

DO YOU KNOW WHAT INADEQUATE CABLING MIGHT COST YOU?

by Dustin McLeod, Vice President of Sales, US Net Communications

CABLING INFRASTRUCTURE IS BEST VIEWED AS A LONG-TERM INVESTMENT, NOT UNLIKE THE INVESTMENT MADE IN PLUMBING, ELECTRICAL AND HVAC INFRASTRUCTURE. THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT IT IS LESS EXPENSIVE IN THE LONG RUN TO OVER-ESTIMATE COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS AT THE BEGINNING THAN IT IS TO ADD CAPACITY AFTER THE FACT.

The initial cost of structured cabling may seem expensive. But consider near-term and future growth when calculating this expense. Structured plans become more cost effective over time as it is easier and relatively less expensive to move and add cabling when it has been anticipated in a structured plan at the beginning.

Modern cabling infrastructure must be flexible enough to support the higher speed and greater bandwidth that tomorrow's networks will require. A structure that allows for proper maintenance, labeling and record keeping is also necessary as the inevitable future additions (and removals), moves, and network reconfigurations are made.

In today's high-speed information society and the data centers that support it, it is no longer practical or prudent to view the cabling as an adjunct to the equipment. Yesterday's unstructured designs are inadequate to support the electronic equipment and the need for high-speed communications.

The IT equipment used in a data center today will be replaced several times over the potential life cycle of a well designed, structured cabling system installation. Today's networks and equipment will be supplanted by more sophisticated and demanding technologies. Even modest installations must accommodate future expansion.

Flexibility in connectivity is essential to meeting both current and future service level agreements with customers. This holds true in both the data center environment as well as in the work area environment

where a wide variety of voice and data configurations must be anticipated.

The seven-layer Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) Reference Model is today's standard. Layer 1 of the model is the physical layer. It's at this level where all the connectivity occurs and voice and data signals are transported from one user to another. This physical layer of copper, fiber and coax -- adequately and correctly installed -- is critical to the entire communications systems performance.

Cable systems management and the maintenance of cable records is a major cost consideration. A well-designed structured cabling system will not remain that way for very long without a good cable management system. Moves, Additions and Changes (MAC) costs will increase drastically in the absence of a cabling management system.

Savvy cabling designers can meet current needs and plan for future needs when they are included in the inception, early planning, design, and implementation phases of every cabling project.



For more information, or to get in touch with our account executives, please call 972.445.8668 or visit www.usnet-1.com