

BUSINESS

connections



Memories are
Made at 1824
House Inn + Barn

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Business Connections is a publication of
Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom.

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Champlain Valley Telecom and
Cornerstone Publishing Group, Inc.

Postmaster send changes to:

Lorraine Keener
Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom
PO Box 9
Waitsfield, VT 05673



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

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Staying connected requires a variety of strategies and technologies.

Sometimes an in-person meeting will be most productive. Other times we'll want to choose a phone call, video conference, email, chat message, or text. Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT) is here to help you make the most of today's many communications options.

The Future is Calling with Hosted IP Phone Service, as you'll learn on page 3.

If your business is in need of a phone system upgrade, you'll want to review the advantages of this technology.

On pages 4 and 5, we share a **Business Spotlight on 1824 House Inn + Barn**. Owners Sean Kramer and Farrell Leo bought this beautiful property in September 2019 and had to soon adjust to the demands of being in the hospitality business during a pandemic. To help keep themselves, their staff, and their guests connected, 1824 House counts on WCVT voice services and Business Class Wi-Fi.

Are You Using Google Alerts? We ask that question on page 6, and explain why you'll want to consider using this tool if you aren't already. It's an efficient strategy for staying updated on the topics you select. Then on page 7, check out **WCVT in the Community**, which includes highlights of programs and events in this area.

No matter how and where you connect with others, it's important to nurture those connections. Let us know how we can help.



Sincerely,

Eric Haskin

Eric Haskin

President & CEO

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom



The Future is Calling with Hosted IP Phone Service



Is your business using the same traditional phone system you've had for years? If so, you may want to consider upgrading to a more cost-efficient and flexible solution that can accommodate your future needs.

WCVT's Hosted IP Phone Service uses Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology that runs on our managed network. VoIP converts the voice signal from your phone into a digital signal that can travel over the internet, enabling you to use one connection for all of your internet and phone needs.

The many benefits of our Hosted IP Phone Service include:

- **Reduced Capital Investment** – Unlike traditional on-premise phone systems, there's no huge upfront investment in expensive hardware.
- **Low, Predictable Costs** – WCVT maintains and enhances the service for you, so there are no surprise maintenance, upgrade, or replacement costs.
- **Easy Self-Management** – Users can 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 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 office features.

What's more, our Hosted IP Phone Service makes sense for businesses of all sizes — from a small "mom and pop" shop all the way up to a large enterprise.

To learn more about our Hosted IP Phone Service, including the variety of features and phones available, visit www.wcv.com/services/telephone/hosted-ip-phones/.

MEET OUR HOSTED IP TEAM

When your business uses one of WCVT's Hosted IP products—such as Hosted IP Phone or Business Class Wi-Fi services—you benefit from an expert team behind the advanced technology.

The WCVT Hosted IP team includes:

- **Dan Fuller**
Business Systems Project Supervisor
- **Nick Sterner**
Business Systems Specialist
- **Kris Merchant**
Sales Manager
- **Kevin Davis**
Business System Specialist 1
- **Trevor Gaylord**
Business System Specialist 1

This team is responsible for the overall coordination of project resources in support of WCVT's Hosted products as well as wiring installations. They plan and organize all aspects of complex projects from inception to conclusion. This helps to provide excellent customer service by building and maintaining productive working relationships with WCVT's customers, suppliers, contractors, and vendors.

Have questions or need support for your Hosted IP Phone Service?

Email the team at HPBX@corp.wcv.com or call 802.496.8309.

(L to R) Kris Merchant, Sales Manager; Nick Sterner, Business Systems Specialist; Trevor Gaylord, Business System Specialist 1; Dan Fuller, Business Systems Project Supervisor; and Kevin Davis, Business Systems Specialist 1.





1824 House Inn + Barn

It's all about relaxation and celebration at this Waitsfield B&B

In September 2019, Sean Kramer and Farrell Leo moved to Waitsfield, Vermont, to purchase the 1824 House Events and Accommodation at 2150 Main Street. After tweaking the name to 1824 House Inn + Barn, the couple hit the ground running, joined on the adventure by their son Finn and dog Bene.

"It's been a whirlwind since then," said Leo, who shares the role of Owner/Innkeeper with Kramer.

15 Acres of Beauty

The 1824 House sits on 15 acres that feature rolling hills and the meandering Mad River. This property offers guests year-round opportunities for outdoor relaxation including a private swimming hole, sledding hill, and fire pits. It's also an ideal location from which to head out and take part in popular Mad River Valley activities including:

- Skiing at Sugarbush and Mad River Glen
- Floating the Mad River
- Paddling Blueberry Lake
- Jumping Warren Falls
- Visiting covered bridges
- Hiking and biking the Mad River Valley Trails
- Enjoying ice cream at Ben & Jerry's

Inn + Barn = Wow!

Inside the stately two-story inn, there are eight unique and well-appointed guest rooms, each named after a Vermont county. One guest room has a private patio. Another has a skylight ceiling in the shower. To accommodate the lodging needs of different travelers, dog-friendly and child-friendly options are available.

A quintessential Vermont barn with post-and-beam construction expands the 1824 House guest experience and provides a cozy setting for a variety of small gatherings—from intimate weddings to business meetings and retreats, bridal and baby showers, and parties to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or retirement. Weddings for up to 150 guests at 1824 House can start with the ceremony on the hill above the inn and finish with dinner and dancing in a gorgeous tent.

Connected with WCVT

The natural beauty of the property and historic charm of the inn and barn are enhanced by modern communications solutions from WCVT. We provide 1824 House with voice service as well as Business Class Wi-Fi, which includes management of the wireless network for separate business and guest use.

We've been very happy to have WCVT manage our Wi-Fi service. As innkeepers, we have a lot of jobs already, so to have one less thing we have to worry about is a big relief."

— FARRELL LEO, OWNER/INNKEEPER, 1824 HOUSE INN + BARN

Leo is pleased with WCVT. Regarding our voice service, she said, "Its best feature is the app. It allows us to answer 1824 House calls directly on our personal cell phones. This means we don't have to spend time sitting at a desk when there are other tasks to be done. The WCVT app works great. Before learning about it, we'd signed a contract for a third party app, and it never worked and cost way more. We're very happy to be using the WCVT app."

What's been 1824 House's experience with Business Class Wi-Fi?

Leo replied, "We've been very happy to have WCVT manage our Wi-Fi service. As innkeepers, we have a lot of jobs already, so to have one less thing we have to worry about is a big relief. When we purchased the property, one of our first priorities was to upgrade the Wi-Fi service. We wanted all of our guests to be able

to use their devices throughout the property without having any interruptions. And with Business Class Wi-Fi from WCVT, they can."

Leo added, "We rarely have reason to contact WCVT's customer service or tech support teams, which is a great thing. Our voice and Wi-Fi services work well. But when we have needed WCVT, they've been very prompt with help and responses."



HELPING GUESTS UNWIND AND FEEL SAFE

After only a short time in business, 1824 House Inn + Barn faced the challenges of COVID-19. Owner/Innkeeper Farrell Leo said, "The pandemic was very difficult for everyone, but the hospitality sector was hit especially hard. We had to close down for several months in 2020, and along with the rest of the world, we watched and waited."

Once 1824 House was able to reopen, it had to adjust to the fluid situation of how to protect the safety of staff and guests. It followed the guidance provided by the Vermont Department of Health, VOSHA, and the CDC.

What can guests expect for the rest of 2021 and into 2022? Leo replied, "As we move forward, we're concentrating on providing amenities and services for our guests which give them the hospitality they crave but also allow them to feel safe. For example, we've added comfortable seating areas in our barn along with some entertainment options so guests can relax in an open environment and not feel crowded. We've also added additional food service options for our guests including some lunches and dinners."

Are You Using Google Alerts?

If not, your business is missing out on valuable information



Google Alerts is a free, easy-to-use tool that lets you know when new content appears online about the topics you select. You can leverage this information to better manage your blog content, discover what people are saying about your business, keep an eye on the competition, and more.

For example, here are topics you could ask Google Alerts to monitor in real time:

Business Name Mentions

Google Alerts lets you track the name of your business, Twitter handle, and other social media identifiers. When your content is indexed by Google's search bots, you're notified by email. In addition to mentions in online articles and blogs, you can also be notified of mentions in social media conversations.

Whether these mentions are positive or negative, it's important to know people are talking about your business so you can respond appropriately. With Google Alerts, you won't be left in the dark.

Leadership Mentions

Your executive team and other key personnel will likely receive online mentions, so it makes sense to track alerts on them. This can help you manage the reputation of your business and its leaders, take advantage of engagement opportunities, and show others in your industry that you're paying attention.

Newly Indexed Content

When you write a new article or blog post, set up an alert to tell you when someone mentions the title of your work online. This

way, you can interact with those who take an interest in what you've published. You can also find out if other sites republish your content and make sure you get proper credit.

Backlinks Tracking

Google Alerts can notify you when another site links to your page, and this link building is especially important if your business does a lot of blogging. You want to know which sites are linking to your content and helping generate website traffic.

Competitor Mentions

Depending on your competitive landscape, it can be challenging to keep up with what your competition is doing—whether releasing a new product or making news in other ways. By requesting periodic alerts based on mentions of your competition, you'll stay updated on their activity.

Industry Topics

Creating alerts around key industry terms can prevent you from missing timely news updates or an opportunity to join a forum discussion.

To create an alert:

1. Go to www.google.com/alerts
2. In the box at the top, enter a topic you want to follow.
3. Click "Show options" to tell Google your preferences on how often you want to get notifications, the sources and regions you want to see, your language, how many results you want to see, and where to send the alerts.
4. Click "Create Alert."

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's a look at some recent activities.

2021 Vermont COVID-19 Arrearage Assistance Program (VCAAP II)

This program provides financial support to customers who may face disconnection of service because of past-due balances for their electric, landline telephone, natural gas, water, or sewer/wastewater charges. Vermonters financially impacted by COVID-19 (either directly or indirectly) with 30+ days overdue charges can get help now to pay their arrearages for residential (both homeowners and tenants) and non-residential accounts.

Additionally, both residential account holders and businesses can get assistance for accounts 30+ days in arrears, that were billed after April 1, 2020 and were closed while the COVID-19 pandemic emergency was in effect: between April 1, 2020 and June 15, 2021.

For more information, visit <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/vermont-temporary-broadband-subsidy-program>. Apply online through the State of Vermont before October 25, 2021.

WCVT Helps Local Schools

For the past 15 years, WCVT has been donating backpacks filled with supplies to schools in our local serving area. This year, due to the pandemic, monetary donations from WCVT's employees as well as the company's Contribution Committee made it possible to send significant funds to approximately two dozen schools. This way, schools could purchase items for their students that are most beneficial to help them have a successful school year.



Tammy Field, Administrative Supervisor and coordinator of the Backpacks for Kids Program, said, "I continue to be overwhelmed by the generosity of WCVT and its employees, and I'm very proud to work with such a great group of people." WCVT would like to wish each and every student a very successful, safe, and fun school year.



Kris Merchant, Sales Manager, staffing booth at the Bristol Harvest Festival.

WCVT Will Support Many Local Events This Fall

Year after year and season after season, WCVT demonstrates our commitment to the communities we serve through our community relations programs and our support of local events.

We're proud to sponsor the following events, which are planned for this fall:

- Mountain Film on Tour in Waitsfield
- Mad River Path / Mad Dash
- Bristol Harvest Festival
- Mad River Valley Arts Festival

WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES

Alpino Vino

Waitsfield – 496-6163

Belgian Wood Works

Lincoln – 453-5836

Backyard Bistro

Charlotte – 425-2596

Head Over Fields

Charlotte – 425-5866

Hermit Thrush Fiber Co

Bristol – 453-7799

Jones the Boy LLC

Bristol – 453-3767

South Mountain Tavern

Bristol – 453-5231

Meet Our Business Sales Team

WCVT is committed to moving your business forward with a comprehensive line of communications solutions. Our Business Sales Team is ready to discuss your needs and recommend the right combination of services to help increase efficiency and productivity.



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