

**Recommendation to the Somerset County Library Commission
for the Award of Contract for
Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Phone System**

Background

Each SCLSNJ branch building is owned and maintained by the municipality in which it is located, and telephony is provided by the operating municipality as a function of utility service to the facility. Features vary from location to location depending on the system installed and the handsets and equipment in use.

Because voice service is provided separately at each location, there are no unified communications tools available for staff. Basic functions such as cross-system caller ID or inter-location extension dialing and transfer are not possible due to the lack of interoperability among systems. The varying ages of the phone systems also lead to variations in call quality for patrons, and staff members who may work shifts at more than one location have to learn separate phone equipment for each building. A new VoIP system will address these problems by using the investment the Library has already made in our network infrastructure, and will decrease utility costs for the municipalities in which each branch is located.

Process

In February 2016, the Somerset County Library Commission authorized Finance Director Brian Morgan to use the Competitive Contracting process in order to procure website development services. Morgan issued a Request for Proposal (RFP), the availability of which was advertised in the in the legal notices section of the Newark Star-Ledger and the Courier News, as well as posted to the SCLSNJ homepage. The deadline for submitting a response to the RFP was Friday, March 3, 2017 at 3:30 pm. A number of emails were received from prospective respondents containing questions and requests for clarification, and three addenda were issued on February 23, February 28 and March 2 through posting on the Library's website. On Friday, March 3, County Library Administrator Brian Auger received and opened fifteen (15) proposals. All fifteen proposals were accepted as being complete.

An evaluation team consisting of Director of Operations Lynn Hoffman and Automation Manager Wendy Clarkson reviewed the proposals separately and made initial scoring decisions. There were four categories for scoring the RFP with a maximum total of 125 points. The categories for scoring were:

1. VoIP System Design and Features (65 points)
Suitability of system design to operate within existing conditions, ability to provide required hardware and software features, ability to adapt to future growth and other system changes, ease of system administration and maintenance

2. Cost (30 points)
Calculated on a total cost basis over a four-year time frame, weighted with the response having the lowest cost receiving full points
3. References and qualifications (20 points)
General vendor qualifications, provision of references that demonstrate experience with similar projects
4. Understanding of requested work (10 points)
Completeness of RFP response

After initial scoring, the total number of points awarded to each of the vendors in descending order were:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. e.comm Technologies | (110.7 points) |
| 2. Computel Communications Systems, Inc. | (107.0 points) |
| 3. Tru Stor, LLC. d/b/a Hunter Technologies | (104.6 points) |
| 4. Eastern Datacomm** | (102.5 points) |
| 5. ViperBox | (97.0 points) |
| 6. Jive Communications | (95.9 points) |
| 7. VoIP Networks | (94.4 points) |
| 8. PureEdge Technologies | (92.8 points) |
| 9. Johnston Communications | (88.8 points) |
| 10. OSI | (79.1 points) |
| 11. CompuVoIP | (76.5 points) |
| 12. Johnston Enterprises | (71.5 points) |
| 13. Cooperative Communications | (63.3 points) |
| 14. Technotime | (47.9 points) |

** Eastern Datacomm submitted two separate proposals, which was not permitted according to section 2.9 of the RFP, "Multiple Proposals Not Accepted." Although this led to Eastern Datacomm's proposals being excluded from consideration, the evaluation team chose to score the proposal with the lower cost of the two in order to demonstrate that the selection process was applied fairly.

Respondents with the top three (3) proposals after initial scoring were invited to attend on-site meetings and demos, conducted March 23 through March 28. Auger, Clarkson and Hoffman attended all three demos, and afterward each made separate scoring decisions. There were three categories for scoring the Respondent based on both the demo and the RFP response, with a maximum total of 60 points. The categories for scoring were:

1. VoIP System: Suitability for existing conditions (10 points)
Including integration with upgraded network equipment and infrastructure
2. VoIP System: Hardware/software features (20 points)
3. VoIP System: Ease of use (30 points)

Including ease of use of proposed equipment, workload implied by proposed implementation plan, training/knowledge needed to administer system, etc.

They, joined by Morgan, met Friday, March 31, 2017 to review the results of the final scoring.

Recommendation

After second round scoring, the total number of points awarded to each of the vendors in descending order were:

1. Tru Stor, LLC. d/b/a Hunter Technologies (58 points)
2. e.comm Technologies (52 points)
3. Computel Communications Systems, Inc. (48 points)

Based on the scoring and associated ranking, we respectfully submit our recommendation to procure a VoIP phone system and implementation services from Tru Stor, LLC. d/b/a Hunter Technologies. We recommend accepting the proposed option to lease equipment and spread maintenance and labor costs over a 48-month term, at a cost not to exceed \$70,000 per year for four years.

Brian Morgan
Lynn Hoffman
Wendy Clarkson
Brian Auger

April 3, 2017