

Case Study

Industry: Manufacturing

Whirlpool Corporation

Project: New warehouse installations

Major challenge: Extremely tight time frames



Data, voice, and more.

Whirlpool Corporation is the one of the world's largest manufacturers of major home appliances. It also relies on Black Box for the data, wireless, voice, and security infrastructures for its new and existing warehouses across the U.S.

In a hurry.

When Whirlpool Corporation first called Black Box, it had a rush assignment: A new warehouse needed to be completed in eight days! Could Black Box do it? The Black Box team flew to the site and worked closely with different Whirlpool Corporation teams in areas such as data, IT programming, wireless, voice, security, equipment, and training. The clock was ticking, but Black Box was able to pull the entire installation together in seven days—one day less than scheduled.

Since then, Whirlpool Corporation relies on Black Box as a One Source provider for its U.S. warehouse infrastructures. Some facilities are larger than others, but all feature the same equipment and systems for consistency. Plus they are completed in just two to three weeks.

Make data connections.

For the first facility's data network, Whirlpool Corporation chose a structured cabling system with a fiber backbone and CAT6 horizontal cable. The company also wanted wireless network access. That hybrid wired/wireless system became the template for all subsequent installations.

Black Box manages all the data infrastructures from start to finish. That includes the cable installation, termination, and testing. Black Box also supplies and installs the equipment for the Main Distribution Frame (MDF) and the Intermediate Distribution Frames (IDFs). So far,

there have been from 4 to 14 IDFs per facility. A typical install includes cabinets, patch panels, connection hardware, and wireless access points.

Black Box also serves as an IT department for Whirlpool Corporation by both installing and programming network switches and other network equipment.

Call anytime.

For the first facility's voice system, Whirlpool Corporation chose an AVAYA® G350 Media Gateway, which offers VoIP capabilities and supports up to 50 users. Black Box installed the system and provided users with four hours of training. Black Box continues to provide support on an as-needed basis. Black Box provides this same system and support for other sites as well.

Standing guard.

To protect the new facility, Black Box also ran all the wiring for the security surveillance system.

Ongoing support and more.

Because the warehouse projects have been so successful, Black Box has done much more work for Whirlpool Corporation at its headquarters' campus and some manufacturing sites. Work has included wireless surveys and deployments, structured cabling retrofits, and on-site technicians for telephony MACs.

To support Whirlpool Corporation users at multiple sites, Black Box created an e-mail address so Whirlpool employees can send MAC and technical requests directly to Black Box. Requests are answered the same day. Technicians are normally dispatched within two or three days, but for emergency calls, technicians can be on-site within two hours.

"Black Box has saved me countless man hours and travel for each warehouse startup. Their ability to adjust and adapt to our needs has proven to be an invaluable asset. I look forward to a growing relationship with this company."

Scott M. Smith, Sr. Network Engineer, Whirlpool Corporation



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