

TANDBERG CUSTOMER PROFILE

Oppland
County,
Norway



Left to right: Lars Kristian Dahl, Øystein Windingstad and Kristin Loe Kjelstad

- **GOAL:** Reduce travel and improve public-sector collaboration in a large, mountainous county
- **SOLUTION:** TANDBERG 7000 and 6000 videoconferencing systems
- **RESULT:** On track for 10-percent annual reduction in travel costs, closer ties with local and state partners, more efficient use of professional skills

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ØYSTEIN WINDINGSTAD
OPPLAND COUNTY, NORWAY

A NEW VIDEO NERVE CENTER

Lillehammer, which hosted the 1994 Winter Olympic Games, is the geographic heart of Norway. It is also the busy hub of Oppland County, whose policies and subsidies flow from the eight-story Oppland County Administration Building on Kirkegata.

There, on the seventh floor, is the county's new electronic nerve center. It's a sleek, black TANDBERG 7000 videoconferencing system, with two high-resolution LCD screens.

County officials use it to stay in touch with 26 municipal governments spread across 25,000 km². They also use it to administer secondary schools, libraries, public transport, vocational training and cultural events for the county's 184,000 people.

"The distances up here are long," says Oppland County's Øystein Windingstad. "Until recently, car expenses and time lost in transit were enormous -- not only for the county but for everyone we worked with. Things are different now. Now we can just go to the seventh floor."

A COST-CUTTING COUNTY

Like public agencies across Europe, Norwegian county governments have been under pressure to cut costs and improve performance. In 2003, Oppland County studied how its 2,000 employees did their jobs and found out that the critics were right in one regard: getting to meetings was costing too much time and money. It can take four hours to cross the county by car. The meetings were necessary for regional development, but costs had to come down.

Most employees guessed correctly that visual communications would be part of the solution. Some of Oppland's municipal governments and secondary schools had already invested in TANDBERG systems and were pushing the county to do the same. They knew the utility of their own videoconferencing systems would increase dramatically if the county joined the loop. But Oppland County's decision flowed from its own considerations -- as did its choice of TANDBERG as preferred vendor.

"We have a duty to manage society's resources in the most sensible way," says Mr. Windingstad. "We concluded after much study that videoconferencing was the way to go and that TANDBERG was the right supplier."

Officials calculated that if 100 employees would eliminate just two trips in 2004 -- and attend videoconferences instead -- Oppland County taxpayers would save between \$72,000 and \$187,000. The savings will likely grow as the county expands the

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number of systems available and employees get used to the simple technology.

"We expect a relatively quick return on our investment," says Mr. Windingstad. "Direct travel costs will fall, of course, but even more important is the time saved. All those hours on the road can now be put to better use."

IMMEASURABLE BENEFITS

For now, county officials have the TANDBERG 7000 in their main administration building and a TANDBERG 6000 in their regional office in Otta. Over and above the savings to the county are the savings to local governments, schools, agencies and private businesses with which the county interacts daily.

Some benefits cannot be measured monetarily. For example, county officials say videoconferencing will help them "expand and develop the democratic arena." They cite plans by the 37-member Oppland County Council to transmit meetings to the many small newspapers around Oppland that can't afford to send reporters.

"When a meeting is over," says Mr. Windingstad, "reporters can sit in their newsrooms and interview the politicians here in Lillehammer."

Likewise, municipal officials and other interested parties will be able to follow County Council debates from afar. Students can study the action, too. Already, video-linked schools in Oppland County and neighboring Hedmark County have expanded their curricula by remotely tapping one another's teaching staffs.

Oppland County's TANDBERG 7000 has already helped cement bonds with the Norwegian capital. When the government in Oslo recently paid tribute to Oppland's environmental policies, it did so in a festive ceremony by video.

To encourage internal use of the video equipment, Mr. Windingstad launched a program titled "New Ways of Meeting in Oppland County." Almost immediately, the videoconferencing schedule filled up. According to the users, it has stayed nearly full because of TANDBERG's reliability, clarity and simplicity.

"The system is both comfortable and easy to use," says Kristin Loe Kjelstad, a county landscape architect. Lars Kristian Dahl, an adviser to the county's chief executive, recalls a recent four-way planning session by video: "Everyone agreed it was a good way to meet, and it probably saved us a combined six or seven travel days."

ABOUT TANDBERG

TANDBERG is a leading global provider of visual communication products and services. The Company has dual headquarters in New York and Norway. TANDBERG designs, develops and markets systems and software for video, voice and data. The Company provides sales, support and value-added services in more than 90 countries worldwide. TANDBERG trades publicly on the Oslo Stock Exchange under the ticker TAA.OL. Please visit www.tandberg.net for more information.



A high bandwidth unit with LCD screens

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