



City of Burbank

The City of Burbank is clearly the hub of the U.S. entertainment industry, with more stars and studios per square mile than any other place in the country. Now, a BlueSecure™ 1100 Controller from Bluesocket® offers free connection services to the city's well-connected residents and visitors.



BLUESOCKET DEPLOYMENT AT THE CITY OF BURBANK

- Based on a centrally-located BlueSecure 1100 Controller that channels users through a high-speed fiber network to the Internet
- System includes 15 M-Gravity access points and an equal number of Proxim Tsunami MP-11a antenna units
- BlueSecure Controller manages policy acceptance and provides free and secure access for 150 simultaneous wireless users
- Future plans include VoIP phones for city workers and connections to a planned city-wide mesh wireless network

Lights! Camera! Wireless Connections! When the Information Technology Department for the City of Burbank held a casting call for a municipal wireless system, a starring role was given to a BlueSecure 1100 Controller from Bluesocket, which is used to manage access policies, control mobile users, and help boost business activities across a 25-block downtown business area.

The City of Burbank

Walk in any direction down the picturesque streets of Burbank, CA and it would be difficult not to bump into someone who is not actively involved in the entertainment or media industries, or works at one of the city's more than 700 video or production studios.

With a roster of businesses that includes Warner Brothers Studios, The Walt Disney Company, and ABC and NBC Studios, Burbank is clearly the entertainment capital of the world and a place where residents aren't exactly strangers to the latest technology, whether it is targeted at a television broadcast or held in the palm of their hands. This presented a unique challenge when city officials decided earlier this year to offer municipal broadband wireless access throughout its downtown area. The wireless system not only had to tie into the city's existing high-speed fiber network, but it also had to offer secure and technology-friendly access to a diverse cross section of people.

"I envisioned people pulling into parking structures, flipping open their laptops and being able to buy their movie tickets, look for sale items from storefronts, and do whatever they need to do on the wireless network," says Perry Jarvis, Network Operations Manager for the City of Burbank. The goal is to keep people in the downtown area a little longer, he says.

The City of Burbank's wireless network now covers a 25-block area spanning approximately one-square-mile area, including a large regional shopping center, with all public wireless traffic channeled through a single BlueSecure™ 1100 Controller located at City Hall. The system went live in May 2005 and is the first municipal broadband wireless hotspot in the San Fernando Valley and one of the first in the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

The Challenge for the City of Burbank

The BlueSecure Controller is not Burbank's first foray into wireless services, notes Jarvis. Almost three years ago the city decided to replace an expensive T1 point-to-point network with a Proxim MP20 wireless point-to-multipoint antenna system that connected various locations to the main city network. This move saved the city a considerable amount of money in charges for the dedicated T1 circuits, which was then used to lease access to the Internet through a high speed fiber connection with Qwest Communications which is the back end of the WiFi network, says Jarvis.

In looking for a wireless network, the city was searching for a solution that could provide simple yet effective policy-based authentication, and offer reliable bandwidth manage-



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“We knew that in order to make this wireless hotspot in the heart of Downtown Burbank a success, we needed to implement top-notch network equipment to ensure a secure and successful end-user experience. The BlueSecure 1100 Controller was critical to our success.”

Perry Jarvis
Network Operations Manager, The City of Burbank.

Secure Mobility® Solutions



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ment. Compatibility with existing systems was also a key requirement. Luckily, everything fell into place like a well-written Hollywood script. Perry and his wireless team, lead by Carlos Castanedo, had been working for some time with M-Gravity, LLC, a Torrance company that specializes in providing wireless technology solutions for a broad array of companies and municipalities. M-Gravity worked closely with Perry and his team to formulate and execute on the City's technology vision that leverages wireless as a key technology enabler and business driver. M-Gravity assisted in the design, configuration, and implementation of the City's wireless networks.

“Burbank's vision of a “Wireless City” is in itself amazing. To ignite the public excitement necessary for a successful return on investment (ROI), it was crucial that the city's vision become a flawless reality,” says Susan Dang, President of M-Gravity. “Our first challenge was to build sound business cases for the wireless projects. Together with the city, not only were we able to develop successful ROI cases for the technology investments, but we have since generated quantifiable returns that have exceeded our initial expectations.”

The Bluesocket Solution

M-Gravity recommended the BlueSecure Controller as the ideal solution for the City of Burbank's needs. “We work with a selected group of best-in-class technologies that most appropriately satisfy our customers' needs,” says Dang, “and with its industry-leading feature set and strong customer base, Bluesocket was the clear choice for the City of Burbank's growing wireless projects.”

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network equipment to ensure a secure and successful end-user experience,” adds Jarvis. “The BlueSecure 1100 Controller was critical to our success.”

The current wireless system includes 15 M-Gravity access points and an equal number of Proxim Tsunami MP-11a outdoor antenna units attached to light poles scattered throughout the downtown area. 802.11 b and g signals from each AP are collected and uploaded through the Proxim antenna to a central communications tower in the heart of Burbank, and then passed through the high-speed fiber backbone in City Hall, where the BlueSecure Controller is located.

The BlueSecure Controller's comprehensive ability to control user access without complicating the user experience is key, says Jarvis. Basically, users are asked to agree to an acceptable use policy when they first access the wireless network, which legally binds them to respect the rules governing the use of the free WiFi network.

The system has been up and running for several months and now averages more than 50 users per day, although it can easily handle up to 150 simultaneous users. Plans include expanding the wireless network to include some of Burbank's 22 parks, add voice over IP (VoIP) telephone services for municipal employees, and even expand it into a mesh network that would offer wireless services to city buses in transit around the city.

“Bluesocket is a great WLAN solution and works well,” says Jarvis, noting that cities in states as far away as Tennessee have looked at Burbank's wireless network and consider it a model for their own planned systems.