

Greetings,

ITD is pleased to announce a new service now available to STAGEnet customers. ITD has just turned up an enterprise 802.11 wireless infrastructure for WiFi access. This wireless service provides connectivity to the Internet as well as secure access to internal network segments without the need of a VPN client. Some key features include:

- Simultaneous 802.11 abg Modes of Operation
- Centralized Authentication
- End-to-end Encryption
- Tunneled access to the Internet for Guest users

Initial deployment provided coverage for the legislative assembly areas and public meeting rooms at the State Capitol. In addition, the Bismarck Northbrook offices and the Dakota Carrier Network Building were included during the pilot and testing phases and our now operational as well.

How does it work? The infrastructure can be broken down into three basic components. The heart of the system is provided by a wireless “Controller” unit. This is a centralized appliance that is capable of managing up to 512 access points. It is expected that there will be multiple controllers deployed as the service expands throughout the state. The second component is the “light-weight” access point. Each access point downloads its own configuration and will not function without the presence of an assigned controller. Each access point can support up to 20-25 wireless users. Coverage varies depending on the location, number of users, and its intended use. The last component is access, authentication, and authorization provided by external security services such as 802.1X, Radius, Active Directory, and LDAP.

The new SSIDs are “STAGEnet Guest” and “STAGEnet Member”. STAGEnet Guest provides unencrypted access to the Internet using a real external IP address. STAGEnet Member provides authenticated and encrypted access to the internal network. Use of STAGEnet member requires enrollment through ITD security.

Because the high level of security and cost effectiveness provided by this solution ITD is also considering its use for Network-to-Network VPN solutions for small offices with the added value of secure WiFi service; two solutions in one. We also feel there are many other uses for this service such as Kiosk connectivity or those areas where you would like public access isolated from your internal network and/or users.

Other custom solutions can be researched and designed on a case-by-case basis for any of our STAGEnet customers with larger foot prints or with unique requirements.

The cost for a single access point is currently priced at \$750.00 plus inside wiring. It is our expectation that wireless coverage will expand across the state as our customers continue to deploy more PDAs, laptops and other wireless devices. If you’re interested in

wireless service or have questions on how wireless service can help please contact one of our following telecommunication business consultants:

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You can also visit our vendor's website at [www.arubanetworks.com](http://www.arubanetworks.com) for additional information about the wireless solution. ITD is excited about the opportunities of this new service and is looking forward to working with our customers.

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