

# Commercial Integrator

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## **\$28M Integrator Bolsters Corporate Business with Acquisition**

### **Signet purchase of telecommunications integrator brings slew of SMB clients.**

August 25, 2011 | by [Tom LeBlanc](#)



For [Signet Electronic Systems](#), a \$28 million commercial integrator, one of its biggest competitive advantages is its ability to package various applications into one system—streamlining the installation process for its clients and boosting its per-project profit margins.

That's what president and owner Bradford Caron told *CI* for our profile, "[Confessions of a Successful Integrator](#)."

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The Norwell, Mass.-based firm says it just strengthened its ability to include telecommunications in those packages thanks to its acquisition of Chestnut Hill, Mass.-based American Business Telephone Company (ABTC).

Signet, which already provides customized telecommunications solutions to its clients, becomes "one of the largest telecommunications system integrators in the region," according to a Signet press release.

Caron shares with *CI* three important benefits of the acquisition:

#### **It strengthens Signet's ability to offer voice over Internet protocol solutions (VoIP).**

Signet, which is particularly strong in the [education market](#), understands that VoIP telephony solutions aren't exactly cutting edge, but Caron says "hosted telephone systems and VoIP" are actually in high demand by schools.

"Although we can handle the demand, I felt we needed more expertise."

### **It bolsters Signet's corporate client roster.**

“We were also looking to strengthen our corporate offerings and [ABTC] really focus on small- to mid-sized businesses. These clients are a great fit for us. [ABTC] strengthens our business solutions,” Caron says, adding that when he bought ABTC he also bought their accounts.

### **It bulks up its technician staff.**

Bringing on new corporate clients would backfire for Signet, Caron acknowledges, without the infrastructure to support them. As such, converting ABTC technicians to *Signet* technicians is essential.

The majority of the ABTC staff will come on board post-acquisition. That was necessary for ABTC owner Don O’Connell. “It is important to us that those who have given their time and talent to this company have the prospect of becoming part of another quality, reputable company,” he says.

For Signet, this is the third acquisition in the past six years. From the press release:

In February 2006, SIGNET acquired Executone of Rhode Island, a telecommunications company serving southern New England; and in May 2008, SIGNET acquired the telecommunications technology portion of the New Hampshire-based IDeACOM Integrated Technologies, Inc. expanding its focus on network consulting and management services. With the purchase of Massachusetts-based ABT, SIGNET has again increased its customer base, now spanning three states.

The companies did not disclose the dollar value of the acquisition.

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