

LifeSize® Results™

A CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



HD video is clean, green and right on the money for the Los Angeles Community College District

LACCD chooses LifeSize to deliver significant travel reduction, better communication through video

Organization

Los Angeles Community College District, Los Angeles, California, USA

Educating nearly 200,000 students every year, the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) is the largest community college district in the US and one of the largest in the world. The scope of operations is immense.

Aware of the environmental impact of such a large enterprise, LACCD has become a leader in environmental performance, with a commitment to sustainable operations and green facilities initiatives.

A bond issue in 2001 and another in 2003 combined to give LACCD \$2.25 billion for its sustainable construction and renovation program. The Bond Construction Program, approved by Los Angeles voters, is among the largest of its kind in the world. One of the program's boldest goals is to take each of the nine LACCD campuses off the energy grid by 2009.

But through onsite generation of solar power at each campus and a renewable energy central plant, LACCD will generate enough energy to power all nine campuses. The district's Energy Strategy Plan also calls for the use of wind and geothermal power, conservation efficiency contracts and a sustainable curriculum customized to meet the needs of each campus. Also, all new construction projects will only produce green buildings, built to LEED® certification standards.



The Los Angeles Community College District



CHALLENGE

With a service area of over 800 square miles and a dispersed group of executives and project management teams, LACCD needed a video solution that served as a clean, efficient way to communicate.



SOLUTION

23 LifeSize systems, including LifeSize® Room™ and LifeSize® Express™ products, installed by Vizual Symphony among nine campuses as well as LifeSize® Gateway™ and LifeSize® Control™ management software.



RESULTS

Now, face-to-face meetings in crystal clear HD are possible with the touch of a button. Productivity has increased while travel and carbon emissions have been significantly reduced.



Challenge

While these initiatives improved the environmental performance of the facilities in the LACCD, the sheer size of the district imposes an additional burden on the system: the cost, time and environmental impact of commuting.

The nine colleges that make up LACCD are distributed across a service area of more than 882 square miles. With a heavily dispersed network of decision makers, including the board of trustees, district executives and campus construction project teams, some members were driving upwards of 60 miles or more to attend one meeting. Not only was this practice costly and time-consuming, especially given the unpredictable Los Angeles area traffic, it was certainly not in line with LACCD energy efficiency initiatives.

In anticipation of an upcoming multi-billion dollar bond issue, LACCD realized that it needed a long range technology plan. Among other things, the plan calls for HD video conferencing. Getting a jump on this future funding possibility, LACCD made a commitment to use existing resources to get a start on the technology plan.

Video communication was not a new idea to LACCD. Standard Definition video systems were implemented in years past, but the technology wasn't widely accepted. "The older systems really had a negative impact on productivity because the image quality was poor, the motion was jerky and they were not user friendly," LACCD's Provisional CIO, Jorge Mata said. "Ultimately, because these systems did not create a natural conversation between locations, they've just been gathering dust."

The district clearly needed a video solution that made sense.

LACCD's Key Requirements:

Quality: HD audio and video for a seamless, in-room feel between locations

Ease of Use: Intuitive, simple operation that almost anyone can use without IT assistance

Connectivity: Built-in bridge to connect up to 6 locations simultaneously, regardless of device



"LifeSize allows us to maximize what good people can do by removing two barriers - distance and time."

— JORGE MATA, PROVISIONAL CIO, LACCD



Solution

LACCD hired Subodh Kumar, IFMA Fellow and President of Chartered Facility Management Group, Inc., a leading strategic consulting firm, to create a technology master plan that would carry the district into the next decade.

Kumar and his team held a four month, stringent evaluation of all video communications manufacturers and created an objective RFP outlining LACCD's specific needs, including those required by the California Department of Education.

"The LifeSize product and their team ranked best on all criteria of the RFP," Kumar said. "What makes video conferencing successful is lifelike, accurate, detailed video, natural audio and seamless environments which make participants feel like they are in the same room. LifeSize accomplishes this," he said.

23 LifeSize systems, including the LifeSize® Room™ and LifeSize® Express™ products, were installed among LACCD's nine campuses, two satellite locations and executive headquarters. LifeSize® Gateway™ was also installed which delivers ISDN to IP connectivity. LifeSize® Control™ management software and HD document cameras were also part of this implementation phase.

Visual Symphony, an authorized LifeSize reseller and specialized integrator for high-end, higher education projects, implemented the systems and worked closely with Kumar's team to create a seamless environment for each site.



Results

“Video meetings are rapidly gaining acceptance,” said Larry Eisenberg, Executive Director of Facilities Planning and Development at LACCD. “We’ve tried the older systems and webcams, but nothing was in real-time. Now, daily face-to-face meetings to district headquarters, which for some took at least an hour each way in travel, are possible with the press of a button. We’re getting our people off the road while increasing productivity.”

And with a recent 17% increase in the cost per mile, LACCD can offset their commute miles with even more programs for positive change. And that ensures that the district’s money is going to where it’s needed most – the schools.

Today, the LifeSize video systems are primarily used for executive management team meetings and campus construction project meetings. As for the future, distance learning over video is the goal.

In November 2008, LACCD will seek voter acceptance for another bond, this time for \$3.5 billion to pay for 70 campus building projects, which will include distance education applications. With LACCD’s student population continually on the rise, the need for educators to be ‘in two places at once’ will continue to grow.

At that point, a professor would be able to teach a course at the Los Angeles Harbor campus, then walk into a designated video room and be projected onto a large screen for students attending class at Los Angeles Valley, which is 30 miles and up to two hours away.

“To put it simply,” Mata said, “LifeSize allows us to maximize what good people can do by removing two barriers – distance and time. One day, picking up a video call will be as ubiquitous as picking up a telephone and we are excited to be moving in that direction.”



LACCD project team members meet with colleagues at a satellite location.



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