

Information Systems

In 2008, the Information Systems Department implemented 2 major technological changes to town operations.

After 6 months of planning, design and collaboration with all other departments within the town, on February 29th, the town launched our new website. The main goal of the web design team was to create a more user friendly interface with pertinent information easily accessible to the public. This new platform allows individual departments the capability to maintain their portion of the website independent of the information system's department, eliminating the 'bottleneck' created by the "one point of contact" approach used prior to launch. In turn, individual department's web presence has become much more *dynamic* in their dissemination of information to the public at large.

Maintaining three town-wide calendars has also proven beneficial. **Upcoming Meetings**, maintained by the town clerk's office is the place to go for any public meetings held by boards, committees, commissions or councils. **Upcoming Events** is where you'll find town-wide events and **News & Announcements** is the place for the latest happenings within town and directs the interested viewer to more specifics. We have also utilized the Emergency News Alert when appropriate. The **Emergency News Alert** is a red banner that spans across the center of the main page; these alerts are initiated by the Town Administrator, DPW Director or Chief of Police when the town wants to direct the public to the most serious matters facing the town. Since February, 2008 the website located at www.town.lynnfield.ma.us is receiving twice as many accesses as the prior year.

The other major change spearheaded by the Information Systems Department was the replacement of the Town Hall's antiquated phone system. At the October 2007 Town Meeting capitol funds were appropriated for this upgrade. The old phone system used 46 pairs of copper wire connected to an analog/digital PBX. The old system did not have voicemail and incoming calls could frequently receive busy signals. The decision was made to replace the phone system with a 100% IP based phone system. With generous support from the Director of Public Works and his communications wiring expert staff member we coordinated the installation of all new category-6 wiring throughout Town Hall. Cat-6 wiring guarantees gigabit throughput to any IP based device. We replaced the 46 pairs of copper at town hall with one PRI consisting of 23 shared lines and purchased a block of 1000 DIDs from the local Telco provider for incoming calls for use by both the town & school district. Employees were trained on the use of the new phones and on the evening of June 4th, we cut over service for the town hall to a fully IP based phone system. The efficiencies and effectiveness of this change were realized almost immediately. Following that installation the School Technology Department deployed an identical system at the middle school utilizing the town's fiber backbone between the town hall and middle school we created a redundant fail-over between the 2 systems. In the future we hope to deploy IP telephony throughout all town buildings.

Respectfully submitted
Joseph Bongiorno, Information Systems Manager