

ATLANTIC CAPE COMMUNITY COLLEGE CONNECTS MULTIPLE CAMPUSES WITH COMCAST BUSINESS ETHERNET DELIVERED OVER FIBER



SITUATION

- Two-year community college needed to connect multiple campuses to each other and to cloud-based applications
- Reliable Internet service critical to support planned WiFi expansion

CHALLENGE

- Help boost capacity between campuses to improve collaboration; support new services
- Establish fast, reliable Internet connection across campus-wide network that can easily scale
- Manage operating expenses

SOLUTION

- Comcast Ethernet Dedicated Internet
- Comcast Ethernet Private Line

RESULTS

- Reliable, high-speed Internet service
- Cost-effective, scalable connectivity
- Flexibility to implement new use cases and enhance academic programs

Gigabit-level Internet connection enables seamless, campus-wide communication and rollout of new services; continuous connectivity to critical cloud-based resources

TWO-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEPENDS ON INTERNET TO CONNECT CAMPUSES, AND TO CONNECT CAMPUSES TO THE CLOUD

As the second-oldest community college in New Jersey, Atlantic Cape Community College serves more than 7,000 students and 400 full-time faculty and staff members across two counties – Atlantic and Cape May. Its main campus is in Mays Landing, and there are two branch campuses located in Atlantic City, approximately 15 miles away, and Cape May Court House, located approximately 45 miles away.

Atlantic Cape depends on its wide area network and Internet connectivity to link its disparate campuses, deliver instructional resources and provide reliable access to Google Apps for Education, a cloud-based resource that serves as the primary communications tool for students, faculty, and staff, and which encompasses everything from email, chat, and calendar access to document management.

The school also needs a reliable Internet service to provide the foundation for a planned WiFi expansion.

According to Douglas Hedges, Dean of Information Technology Services for Atlantic Cape, “Our students are spread out across three campuses, and most of our IT resources, including our data center, are housed at our main campus. Students, faculty and staff at our satellite locations don’t care about these technical hurdles – they need a reliable Internet and wide area connection that enable them to operate as if they’re on the main campus.”

SLOW INTERNET SPEED AND INCONSISTENT PERFORMANCE FRUSTRATES STUDENTS AND STAFF

Dismayed with the limited connectivity options available from alternative providers, Atlantic Cape reached out to Comcast Business Services. The College already was using Ethernet Private Line (EPL) services from Comcast to connect its main campus to its satellite branches but needed more capacity to improve collaboration and support more learning applications.

COMCAST
BUSINESS

“Having a dedicated Ethernet connection from Comcast is great. With not a whole lot of lead time, I can pick up the phone and say ‘I need a bandwidth boost’ and Comcast can scale up quickly.”

*Douglas Hedges
Dean of Information
Technology Services
Atlantic Cape*

For its campus Internet connection, the college was using much slower service from another provider, which frustrated students, faculty and administrative staff. The college wanted to establish a direct fiber-based Ethernet Internet connection to the campus so that they could quickly and cost-effectively scale capacity to serve its growing student body, and also to support the growing number of wired and wireless devices connected to the network with minimal hassle.

COMCAST DELIVERS SCALABLE, ETHERNET-BASED INTERNET SERVICES; OFFERS RELIABLE PERFORMANCE

During the summer months, Comcast upgraded the Ethernet Private Lines connecting the College’s main campus and data center located in Mays Landing to each of its satellite campuses, providing a significant increase in capacity over its previous 20 Megabit per second (Mbps) connection. It also installed a Comcast Ethernet Dedicated Internet (EDI) line at the Mays Landing campus capable of providing 500 Mbps of bandwidth for students, faculty and staff. The entire upgrade and installation was seamless. As of February 2013, the Internet connection was boosted to 100 Mbps; the upgrade was transparent and incurred no down time.

Since the students returned, they’ve noticed a marked increase in the speed and reliability of the network connections between campuses. The gigabit-level service also has enhanced many of Atlantic Cape’s academic programs, and primed the college to offer new learning applications in the future.

“We now offer some video classes for some of our students who may not be able to travel to our main campus – it’s extremely important to us that all of our students feel as if they’re right next door to each other and learning side by side, regardless of whether they’re in Mays Landing or one of our other locations up to 45 miles away,” said Hedges.

For example, Atlantic Cape nursing students can now stream video of live classes taking place on the main campus from satellite campuses to minimize commute time. This allows them to experience instruction in real-time with students attending the class in person in Mays Landing, which is an added convenience not previously available.

According to Hedges, “Having a dedicated Ethernet connection from Comcast is great. With not a whole lot of lead time, I can pick up the phone and say ‘I need a bandwidth boost’ and Comcast can scale up quickly. We’ve already scaled our network once to accommodate increased bandwidth demands, and the entire experience was seamless. It’s great to know that we’ve got the capacity to grow.”