ITW Welding Connects with Time Warner Cable Business Class to Spark Seamless Companywide Collaboration

BACKGROUND

Illinois Tool Works, Inc. (ITW), is a leading manufacturer of a diversified range of value-added industrial products and equipment, boasting $14.9 billion in revenues, approximately 825 business units in 52 countries, and nearly 60,000 employees. A vital piece of the multinational corporation, ITW Welding is a leading supplier of commercial and consumer-grade welding wire, systems and supplies.

Headquartered in Troy, Ohio, ITW Welding has been at the forefront of welding technology advancements throughout its nearly century-long history. Recently, growing communication needs between the company’s many sites began overwhelming its costly legacy T1 connection and other services.

The rollout of a large-scale Cisco Unity voice-over-IP (VoIP) system to 1,500 employees across five sites presented an added challenge. Delivering bandwidth in the range of 1.5 Mbps, the T1 service wasn’t nearly robust enough to handle the additional burden the VoIP system would place on the company’s network.

“As with most businesses, information technology is a critical component of our evolving operations and success going forward,” explains Gaston Brown, systems administrator. “We needed to access advanced Internet-based applications and integrate more with other business units across the ITW Welding family. Our T1’s limitations stood in the way of our progress.”

SOLUTIONS

A Time Warner Cable Business Class (TWCBC) customer since 2005, ITW Welding turned to the business-communications leader for an up to 100 Mbps point-to-point Ethernet private line (EPL) link from the company’s headquarters to its consumer-welding production facilities across town. The EPL service provides the benefits of a dedicated, physical connection between the buildings, including security, reliability and high performance, with a cost-effective Ethernet virtual connection that delivers speeds from 5 Mbps up to 10 Gbps.

The EPL links in metro area networks make them a solid choice for bandwidth-hungry applications such as online backup, storage area networking and connectivity to centralized application servers, including ITW Welding’s IBM Application System (AS)/400 computers.

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- Gaston Brown
Systems Administrator, ITW Welding

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SOLUTIONS (cont.)

ITW Welding relies on up to 25 Mbps TWCBC Dedicated Internet Access (DIA) service to power a site-to-site virtual private network (VPN) between its headquarters and its Appleton, Wis., locations. The DIA service delivers symmetrical connectivity via TWCBC’s fiber network, providing private, redundant connectivity for businesses that require fast speeds to maximize performance of applications such as VPNs. The company also leverages the robust DIA bandwidth connection for reliable, cost-effective VoIP service.

Brown notes that ITW Welding found the upgrade path for its DIA service easy, boosting performance from 5 Mbps and then to 20 and 25 Mbps with a simple phone call to TWCBC. The upgrade answered the growing bandwidth needs of the company’s dispersed sales force and network of 10 U.S. warehouses, as well as the need to increase access to critical applications and data for major remote sites.

Additionally, a separate, up to 15 Mbps, DIA connection serves the Hobart Institute of Welding Technology, a trade school that has graduated more than 100,000 students with welding certifications over the past 80 years. All school applications, serving faculty and students, as well as an IP-based security camera system, run over the DIA connection.

RESULTS

Time Warner Cable Business Class delivers for ITW Welding what Brown describes as a combination of “service quality, savings, reliability, responsiveness and network coverage.”

Running VoIP over the new high-speed infrastructure quickly delivered savings by cutting local and long-distance phone bills. Brown also points to travel-cost savings and a boost to productivity from the growing use of video conferencing between locations.

Brown adds that a key advantage of working with TWCBC has been the ability to stay focused on running the business, without having to spend exorbitant time and resources on IT maintenance and management.

“Our overarching goal is to become more tightly integrated and increase collaboration companywide,” Brown says. “That can’t happen without a reliable, secure, high-bandwidth connection to all our locations, data and resources.

“Having the ability to provide our locations and people high-speed and reliable access to our servers means we’re able to enter and fulfill orders accurately and on time. And being able to keep our service up 24/7/365 is obviously critical to meeting our customer needs and driving our success.”

Added Brown, “The support and simplicity we receive from Time Warner Cable Business Class is remarkable. One phone call and we increased our speeds to meet demands. Time Warner Cable Business Class makes it easy to get the reliable, high-quality connections to help meet all our business needs.”

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About Time Warner Cable Business Class

Time Warner Cable Business Class, a division of Time Warner Cable (NYSE: TWC), offers a full complement of business communications tools to small- and medium-sized businesses and enterprise-sized companies. Its Voice, Internet, Television, Network and Cloud Services are enhanced by award-winning customer service and local support teams. Through its NaviSite subsidiary, the Company also offers managed and outsourced information technology solutions and cloud services. Time Warner Cable Business Class was founded in 1998. Today, it serves more than 592,000 business customers throughout Time Warner Cable’s markets. For more information, please visit business.twc.com.