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Quintron Selected to Support Schools with E-Rate – A Program to Bring Internet Access into Schools That Lack Financial Resources

Santa Maria, CA (December 4, 2007) – Quintron (www.quintron.com), the recognized leader in advanced interoperable voice systems, and physical access control/intrusion detection systems, wins additional bid to support local schools within the Santa Maria-Bonita School District (SMBSD) with telephone and computer network infrastructures through the E-Rate program. “Santa Maria-Bonita has been a long-term customer for us,” said David Wilhite, Vice President and General Manager at Quintron, “We have always worked as a team, with excellent cooperation and understanding from both sides, and a common realization that providing worthwhile new technology to the students was the mutual goal.”

In 1998, the U.S. Government initiated a program called the Schools and Libraries Program, but is more commonly known as E-Rate. This program is operated by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The intent of the program is to extend internet access into schools that lack financial resources to do so independently. The funding for the program is generated from a special charge on long-distance phone services. Distribution of the funds is based on a school’s percentage of students who qualify for federally subsidized meals, as the best common indicator of financial need.

The Santa Maria-Bonita School District was an early applicant for this new program, and successfully obtained funding during the first program year (1998-99) for a complete upgrade to the telephone and computer network infrastructure. Quintron Systems was awarded this contract, worth over \$7 million, in a competitive bid at the

time. This project included new NEC telephone switches at all sixteen district locations (14 schools and 2 administration buildings). Nortel computer network equipment was selected, using then-current Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) topology throughout the district, running over single-mode fiber cables supplied by the local cable-TV supplier, Comcast. Related structured computer network cabling and electrical system upgrades were also funded to ensure all school locations could completely utilize the new computer capabilities.

Since this initial E-Rate program update, four more schools have been added to the district, all with Nortel and NEC equipment and computer network cabling to match the district pattern established in the first E-Rate design. The work at three of the four schools was also awarded to Quintron Systems through competitive bids, with total values exceeding \$1.2 million.

"The work Quintron has done at all of our schools has enabled teachers to incorporate the Internet into their lesson plans and has provided a fabulous source of an enormous amount of information for the students," said Maggie White, Public Information Officer, Santa Maria-Bonita School District. "They are able to practice note reading for music theory, solve all types of problems for mathematics, research multicultural dances for PE, experience Africa for social studies, and so much more."

With the latest E-Rate program year just concluded (2006-07), SMBSD was again successful with obtaining additional funding for a complete replacement of the prior computer network portions of their system. Quintron Systems won this bid, valued at over \$1.5 million. This new network topology has now introduced Ethernet (up to 10GB for main backbone connections) to replace the now obsolete ATM network design. In addition, critical network segments also have redundant link design for improved reliability. Installation of this network replacement was successfully completed during summer 2007 with minimal network access loss to the district. Further upgrades now being incorporated include wider usage of wireless connections with security controls to prevent unauthorized access, within or from without the schools.

“The work that Quintron has done on behalf of the Santa Maria-Bonita School District has benefited both the students and the teachers, while also supporting the business functions and operations of the district,” said David Francis, Superintendent at the Santa Maria-Bonita School District. “Quintron’s staff has been extremely responsive to our timelines and in meeting reporting requirements to the federal E-Rate department.”

For more information about Quintron solutions, call 805.928.4343 or go to www.quintron.com.

About Quintron

For over 37 years, Quintron has provided high technology and cost effective solutions to government and industry in support of mission critical communications and security requirements for command and control applications. No other company offers the depth of expertise found at Quintron in fault tolerant, interoperable communications, and security systems. In addition to providing advanced products and systems, Quintron’s professional technical services capability provides a superior level of customer satisfaction. Quintron’s engineering services provide off-the-shelf or customized engineering solutions to solve the toughest of challenges facing customers. Find out more about Quintron at www.quintron.com or by calling 805.928.4343.

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