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Are You Paying for Unused Data Lines?

DATA LINES: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Data lines are a vital part of your school's communication with people and technology both internally and externally. There are many kinds of data lines. I list several examples below:

- T1
- ISDN
- ATM
- DSL
- Point to Point lines
- Modem

All these lines allow your school to complete various tasks in order to run smoothly and effectively. However, with so many different lines you can easily lose track of which ones are necessary and which are expendable.

ELIMINATING EXPENDABLE LINES

Have you ever wondered if all of the data lines that your school is being billed for each month are actually being used?

The monthly bills you receive most likely come from a multitude of providers. Some of these providers may include Verizon, AT&T, MCI and others. Many schools are hesitant to cancel, or even simply to question, lines that have been running for years. Unfortunately, no one knows if these lines are still being used, what their purposes may be, or where they are located.

With so many data lines and providers, the task of eliminating expendable lines can be daunting. To efficiently complete this task, you will need to start by creating a clearly defined map in a graphical format, a Visio (similar to a schematic), and a list consisting of information like line types, bandwidth contracted, circuit identifiers, and communication providers contained in a simple Excel document – this information should be an integral part of your schools overall Network documentation.

Once your IT staff or outside consultant has put together an accurate map, you are ready to turn off unused lines as well as renegotiate the rates that you are currently paying. Because the cost of data lines have drastically fallen over the past few years, you will certainly want to do this for lines installed more than two years ago and even for lines that you may have had installed just last year.

By eliminating the lines that are no longer in use and negotiating better rates for existing lines, your school

may be able to save thousands of dollars annually. It is a simple process and one that has many benefits for schools who are constantly under budgetary pressures.

Enjoy your summer!



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