s you know, Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom recently made the transition from the Google Mail Platform to Zimbra. This is because in 2014, Google made the decision to discontinue the edition of their Google Mail Platform that was made available to ISPs like Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom. While we strongly disagreed with Google's decision, we had to transition our email users to another email platform. Our goal, as always, is to provide an exceptional user experience. That's why we selected the email platform Zimbra and will work alongside you to ensure a smooth transition.

With its vibrant open source community and worldwide partner network, Zimbra is the third largest collaboration provider in the world. More than 500 million people trust Zimbra to share what matters most. Zimbra is used by more than 5,000 companies including global brands such as NTT Communications, Dell, Cadbury, Investec, Rackspace, Red Hat, VMware, H&R Block, and Vodafone.

Zimbra can provide many benefits to your business. Zimbra connects people and information with an integrated collaboration suite that includes email, calendaring, file sharing, activity streams, social communities, and more. With technology designed for social, mobile, and the cloud, Zimbra gives individuals the flexibility to work from virtually anywhere, through nearly every computer, tablet, and mobile device.

**More specifically, Zimbra is packed with features to save time and improve efficiency:**

- 15 GB of storage space for email—never max out your inbox again
- Anywhere, anytime access to email
- Top-of-the-line protection from spam and viruses to keep you safe from online threats
- Powerful search capabilities let you quickly and easily find messages and filter results based on email address, date, and more
- 24-hour live technical support

If you prefer to view your email on a phone or tablet rather than on a computer, Zimbra's mobile access makes it easy to read, send, and store emails right from your mobile device. And your email is always synced and current no matter what device you use.

Since Zimbra does not have advertising, you can say goodbye to the days of clunky, ad-laden webmail platforms and you won't have to worry about third parties gaining access to your email. Unlike free email services, Zimbra has no advertising and information is not granted to advertisers, so your email remains private and free of ads.

*If you have questions about Zimbra or need assistance with this transition, call Technical Support at Green Mountain Access at 888-321-0815.*

# Palmer Insurance Agency

*Providing excellent customer service and education is their policy*



**D**ave Palmer's initial years in the insurance field shaped his viewpoint on how to best serve clients. As owner/operator of Palmer Insurance Agency, he makes sure people thoroughly understand their options and what their choices will mean down the road.

## Clients Deserve the Details

"I started in this field many years ago as a claims adjuster. I stuck with it for awhile and learned a lot about insurance, but that particular job wasn't a good match for my personality. I didn't like it when a client was surprised and disappointed that a claim didn't meet their expectations," recalls Palmer.

He continues, "Today, I make it a priority to explain the pros and cons of various insurance policies to our clients. I want to prepare them for what will happen during a claim if they choose one policy versus another one. I think it's important that clients understand that a lower-priced policy with less coverage may not be the best value overall."

Palmer Insurance Agency, with locations in Hinesburg and Williston, offers a broad range of insurance products including life, business, liability, disability, auto, homeowners, farm, equine, and contractors. In addition, the agency provides annuities to help clients invest for the future.

## Keeping Up With Technology

"The majority of our insurance clients contact us by phone, but we get a fair number stopping by the office. Each year, more people come to us via our website and send messages that way," Palmer says. To keep everyone connected, Palmer Insurance Company depends

on these communications solutions from Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom: Fiber Internet Connection, Voice Services, iFax Internet Faxing, Voicemail, Email, and an Analog Phone System.

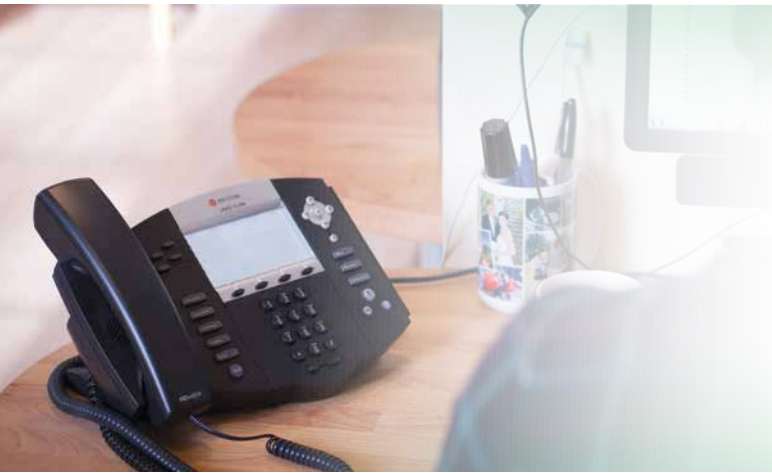
Palmer says, "We've been really happy with the service we get from Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom, particularly from Kris Merchant. He's a valuable part of our team. He steps in to help whenever needed, and I can call him at any time. He's proactive and stays on top of things to make sure our agency is keeping up with technology. Most recently, Kris has been educating us about Hosted IP Phone Service. Our agency is always working to improve our customer service, and things like Internet and phone systems are part of that. I also appreciate the Waitsfield technicians, who are friendly and great at diagnosing issues."

## A Sweet Family Business

It's worth noting that insurance isn't Dave Palmer's only line of work. He's also active in the long-time family business, Palmer's Sugar House. He notes, "My father, David Palmer, passed away in 2011. He left behind the legacy of Palmer's Sugar House, and I've stepped in as the third generation to continue the maple sugaring business in Shelburne, Vt."

*Our agency is always working to improve our customer service, and things like Internet and phone systems are part of that."*

— DAVE PALMER, OWNER/OPERATOR, PALMER INSURANCE AGENCY



# FAQ on Hosted IP Phone Service

You may find the answer to your search for a better phone system

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom's Hosted IP Phone Service uses Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology that runs on our state-of-the-art managed network, enabling you to use one connection for your Internet and all of your phone needs.

## Q. How does Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology work?

**A.** Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) is a technology for communicating using "Internet protocol" instead of traditional analog systems. VoIP converts the voice signal from your telephone into a digital signal that can travel over the Internet.

## Q. What are the main benefits of Hosted IP Phone Service?

**A.** The benefits are:

- **Reduced Capital Investment**—Unlike on-premise phone systems, there's no huge upfront investment in expensive hardware.
- **Low, Predictable Costs**—We maintain and enhance the service for you, so there are no surprise maintenance, upgrade, or replacement costs.
- **Easy Self-Management**—Users have the ability to perform their own Moves, Adds, and Changes (MACs) via an intuitive web portal, eliminating the expense of service calls when you have employee moves or changes.
- **Flexibility to Meet Your Growing Needs**—The flexible infrastructure can grow as your

business grows; there are no limits to adding users, sites, and features.

- **A Secure and Reliable Solution**—Our network will automatically handle calls and messages during power outages. In case of disaster, employees can forward calls to home or mobile phones.
- **Mobility Options for Remote or Home Workers**—Employees can easily and seamlessly connect to your Hosted IP Phone Service over their home broadband connection and enjoy the same features they'd use at the office.

## Q. Does Hosted IP Phone Service make sense for a small business?

**A.** It absolutely does. With its flexibility and scalability, Hosted IP Phone Service can be a smart choice for a small "mom and pop" business all the way up to a large enterprise. What's more, its professional features can help a small business appear larger to its callers.

*To find out how Hosted IP Phone Service could save your business time and money, contact Kris Merchant, Sales Manager, at 802-496-8554 or [kmerchant@wcvl.com](mailto:kmerchant@wcvl.com).*

## WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES

When you buy local, everyone benefits. Please support the community by doing business with these new neighbors and making a point to offer them encouragement in their ventures.

- **Chez Boheme**  
Charlotte – 425-5700
- **Green Peak Solar**  
Waitsfield – 496-7477
- **New Penn Financial**  
Hinesburg – 482-5604
- **Old Elm Interiors LLC**  
Warren – 496-8893
- **Snaffle Sweets**  
Richmond – 434-2900
- **The Wafel Shack**  
Warren – 496-4233
- **Tom Sawyer Development**  
Bristol – 453-6968



# Avoiding Wireless Woes

*Tips for maintaining security when installing or accessing Wi-Fi networks*

**A**s wireless networks become easier to install within your own business, and easier to use when outside it, security becomes increasingly important. An unsecured wireless network allows people outside your building to “leech” off the services you’ve paid for; these individuals could also use your connection for illegal activity. And, connecting to a public Wi-Fi hot spot that’s not secure can leave you vulnerable to attack.

To protect yourself, follow these tips:

## **Securing Your Wi-Fi Network**

Change the SSID name of your network. When choosing a name, don’t use anything obvious, such as your name, home address, or other personal information.

## **Change the default password.**

Be sure to create a strong password such as one that’s 14 characters or more and combines both letters and numbers.

## **Enable security on your router.**

Most wireless routers come with this option turned off, so you’ll need to activate it.

## **Use the strongest form supported by your network.**

The Wireless Protected Access (WPA) protocol and WPA2 have replaced Wireless Encryption Protocol (WEP) as the most secure option.

## **Connecting in Hot Spots**

A hacker can set up a legitimate-looking Wi-Fi network in a known hot spot, wait for users to connect to it, and access sensitive information. Connecting to such a Wi-Fi network can result in inadvertently downloading viruses, worms, and other malware. It’s best not to connect to an unknown Wi-Fi network. But if you must, take precautions.

## **Make sure it’s a legitimate hot spot.**

Ask employees at public establishments to verify the name of the network.

## **Keep your laptop security up to date.**

Make sure you have the current versions of your operating system, firewalls, web browser, and antivirus and antispyware software.

## **Avoid sensitive transactions.**

To reduce your risk of having personal information stolen, don’t conduct financial transactions or use messaging applications.

## **Adjust your laptop’s default setting.**

Set it to prompt you to manually select a Wi-Fi network rather than have one automatically chosen for you.

*To learn more, call our technical support department at 888-321-0815.*

# 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 isn't just a nice thing to do; it's the right thing to do. Here are some highlights of recent and upcoming activities:

## Community Easter Egg Hunt Was a Sweet Success

Fun was had by all at our annual community Easter Egg Hunt on March 28! Over 200 Valley residents attended the event on a beautiful spring day. Children of all ages enjoyed hunting for Easter Eggs, getting their pictures taken with the Easter Bunny, and filling their baskets with goodies. Thank you to the WCVT employees who hopped into action and volunteered.



## 18th Annual Vermont Festival of Arts August 1 through Labor Day Weekend – Mad River Valley

The towns of Vermont's Mad River Valley play host in August to one of the most diverse festivals in New England. With more than 100 quality arts-related events and activities, the Vermont Festival of the Arts is designed to entertain the soul, enlighten the mind, and energize the spirit. Every visitor will find something to enjoy at this multidimensional, multi-media, multi-age extravaganza. Events take place every day during the month of August and are perfect for mid-week visitors, weekend guests, second-home owners, and local residents. For details and a list of events, visit [www.vermontartfest.com](http://www.vermontartfest.com).

## Addison County Farm and Field Days August 4 through 8 – New Haven

WCVT will again be exhibiting at the Addison County Farm and Field Days, so make sure to stop by our booth in the Lucien Paquette Building to say hello and pick up some of our famous hats and gliders. The Addison County Farm and Field Days is located off of Route 17 in New Haven and is Vermont's largest agricultural fair. For details and a list of events, visit [www.addisoncountyfielddays.com](http://www.addisoncountyfielddays.com).

*Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom provides each employee with 16 hours of community service time yearly to be used on local community service projects. If your organization has a project in the making and is looking for help, contact Alan Jones at 496-8328 or [ajones@wcvt.com](mailto:ajones@wcvt.com) to discuss the possibility of WCVT participation.*

## Mad River Valley Blood Drive Collected 61 Pints

A blood drive was held at the WCVT office in Waitsfield on March 24, which exceeded expectations. The Red Cross set a goal of 57 pints and a total of 61 were collected! A special thanks to event organizer Eric Haskin from WCVT, everyone who volunteered to assist with the event, and those who came out and donated.



## WCVT Exhibited at Vermont Business and Industry Expo

Thanks to everyone who stopped by our booth at the Vermont Business EXPO on May 21<sup>st</sup> at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington. The EXPO is northern New England's largest business-to-business trade show, attracting over 3,000 business leaders and hosting nearly 200 exhibitors. It's always great to network with our local businesses and fellow exhibitors.



# BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

## Ask Goliath. Or the Titanic. Or the Roman Empire.

Sometimes bigger isn't always better. When you're the biggest, it's hard to keep an eye on the little things. That's true for companies, too—when you're a big, national company, it's easy to forget about the people in the communities you serve.

Sometimes, smaller is better. Waitfield and Champlain Valley Telecom is directly involved with the community—from volunteering, supporting local events, serving our neighbors, and great customer service from people you know. All that, and we still provide the world-class technology you expect from the big guys. WCVT has been committed to the people of Vermont since 1904.

**Give us a call or stop by today to start the conversation.**

800.496.3391



[www.wcvt.com](http://www.wcvt.com)