

Iowa Communications Network

Fiscal Year 2027 Strategic Plan

Updated May 2026

WHO WE SERVE

Public Safety - Education - Healthcare - Government



Iowa Communications Network

Agency Overview

Mission

Provide a statewide, innovative, secure, reliable network, and technology solutions for education, healthcare, public safety, and government.

Vision

Operate as the Managed Service Provider securing Iowa’s critical infrastructure, leveraging public-private partnerships to maximize our statewide asset for the benefit of all Iowans.

Agency Values

Integrity

Be honest, transparent, and accountable.

Customer-Focused

Prioritize satisfaction and continuous improvement with unmatched support.

Reliability

Deliver consistent, dependable service.

Security

Protect our network and customer data at all times.

Services

- High-speed Internet
- Data (ethernet)
- Voice (phone)
- Zoom
- Colocation
- Cloud
- Security Consultations
- DDoS Mitigation
- Managed Firewall
- Professional Services
- Granite’s EPIK solution

Organizational Assessment

This assessment details the current performance of the ICN across two critical operational areas: internal employee engagement and external customer satisfaction.



Customer Satisfaction

The most recent survey results confirm that the ICN team is viewed as a premier partner. Customers consistently highlight the team’s technical expertise, professionalism, and dedication to mission success.

- **Overall Excellence:** Customers awarded the ICN a **4.72/5** for total support.
- **Expert Professionalism:** **100%** of respondents reported high satisfaction with staff professionalism.
- **Rapid Response:** ICN earned a **4.66/5** for responsiveness to customer needs.

The feedback emphasizes a culture of follow-through. Testimonials frequently include ICN as a true partner that solves problems with the best interests of taxpayers in mind.



- “In my years in state government, I have always had a good working relationship with the ICN... ICN has always been fair, quick to respond to requests, and performs very well.”
- “ICN staff is always professional and accommodating. Great customer service!”
- “We have had a lot of work done recently. In every instance, ICN has come to bat for us. Been a partner in our endeavors. Helps with solving problems.”

Employee Engagement

When comparing the overall State of Iowa results, the results reveal that ICN significantly outperforms broader State of Iowa benchmarks.

| | |
|---|--|
| Exceptional Culture of Fairness | ICN leads the state average by +24.8 percentage points in perceived equity, demonstrating a strong internal culture. |
| Superior Leadership Transparency | ICN management excels at closing the loop, maintaining +21.7 points higher in keeping staff informed and +20.2 points higher in following up on previous feedback. |
| High Institutional Trust | ICN employees report a 58.5% trust level; 17.7 points higher than their peers across the state |

SWOT Analysis

| Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|--|---|---|--|
| Proven ability to execute complex network modernizations (e.g., successful shutdown of the legacy DMS-500). | Currently running a complex telecom business using fragmented government IT tools. | Shift from commodity bandwidth to acting as the State’s premier Managed Service Provider via new reseller agreements: Fortinet and Zoom. | The increasing volume and sophistication of cyberattacks targeting telecoms, government, and school districts. |
| Aggressive financial discipline of private-sector business standards has improved operating budget from \$2.2 million loss. | With payroll at 50.45% of the budget, scaling automation and workforce output is a critical strategic necessity. | The Business Support System/Operations Support Systems (BSS/OSS) rollout will modernize operations via automated billing, revenue assurance, and carrier-grade precision. | Intense private-sector competition for highly skilled telecom, cloud architecture, and cybersecurity engineers makes recruiting and retaining top technical talent a constant challenge. |
| Unmatched institutional knowledge of the State's telecom footprint, E-Rate federal funding mechanisms (\$2.72M match), and public safety (HSEMD/911) architecture. | Code of Iowa Chapter 8D restricts authorized users, preventing the ICN from naturally scaling revenue like a traditional carrier. | Productizing internal assets for authorized users, such as Dark Fiber Leases and offering GIS as a Service. | The hyper-accelerated pace of telecommunications and security advancements requires constant, capital-intensive infrastructure refreshes to avoid falling behind the private market. |
| Highly resilient 100Gb core network boasting 99.999% uptime across all 99 counties. | Lingering maintenance overhead on aging optical transport hardware that must be sunsetted. | Integrating AI to handle routine tasks, transitioning the workforce from manual administrators to strategic brokers. | Potential volatility in federal programs that could alter how our authorized users fund their connectivity and security budgets. |
| Customer satisfaction scores well above telecom industry standard. | | | |

Strategic Initiative

All strategic initiatives support the Governor’s goals to Transforming Healthcare in Iowa (2), Expanding Education Freedom (3), Serving Iowans Who Served Us (5), and preserving Public Safety (6).

1. **Decrease expenses** by driving behaviors and policies that are fiscally responsible.

Goal: Evaluate all hardware and software costs and understand our true cost of services sold to eliminate legacy technical debt.

- Measure/KPI: Decrease expenses by 5% annually.
- Measure/KPI: Pay immediate debts with 1.75 monthly quick ratio.
- Measure/KPI: 60 days cash on hand.

2. **Increase revenue** by driving top-line growth to ensure we can meet payroll, fund essential network upgrades, and invest in our core business functions.

Goal: Increase revenue into the private sector by acting as the State's premier connectivity broker, while also aggressively monetizing our new reseller agreements to move beyond commodity bandwidth margins.

- Measure/KPI: Recurring revenue growth of 1%.

3. As a **managed service provider**, ICN will move beyond offering basic internet and hardware connections to become a partner that provides expert guidance and specialized tools that help our customers grow.

Goal: Deploy new reseller partnerships to serve as the State’s ultimate cybersecurity shield and unified communications provider, managing all technical complexity so our authorized users can focus entirely on their core missions.

- Measure/KPI: To maintain critical infrastructure uptime of 99.999%.
- Measure/KPI: To achieve 85% customer satisfaction.

4. Integrate a **tool and system modernization** project to replace generic government IT tools to run a telecommunications business.

Goal: Deploy MCL/Cadebill as our core billing and operational system, and integrate AI with automation to handle routine tasks, allowing our team to stop managing spreadsheets and start focusing on strategic management.

- Measure/KPI: Book to Bill Cycle. (In development for FY 2028).