

## Kentucky Energy Cooperative Looks for Custom IT and AV Design in New Headquarters

### KENTUCKY MUNICIPAL ENERGY AGENCY



PUBLIC POWER FOR KENTUCKY

#### Customer

Kentucky Municipal Energy Agency (KYMEA)

#### Industry

Energy

#### Challenges

- Building a new corporate headquarters.
- Collaborating with municipal members on mission-critical issues.
- Requiring a custom IT and AV infrastructure to accomplish day-to-day operations, as well as “big picture” goals.

#### Solution

- Strategic Communications designed a custom IT infrastructure to meet KYMEA’s requirements.
- Strategic Communications designed custom audio-visual collaboration and unified communications areas including a corporate boardroom, a secondary conference room and huddle spaces.
- Strategic Communications designed a Market Analytics Center (MAC) enabling members to create data models using real-time analytics.

#### Results

- Enhanced communications and collaboration enabling significant increases in efficiencies and productivity.
- Managed IT Services model providing support for business goals and objectives.

Strategic Communications experience in working with commercial businesses and regulated federal agencies continues to grow. For over 25 years, Strategic Communications maintains expertise in providing everything from AV collaboration, voice, and IT networks to low voltage cabling and engineering cloud solutions. Furthermore, the company works with organizations such as LG&E/KU, the Department of Defense, University of Louisville, and a variety of commercial enterprises nationwide.

A variety of solutions were discussed in identifying brand differences, technology benefits, and initialized bandwidth conversations. These elements remain crucial in supporting data transport and management for office communications.

### Introduction

Formed in 2015, Kentucky Municipal Energy Agency (KYMEA) provides cost-effective energy resources for its municipal members. After three years of aligning public power goals, KYMEA needed a centralized HQ for its agency operations and Board of Directors meetings. The Kentucky agency chose to open its headquarters in Louisville.

KYMEA CEO Doug Buresh needed an Information Technology (IT) and Audiovisual (AV) integrator capable of providing a technology roadmap to support office operations. Buresh also required technology in creating a headquarters to serve as a communications hub for clients, strategic partners, and board meetings.

Strategic Communications, an IT and AV consultancy and integrator, worked with KYMEA to develop a preliminary technology blueprint. In addition, the technology implemented empowered the KYMEA board in considering future office space technology.

## Low-Voltage Cabling

KYMEA engaged Strategic Communications' Low Voltage division in shoring up network cabling specifications. The low voltage team partnered with the architect and general contractor ensuring components like HVAC for cooling on premise servers, power specification for devices, and custom architectural inserts for displays and lighting were exacted prior to construction.

The main frame distribution build-out utilized Cat 6 cables and other associated patch cords, panels and jacks. Single and dual cables were run to work areas, outlets, and wireless access points ensuring reliable connectivity.

"When installing today's technology, we create a lot of value due to our unique ability in providing cabled infrastructure supporting the technologies we engineer", Brian Walls - Strategic Communications Operations Manager. "By providing low-voltage installs, clients remain protected from situations where it's hard to identify the vendor responsible for repair and maintenance." In addition, Strategic Communications' certified engineers provide progress reports and a Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) to check for failures and ensure reliability.

## Audio Visual Design & Install

The AV and collaborative tools play a significant role in KYMEA's office communications. The ability to see and hear more than 25 partici-

pants, both remote and onsite, remained a crucial part for discussing and voting on mission-critical issues. Strategic Communications' Audio-Visual division leveraged Cisco collaborative platforms integrated



KYMEA Board Room

with state-of-the art AV technology in meeting the challenges. Furthermore, the collaborative platforms aligned with IT initiatives for voice and data design.

"With the industry convergence of IT and AV, it's crucial for businesses to look at both systems as a whole." Fred Devoid - Strategic Communications Director of Service. "Our goal on every project is ensuring these technologies work and function well together."

The main board room serves as the central space for staff and advisors to present and board members to steer company

decisions. The board room utilizes NEC 6500 Lumen Laser projection with a 133" motorized projection screen and two 65" peripheral monitors. Crestron Touch panel controls integrated with projector, screen, monitors, audio, and lighting create a single touch solution to activate technology in the room. Other spaces designed with similar user experiences made it easy to accommodate pop up collaboration in the secondary conference room which utilizes an 86" monitor and a huddle space which utilizes a 50" monitor.



KYMEA Market Analytics Center

KYMEA's Market Analytics Center (MAC) symbolizes an aesthetic office center piece for visitors to experience as they enter the lobby.

The MAC requires a video system visualizing metrics pulling from

multiple sources, but flexible enough in allowing customization of views for more specific purposes. Strategic Communications specified two 98" Planar monitors along with rack mounted Extron Video Wall processor for the main video wall. To elaborate, the Extron processor allows for 8 inputs sized anywhere over the 2 displays in a variety of configurations. In addition, Strategic Communications worked with KYMEA in developing customized video-wall template layouts commanded by a single 10.1 Crestron touch screen controller. The operations center simultaneously displays gas prices, SCADA system, internal brand content, cable news, specialized mapping software, cable weather, and PC inputs to share work on the wall from two workstations.

"Engineering constantly keeps an eye on the best tools and emerging technologies on the market." Josh Ballard - Strategic Communications Senior AV Engineer. "We design for clients by uncovering current engagements and engineer more efficient and effective solutions fitting their culture."

## IT Environment Design

KYMEA approached IT from the ground up and wanted to partner with a company with the capability to provide insight into a variety of options. Also, KYMEA needed an outsourced IT department for the organization after the May 1, 2019 "go live" date. Once again, Strategic Communications IT division delivered on their needs and provided a comprehensive managed services model.

For instance, Strategic Communications provided content filtering, intrusion detection and advanced malware protection integration into KYMEA's IT network. Strategic implemented Active Directory, DNS, DHCP and FTP utilizing Cisco servers. Meraki Firewalls were deployed and programmed with traffic shaping features and designed for VPN access to corporate resources. In addition, Meraki

MR42 access points were installed for wireless connectivity as well as a Cisco BE6000 phone system with full unified communications capabilities (instant messaging and video conferencing), and IP desk phones. Finally,



*KYMEA Conference Room*

Strategic made recommendations and delivered custom configurations for Dell Latitude laptops and Dell Precision workstations built into KYMEA's computer infrastructure.

As an outsourced IT department and Managed Service Provider (MSP) for KYMEA, Strategic Communications negotiated the best rates for bandwidth. Furthermore, the company's IT Division ensures engineering for IT technologies functions seamlessly across segmented solutions and provides a premier managed services solution. To summarize, the MSP services provided entail: monitoring, reporting, alert management, maintenance and antivirus-endpoint protection for all endpoints. In addition, Strategic Communications provides Level I, II, and III help desk support and cloud storage server backup.

"Strategic Communication's ability in providing end-to-end solutions from Low Voltage cabling to integrated IT and audiovisual services enabled KYMEA to achieve an overall cost point and manage one vendor for all of our network infrastructure." Doug Buresh—CEO of KYMEA.

## Conclusion



*KYMEA Headquarters*

KYMEA now possesses a modern, collaborative headquarters and a trusted partner thanks in part to their IT and AV integrator Strategic Communications. Strategic

Communications' business model remedied costly and burdensome processes from showing up later down the road. The company's expertise and consultative approach reduced inefficient communication between multiple vendors, offered a brand neutral choice for technology integration, and maintained competitive cost

while preserving the quality of work. In conclusion, KYMEA needed an IT and AV integrator, however they found a true partner in Strategic Communications.

## About KYMEA

Founded in 2015, KYMEA began when ten municipal electric utilities entered into an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement. KYMEA facilitates effective collaboration among its members to do all things necessary or convenient to serve the current and future electric energy requirements of the members. In addition, the cooperative provides assistance to the members related to their electric power and energy utility systems.

KYMEA exists to serve its members. Members may choose to enter into contracts with KYMEA for power supply or other services. Members retain the flexibility to establish projects for the benefit of one or more members, such as the All Requirements Project (AR Project). To elaborate, the AR Project acquires power supply resources to serve the needs of eight participating all requirements members. The business model objective of KYMEA is to provide cost-effective resources and services for the benefit of its members. KYMEA enables members to achieve their objectives more efficiently and at lower costs.



## About Strategic Communications

Strategic Communications is a Minority and Woman Owned Small Business established in 1994. The company is an Information Technology (IT) Solutions integrator, with core competencies and experience in consulting, designing, engineering and installing Audio Visual (AV), IT, and Unified Communications (UC) solutions. Strategic Communications offers over 25 years of experience



providing IT Services and solutions serving commercial, SLED (State Local Education), and federal agencies. The company is a certified partner with trusted OEMs, such as, Dell, Cisco (Gold), AWS, HPE (Gold), Microsoft (Silver), Crestron, Extron, Planar, and Polycom. Strategic Communications partners with over 1500 OEMs to offer end users a vast selection of technology solutions. As a systems Integrator, the organization installs customized Network, Data Center, Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP), Video Conferencing, Low Voltage copper and fiber wiring, Wireless Networks, Cybersecurity, and Audio Video solutions for numerous commercial, education and government agencies.



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To learn more about KYMEA please visit

[KYMEA.org](http://KYMEA.org)

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