

Cistera Networks Teams with Information Transport Solutions, Inc. to Enhance IP Communications for Alabama Schools

Cistera Networks, Inc.®, a leading provider of enterprise application platforms and engines for IP (Internet Protocol) Communications, today announced the installation of its award-winning Cistera ConvergenceServer(TM) and Emergency Alerting and Notification Solution for Alabama's Elmore County Public School District. To complete the project, the company worked with Information Transport Solutions, Inc. (ITS), a leading IP Communications solutions provider in the Southeast, and one of the fastest-growing private companies in the country. Cistera's solution is fully integrated with Cisco's Unified Communications installation and provides enhanced district-wide emergency alerting and communication capabilities.

"In 2000, ITS started designing and installing Cisco Unified Communications throughout Alabama Public Schools to improve district communication services. Adding Cistera products to provide an integrated live broadcast (paging/announcement) system, including two-way radio interoperability seemed to be the next logical step to leverage our customers' technology investment," commented Tomi Selby, ITS' founder and CEO. "Cistera products are now integrated into all ITS K-12 solutions and provide a vital and necessary part of the overall offering. The advantages and critical safety benefits of a comprehensive communications system can no longer be overlooked."

With approximately 11,000 K-12 students and 1,200 employees, Elmore County Public School District is the seventh-largest of 137 Alabama school districts. The district has 15 campuses, and additional sites include central administration offices, the office of technology as well as vocational and alternative education facilities.

Cistera's solution was initially deployed to 20 locations and incorporates approximately 1,200 IP handsets. Elmore County, which covers 620 square miles, is the third fastest-growing county in the state, and the scalability of the Cistera ConvergenceServer will allow for new schools and facilities to be easily incorporated into the installation as they are built.

"Premier communication capabilities within the district are a daily requirement, and the safety of our campuses is an extremely high priority," said Davis Brock, director of technology for the Elmore County Public School System. "Cistera's technology provided a cost-effective system to address both needs. It improves our communication capabilities every day, and also ensures that if the need arises, we'll be better prepared to react in order to help mitigate a dangerous situation."

To verify the effectiveness of Cistera's Event Alerting and Notification solution in a simulated emergency, administrators recently conducted a successful training exercise focused on a campus intruder scenario at one of the district's middle schools.

"We are very happy with the features and capabilities of Cistera's Event Alerting and Notification solution, and we use them on a daily basis, but the success of the drill reinforced our overall satisfaction and peace-of-mind that we have a reliable communications system in place to share important information if we are faced with an emergency," commented Brock.

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