

BUSINESS

connections

Savor the
Flavor at
Mad River
Taste Place



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BUSINESS connections

Do you have a taste for innovation? This can be a valuable trait in the business world, since a willingness to explore and use innovative resources—whether technology, community partnerships, or something else—often leads to competitive advantages.

In this issue of *Business Connections*, we share a taste of what a new and unique Waitsfield business is bringing to the table. **Mad River Taste Place**, showcased in the Business Spotlight on pages 4 and 5, features food and beverages made in the Mad River Valley and throughout Vermont, allowing visitors to sample products and learn about the producers.

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT) offers a broad menu of advanced communications services. On page 3, learn about one of them in **FAQ on Hosted IP Phone Service**. Then on page 6, check out **Your Guide to Ransomware Prevention** and get advice on how to protect your data.

In **WCVT in the Community** on page 7, we announce recent scholarship recipients and other school news. WCVT is committed to helping students in our local service area and believes today's educations will lead to tomorrow's innovations.

If it's been awhile since your business considered new telephone or internet services, I encourage you to get a taste of the solutions WCVT now has available. Contact us for more information.



Sincerely,

Gregg Haskin

President & CEO

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom



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 **WAITSFIELD
TELECOM**
CHAMPLAIN VALLEY

FAQ on Hosted IP Phone Service

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



WCVT's Hosted IP Phone Service uses Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology that runs on our state-of-the-art managed network. This enables you to use one connection for all of your internet and phone needs.

How does VoIP technology work?

VoIP technology uses internet protocol instead of traditional analog systems for communication. VoIP converts the voice signal from your telephone into a digital signal that can travel over the internet.

What are the main benefits of WCVT's Hosted IP Phone Service?

Our Hosted IP Phone Service is a great replacement for a traditional on-premise phone system. The benefits include:

- **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.

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

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

802-496-8554

kmerchant@corp.wcvt.com

Mad River Taste Place

Where you stop by with your buddies to give your taste buds a treat



Waitsfield locals and visitors are enjoying a delicious assortment of activities in the Mad River Taste Place at 89 Mad River Green. They're learning about food and beverages made in the Mad River Valley and throughout Vermont, tasting samples of these products, and purchasing their favorites to take home.

Located in the former People's United Bank building, the 3,600-square-foot Mad River Taste Place held its grand opening on August 10, 2017, offering beer, butter, cheese, cider, bread, chocolate, and other goods from more than 100 Vermont producers.

A Popular Place With Growing Options

Founder and President, Robin Morris, says, "So far, we've been very successful. Our vision of curated retail has been well received by both Mad River Valley visitors and residents, and we've listened carefully to their feedback and responded to it. Thanks to our strong staff—led by Mary Tuthill, Head Cheese-monger and Retail Manager—the Mad River Taste Place is now able to start implementing the programs we envisioned from inception." These programs include offering French press coffee and tea service with tastings and a ploughman's lunch.

The Mad River Taste Place is also adding new products such as:

- Babette's Table duck prosciutto made in Waitsfield
- Smoked salmon
- Local teas
- Kombucha (fermented, lightly effervescent sweetened tea drinks)
- Cold brew coffee
- Cold pressed juices
- Regular cider (non-alcoholic)
- Fresh pasta and pasta sauce
- Pesto

Those with a love of cheese will especially want to come to the Mad River Taste Place on a regular basis. It's the new headquarters of the Vermont Cheese Council, which means you can expect to find cheeses from nearly all of Vermont's 56 cheese makers.

Two Businesses, One Communications Provider

In addition to the Mad River Taste Place, Morris also founded the Mad River Food Hub in Waitsfield, which has been in operation for five years. (See sidebar for details.) The two businesses are closely related, explains Morris: “If you think in terms of a restaurant, the Mad River Food Hub would be the back of the house, and the Mad River Taste Place would be the front of the house.”

Both businesses are also customers of WCVT.

“I’ve worked with WCVT for the last 26 years and always found them to be responsive and ahead of the curve. The Valley is very lucky to have access to their high-speed internet capabilities,” notes Morris.

Mad River Taste Place uses voice and internet services from WCVT. Morris says, “WCVT installed a secure wireless internet connection for our shop at the Mad River Taste Place and recently added public internet service to our conference room.”

I’ve worked with WCVT for the last 26 years and always found them to be responsive and ahead of the curve.”

— ROBIN MORRIS, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, MAD RIVER TASTE PLACE

From Celebration to Education

What else will be coming up at the Mad River Taste Place? Norris replies, “We’re busy preparing for our first holiday season. Our customers will be able to order from a menu of holiday food platters for entertaining as well as gift baskets. We’re also happy to make custom platters and gift baskets to meet the specific requests of businesses or individuals.”

Morris encourages people to check out www.facebook.com/MadRiverTaste to find out about the maker demos held on weekends at the Mad River Taste Place, where you can meet the artisan of the day. This Facebook page is also your source for information on upcoming classes taught by food specialists on topics ranging from chocolate dipping to herbals to salami.

Clearly, there’s something for every taste at the Mad River Taste Place.



MAD RIVER FOOD HUB SUPPORTS LOCAL FOOD PRODUCERS

The Mad River Food Hub is a 4,000-square-foot facility where local foods are processed, stored, cured, value-added, and distributed. It’s designed for small-scale food producers who need the use of a licensed facility at affordable daily rates. There are two meat processing rooms as well as a vegetable/herb processing room and a smoke room.

The Mad River Food Hub provides services including:

- Wraparound business assistance to help food producers scale and maximize profitability
- Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan development assistance
- Energy efficient, dry, cool, and frozen storage
- Distribution to retail markets throughout the Mad River Valley, Waterbury, Montpelier, and Burlington

WCVT provides services to the Mad River Taste Place and the Mad River Food Hub. To learn more about our menu of solutions available to your business, contact Kris Merchant, Sales Manager, at 802-496-8554 or kmerchant@corp.wcv.com.

Your Guide to Ransomware Prevention

Six essential tips for avoiding malicious computer attacks



Ransomware is a type of malicious software (malware) that can restrict access to files on your computer system, or encrypt data, making it unreadable. It then demands that you make a payment by a certain date and time to un-restrict or un-encrypt your information. Once you pay (up to several hundred dollars), you get your files back. Ransomware, such as CryptoLocker, typically propagates as a trojan and is usually disguised as a legitimate file attached to an email or on a USB drive or website.

Prevention is key when it comes to protecting your business from ransomware. Follow these six prevention tips:

- 1. Install a reputable anti-virus/anti-malware software that features on-demand scanning.** Remember that anti-virus software alone may not be able to prevent a ransomware infection and can do nothing once your system is infected. Good anti-virus protection is only one part of a smart prevention program. Schedule your anti-virus/anti-malware software to automatically run scans at least once per week.
- 2. Ensure all your software is up to date.** Software includes your operating system, browser (including plugins), and all applications. Malware makers commonly exploit software vulnerabilities, and keeping yours up to date decreases the likelihood of this method being used on your system.
- 3. Never open an email attachment unless you know exactly what it is and trust the sender, and don't click links within emails unless you know where the link is going.** Email attachments and website links are two of the primary ways ransomware is transmitted.
- 4. If you use cloud services such as Google Apps, Microsoft Office 365, or Microsoft Azure, consider investing in a cloud-to-cloud secure backup solution.** Cloud-to-cloud

backup solutions offer an additional secure copy of your data that maintains prior versions, which, in the event of an attack, gives you the unencrypted files without the ransomware infection.

- 5. Install a "next-generation" firewall that is capable of unified threat management.** It can help prevent suspicious traffic from reaching your internal network.
- 6. Most importantly, back up your data.** Imagine the worst happens, and you're not able to access your data due to a ransomware attack. You'll still have all your information readily available. The key is making sure your data is backed up regularly with a reliable service.

While the ransomware can be removed, prevention is crucial for protecting your data from being encrypted or restricted. If your system does become infected, don't pay the ransom! Instead, remove the affected system from your network and restore your backed up files.

To learn how WCVT can help your business with network security, contact Kris Merchant, Sales Manager, at 802-496-8554 or kmerchant@corp.wcvt.com.

WCVT in the Community

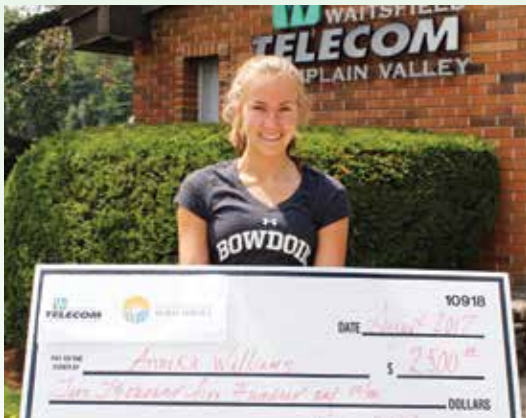
Being a local business means that our customers are also our neighbors and friends. Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom feels strongly that community involvement isn't just a nice thing to do; it's the right thing to do. Here are some highlights of our recent activities.

WCVT Employees Deliver Backpacks to Local Schools

Employees of WCVT delivered 136 new backpacks filled with school supplies to these schools: Addison Central, Beeman Elementary, Brewster Pierce Memorial, Bridport Central School, Bristol Elementary, Bolton Smilie, Camels Hump Middle School, Charlotte Central School, Champlain Valley Union High School, Fayston Elementary, Hinesburg Community School, Lincoln Community School, Monkton Central, Moretown Elementary, Mount Abe Union Middle and High School, Richmond Elementary, Robinson Elementary, Thatcher Brook Elementary, Waitsfield Elementary, and Warren Elementary.



This is the fourth consecutive year that Tammy Field, Administrative Services Supervisor with WCVT, has coordinated this charitable backpack program. Field, who also coordinates our Annual Giving Tree program, worked with local schools to help identify families needing assistance with school supplies for their children. WCVT frequently collaborates with local nonprofits, schools, and community organizations to provide important goods and services.



Valley Resident Anneka Williams Receives National Scholarship

Anneka Williams was awarded a \$2,500 scholarship from the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS). This charitable foundation was founded by NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association, an organization representing independent, community-based telecommunication companies. WCVT is an active member of NTCA and nominated Williams for this FRS scholarship. She is attending Bowdoin College, and we wish her much success.

WCVT 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 Lorraine Keener at 496-8379 or lkeener@corp.wcv.com to discuss the possibility of WCVT participation.



WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES

When you buy local, everyone benefits. Please support the community by doing business with these new neighbors.

839 Main St LLC

Warren - 583-4444

Almeida Farm

Addison - 759-2291

Connor Restoration

Bridport - 758-2700

Jubilee Farm

Huntington - 434-5488

Clarfin Family Dairy LLC

Charlotte - 425-5561

Hurlburt Hill Farm

Starksboro - 453-5932

Mad River Taste Place

Waitsfield - 496-3165

Salt and Sand Studios

Warren 583-2559

Snow Song LLC

Warren - 583-3261

St. George Villa

Saint George - 482-7215

Studio Roji

Bristol - 453-5238

The Learning Garden

Moretown - 496-9541

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