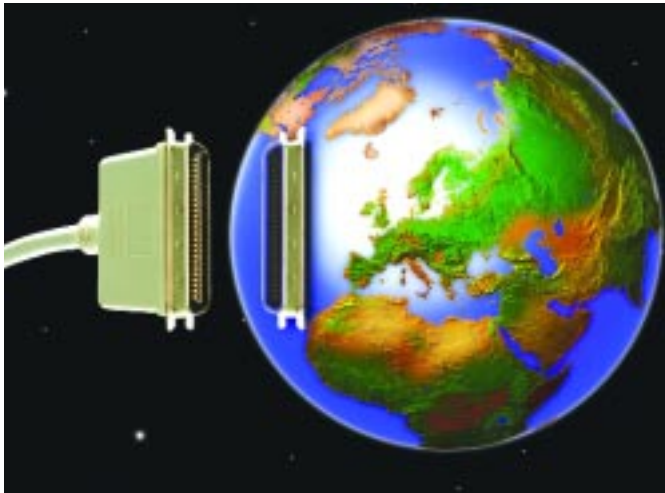


## Open-book Partnership Important to Project's Success



Engineers at Brown and Caldwell, an environmental engineering company headquartered in Walnut Creek, Calif., design and execute innovative environmental solutions for public agencies, government and private industry. This type of work requires a sophisticated high-speed structured cabling system to enable the bandwidth-intensive applications required. So, when Brown and Caldwell planned to move its headquarters to a new building in Walnut Creek, the company sought an experienced, reliable installer for its high-speed data cabling network – one who could fully understand its needs.

“We interviewed several companies, both large and small, but we were extremely impressed with Rancho Santa Fe Technology,” said Felix Valadez, corporate network manager for Brown and Caldwell. Rancho Santa Fe Technology (RSFT) is a privately held, minority-owned business with offices in San Diego and Alameda, Calif., and Tempe, Ariz.

Particularly appealing was the innovative open-book, partner-style relationship offered by RSFT. “...Before we even wrote the RFP, and without any contract signed, they actually offered to create the initial design document and budget model that would serve at the basis for the final project definition,” said Valadez. Throughout the project, Valadez said that RSFT facilitated “regular and constant” communication. “As part of that, we would see all the costs as the project went forward, and they would pass savings, such as better negotiated final pricing on materials, back to us,” he added.

### Solution

RSFT proceeded to plan, develop and manage an efficient, flexible, and serviceable communications network system designed for a useable life of eight to 12 years. In order to provide for high-speed applications, RSFT utilized state-of-the-art components, including Avaya Communication’s SYSTIMAX® structured cabling, which guaranteed that all components would meet or exceed the proposed Category 5e standards and that they would work together seamlessly.

**“The Rancho Santa Fe Technology team felt like coworkers who cared as much about the success of the project as I did.”**

The project included three floors consisting of local LANs with dedicated links to the main cross-connect (MC). The connectivity between floors consisted of a fiber

optic and copper backbone installed in a star topology originating from the MC on the third floor. The project also included two telecommunications rooms (TRs) located on Floors 1 and 3. The TRs were provided with six strands of multimode fiber connecting to the MC.

Approximately 275 station information outlets (SIOs) were installed throughout the three floors, and the cabling from the TR to the SIOs consisted of Category 5e data cable

and Category 5e voice cable. The project also included the racking and termination hardware at the MC.

## Benefits

Valadez's review of the completed project was consistent with his enthusiasm at the start. "The project was delivered on schedule, and we now have a high-quality cabling system that will serve us well now and for some time into the future. And Rancho Santa Fe Technology provided us with excellent service. They had a dedicated project manager assigned to the job, and throughout the project we met at least weekly to get status reports and go over any issues."

Communication was also the key to resolving the only real challenge that arose during the project. "RSFT worked directly with us," explained Valadez, "not as a 'sub' to the contractor doing our build-out. This inevitably led to issues of timing and responsibility, but we were able to resolve this relatively easily because the RSFT team was able to communicate effectively with our contractor as well."

But while Valadez was pleased with the processes established by RSFT for the project, as well as the results, he reserved his highest praise for the relationship created between Brown and Caldwell and RSFT. "...I can't say enough about how important it was to feel that we were working with a partner instead of a vendor. The Rancho Santa Fe Technology team felt like coworkers who cared as much about the success of the project as I did. They were always available when any issues arose, and they handled them quickly. We developed a very comfortable working relationship."

In fact, the experience has changed the way Brown and Caldwell does business. "Going into the project, we were preparing our standard request for bids, but after meeting with Rancho Santa Fe Technology, we opted to accept their design-build process, which included the open-book, partnership-style relationship. Having found real value in this, we've really changed the way we look at our other vendor relationships, and want to replicate this model as much as possible."



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### About Rancho Santa Fe Technology, Inc.

As a leading communications contractor in the western states, Rancho Santa Fe Technology is focused on providing customers with an essential suite of services in interrelated areas – building connectivity through the implementation of voice/data structured cabling and rollout of new enterprise wide data equipment technology; and providing service level maintenance and repair contracts for distributed network products for both wide-area networks (WANs) and local-area-networks (LANs). The company was named one of the 25 Top Emerging Technology Companies in San Diego at the annual Starcom 2000 Event and received the 1999 Arthur Anderson Best Practices Award for Exceeding Customer Expectations.

Visit the company's web site at [www.rsft.com](http://www.rsft.com).

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