

# Head of the class: The School District of Philadelphia calls on Calero solutions


**Industry:**

Education

**Number of Schools:**

214

**Number of Students:**

140,000

**Number of Employees:**

16,600

**Solutions:**

Calero Expense Management,

Calero Usage Management

**BACKGROUND**

With over 140,000 students and 16,600 employees the School District of Philadelphia is the eighth largest in the nation. Established in 1818, the district's 214 schools are funded with an annual budget in excess of \$2.5 billion.

**CHALLENGES**

Communications – wired, wireless, voice, and data – are essential to the daily operations of the district. With nearly 20,000 phones, more than 7,000 individual phone lines and 15,000 plus pieces of network equipment spread across approximately 250 buildings, keeping everything running smoothly is a monumental challenge.

One of the key people tasked with maintaining order is Stefanie Hollinger, manager of telecommunications for the district. She recalled, "We used to manage inventory using very crude tools from our telco providers and used spreadsheets to keep track of the many service and maintenance calls that we logged on behalf of the schools.

"There were numerous issues with this approach; we were unable to identify repeat problems or patterns of issues with phone lines, hidden charges, and associating inventory with its actual location."

A similar situation occurred with the district's extensive Data infrastructure. Mike Higgins, director of network services, commented, "We too had the need for inventory control and for tracking trouble tickets. Much of the technology in the schools, specifically the hardware, is federally funded, and with that funding comes the need for very tight control. For similar reasons, it's also imperative that we accurately track the specific maintenance activities performed by each of our technicians."

Higgins added, "The nature of our inventory makes it additionally challenging; one item could have numerous sub-components associated with it. For example, a switch chassis may contain 17 individual parts. Occasionally, it becomes necessary to relocate this equipment (sites close, equipment fails

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— Stefanie Hollinger, manager of telecommunications, School District of Philadelphia

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or is upgraded when eligible, etc.), so if we move a chassis we must ensure that everything inside goes with it. It's also possible for the unit to get split up and each individual sub-item ends up going to different schools; the magnitude of our environment made tracking everything a nightmare!"

### SOLUTION

In 2009, the School District of Philadelphia adopted the Calero Management Suite. Calero assigned an experienced project manager to assist with transitioning the district's legacy spreadsheet and paper-based processes to the Calero Expense Management and Usage Management solutions. "The Calero consultants worked to define a set of optimized processes with us and they were willing to customize it to fit our needs," said Higgins.

of line counts, ticket volumes, and specific details of the changes taking place across the environment. These are all important factors when working with our providers."

One of the biggest improvements came with the way ticket tracking was managed. Higgins recounted, "In the past we relied on 'dumpster diving' through emails and spreadsheets to piece together an accurate picture of the behavior and history of a specific line or device. Now we can quickly see the repair history of any item we choose."

The District relies heavily on accountability reporting, not only for the purpose of funding, but also to achieve higher levels of efficiency. "Technicians log and respond to their own tickets, so we know exactly how many hours are being spent on each incident

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### RESULTS

"Having easy, immediate access to inventory and usage information is great," remarked Hollinger. "We were able to save a considerable amount of money by identifying and disconnecting unused phone lines. For the first time, we were able to get a clear picture

or category of device. This enables us to remain compliant and also more accurately project the staff needed for future similar tasks"

The implementation also has contributed to improved levels of customer service: "The deployment of Calero has been a positive

## CASE STUDY

experience for the district's telecom team. We're able to quickly respond to incidents without the need to ask the school to diagnose a problem. It's had a positive impact on everyone who uses the product," stated Hollinger.

"Now that we capture and maintain all of our inventory information in Calero, we are able to easily run reports based on users' requests," noted Hollinger. "We access the Calero portal every day – it's our life line, our heart beat."

Higgins concluded, "The fact that they easily accommodate the unique way we operate is a true testimony to the power and flexibility of the Calero solutions."

### **Calero Software, LLC**

Calero is a leading provider of Communications Lifecycle Management (CLM) solutions designed to turn insight into action through the intuitive user-interface and visually comprehensive analytics. Calero helps to simplify the management of voice, mobile and other unified communications services and assets. With a deep commitment to innovation and customer service, Calero's CLM approach enables organizations to support the full communications lifecycle, from procurement to payment, including software and services that aid Telecom Expense Management (TEM), Managed Mobility Services (MMS) and Usage Management. Calero has thousands of customers in the United States and more than 40 countries worldwide, including Fortune 1000 corporations, universities and government agencies. Learn more at [www.calero.com](http://www.calero.com) or follow us @CaleroSoftware.