

PUEBLO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

steps **UP** to a

HIGHER LEVEL OF SERVICE

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Established in 1866, Pueblo County Colo., is unusual for most mid-sized communities. The county is large enough to reflect the trends in major markets, yet small enough to still feel comfortable.

With a strong commitment to innovative communications solutions to better serve the community, Pueblo County is equipped with the tools residents need to quickly access information. Unlike other governments, Pueblo County furnishes its employees with high-bandwidth communications that allows any public sector, education, health care or government agency to reap the benefits of the county’s telecommunications provider without having to separately negotiate service contracts.

A Robust Solution

To handle an increasing volume of callers and defray the heavy costs required to maintain its current communications system, the Pueblo County government decided to revamp its existing telephone system. It needed a system that could cut costs paid by tax dollars, as well as improve service delivery and support growth for an increasing number of customers in all of its government entities.

The county selected U S WEST Centrex PRIME to replace its existing PBX system and to support a complex infrastructure of 900

government employees spread throughout seven buildings on its core campus as well as four outlying locations. The county now deploys a robust communications platform that better accommodates customers, saving the county nearly \$200,000 in taxpayer dollars it took to maintain PBX systems and software, which is now being accomplished by U S WEST.

“With our ever-growing civic responsibilities, our existing communications system was beginning to slow our daily business affairs. We needed a system we could rely on to support our continued growth and development now as well as into the next decade,” said Jerry Carleo, chief technology officer for Pueblo County. “Centrex PRIME was an excellent tool since it saved money, saved time and improved our service delivery capabilities.”

U S WEST has migrated the county to one of the largest Centrex PRIME systems in the Front Range of Colorado. The new service offers high-bandwidth delivery of integrated voice, video, image and data connections between the local office-based system and the network interface that operates the county department phone lines.

“We’re serious about our commitment to spend tax dollars wisely,” said Carleo. “With U S WEST Centrex PRIME, we’ve been able to filter the dollar savings into programs that directly help the Pueblo County community, and that’s what we should be doing for the community.”

Innovating Business Practices

Pueblo County has reaped phenomenal cost savings with this new installation. For example, the county saves more than \$180,000 in business line charges annually just by using U S WEST Centrex PRIME lines versus business lines from other vendors. The county has also seen productivity gains and reduced labor costs after implementing the Centrex PRIME solution.

Once installed, the Centrex PRIME system resulted in high-speed, high-bandwidth connections that significantly decreased the labor and time involved for all internal and external business communications to and from Pueblo County government departments.

With the system, county employees use four-digit direct dialing for all internal calls, as well as the capability of dialing out before and after hours without the need for expensive lines and operators. Centrex PRIME also gives the county the ability to expand quickly and easily without having to redevelop dialing plans and software database definitions.

Improving Customer Satisfaction

The new system also means improved accessibility and increased efficiency. Pueblo County residents are now given direct dial access to each department and division in the county offices, which eliminates the delays they experienced before the installation. Residents are no longer limited to live operator support during regular office hours with 24x7 access to customer service information is provided by the new system.

Centrex PRIME also meshes with the county's voice messaging system so customers can page county personnel to respond to after-hours emergency requests. County officials also enjoy increased productivity by serving a higher volume of calls each day.

"We chose the U S WEST Centrex PRIME system based on its ability to meet our bottom-line business objectives to save taxpayer dollars, improve service accessibility and delivery, and save labor time by functioning efficiently in whatever business initiative we undertake," said Carleo. "With Centrex PRIME we more than exceeded our objectives."

"The foremost objective of a U S WEST solution is to exceed customer expectations," said Connie Larson, senior market manager, U S WEST State & Local Government Services. "Government-based solutions, like Centrex PRIME, consistently deliver outstanding results with a keen focus on customer service."

Centrex PRIME For Pueblo County

The Centrex PRIME solution for Pueblo County was configured by U S WEST to provide the county government with an organization-wide, standardized solution for its phone lines. U S WEST installed the Centrex PRIME system at an off-site local exchange office maintained by U S WEST technicians, eliminating capital investment and maintenance costs associated with housing an onsite system. As new system components become available, U S WEST will upgrade Pueblo's system free of charge.

Centrex PRIME facilities serve Pueblo County's multiple entities, which include administrative work, tax assessment, tax collection and disbursement, budget and finance, election management, clerk and recording, public works, social services, and planning and development functions. Pueblo County oversees the elected offices of the board of county commissioners, sheriff, county and district attorney, clerk and recorder, treasurer, assessor, coroner, surveyor and a number of other internal offices.



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