

US West !NTERPRISE Networking

IBDN cabling system installation transforms a turn-of-the-century facility into a modern office, supporting application requirements for US West !NTERPRISE Networking Headquarters.

US West !NTERPRISE Networking has recently completed a building retrofit program at its new facility in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The new site was originally a turn-of-the-century facility that called for its cabling to be retrofitted to adopt a modern, open-office concept. This task was successfully accomplished while allowing the building's old-fashioned characteristics such as its original brick and beam construction to be left intact.

Created in 1992 to address the advanced data networking needs of its customers, the US West !NTERPRISE family is set on providing a vast group of high speed data communications services, such as Internet-based computer networking services. As a single-source network integrator, US West !NTERPRISE requires support from a highly trained staff as well as from reliable and dynamic in-house technologies. Moreover, such services must have a network infrastructure in place that is capable of supporting the high-speeds at which the data must be communicated.

For this building modernization program, the IBDN structured cabling system, manufactured by NORDX/CDT (a subsidiary of Cable Design Technologies), was designed and installed by

US West !NTERPRISE and U.S. Premise Networking Services LLC, a NORDX/CDT Certified Systems Vendor (CSV).



Main Lobby, US West !NTERPRISE Networking Operations Headquarters
Minneapolis, Minnesota

In addition to the open office reorganization plan, the retrofit IBDN Category 5 cabling system would also serve as the basis for the building's network infrastructure, providing US West !NTERPRISE with the high-speed data transfer carrying capabilities that it requires for maximum reliability.

The new system includes a total of seven telecommunications closets and three computer rooms serving some 2,000 workstations in modular furniture

and hard-wall offices. The data networking environment offers Internet access and the capacity to install an asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) network for increasing bandwidth demands that may arise in the future. US West's existing

high-speed Ethernet networks are served by nearly 1000 strands of fiber backbone cabling. The horizontal cabling includes 7000 Category 5 cables, specifically, 1.27 million feet of CMR Category 5 and 105,000 feet of CMP

Category 5 cabling. This IBDN system also includes the necessary Category 5 copper and fiber patch panels, outlets and cords.

"This modernization project went over very smoothly due to the professionalism of the installation and the unique and flexible design of the cabling system"

The fiber backbone cable within the building provides US West !NTERPRISE with the appropriate bandwidth for its network integration services. The horizontal cabling has been installed on a single platform that goes beyond current needs to support all present voice and data applications such as 10 Mb/s, 100 Mb/s, 155 Mb/s ATM, and 622 Mb/s ATM as well as for any future application implementations. This is a flexible system that allows communications cables to be utilized for either voice or data applications.

“Providing a showcase installation in a 100-year old, open ceiling, open office facility can be challenging, especially when you need to conceal several thousand horizontal cables”, explained Dan Galbraith, account executive at U.S. Premise Networking Services. “Special consideration was given to the design of cable pathways and spaces to provide access to each workstation and to offer flexibility for moves, adds and changes”.



Open Office layout where cable has been aesthetically installed

To achieve an aesthetic and precise installation for this open office, open ceiling design, the building's cables were routed through cable trays, ladder racks, Carlon channels and split wraps so that they are not visible. The only place that the cables have been made visible is in the back of the patch panels, located in the telecommunications closets.

The IBDN system provides this US West !NTERPRISE building with the convenience of end-to-end system performance. Each IBDN component within this

installation has been tested as part of the IBDN Category 5 system to ensure satisfactory performance throughout the building.

“This particular installation was quite a challenge because in most cases, historic buildings like this one present unique obstacles to telecommunications upgrades”, explained Gary Baker, manager of communications services for US West !NTERPRISE. “This modernization project went over very smoothly due to the professionalism of the installation and the unique and flexible design of the cabling system”.



Open ceiling installation routed through cable trays.



A close-up of a cable tray in an open ceiling installation.

US West !NTERPRISE has implemented both 100 Mb/s Ethernet and 10 Mb/s Ethernet networks. Future plans include the implementation of a 155 Mb/s ATM network.

Subsequently, this new headquarters has been certified by NORDX/CDT and U.S. Premise Networking

Services. Certification means that the installed, passive components are guaranteed for 15 years. It also means that the installation complies with EIA/TIA-568A guidelines for “Category 5” data cable installations, which set forth strict procedures and practices for the installation process. These procedures are critical to insuring that the system will support U.S. West !NTERPRISE's high-speed data rate requirements for today, and well into the future.

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