



Polycom Improves Collaboration, Boosts Public Safety for Southwest Missouri

Government

Daily Use

- Inter-agency collaboration
- Emergency management
- Critical needs assessment
- Crisis communications
- Preparedness and response training
- Central command communications
- Citizen safety

Solution

- Polycom® CMA™ 4000 video management application
- Polycom RMX 2000 conference platform
- Polycom Video Border Proxy™ (VBP™) firewall traversal solutions
- Polycom RSS™ 2000 video recording and streaming solution
- Polycom HDX™ 9004 room telepresence solutions
- Polycom HDX™ 4000 personal telepresence solutions

Results and Benefits

- Improved public safety as a result of enhanced collaboration among agencies
- Cost savings and productivity benefits due to reduced travel requirements for meetings
- Increased and more effective communications with national and federal agencies

The mission of Missouri's Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is to prepare the community for disastrous events and minimize loss of life and property. This includes working collaboratively with the other 17-county emergency management agencies in the region on effective response and recovery management for any type of emergency affecting the region—ranging from an ice storm or flood to a terrorist attack.

Real-time collaboration between these counties before, during, and after a disaster is often literally a matter of life or death, so enhancing the quality and speed of collaboration is an ongoing priority for the agency. Recently deploying Polycom telepresence and video collaboration solutions across the entire region has delivered a significant impact.

“The compelling factor to invest in a video network for our agency was tying our regions even closer together,” explains Ty Davisson, training and exercise specialist for the Springfield-Greene County OEM. “Emergency response is a collaborative effort; video conferencing enables multiple people, wherever they are, to come together on the same page. That’s crucial in a disaster.”

A Comprehensive Solution

A Homeland Security grant administered by the state allowed the region to equip all 18 counties with Polycom telepresence capabilities to be used in response to disasters and for emergency preparedness planning.

The Springfield-Greene County OEM has widely deployed Polycom® HDX™ 4000 personal telepresence and Polycom HDX 9004 room telepresence solutions, while remote users leverage Polycom's PC-based video software client. The Polycom RMX® 2000 multipoint conference platform supports multi-party calls and the Polycom Converged Management Application™ (CMA™) 4000 solution centrally manages the entire video collaboration network. To enable connections with outside organizations, the Springfield-Greene County OEM has implemented a Polycom Video Border Proxy™ (VBP®) firewall traversal solution. The Polycom RSS™ 2000 solution provides on-demand recording, streaming, and archiving of captured video conferences and content.

“When we decided to deploy a video network, we set out with the goal of equipping all of our counties at once. We were impressed with Polycom’s ability to deliver a complete solution for the entire 18-county roll out, and at a price point we could afford.”

Ryan Nicholls, Director, Springfield-Greene County OEM

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“When we decided to deploy a video network, we set out with the goal of equipping all counties at once. We were impressed with Polycom’s ability to deliver a complete end-to-end, cost-effective solution for the entire 18-county roll out,” says Ryan Nicholls, Springfield-Greene County OEM director. “And once we saw the Polycom HDX demo—how clear the video was—we were sold.”

Davisson adds: “Good planning was required to execute this large-scale project. There were eighteen different counties to get up and running, working with each of their IT departments and firewalls. The service we received from Polycom was phenomenal. In the end, having all of the sites tied together has us given all the benefits we had hoped for.”

A New Level of Collaboration

Chief among those benefits is increased inter-agency collaboration. Prior to deployment, an in-person meeting of representatives from the counties involved multiple individuals traveling up to four hours round trip, representing a severe productivity loss.

Nicholls defines the key benefits of the video network as time and money savings and increased frequency of interaction. “In the past, a lot of meetings would be postponed, or take months to schedule because of the time commitment required to attend.”

“The video conferencing network ties us together seamlessly as one agency,” says Davisson. “You just step out of your office, have your meeting over video, step back in and you’re back to work. It’s saving us time and money.” Davisson also feels that being able to look at the people you are talking to and interact with them makes meetings significantly more productive.

The Polycom HD video network is also boosting the Springfield-Greene County OEM’s connectivity with outside agencies critical to its mission. For example, using the Polycom VBP firewall traversal solution, it can easily connect with

FEMA, the Red Cross, and the National Weather Service over video. Not only does this enable improved collaboration for the Springfield-Greene County OEM, it’s more convenient and efficient for these federal and national agencies to communicate with all of the counties in southwestern Missouri simultaneously, particularly in a time of crisis.

“Recently, FEMA held a four-state video conference for input on improving its recovery process. Because we have the video systems in place, we were able to participate and provide our feedback,” explains Nicholls.

In addition, the agency’s mobile communications vehicle has been equipped with Polycom HD video systems that transmit a live feed directly to the emergency operations center from the vehicle’s 60-foot pan-tilt-zoom camera. “Whether we’re covering a disaster or an event, we now have real-time video footage of what is happening on the scene,” says Davisson.

Next Steps

Moving forward, Davisson and Nicholls are planning for an increase in usage of the systems.

“Video has already facilitated a lot better coordination and allows us to pull the region together much more quickly. The use and the benefits are only going to increase,” predicts Nicholls.

Expanding the real-time video imaging in the field is another focus for the agency. “The real-time field imaging is becoming a very powerful application as we are able to make it available to more and more of the key decision makers,” says Davisson.

Learn More

To find out how Polycom solutions can help your organization, visit us at www.polycom.com or speak with a Polycom Account Representative.

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