



Case Study

U.S. County Brings Free Public Wi-Fi to More Than 30,000+ Rural, Low-Income Students and Workers

The client

The client is a county government in a Southern U.S. state that is home to more than 850,000 residents. The county encompasses more than a dozen school districts and hosts several collegiate institutions. Recent census reports have found that the county is ranked among the poorest in the U.S., with upwards of one-third of families living below the poverty line.

The challenge: Narrowing the digital divide at a critical time

As the COVID-19 pandemic has swept through the country, various regions and demographics have been hit harder than others. Federal aid has been provided to help where possible. The client was a recipient of such relief funds from the federal government that could be used for a variety of needs.

Each city within the county had claimed its portion of the federal aid to support its citizens; however, residents located outside of city limits had a different set of challenges. Unlike city dwellers, the county's rural population lacked internet access and is generally living on the less privileged side of the so-called digital divide.

With the pandemic continuing to wreak havoc, remote work is often required, as is distance learning. However, without proper internet access at home, earning a living and receiving an education are basic rights that are simply unattainable in the current environment.

Industry:
Government

CDCT provided:

- Multilayered network design
- Planning and deployment of a reliable wireless network
- Electrical remediation services and tower construction
- Ongoing network monitoring and maintenance

CDCT services:

- Professional Services

The solution: A multiphased approach and multilayered network with ongoing expert support

The county requested Insight propose a solution for strategy, design, and deployment of a free public internet access Wi-Fi network across several precincts. Insight Cloud + Data Center Transformation (CDCT), in collaboration with SmartWAVE, was selected to help the county with this large-scale and time-sensitive project.

As of August 2020, the Insight services team is in the process of multiphased project delivery planned to occur over a couple of months: planning, design, electrical remediation, and tower construction and installation. Each phase addresses the core and access network and wireless network, including RF analysis and field site surveying. The new, multivendor network is comprised of Cisco, Palo Alto Networks, and Ruckus® wireless mesh.

Our team is also providing the county with three years of ongoing support services to respond to issues as they arise and maintain the network for peak performance. This includes monitoring, data analytics, optimization, software updates, and engineering support.

The benefits: Broad, free internet access to support education and remote work

Through working with Insight and SmartWAVE, the county can provide free public Wi-Fi internet access to more than 30,000 students and teleworkers. The network design has built-in safety and compliance features to ensure user and business data and privacy are protected.

Our three-layer network design leveraged as much existing infrastructure as possible — water tanks, light and telephone poles — to expedite services delivery and control costs. Insight's engineering services will help the county continue to deliver reliable, secure internet access to residents in need for years to come.

Benefits:

Free public Wi-Fi access to
30,000+
students and remote workers



Secure, wireless
network design

Cost-effective solution
leveraging existing
infrastructure

Eliminates aspects of the
growing digital divide at an
important time

Well-maintained and
optimized network
through an expert
support team

