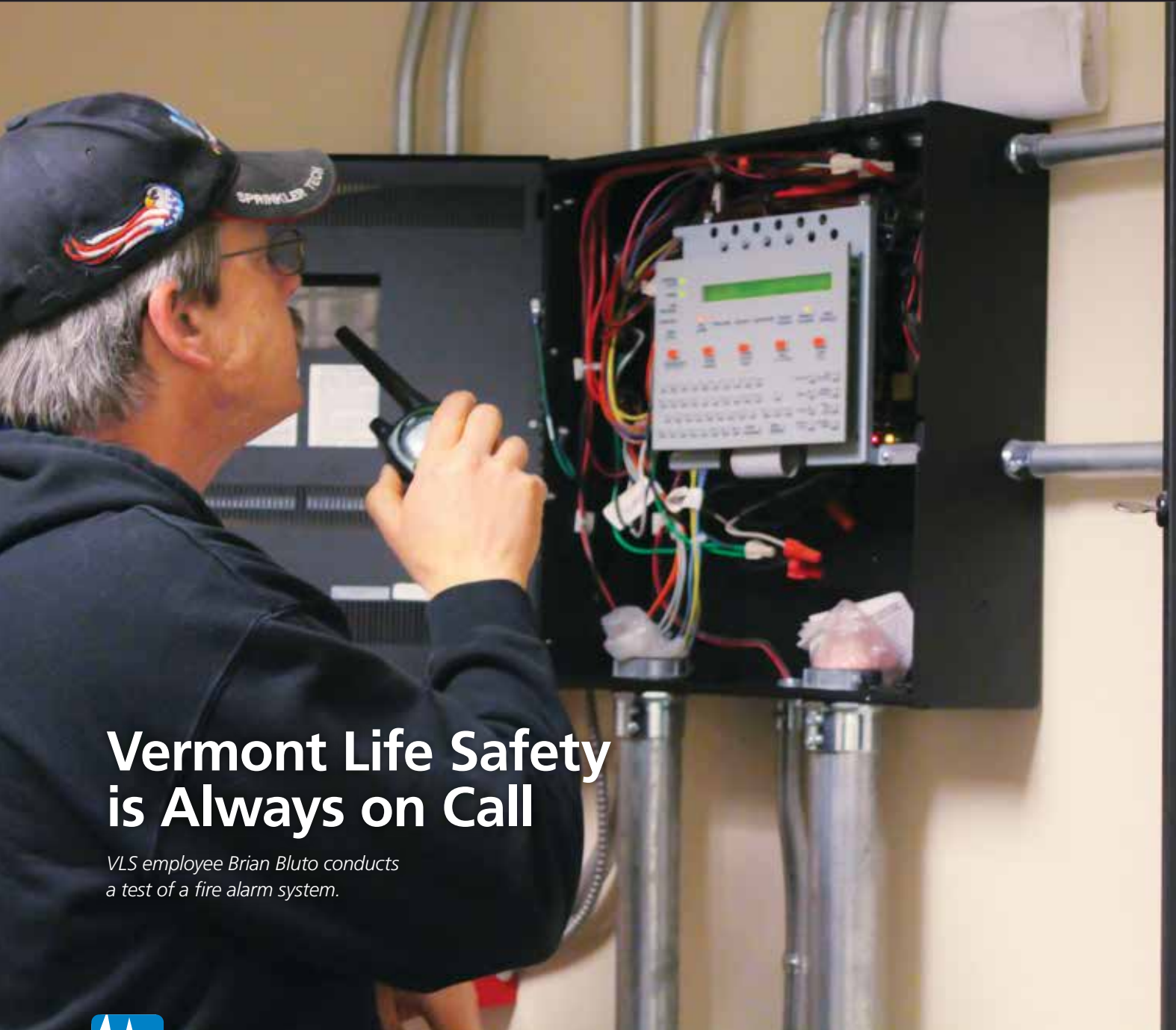


BUSINESS

connections



Vermont Life Safety is Always on Call

*VLS employee Brian Bluto conducts
a test of a fire alarm system.*

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BUSINESS connections

Life can be complicated, so we all look for ways to make things easier. At Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT), that translates into streamlining internal processes to improve our efficiency and productivity. It also means providing you with easy-to-use communications services that let you focus on running your business rather than troubleshooting technology.

This issue of *Business Connections* begins with a **Business Spotlight on Vermont Life Safety (VLS)** on page 3. VLS makes things easier for its customers with a "one call does it all" benefit of getting multiple safety and security systems from one place. To make it easier for this 24/7 business to manage customer calls, it uses WCVT's Hosted IP Phone Service.

On pages 4 and 5, you'll find a **Case Study on the Yellow Farmhouse Inn**. Thanks to our Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi, the guests of this Waitsfield bed and breakfast now have a much easier time accessing a fast and stable internet connection.

Reducing business expenses can be fairly easy with the right strategies. Check out **Cost-Cutting Strategies for Small Businesses** on page 6. Then on page 7, get the latest on what our team is doing in **WCVT in the Community**.

At WCVT, we work hard everyday to help make things easier for your business. Contact us for practical solutions to your communications challenges.



Sincerely,

Gregg Haskin
President & CEO

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom



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 WAITSFIELD
TELECOM
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Vermont Life Safety (VLS)

This 24/7 business demands the latest in communications services



Phone calls are a big deal to VLS. As President Mike Poirier explains, “Our claim to fame is ‘one call does it all.’ We provide all types of safety and security systems—everything a business or other facility would need. It benefits our customers to work only with VLS instead of several providers. They save money that way and have fewer hassles. Plus, there’s just one number to call, day or night, if there’s an issue.”

VLS serves Vermont and New Hampshire from its offices in Bolton and Claremont, respectively. It provides sales, installation, testing, and inspections for systems including:

- Fire Alarms and Sprinkler Systems
- Chemical Suppression Systems
- Fire Pump and Extinguishers
- Back Flow Devices
- Emergency Lighting
- Business Burglary Alarms
- Access Control
- Temperature Monitoring
- Closed Circuit TV
- 24-Hour Alarm Monitoring

Hosted IP Phone Service lets us be anywhere with an internet connection and forward our office calls to another phone.”

— MIKE POIRIER, PRESIDENT, VLS

Hosted IP Phone Service Offers Flexibility

Given the importance of phone calls to his business, Poirier decided to upgrade several years ago from traditional phone lines to Hosted IP Phone Service from Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT).

Poirier notes, “Before, we had three standard phone lines and four phones. Nothing special. We decided to switch to Hosted IP Phone Service because we’re a 24/7 business and needed more flexibility from our phone system. I’m out a lot and our guys are often on the road. With our old phone system, we had to use *72 on an office phone in order to forward calls to our smartphones. Hosted IP Phone Service lets us be anywhere with an internet connection and forward our office calls to another phone.”

In addition, while the New Hampshire office of VLS is outside the WCVT service area, it’s still part of the company’s Hosted IP Phone Service since it uses Voice over Internet (VoIP) technology.

Responsive Service and Fast Internet

“WCVT makes everything so easy for us. In our business, we deal with many phone providers when installing security systems for our customers. With some of the national companies, it may take a week or two to get anybody out for a service call. That’s not the case with WCVT. They come out right away, usually in a day or less,” Poirier says.

He adds, “We also have fiber internet from WCVT. It’s a big plus for VLS since we use the internet all the time for ordering, book-keeping, and so on. Having fast and reliable internet service is important to us, and we get that from WCVT.”



Case Study: Yellow Farmhouse Inn

Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi is one of many reasons guests are happy

The Yellow Farmhouse Inn is located on 10 acres of rolling hills and pastures in the Mad River Valley, surrounded by the Northfield Ridge and the Sugarbush Mountains. Innkeepers Mike and Sandra Anastos previously worked in the guest services industry in downtown Boston. They moved to Waitsfield in 2005 and opened the bed and breakfast.

The Challenge

Wi-Fi service used to be a problem at the Yellow Farmhouse Inn. Mike Anastos recalls, “In the past, we just had one router on the first floor of the Inn. All eight of the guest rooms are on the building’s second floor, and on one end, they would not get a Wi-Fi signal. Those guests would have to walk down the hall for an internet connection, which obviously wasn’t convenient. We also had trouble with the stability of our Wi-Fi. In fact, I had a guest that stayed here about 10 times a year, and if the Wi-Fi was down and I wasn’t around, he’d go to the first floor and reset the router himself.”

The Solution

WCVT Sales Manager Kris Merchant recommended Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi for the Yellow Farmhouse Inn to improve the stability and coverage of its Wi-Fi network. Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi uses commercial-grade Rockus ZoneFlex access points, which provide stronger and more secure signals than the consumer-grade variety. The service also features cloud-based management with ZoneDirector, which simplifies configuration and provides ongoing control.

The Benefits of Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi

“With the Ruckus equipment as part of the Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi, we get a strong, even Wi-Fi signal in every room of the Inn. The service also extended the internet connectivity to all three of our porches, which our guests appreciate,” Anastos notes.

He adds, “It’s not just our guests who are enjoying the improved Wi-Fi. Steve Butcher from VickeryHill does web design for the Yellow Farmhouse Inn, and he comes here to work on our projects. He loves the speed and reliability of our Wi-Fi now. I appreciate the ability to maintain separate Wi-Fi networks—one for guests and a locked network for my office. That gives me confidence that our data is secure. With Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi, we can also see how much bandwidth guests are using and manage that.”

With Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi, we get a strong, even Wi-Fi signal in every room of the Inn. The service also extended the internet connectivity to all three of our porches, which our guests appreciate.”

— MIKE ANASTOS, YELLOW FARMHOUSE INN

Since the Inn’s Wi-Fi service is more stable than it used to be, Anastos (or a guest) no longer needs to reboot on a regular basis. He says, “Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi has given us more control over our Wi-Fi network so it’s not getting overloaded. Plus, when WCVT ran fiber to the Yellow Farmhouse Inn, our internet speeds increased. We’re happy with the fiber and the service from WCVT’s staff. It’s phenomenal. If I need something fixed, they come right away. You don’t get service like that very often from big city providers. I know, since I used to live in Boston.”



Want to Learn More?

If you’re a WCVT business customer and want to learn more about how our Managed Business Class WI-FI can help your business, please contact Kris Merchant directly. He’ll gladly visit your business, discuss your WI-FI needs, and develop specific service recommendations for you.

Call Kris Merchant at 802-496-8554 or send an email to kmerchant@wcv.com.



FOCUS ON YOUR BUSINESS AND LET US MANAGE YOUR WI-FI

You may be so busy running your business that you don’t have the time or energy to devote to managing your Wi-Fi network. Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom understands. That’s why we offer Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi, which provides these benefits:

- **Secure and Cost-Effective Solution** – Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi is specifically designed for a business environment.
- **Affordable** – There’s no huge upfront investment in Wi-Fi equipment. You also have the option to lease or buy.
- **Low, Predictable Costs** – We maintain and enhance the service for you, so there are no surprise maintenance, upgrade, or replacement costs.
- **Flexibility to Meet Your Growing Needs** – The flexible cloud-based infrastructure can grow as your business grows. Need additional coverage? No problem! We can easily add additional access points for a low monthly fee.
- **Accommodates Visitors** – Easily add a guest network to keep your business and customer traffic separate and secure.

To find out how Managed Business-Class Wi-Fi could work in your business and arrange a free on-site assessment, contact:



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802-496-8554
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Cost-Cutting Strategies for Small Businesses

Reading this article could really pay off in the long run

No matter what type of small business you have, you should be able to find at least a few ideas here to help you cut costs. Every dollar counts, so it's important to save wherever and whenever you can.

Go Paperless

You can lower storage and printing costs as well as improve overall efficiency by running a paperless (or near paperless) office. Try to scan documents and keep electronic records as much as possible.

Go Green

The more energy efficient your space is, the lower utility costs you're going to have. For more information on greening your spaces, check out Energy Star, a program run by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Lease Equipment Rather Than Buy It

A lease allows you to avoid the big upfront costs you'd face when purchasing equipment. You not only conserve your company's cash but can also save money in repairs, upgrades, and maintenance since many lease agreements cover these expenses.

Ask for the Discount

The suppliers you work with may have quantity discounts. To find out, ask about discounts and what you need to do to earn them. You may be able to get anything from an interest-free loan in the form of vendor credit to a healthy discount for paying early.

Barter With Other Businesses

This is an old-school strategy, but it can definitely still be effective. If you need a good or service and have something of value to offer in return, this could be a money-saving route to take.

Stay on Top of Your Accounting

When money is tight, things like late fees on bills or a client who doesn't pay on time can be a significant problem. Make every effort to ensure your collections are on time and outstanding balances are minimized.

Don't Buy in Bulk

Small business owners often buy things like office supplies in bulk because the per-unit cost is lower. But you have to ask yourself, "Will we ever really use 1,000 pens?" Generally speaking, it's better to buy only what you need today and free up your cash flow for other things.

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom offers excellent values in business communications solutions. To learn more, contact Kris Merchant, Sales Manager, at 802-496-8554 or kmerchant@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 isn't just a nice thing to do; it's the right thing to do. Here are some highlights of our recent activities.



Kurt Gruendling Testifies

In March, Kurt Gruendling, WCVT Vice President of Marketing and Business Development, testified on behalf of NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association during the House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection hearing, “Disrupter Series: Smart Communities.” Waitsfield was recognized by NTCA as a Smart Rural CommunitySM in 2014 for WCVT’s collaborative work with government and business leaders in the Mad River Valley to promote economic development efforts through broadband access. Thanks to the broadband infrastructure WCVT deploys and maintains, all of the schools and many of the businesses and residential customers in our service area now have access to fiber-to-the-home technology offering speeds up to 1Gbps. Great job, Kurt!

WCVT at Vermont Business and Industry Expo

Thanks to everyone who stopped by our booth at the Vermont Business EXPO on May 25 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.

Employees Volunteer for Special Olympics

A group of Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom Employees (shown below) volunteered to help set up for the Special Olympics Vermont 2017 Summer Games held at the University of Vermont in early June. This has become an annual event for these WCVT employees. Great job, team WCVT!



Alan Jones prepares to lend a hand to a community “spruce up” project.

Happy Retirement, Alan Jones

Alan Jones retired from WCVT this spring. Many of you might remember meeting Alan at a tradeshow, local business association meeting, or Chamber of Commerce event. He’s been an instrumental part of our company for more than twenty years, responsible for publishing our local telephone directories as well as coordinating our community service and public relations. Alan will be truly missed by all of us, and we wish him the best in his retirement.

WCVT provides each employee with sixteen 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 Loraine Keener at 496-8379 or lkeener@corp.wcvt.com to discuss the possibility of WCVT participation.

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