



## Luzerne County Housing Authority

### OVERVIEW

Doing more with less money is just one of the many challenges facing Housing and Redevelopment Authorities all over the country. One such Housing Authority--with the help of Infradapt--is doing exactly that...

The Luzerne County Housing Authority provides low-income, Section 8, and subsidized housing within pastoral Luzerne County in northeast Pennsylvania.

### THE CHALLENGES

With 22 locations and more than 1,300 tenants throughout Luzerne County, the Housing Authority faced a number of data communication challenges. Most significantly, many of the locations within the county lack reliable high-speed Internet links.

"Since 1987, we had been doing all of the work – computer-wise – in the main office", said Marion Finn, who coordinates services for Luzerne County Housing Authority. "We had no connection to our remote offices. On a daily basis, our staff had to come in to the main office from their locations all over the county to pick up reports."

Ms. Finn continued, "In 2005 we went with a new software package and purchased computers for many of our remote locations. We had to figure out how to connect them because we didn't have anyone on staff (we still don't) who was a computer IT person. Despite assurances from the software company, there were a lot of things that didn't work. We couldn't even connect the remote sites to the main office."

When asked about the reliability of the Internet connectivity used to connect remote offices to the main location, Ms. Finn commented, "The remote locations would go down every time the wind blew sideways. They wouldn't be able to get any work done on a day when they lost connection to the main office."

Additionally, e-mail accounts had been obtained by individual employees over the years with local Internet providers. As a result, no central administration, backup, or control could be performed. Unwanted spam, viruses, and other junk grew to a point where e-mail became difficult to use.

### THE SOLUTION

The most urgent need was connecting the various LCHA locations to the data applications at the main office. With the primary connection at the main office down for extended periods of time on a number of occasions, locating the servers in a reliable data-center became an obvious choice.

By leveraging Infradapt's Tier-1 data center facilities, including redundant power, connectivity, fire suppression, physical security, etc., the Housing Authority was able to attain a level of performance and stability that was previously unaffordable.

Essentially, the data center (rather than their main office) houses Luzerne County's servers and databases. Remote offices no longer rely on the reliability of the main location's connection and can operate independently -- the best possible scenario for LCHA staffers.

To protect their users from e-mail viruses and spam, Infradapt recommended its hosted e-mail filtering solution. All of the individual e-mail addresses with third-party providers were eliminated in favor of a domain name controlled by the housing Authority. All e-mail now passes through a sophisticated rules-based engine and dual virus scanner so that only legitimate messages are delivered.

## REALIZATIONS

When asked about the stability of the solution, Ms. Finn responded, "That was the big selling point for us. It eliminated the bumpiness. We haven't had any of those bumps with Infradapt from the beginning. It's helped us shift workload to our remote sites, allowing them to enter and access important data needed locally. This has freed-up staff at our main office to take on other important functions."

"For example, we are required by HUD to do annual reexaminations of income, which entails interviewing the tenant and getting proof of all their information. Our staff has to do this for over 1,300 tenants. They have to collect and post rents, work with the families, pull out the history, maintain records, note changes and do any troubleshooting that comes along. It's a big, big job. And now our remote locations have the ability to get this work done because the network doesn't go down."

When asked about the e-mail service improvements, Ms. Finn answered, "Having Infradapt host and filter our email has been wonderful. They came along right after we got our 'dot org' domain name email account. Infradapt took control and streamlined the whole process. Now we don't have to worry about spam at all. We know all of the machines are clean, and it's wonderful."

Ms. Finn continued, "Our software company is now trying to offer a little bit of what Infradapt already provides. I said 'Our guys are way ahead of you!'"

And when asked about the return on investment for the solution, Ms Finn concluded, "It has paid for itself..."

## WHAT'S NEXT

Owing to the availability of federal stimulus monies for making Internet and telecommunications services more available, Infradapt has proposed several creative strategies to create new long-term sources of additional revenue for the Luzerne County Housing Authority. These initiatives will also have the benefit of reducing overall operating expenses.

## ABOUT INFRADAPT

Infradapt is a leading regional technology solutions firm, providing comprehensive IT consulting and outsourcing. Its customers span many industries from small-to-mid sized businesses to multi-location Fortune-1000 enterprises. Infradapt's solutions range from basic IT services through multi-tier outsourced support and business continuity solutions. Infradapt has a strong IP Telephony (VoIP) service concentration, specializing in designing, integrating, and supporting converged voice networks including multi-site and call center systems. Recognized nationally for service and engineering excellence, Infradapt is the company experts choose.

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