

BUSINESS CONNECTIONS



***INS is your lifeline to
Business-Smart
Technology***



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BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

Customer service excellence has always been a hallmark of Iowa Network Services and remains our focus today. We're strongly committed to you as our valued customer, and we will continue to deliver an unparalleled combination of responsive customer care and reliable communications services for many years to come.

We begin this issue of *Business Connections* on page 3 with ideas on how to create a customer service culture at your business. You'll also find highlights from the 2009 INS Customer Satisfaction Survey, and I'm pleased that so many of our customers are highly satisfied overall with INS.

On pages 4 and 5, you'll learn about INS' readily available bandwidth and the significant savings you can enjoy with our "Upload Incentives" program. This may be a good time for your business to assess your bandwidth usage and talk to INS about developing a plan for increased cost-efficiency. Also on the topic of new solutions, check out the article on page 6 about Virtual Desktop Infrastructure from Alliance Technologies.

Sometimes customer service involves community service, and that's the subject of "INS in the Community" on page 7. You can look forward to more of these articles in future issues, as we celebrate what can be accomplished when communities come together.

Sincerely,

Richard M. Vohs
INS President and CEO



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Editorial and Circulation Contact:
Kristi Arp, 4201 Corporate Drive, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-830-0425.

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Contact: Kristi Arp, 4201 Corporate Drive, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-830-0425.

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Postmaster send changes to:
Kristi Arp - "Business Connections"
Iowa Network Services
4201 Corporate Drive
West Des Moines, IA 50266





INS Scores Highly in Customer Satisfaction

The 2009 INS Customer Satisfaction Survey, conducted each fall by Flynn Wright, found that more than half of the business customers surveyed were highly satisfied overall with INS.

Mike Irwin, Research Manager at Flynn Wright, cites two particularly significant findings:

- **INS received a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 48 percent, compared with the telecommunications industry average of about 20 percent.** The NPS is determined by subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters, representing the true strength of the brand in the marketplace. This score suggests that there is relatively strong word-of-mouth promotion among INS customers.
- **The INS score in the Secure Customer Index shows strong customer loyalty to INS and a likelihood to recommend the company to peers.** This multi-dimensional index measures the satisfaction metrics of Overall Satisfaction, Likelihood to Recommend, Likelihood to Continue Service Mix, Earned Loyalty, and Prefer Company.

"I believe these findings are due to some very good things INS is doing operationally. They are committed to customer service, and by improving satisfaction, it leads to stronger loyalty and a greater likelihood of referral," says Irwin.



Create a Customer Service Culture

Start at the top and let it spread throughout your company

A common characteristic of successful businesses is the ability to deliver excellent customer service. It builds lasting customer relationships and fosters valuable "word of mouth" advertising. If you'd like to create a stronger customer service culture at your company, here are five fundamentals to keep in mind:

1. Make customer service a clear priority

For true impact, the focus on customer service must be a strong one, beginning with upper management and spreading throughout your company. Employees should clearly understand that they work for the customer, no matter their job title.

2. Train your entire staff

All employees contribute in some way to customer service, whether they typically have direct customer contact or not. This is why it makes sense to provide training for your entire staff.

3. Empower employees with the tools they need

There is always a way to satisfy a disgruntled

customer. To do so, however, employees must be given the latitude to take the necessary action to provide exceptional service and resolve issues promptly.

4. Recognize and reward employees for outstanding service

To foster the growth of a customer service culture, take the time to recognize and reward employees who demonstrate excellent service behaviors. Seize every opportunity to celebrate and publicize the times when employees go the extra mile for your customers.

5. Regularly ask customers what they think of your service

The best way to find out if you're satisfying customers is simply to ask them. Formal efforts could include customer surveys, questionnaires, interviews or comment/suggestion cards. Informally, get out and talk with your customers and your staff on a regular basis. After you gather this feedback, always communicate the results to your employees so they can use the information to improve their performance.



INS Dedicated Internet’s “Upload Incentives”

Discounts on DIA available to clients that upload more than download

Bandwidth usage varies considerably depending on your type of business and INS offers customized solutions to meet a variety of needs. For example, does your company utilize more outgoing bandwidth than incoming? (This is often the case with businesses that send large files such as marketing firms, graphic designers, architects, engineers and Web hosting companies.) If so, you may be able to take advantage of a dramatic price incentive now available from INS.

You Could Save 30 Percent

INS offers a competitive, reliable Dedicated Internet Access (DIA) product that is uniquely redundant and reliable. Companies using INS DIA that regularly transfer large amounts of content up to the Internet can benefit greatly by having a two-to-one ratio for Internet traffic (two parts outgoing to one part incoming). Chris Williams, Manager of Internet Products, explains, “Your company can take advantage of the INS ‘Upload Incentives’ if your network usage of outbound (sent) traffic is significantly more than inbound (received). Specifically,

if at least 66 percent of your traffic is outbound, you’ll qualify for the lower pricing program. So, for instance, if your company averages 3Mbps of inbound traffic a month, you will need to have at least 6Mbps of outbound traffic that month to qualify for the ‘Upload Incentives’ program.”

Companies using INS DIA that regularly transfer large amounts of content up to the Internet can benefit greatly by having a two-to-one ratio for Internet traffic.

Each month, a determination is made as to whether your company has reached the two-to-one goal required. If you meet this criterion, INS provides a 30 percent discount on the DIA portion of your bill for that month.

One of Iowa’s Largest Networks

INS is able to provide such affordable bandwidth pricing options due to our

size—we operate one of the largest IP networks in the state.

Williams adds, “INS operates a redundant IP network that provides Internet service to a market of over 300,000 people served by our rural telephone companies. INS provides DIA service in these mostly rural communities as well as markets served by other telephone companies. We connect to multiple Tier 1 IP carriers to be able to allow the type of uptime that our customers require. This same bandwidth is also available for business use.”

Bandwidth Opportunities

Businesses can choose from a variety of bandwidth options from INS. These include:

- Multiple points to connect to INS across Iowa including 34 INS POPs, over 100 INS telco member companies, and national and regional partnerships.
- Ability to be competitive in areas served by Qwest, Iowa Telecom and Frontier. INS will order and manage

circuits needed from other carriers so you can turn to us for help with any aspect of your service.

- MPLS, Ethernet and TDM Transport options are available (depending on your location) to best fit your needs.



In addition, INS offers Web and e-mail hosting for small- and medium-sized businesses. Packages include self administration of 15 to 75 e-mail addresses with your own domain name (mycompany.com). INS can provide space for hosting a Web site using the most popular Microsoft and Linux options. Web site database hosting allows for e-Commerce and other tools that make life easier like Content Management Systems.

All hosting services are on the INS fully redundant, survivable network. Its three-node design allows for instant rerouting and no downtime, our products have a built-in disaster recovery plan. Advanced hosting needs can be met by housing your own equipment in the INS Westtown Communications Center.

Call 800-469-4000 for more information on the affordable, readily available bandwidth opportunities from INS.

Some restrictions apply. Contact INS for Upload Incentive qualifications and details.

Instantly Test Your Internet Speeds

Have you ever visited a Web site and the viewing experience there seemed “clogged” or slow? This might be caused by the speed of your Internet connection, but is much more likely the result of issues with the Web site itself.

You’ll find a simple test to troubleshoot this kind of situation on the netINS Web site. Go to www.netins.net/speed.htm and click on Begin Test. In just seconds, you’ll get estimates of your download speed and upload speed to use as a reference tool. While no test of this type can ever be 100 percent accurate, it will give you a general idea of your bandwidth.

If the displayed speeds fall within the range you expect from your Internet connection, you can safely attribute the sluggishness you’re experiencing to that particular Web site.



INS Customer Support Services Here to Help

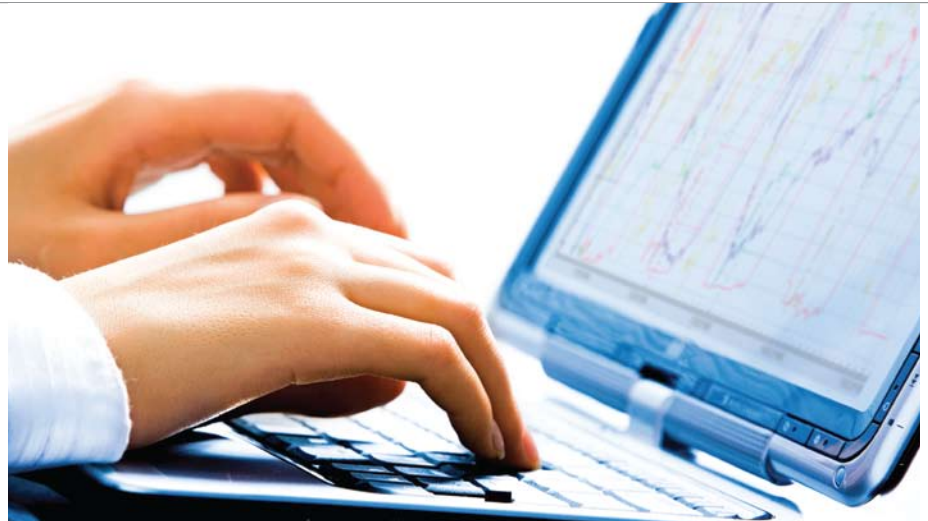
INS can assist your business with call center technical services. We have been providing Internet Technical Support since the mid '80s. Over the years, our call center design has adapted to a fast-changing industry to allow for the support of many types of technical and communication services. While we still assist customers with Internet services, we also help our clients' customers with:

- Cable/IP Television
- Voice over IP (VoIP) and Traditional Telephone Services
- Public Wireless Hot-Spot Access
- After Hours Call-Out
- Trouble Ticket Creation and Follow-Up

Our 24x7x365 call center is staffed with Iowa employees that can relate to your customers. We provide access to call records and regularly check with you to ensure calls are being handled properly.

Could Virtual Desktop Infrastructure Be For You?

Get answers through a comprehensive assessment by Alliance Technologies



Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), offered by Alliance Technologies, is a method of hosting personal workstations either in a company's own data center or through a cloud computing model. VDI involves the use of a centralized server to process and control data, and several low-cost remote workstations with remote access software installed. The benefits of the powerful centralized server are shared across all remote workstations, and hardware costs are reduced.

Medium to large businesses tend to derive the most benefits from making the switch to VDI, but it's not for everyone. Steve Simpson, Alliance Technologies Sales Consultant, explains, "Alliance Technologies insists on doing a thorough assessment process upfront, since understanding the user environment is essential to the successful implementation of VDI. This sets us apart from other providers that use a one-size-fits-all approach."

Alliance Technologies is a partner of LiquidwareLabs, and uses their Stratusphere assessment tool. When a company is interested in exploring VDI, Alliance Technologies installs this tool on their network for 15 to 30 days. It provides quantitative information on memory, CPU, graphics, network activity, number

of monitors, types of monitors, type of configuration, age of desktop and what applications are being used by each staff member.

After the assessment is completed, a VDI Fit Report is created that plots out devices and users into four quadrants, indicating where they fall in terms of appropriateness for VDI. Some users within a company may be a great fit while others are not. For example, engineering/CAD users may be better off maintaining a desktop computer.

"Once VDI is determined to be a good option for that company, Alliance Technologies recommends the branded version that's best for them. We also discuss which 'grass roots' users should be set up with VDI first as part of the pilot project," says Simpson. He adds, "These influencers then spread the word to other employees and pave the way for expanded VDI implementation in the future."

For more details on Virtual Desktop Infrastructure, contact Jason Lamping, Marketing Manager, at 888-387-5670 x7682 or lampingj@alliancetechnologies.net.



Benefits of VDI

- **Backup and Disaster Recovery** – All workstation data is stored on a centralized server, so it is automatically backed up. It is also simple to recover in the event of a disaster, even if the physical workstation is damaged or destroyed.
- **Remote Access** – Because the workstation is accessible from a centralized server, it is always available for access from a remote location.
- **Minimize Hardware Dependence** – The remote workstation can be accessed from almost any computer with a network connection and the installed software, minimizing dependence on specific hardware.
- **Cost Effective** – Money can be saved by purchasing several low-cost workstations and a powerful centralized server, instead of several high-cost workstations.
- **Centralized Management** – Software and hardware updates can be performed on a single centralized server and those changes will be reflected on all remote workstations without any additional maintenance.
- **Security** - Since all data is stored on a centralized server, the damage or loss of a remote workstation does not compromise data security.

INS in the Community

This marks the first appearance of what will be a regular feature in Business Connections, designed to highlight some of the community events, programs and organizations supported by INS. We are proud to take an active role in the communities we serve, and look forward to working closely with many others to enhance the lives of Iowa residents.

“INS Superior Student of the Month” Program Honors Iowa Youth

The “INS Superior Student of the Month” program began in March 2009 through a partnership between Iowa Network Services and Learfield Communications. The program honors high school students who have demonstrated excellence, each in his/her own way. Some may be dedicated to academic achievement, leadership roles or extracurricular activities. Others may have overcome a personal challenge that shows extraordinary strength and commitment. INS’ Marketing Manager, Kristi Arp, states, “These are the youth that benefit our communities most and are the individuals Iowa Network Services would like to recognize. They are Iowa’s future.”

For several years, Iowa Network Services has honored student athletes through the “INS Player of the Week” program. INS also has been a proud sponsor of other youth-related activities such as the State high school drill team competition, music festivals, and academic scholarships. However, we wanted to broaden the recognition to those individuals who have excelled in other areas including:

- Scholastic
- Community and/or Church
- Art
- Music and/or Theater

- Sports
- Club, Organization and/or Political
- Self Accomplishments
- Entrepreneurialism

Each month during the school year, one student is chosen from a qualified pool of nominees submitted by community members. A panel of third-party, independent judges select the award recipients.

Winning “INS Superior Student of the Month” award recipients are announced in the last week of each month on statewide radio commercials through the Radio Iowa network. The commercials are crafted from interviews with the individuals who submitted the students’ nominations, and allow all of us in the community to get to know these outstanding youth. In addition, “INS Superior Student of the Month” award recipients receive a \$250 savings bond.

As a business owner or manager, we encourage you to take special note of the “INS Superior Student of the Month” award recipients—you may know of another deserving student to nominate or want to hire these winners a few years down the road.

How to Nominate a Deserving Student

For complete program details and to nominate a student for the “INS Superior Student of the Month” award, simply visit www.INSSuperiorStudent.com.

Nominations can be made by a community member, teacher, counselor, advisor, school leader or any other adult with an experienced understanding of the student’s accomplishments. The nominator will be required to validate the online entry by calling 1-888-320-1319 to leave a sixty-second recorded message about the student and to confirm the nomination submission. Student accomplishments must have been fulfilled within 18 months prior to the nomination.

Nominations will be carried over from month-to-month until the end of the academic semester. Non-winning students may be re-nominated at the beginning of each new semester, as their accomplishments will likely need to be updated.

We appreciate your support of this community program and ask that you share this nominating information with others you know that work with youth. Thank you.

BUSINESS-SMART TECHNOLOGY

INS is Iowa's communications technology leader who can develop a solution to protect your vital network infrastructure, provide access to your company data, and achieve your communications goals.

Get Business-Smart Technology with INS

VOICE AND DATA TRANSPORT

DATA NETWORK SOLUTIONS

VIRTUAL OFFICE

BUSINESS CONTINUITY

WEB SITE SOLUTIONS

TECHNICAL RESOURCES

CONSULTING SOLUTIONS

FAMILY OF COMPANIES

