

BUSINESS CONNECTIONS



Groundbreaking Projects in Charleston



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BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

It's important to reevaluate your business every so often

to see what's working and what might need to change. If it's been awhile since you've done this, you might realize you need to update things like your technology, services, or marketing methods. In this issue of *Business Connections*, we explore some considerations in each of these areas.

How Much Speed Do You Need? If that's a question that's been on your mind regarding your internet plan, we'll provide some answers on page 3. There are many factors to think about, and some change as your business grows. If five years or more have passed since you last reviewed your plan, now may be a good time to reassess.

Turn to page 4 for this issue's Business Spotlight, which focuses on **Charleston Industrial**, a real estate consulting company with its finger on the pulse of Charleston's defense, innovation, and engineering sectors. The company recently expanded into office building investment and uses Home Telecom's services to meet its tenants' technology needs.

On page 6 we remind you to **Call Before You Dig** on projects that involve digging on your property. It takes only a minute and is well worth the effort, considering the alternative could be responsibility for a widespread power or internet service outage.

Finally, on page 7, learn about **Marketing With Social Media**. If you're just getting started with this low-cost strategy, you'll get ideas here for how to use Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and blogs to build relationships with customers and boost sales.

Remember, we're always here to help you implement new communications solutions. Contact us to let us know how we can help your company thrive.

Sincerely,

William S. Helmly
President & COO
Home Telecom



How Much Speed Do You Need?

The internet service you should choose depends on a variety of factors

Home Telecom hears this question frequently from our business customers, and there's no single right answer. For some small businesses, a download speed of up to 100 Mbps may work fine. Larger businesses with many devices and data-intensive applications may need a download speed of up to 1 Gig (1,000 Mbps) for optimal performance.

To select the right internet speed for your business, it's important to consider these factors:

- **How many devices are using your internet service?** Add up all the desktop computers, tablets, smartphones, Point of Sale (POS) terminals, security systems, and other internet-connected devices at your business location. Remember to also include devices used by visitors and customers on your Wi-Fi network, if applicable. The more devices you have, the more speed you need to accommodate them.
- **How do your employees use the internet?** If your employees' online activities consist mainly of email, web browsing, and POS terminals, then a moderate internet speed may suffice. However, if you have many employees simultaneously streaming HD video, engaging in video conferences, uploading and downloading large files, and using cloud-based applications and storage, then your business may be a candidate for higher speeds.
- **What are your performance requirements?** Think about the impact to your business if your internet service were to slow down from heavy use on insufficient bandwidth. Would your employees be able to do their jobs quickly or efficiently? Would customer service be adversely affected? It's important to equip your business with plenty of internet speed for your current usage and upgrade your plan as your needs grow.

If you want to discuss an internet speed upgrade for your business, call Home Telecom at 888-571-5775.



INTERNET SERVICES FROM HOME TELECOM

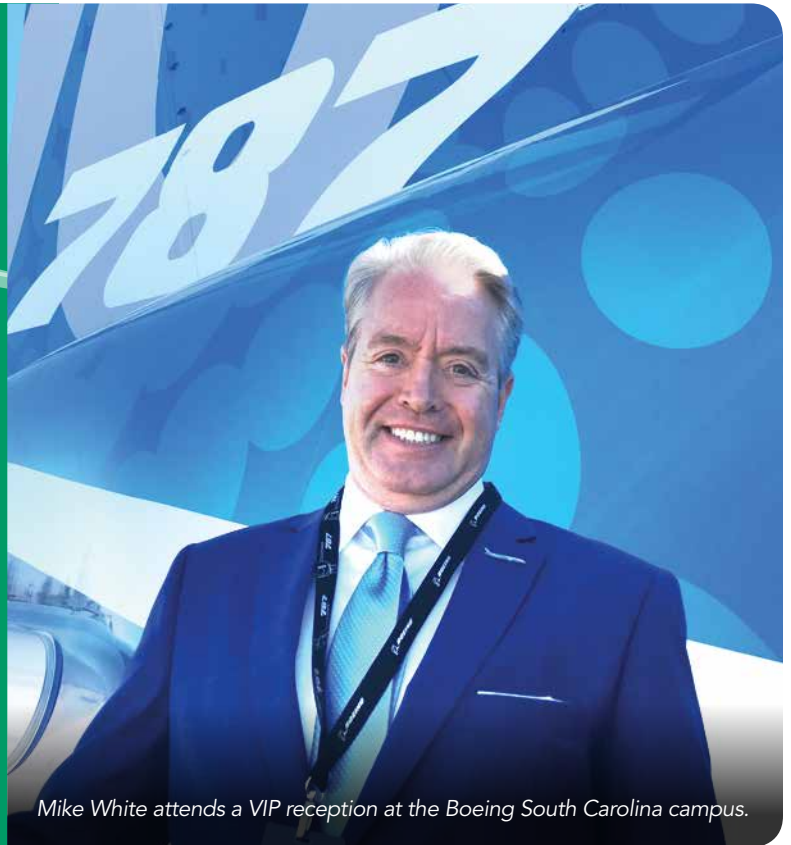
Improving connectivity across all of your locations is vital to your productivity and cutting costs is vital to your bottom line. With a constant demand for faster network access, you need to trust that your network partner has the data networking and broadband services you need today, and more importantly, the ability to grow with you in the future.

Home Telecom Business Solutions offers a variety of services to connect businesses. We provide scalable data and internet access solutions over a variety of technologies, customized for your unique requirements. At the core of these services is our fully redundant backbone that delivers secure, dedicated services across our network footprint. The Home Telecom Business Solutions carrier-class network allows us to deliver services ranging from mid-band Ethernet to ultra-high capacity Metro Ethernet over fiber.

All our services come with our fast customer response to any problems you might have. No matter what type of capacity you need, Home Telecom Business Solutions delivers the superior experience you deserve.

Charleston Industrial

Real estate consulting helps companies find their ideal site



Mike White attends a VIP reception at the Boeing South Carolina campus.

Established in 2009, Charleston Industrial is a real estate consulting company that provides marketing and forecasting expertise on the Charleston industrial market, port logistics, and aerospace manufacturing. The company was founded by Mike White, who has more than 21 years of experience in industrial real estate.

Offering Outstanding Service

Charleston Industrial is in the ideal place for the services it provides, as Charleston is the location of some of the nation's leading defense manufacturers, innovators, and engineers. It's home to top companies like SAIC, SPAWAR, and Force Protection, Inc. In addition, the shipping industry recently made a move toward bigger ships, and the widening of the Panama Canal will make it possible for these ships to dock on the eastern side of the U.S. rather than using overcrowded western ports. White states, "The Port Authority is on top of everything, assuring industrial leaders that Charleston will be ready."

Typical clients of Charleston Industrial are large multi-national corporations in the manufacturing and logistics industries focusing on aerospace, automotive, and ocean cargo. The company offers solutions and expertise that give these clients the ability to make smarter site selection choices. White notes, "We pride ourselves on

outstanding service delivery to unleash the full market potential for the benefit of our clients."

Many Charleston Industrial clients are seeking to enter the Charleston market for Boeing and the aerospace industry, the Clemson wind turbine institute, and Charleston port logistics. "We have developed a deep understanding of the port logistics real estate process and the issues that must be addressed to improve the competitive positioning of our clients," comments White.

The company focuses a good amount of energy on client relationships. "Having a thorough understanding of our clients' needs is key to helping them achieve a meaningful return on their facility decisions," says White.

Charleston Industrial secured a large share of landlord representation work in the greater Charleston market and received the

Michael Hickey Service Provider of the Year award by the prestigious Industrial Asset Management Council.

Supporting Employees and the Community

The company employs five team members, each with specific skills in a particular part of the transaction cycle. White notes, "Our employees appreciate the fact that they're empowered to make decisions. They don't have to worry about communications from far-flung headquarters that take weeks; they're authorized to correct anything they see that's wrong and incented to bring in new business."

In addition to empowering employees, the company invests in the community through supporting a variety of events across Daniel Island. They include community walks and fundraising events, such as efforts to raise money for MUSC Children's Hospital. White himself spends time volunteering with his daughter's school and his church.

The technology experts at Home Telecom are very responsive and have helped my business grow."

— MIKE WHITE, FOUNDER, CHARLESTON INDUSTRIAL

Using Technology to Branch Out

As an additional line of business, Charleston Industrial has begun investing in office buildings within the Charleston market. White explains, "We currently own three and have two more under contract. We use Home Telecom exclusively to provide a bundle of services for our tenants, including high-speed internet, telephone, cable, and security monitoring services." Tenants range from law firms to consultants to defense contractors who depend on the technology that Home Telecom can provide. Strategic Sales Executive Mark Reamer notes that Charleston Industrial also uses a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone system and ITV video services from Home Telecom.

White likes that Home Telecom offers a broad menu of services, and his company can add or enhance its services over time as needed. In addition, he says, "The customer service is excellent. We know they'll come out in a timely manner, and it will be done right the first time. The technology experts at Home Telecom are very responsive and have helped my business grow."

In turn, Home Telecom appreciates Charleston Industrial's contribution to the community. Reamer says, "Mike and the company have always been very involved in the business community and have been instrumental in attracting new business to the area, especially within the aerospace, manufacturing, and construction industries."



Charleston Industrial developed this Daniel Island building with apartments on the top floors and commercial/retail space on the first floor.



VOIP IS A CONVENIENT AND FLEXIBLE PHONE SERVICE

Home Telecom's Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone systems are easy to manage and boast a lower total cost of ownership compared to traditional systems. With the combination of VoIP and our state-of-the-art fiber network, you can use one connection for all your communications needs. Robust features include Shared Line Appearance, Multiple Appearance Directory Numbers (MADNs), Call Pickup Groups, Music on Hold, Unified Messaging, and Short Code Dialing. In addition, VoIP offers the following benefits:

- **Convenient.** No premises-based equipment to install, maintain, or occupy space.
- **Easy.** Administrators and users simply manage and control all features from any web browser.
- **High-quality.** Our reliable solution runs over the Home Telecom managed network.
- **Reliable.** Home Telecom's network automatically handles calls and messages during power outages.
- **Flexible.** The infrastructure can grow with your business.
- **Adaptable.** Existing phone systems can easily integrate, providing better support for home workers and satellite offices.
- **Effortless.** Feature upgrades are done seamlessly in our network.

To learn more about how VoIP can work for your company, please contact Business Services at 888-571-5775.

DO YOU KNOW THE COLOR CODE OF LOCATE CREWS?

After an 811 call is made, locate crews from member utility companies are told where you're planning to dig and typically arrive within a few days to mark the location of underground utility lines. These markings may be done with paint or flags and will use this universal color code:

- **Red** – Electric
- **Orange** – Communications, Telephone/CATV
- **Blue** – Potable water
- **Green** – Sewer/Drainage
- **Yellow** – Gas/Petroleum pipe line
- **Purple** – Reclaimed water
- **White** – Premark site of intended excavation

Check the digging area carefully before proceeding with your project. Make sure to dig around the marks and not on them. Some utility lines may be buried at a shallow depth, and an unintended shovel thrust can bring you right back to square one, facing potentially dangerous or costly consequences.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



Call Before You Dig

Cut communications lines can cost more than money

Though most business owners and managers are aware of the “call before you dig” rule, they don’t always follow it, meaning phone and internet lines do get damaged during construction and other types of projects. This damage can lead to phone outages and other services being cut for neighboring businesses and residential communities.

Fortunately, phone and internet system designs prevent service from being affected outside a limited service area by any one cut. However, a cut line is more than just an inconvenience; it could be a matter of safety. In the worst-case scenario, phone customers can lose 911 services. Or an entire neighborhood could be without television, making emergency weather warnings unavailable. Companies can also lose business if they’re not able to operate their phones or the internet. When a line does get cut, up to 16 hours may be required before it gets fixed. In addition to the time, the cost—which varies based on the size

of the cable—can be substantial; the party that causes the damage could be charged between \$2,000 and \$25,000.

The person doing the digging is responsible for making the call. That means that if a company hires a contractor to dig something up, it’s the contractor’s responsibility to call. If a line is cut and they haven’t called, they’re responsible for the cost.

Dewey Ford, Marketing Communications Coordinator at Home Telecom, says, “Using the South Carolina 811 system is very important. Each year, there are a lot of new infrastructure and facilities being placed in the ground, and the South Carolina 811 system helps to protect them and the excavators working on them.”

Always call 811 before digging begins. For more information about South Carolina 811, visit sc811.com.

Marketing With Social Media



A low-cost way for your business to build relationships and boost sales

Looking for ways to update and strengthen your marketing program? Explore the opportunities offered by social media. Even small businesses can easily reap the rewards of social media's benefits, which include:

- Enhanced customer satisfaction.** By monitoring online comments made by your customers about your business, you can respond more quickly and effectively to customer service issues. This can lead to better products and happier customers.
- Targeted promotional opportunities.** Your followers on Twitter, for example, are a self-selected group of people that are interested in what you sell. Use your tweets to give them an incentive, such as a coupon or special
- More website traffic.** Each online application can serve as a "gateway" to your company's website and its various sales messages.
- Expert status.** The more people associate your name with valuable online content, the more you'll be viewed as an expert in your field. Social media gives you the platform to instruct, educate, and inform your customers.

deal, to make a purchase from your business now.

Remember, the general rule with social media is to form relationships first, build trust, and then test the sales waters. Here are some quick tips:

Facebook—Interact with your community by posting stories, links, tips, and insider information. Start conversations by asking questions. Encourage Facebook participation by placing a link to your Facebook page on your website.

Twitter—Tweet information that might be useful to others and offer special deals only for Twitter users. You can also connect with other businesses, learn what customers are saying about you, ask for advice, and test new ideas. Be sure to incorporate links on Twitter to your website or blog.

LinkedIn—Create a strong LinkedIn profile for yourself and your company, then start

linking with current and potential customers and vendors. Participate in groups and use the powerful search capabilities to find new connections.

YouTube—As a search engine, YouTube is a serious competitor with Google. That means people are looking on YouTube, and if your business is there, they'll find you. Develop a brief video to introduce yourself and your company or make instructional videos that show how to use your products.

Blogs—Set up a blog on your website, and regularly publish new posts. Encourage readers to comment, and be sure to provide thoughtful, timely responses.

WHO'S MINDING YOUR BUSINESS?

MARK REAMER
Strategic Sales Executive

Mark Reamer's favorite part of his job as a Business Solutions Consultant with Home Telecom is building long-term relationships with business customers. He does so by carefully listening to their needs. "I work with customers to evaluate their technology needs and provide them with best-of-breed solutions, to help them manage their business," Reamer explains. He utilizes a customer-focused, rather than a product-oriented approach.

Prior to starting in this role a year ago, Reamer worked in positions with several large technology companies, as well as smaller, privately held firms. He says, "Over the course of my career, I've held various jobs in business development, marketing, and sales management, along with consulting." He holds a Bachelors degree in Financial Management from Clemson University.

When not working, Mark enjoys spending time with his 4 kids and their yellow lab puppy, Gracie. He also likes to run in road races and cheer his favorite sports teams on, including the Clemson Tigers, Atlanta Braves and the Atlanta Falcons.





WORKING WITH YOUR BUSINESS TO PROVIDE THE BEST FIBER HAS TO OFFER

Home Telecom is pioneering the GigUP Charleston effort and is committed to providing the service our business community needs. We welcome the opportunity to discuss your current telecommunications needs or challenges and will work together to create the technology experience your company requires to keep you efficient and productive. Call or visit us online to [see the possibilities and let us know your business needs!](#)

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- **LOCAL COMPANY WITH OVER 100 YEARS IN BUSINESS**
- **RESPONSIVE CUSTOMER SUPPORT**

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