

Client: ITAC IT Hero Awards

Outlet: Times & Transcript

Date: June 30, 2008

Moncton WiFi wins IT award

Published Monday June 30th, 2008

Brent Mazerolle



VIKTOR PIVOVAROV/TIMES & TRANSCR

City of Moncton director of information systems Dan Babineau recently won the Information Technology Association of Canada's 2008 Community IT Hero award for the city's downtown WiFi network.

The Community IT Hero Award, which recognizes "an individual, group or not-for-profit organization that can demonstrate the creative application of information technology in improving the lives of Canadians," went to the City of Moncton.

Dan Babineau, director of information systems, who headed the team that developed and installed the free downtown WiFi network in Moncton, led the nomination.

In 2007, the City of Moncton developed and installed a free downtown WiFi network. Up until then, an outdoor wireless mesh network had never been installed in Canada. Unlike traditional WiFi networks where individual access points are hardwired to the Internet, a mesh network wirelessly transmits data to a central Internet hub, making each access point part of the network's data-transmission infrastructure that passes data from other access points across the network to the hub and back.

According to the award judges, Babineau's leadership meant the whole network was successfully installed in only three days. Today, the network is widely used.

"Certainly the residents of Moncton are using the network. We have statistics to show that," Babineau says. "It allows them to bring them their WiFi technology downtown and use it.

"The other thing which is somewhat of a surprise is that the business traveller is using our WiFi network quite a bit. The tourists are utilizing it a fair amount as well."

Meanwhile, Babineau says there would be an exciting announcement coming in the next week about WiFi at the Magnetic Hill concert site.

Winners of the community IT awards were determined by a panel of judges who assessed the nominees and their projects for innovation and creativity, as well as initiative and leadership, positive and measurable impact on Canadians, and effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

* *With files from Nick Moore.*

<http://timestranscript.canadaeast.com/rss/article/340716>