



## Getting Ready for Higher Bandwidths



The ICN fiber project will soon offer higher capacity and lower costs and many of our constituents are looking to upgrade their networks to take advantage of higher bandwidth levels. There are three primary areas our constituents should be looking at: wide area network (WAN) equipment, the local area network (LAN), and the last mile connection.

Network equipment comes in different service levels and an upgrade to a higher capacity router or firewall may be necessary if you are moving from 10 or 20Mbps to 50 or 100Mbps. Similarly, switches within a site's LAN may need to be upgraded to ensure higher throughput to the users. The last mile service, the circuit which connects your facility to the ICN, will probably need to be upgraded. If you are using a Metro-Ethernet service upgrades can generally be made with just a call to your provider. With a scalable service like MetroEthernet, the change is mostly just a few software commands, although there may be additional costs from your provider for the upgraded service.

The ICN will be ready. We are making preparations to provide the additional bandwidth this summer as our constituents request changes in service levels. From our side, it is a simple rate limit change in most cases. But we need to know what you are planning. Please let your [RTC office](#) know of your plans as soon as possible. We anticipate a very busy summer and fall and appreciate your help getting us prepared.

ICN is working with AT&T to roll out a special discount program on Cisco equipment which we hope will start soon and run through the summer. We will send information as soon as AT&T is able to work out the remaining details.

Your [RTC office](#) can help in all these areas including recommending hardware, helping secure circuit pricing, and assessing your existing router and circuit capacity. [Please give us a call, we are here to help.](#)

## New ICN Forms



The new fiber backbone is not the only change taking effect July 1. ICN is introducing new forms that consolidate information into fewer documents. The new fiber network and obligations of the grant are bringing change to some of our policies and business practices. As such we need to update our customer forms.

Over the next few months, our [RTC office](#) staff will work with existing customers to complete the new Master Service Agreement which replaces the legacy Participation Agreement. And unless buying a service, that will be the only form we require. Our Acceptable Use Policy becomes an online document and is no longer a separate form that customers must sign and return. We have dropped the Participation Application since the ICN is open to any organization that wants to use the network.

If you are a current customer of the ICN, or if you would like to become a customer, you can help us get started by completing the [Master Service Agreement](#) now and emailing it to your [RTC office](#).



The last week of February found the Illinois Century Network in St. Charles, Illinois at the Illinois Computing Educators Conference (ICE).

Attendees from school districts around the state meandered through over 150 exhibits to learn the latest and greatest in technology and connectivity for classrooms.

The conference has been in existence for more than twenty five years and is one of the premier events of its kind to attract the educators in Illinois.

We look forward to meeting face-to-face with many more constituents at future events.



## Wireless Provider Options



This past month, the ICN Advanced Engineering Task Force conducted an informal survey of sites using wireless service either between campuses or for their last mile service. The results of the survey point to an increase in use, satisfaction, and bandwidth capacity. Since we are often asked about wireless, we wanted to share some products which received high marks in the survey and invite you to let your RTC staff know what your experience has been and where you are using wireless successfully. In most cases, wireless options provide much lower connectivity costs.

Products with positive praise included Alvarion, Motorola/Cambium, Ubiquiti, and UniFi. The number of survey participants was small so we hope to build on this data as more experiences are shared with us.

The ICN has one wireless provider directly connected to the ICN for the delivery of last mile service. That provider is Business Only Broadband serving the metropolitan Chicago area. Through the ICN fiber project we have been approached by many other wireless providers wanting to provide last mile service to the ICN and connectivity within multi-campus WANs. [Intelligent Computing Solutions](#) and [Urban Communications](#) will be connected very soon. We see this technology as being more and more available throughout the state in the near future, offering viable alternatives for interconnectivity at lower costs.

## Spotlight: Waubonsee Community College

Waubonsee serves portions of five counties in far west suburban Chicagoland, including Kendall County, which has been one of the fastest-growing counties in the nation for the past decade. The college has recently added four new buildings to their main campus in Sugar Grove and construction on a fifth is about to begin. In addition to expansion on their main campus, Waubonsee has built a new location in Plano and a new, larger downtown Aurora campus. Speaking with Jim Pike, Network Technology Manager and Jeff Noblitt, Executive Director of Marketing and Communications, we understand their primary need to be meeting the ever-increasing demands for bandwidth in our internet dependent society.

With increased bandwidth from the ICN, Waubonsee will be able to enhance their on-line course offerings and wireless availability for their growing student body. They will now be able to provide redundancy and fail-over capability more securely, as well.

When ICN approached Wabonsee in hopes that they would agree to serve as a hub site for the fiber network and a vehicle for providing amplification to NIU, Jim Pike knew that the partnership would prove to be mutually beneficial!

