

# Case Study

Industry: Education

## Carlow College

Project: Telecommunications infrastructure

Major challenge: Aggressive time frame



### The background.

Located in Pittsburgh, PA, Carlow College offers more than 40 undergraduate majors, as well as a trio of graduate programs in education, professional leadership, and nursing. It is also a school with vision. Here is its story:

A few years ago, Carlow College recognized the need to implement, integrate, and connect campus-wide communications systems and information technology resources, so it formed the Carlow College Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC). This committee formulated a five-year plan that showed a strong commitment to improving the technology resources at the college. The Information Systems Department was created to carry out those plans and ensure a strong technological future for Carlow College.

Before diving into their ambitious plans, Carlow's IS team visited several similar colleges that recently implemented campus-wide communications networks. Of particular importance to the team was how these other colleges dealt with pitfalls and obstacles encountered during the planning and installation phases.

The Carlow team was most impressed by a Pennsylvania college that was already a Black Box client. Our client has a comprehensive campus-wide data, voice, and video network that connects every academic building and dormitory on campus. The Carlow team was amazed at the network's relatively event-free installation that occurred in precisely scheduled phases over three summers.

The Carlow Information Systems Department developed bid specifications of its own. In the end, the school chose Black Box Network Services.

### Challenge issued, deadline met.

Unlike other installation projects, which are usually scheduled between the spring and fall semesters while students aren't at school, the Carlow installation began in the middle of the spring semester—February—and had to be completed by May 31 of that year. With 11 buildings to network across a 13-acre campus, Black Box faced its tightest deadline to date. But project management has always been one of Black Box's greatest strengths. In the end, we successfully met the deadline and networked Carlow College.

Our expert techs designed and installed a network comprised of a 12-strand fiber optic backbone infrastructure. It provides connectivity between all 11 campus buildings. They also implemented a horizontal infrastructure in all campus buildings with Category 5 UTP distribution cabling.

In the years since we installed Carlow's campus-wide data, voice, and video network, the college has used the Internet for several of its courses and uses interactive television at its satellite sites. Thanks to Black Box, Carlow College has optimized its communications systems and information technology resources.



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