PARTNER SUCCESS

The Quick Turnaround that made High-Speed Internet Accessible for Those Who Needed It

When an IT vetting agency needed to deliver high-speed access for their customer, they turned to a partner to help formulate and execute a plan

> " This was a great project to help these kids now have access to Internet services they didn't have before. There was a lot of passion to make that happen, and the TPx team helped make it work."
>
> *Jeff Dodig, Founder and President of TDS USA*

TPx

TDS USA is an IT vetting agency helping customers navigate the complex, ever-changing universe of Cloud Computing, Managed Security, UCaaS/CCaaS, Mobility, Connectivity and Network Management. The company launched over 13 years ago as a telecom-focused agency. It has evolved into a full-fledged Certified IT Technology Advisor helping clients of all sizes identify their short-term needs and define long-term goals and requirements. TDS USA has extensive experience working with governments at the local and state levels.

PROFILE
TDS USA is an IT vetting agency that helps customers navigate the complex challenges of the IT landscape

CHALLENGE
TDS USA had three weeks to craft a proposal to provide Wi-Fi access to 3,000 families across five communities

SOLUTION
Provide Municipal Broadband access to more than 3,000 low- and moderate-income families in Hopewell, Virginia

BENEFITS
A flexible partner who understood that both TDS USA's and the customer's needs during an unprecedented time

RESULTS
A lasting partnership moving into a second phase of the project that will provide additional WI-FI resources for residential areas

The Challenge

Amid the height of the pandemic, Jeff Dodig faced a potentially daunting task. Dodig and his team were working with officials in Hopewell, Virginia, on a plan to deliver Wi-Fi to low- and moderate-income students and residents in the city. While it sounded easy enough, the headwinds they faced might have been enough to discourage most companies. But not Dodig. As head of an IT vetting agency, he was used to working with managed service providers (MSPs).

As the team finalized pricing and requirements for a grant request, they reached out to a number of MSPs, including TPx, to find a potential partner. The response surprised them. Most were unable to provide a quick turnaround on scoping out a solution of this size, but TPx was able to step in and offer a complete proposal.

"This was right during the beginning of the pandemic," Dodig recalled. That meant the TPx team had to forego the standard site visit and provide an estimate based on remote review and past experiences. Luckily, the TPx team has encountered virtually every situation. It acted quickly to provide an accurate scope of requirements and resources. The TPx team understood the customer's vision and provided a quote, sight unseen, using satellite imagery and a deep understanding of the time constraints and the community's needs.

Within about a month, thanks to the work of TDS USA and TPx, the customer submitted a Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (CCPF) grant request to meet deadlines and secure the necessary funding. The outcome was a green light and funding to transform the Hopewell community.

The Solution

The city of Hopewell is roughly 25 miles southeast of Virginia's capital, Richmond. It is home to an estimated 4,000 low- and moderate-income students spanning three elementary schools, one middle school, one high school and a learning center for students between preschool and adult.

Amid the pandemic, Dr. Concetta Manker, Hopewell's IT Department Director, had a simple goal: Make the downtown area accessible via Wi-Fi for residents. It would give students the connection they needed to excel in their studies when all students were participating in classes virtually. Dr. Manker developed a plan to bring the ambitious goal to life. It centered on using Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act money to enable students of low-income housing to have much-needed internet access for remote learning.

That's where TDS USA and TPx entered. Their solution called for managed networks, firewalls, and wireless access points. The plan would have been challenging but doable during normal times, but throw in the supply chain issues that arose amid the pandemic, and the project was suddenly more complicated.

"They put their heels in the ground and started to dig in," Dodig said of the TPx team. "They were able to build out a great solution. There are a lot of moving parts of this project, and TPx ensured everybody was in alignment every step of the way."

The Results

"At the initial stages of the project, a quick response enabled TPx and TDS to win the bid," said Leo Dodig, TDS USA's VP of Technology and Cloud Sales. "We only had two or three weeks to put the proposal together and submit it. There were a lot of late nights, answering questions and calling the client. But the quick responses from TPx were what enabled us to proceed with the project submission."

Equally important was the ability to navigate the restrictions and supply chain disruptions that the pandemic brought about. "TPx had the flexibility to work around those issues," Dodig acknowleged. "If certain suppliers didn't have something in inventory, TPx went above and beyond. They looked beyond their registered vendor network. That made a huge difference, especially to the customer."

Ultimately, the project's beneficiary wasn't the city, but the local students. "Being able to start something like this is a big project, and finishing it is an experience we will never forget," Jeff Dodig said. "It was a great project to work together to help these kids now have access to Internet services where before they didn't. We were able to fulfill the vision of Dr. Manker. There was a lot of passion in this project to make that happen. It is definitely something that we will remember."

"TPx worked through everything that would come up in a project like this," Jeff Dodig said. "They were able to make it all work, and now we are going into the second phase of the project. We're going to be completing a fiber ring and building out an Internet signal to the residential area that's part of the city and also lighting up some of the city's parks that are part of the second phase."

About TPx

TPx is a nationwide managed services provider delivering cybersecurity, networks, business internet and cloud communications at scale. For more than two decades, TPx has helped customers across every business sector address the growing complexity of their IT environments. With a full suite of managed IT services, TPx is making IT more accessible for businesses coast to coast. For more information, visit tpx.com or follow TPx on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.