



# ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



## Video Conferencing Paves the Way to Savings for Department of Transportation



The Alabama Department of Transportation uses video conferencing to increase productivity and reduce expenses across the department.

### CHALLENGE

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is organized into nine geographic regions called Divisions, with a Central Office located in Montgomery. In addition, ALDOT encompasses 22 Bureaus responsible for everything from Administration to Construction and Equipment Procurement and Audits to Transportation Planning. For such a diverse and geographically dispersed organization, ALDOT needed a cost-effective means for training and meetings across Divisions. So in 2000, ALDOT implemented video conferencing. At first, recalls Susan Butler, ALDOT Telecommunications Manager, "The first equipment we used was very unreliable, so we didn't use it a lot."

As a result, says Butler, "We decided to revamp the entire system, and I did extensive research. I went to trade shows and visited several vendors. TANDBERG offered everything I wanted, so I wrote bid specifications specifically for TANDBERG. It's been about 5 years, and we now have TANDBERG equipment in all nine Divisions."

"Because the previous vendor's equipment had been so unreliable, people were initially hesitant about using video again," Butler notes. "But now that they see how dependable and utility-like TANDBERG equipment is, they're using it a lot more. In fact, this month there were only 6 days during which ALDOT did not use video — that speaks for itself."

### SOLUTION

Video conferencing has now become an integral part of everyday business at ALDOT, used for everything from new-hire training to meetings with external parties. Butler explains: "New hires throughout the state can go to their nearest Division office for training rather than drive 3 or 4 hours to the Central Office in Montgomery. We also use video-conferencing for ongoing employee training, whenever there's a new policy or new information about insurance."

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“And at least once a month we use video for Diversified Business Enterprise Appeals,” she continues, in which an organization appeals ALDOT’s decision to award a contract to a different company. In those instances, again, the representatives from the appealing company can visit the nearest Division office rather than travel to Montgomery.

One of Butler’s colleagues in the ALDOT Telecommunications Department, Jeremy Johnson, points out that “TANDBERG allows us to record those meetings for legal purposes in case we need to refer back to them later,” which negates the need for additional meetings.

ALDOT employees also use TANDBERG equipment for point-to-point video conferences, in which employees connect directly to one another from their desktops.

“A lot of our users didn’t realize they could do point-to-point calls on their own — they thought they had to schedule it through our bridge,” states Butler. “But with the TANDBERG equipment, it’s just like making a phone call. They don’t have to go through the Telecommunications Department. It’s a huge time savings for everyone.”

## RESULTS

Thanks to TANDBERG, ALDOT is saving time and money — and improving the quality of life for its employees.

“I don’t like driving long distances,” declares Butler. “The benefit of not having to drive 3 hours to a different location is huge.”

“Especially for training sessions,” adds Johnson. “Before, we would have to set up so many different sessions in so many areas. One week there would be a session in Northern Alabama, the following week somewhere else, the next week another city. Now, we can connect everyone one day out of the month. You’re looking at a lot of cost savings in terms of man-hours.”

“We’re also saving on paying a consultant to teach the same class multiple times,” says Butler. “Now we just hire the person to teach it once and we record it so we can re-broadcast it as needed.”

Additional savings can be attributed to eliminating the need for hotels, as employees no longer need to stay overnight to attend an early-morning class in a remote location.

Clearly, video conferencing has proven to be very cost effective for ALDOT. As Butler remarks, “When I wrote the bid specs, I came up with how this would save us money in different areas. I justified buying the equipment, but now the equipment has justified itself.”

“It’s hard to put a value on our TANDBERG video equipment,” adds Johnson. “So many people use it for so many different things; it’s hard to quantify how much we’re saving. Priceless is a strong word to use, but that’s pretty much what it is.”



Contact TANDBERG today to learn how our solutions can support your business processes.

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