

Avotus helps Algonquin College become “Ontario’s most-wired campus”

Executive Overview

Algonquin College in Ottawa, Canada, is the third-largest college in Ontario and the largest outside of Metro Toronto. Ranked number one in the province in terms of student satisfaction, the College is positioned to become one of Canada’s leading colleges. Recently, Algonquin embraced leading-edge technology. E-learning is now an integral part of nearly all its programs. The College has more than 100 multimedia e-classrooms and some 10,000 students currently enrolled in hybrid courses that blend classroom time with online learning activities. Algonquin is also a leading provider of online distance education.

Business Need

Algonquin College faces a variety of telecom challenges in providing varied services to its administration, faculty, and resident students. In order to offer high-level service to its users, the IT department at Algonquin, which also serves satellite campuses situated as far as 90 miles from the main campus, required a solution to help provide an infrastructure that met both present and future needs.

Further, the College needed a solution that helped them charge back long-distance calls to students in a timely fashion. The existing College billing system was extremely slow, sometimes resulting in service disruptions. If students exceeded their \$150 long-distance limit, they ran the risk of having their long-distance service cut off.

After a thorough review of their telecommunications network, Algonquin decided to replace their outdated PBX phones and switch to Cisco’s Call Manager Voice over IP (VoIP) system.

Approach Adopted

The College selected software to interface with the Cisco IP phone system; this software was Avotus’ Intelligent Communications Management™ (ICM). Avotus ICM has a Cisco Account Code Manager module that authenticates caller account codes before permitting long-distance calls. In less than one month, Avotus and Cisco worked together to have the system operational at Algonquin.

Results

“We don’t receive any complaints now,” says Monica Balastik, Algonquin’s Network/Systems Administrator. “Thanks to Avotus, we can access our billing information anytime. Students are now billed in a timely manner, and no one has had their long-distance privileges revoked due to unpaid bills since the system has been in operation.”

“I can go into the system to look at collected call records, and if someone reports a prank call, I can view all call details,” adds Balastik. “The new system is also very helpful for our departments as they can now view their long-distance bills and drill down to see which phone numbers were dialed by a certain user and how long each call lasted.”

Avotus Advantages:

- » **Secure** - Validation of caller authorization codes ensures that only approved users incur communications charges. While residents can use the in-room phones to make local calls, anyone attempting to make long-distance calls will require account codes and PINs.
- » **Informative** – System users can see the call length and the related cost on the Cisco IP phones
- » **Easy-to-use** – The previous system for billing required significant manipulation before generating a report; data had to be extracted and formatted. With Avotus, some steps in this process were eliminated. Users simply click a button to see their information.
- » **Cost effective** – The system has resulted in cost savings to the College as a result of the simpler system administration

About Avotus

Avotus partners with emerging and established enterprises to help them procure, manage and optimize their telecom environment. Our Total Telecom Cost Management Solution delivers up to 40% savings with best in class quality.