Calix

Hargray Communications Improves Network Deployment Productivity By 50 Percent And Empowers Technicians For The Future With Calix Education Services

CHALLENGE

For over 70 years, Hargray Communications has been the foundation of their community's connective tissue—first by offering local phone services and now by providing advanced internet, television, and phone communications to markets in South Carolina and Georgia.

As Hargray grew, they expanded into data center services and later became an industry leader in providing regional pure fiber-based wide area network (WAN) to cell towers. Hargray was the first provider to offer Gig speeds to many communities in the region and now has over 2,000 route miles of fiber and over 80,000 customers.

Hargray has always believed in investing in their technicians and has considered their employees a critical part of its mission. Retention of talent is a high priority. Even with a strong engineering team to assist, newer technicians joining without previous access network experience led to operational inefficiencies in the field.

This meant engineers needed to stay involved throughout the network deployment, provisioning, and turn-up processes. This kept them from working on other projects and, in some cases, created costly back-and-forth situations that could extend for hours or days.

For Hargray, the challenge was twofold. Not only did tying up two people take up more resources and time that could be spent elsewhere, but it also signaled that technicians weren't feeling empowered—and that was something that Hargray wanted to solve.

HARGRAY

COMPANY
Hargray Communications

COMPANY TYPE
Regional telecommunications provider

WEBSITE
hargray.com

LOCATION
Hilton Head, South Carolina

SERVICES
Residential and business services including internet, VoIP, and IPTV

Members
80,000 customers

SOLUTION

Hargray teamed up with Calix Education Services to offer online training for their technicians with the Intelligent Access EDGE (IAE) Enterprise eLearning Subscription. The IAE training subscription comprises over 20 eLearning courses curated for the educational needs of a diverse collection of technicians, engineers, and network operations team members. It provides knowledge on critical access technology and IAE platforms including the E9-2, E7-2, and E3-2. With a subscription model, Hargray employees could select from a wider variety of self-paced courses that could be taken at any time when it fit their schedule. Hargray management no longer had the hassle of purchasing multiple individual classes for each of the learners. Investing in team knowledge using the subscription approach proved more cost-effective and easier to budget from an accounting perspective, as all costs were included in one transaction. Learners found it easier, and managers appreciated the ability to track progress through administrative reporting features.

THE RESULTS

In the past, network engineers would develop the detailed engineering, configuration specification, and method of procedure (MOP) and hand that over to the technicians. But if there were any problems, the technicians were not trained to solve them. Instead, troubleshooting communications would be fielded back-and-forth for days.

After completing the training program through the subscription, productivity and confidence went through the roof. Field teams were now empowered to perform the provisioning, turn-up, and testing of new nodes and new rings without the assistance of an engineer. They had the confidence to efficiently turn up Intelligent Access EDGE platforms, as well as troubleshoot and remediate problems quickly if issues did arise. Network engineers were freed up to perform other critical design tasks without the need to shadow technicians during the deployment process, effectively cutting installation hours per node by 50 percent.

The training also empowered technicians with the ability to better identify and resolve problems on their own, reducing the number of trouble escalations and driving increased operational efficiencies.

50% improvement in network deployment productivity, cuts installation labor hours in half!

Empowering the team for the long-term

Better network maintenance and troubleshooting

Easy one-time payment and admin dashboard

"Now that we've got the subscription training, the knowledge transfer is much quicker," Dan Thompson, manager of regional operations at Hargray, noted. "Any of the technicians can do the installs, do the provisioning on the platforms, and bring them up. And it doesn't take two technicians. Because previously, before we had the subscription to the courses, we had to have two people—one technician in the field doing the hands-on work, and one engineer doing the actual provisioning and the software updating. Now it can all be done by one technician on site, who does all the connections and performs all the provisioning right there once he gets it connected."

With Calix Education Services training, technicians can identify and resolve network problems on their own. The training also empowers them with a better understanding of the platform to offer solutions and contribute meaningfully to their teams. This is deeply important to Hargray, as they see this investment in the individual valuable no matter where they land.

For Hargray, it has always been about investing in the success of their team members. With the IAE eLearning Enterprise Subscription, they're investing not only in the efficiency and the productivity of their technicians—they're also investing in the livelihood of each individual. They're giving them the potential to grow their career, and this long-term development never stops bringing in benefits.

Find out more about Education Services by scheduling a [360 Services Consult](#) today.

"Giving the technicians easy access to the training not only bolsters their confidence, but it makes them feel valued. It gives them opportunities for growth. It gives them a sense of purpose and a way to advance their career."

Dan Thompson, manager of regional operations at Hargray

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