

Net Gains For Pupils in Essex

Submitted by: Aspectus PR

Friday, 25 July 2003

Syntegra Wins £7.6 million Contract

This September a third wave of school children across Essex will join the hundreds already 'wired up' in the county's schools to enjoy the benefits of super-fast access to the internet thanks to a new £7.6 million broadband network that runs on a newly-developed and cost-effective virtual private network providing high security internet access. The contract is for a total of £7.6 million spread over ten years.

Essex County Council (ECC) has awarded Syntegra, BT's consultancy and systems integration business, the contract which will increase the total number of schools on broadband access from 121 to over 200. ECC plan that the county's remaining 350-plus schools will come online by 2006.

Stephen Castle, Cabinet Member at Essex County Council, said: 'The internet is a powerful learning tool and broadband opens up even greater opportunities to download educational material and course work, or access web sites for research. Children are very enthusiastic about using computers'.

'Teachers also benefit from the shorter, much improved times between setting a task and the children completing it.' he added.

The broadband-in-schools development shows the continuing strength of the long-term partnership between the Council and Syntegra. Neil Connor, Syntegra's ECC account manager, commented: "Our ultimate goal is to significantly enhance communication between the Council and the people of Essex, as well as its employees, partners and suppliers. This deal is just one element of our ongoing commitment to improving and modernising services in Essex."

The new broadband circuits are being deployed by Syntegra using BT's MetroVPN (Virtual Private Network) facility, a regional service designed for county-wide use for organisations who need a highly secure network. Because MetroVPN allows for any-to-any connection, schools will be able to share data with each other over the network as well as access the internet in a secure environment. MetroVPN provides a more robust infrastructure than more traditional networks and improves the quality of support for schools, while its flexible platform means that more services can be added in the future.

Across the education sector pupils and teachers alike are discovering innovative new ways of learning using broadband. Schools in Essex will not only have a fast link to the internet, they will also be able to share information with each other within a highly secure environment. The schools are also exploring state of the art ways of working with other schools across the world using videoconferencing facilities to improve pupils' foreign languages skills. To date, around 40 per cent of schools in the UK have a fast internet connection as part of the government's nationwide scheme to draw together all public sector services, including public libraries, doctors' surgeries and schools.

About Syntegra

Syntegra is part of BT Group. It plays a key role in the realisation of BT's ICT strategy as BT's expert in business transformation and change management. Syntegra has revenues of around £600 million and employs more than 5000 business and technical professionals world-wide.

Syntegra helps organisations transform the way that they operate, by applying business knowledge and technology to make new and better ways of working possible. The nature of such major business change means that in many cases Syntegra takes on the responsibility for one or more business processes, or an organisation's entire ICT infrastructure.

For further information visit www.syntegra.com.