

Top U.S. Truck Dealership Saves Time, Money and Travel with LifeSize



Atlanta-based Vanguard Truck Center executives use HD video to eliminate routine travel; dealerships shift into high gear as best practices spread through organization



Organization

Vanguard Truck Centers, Atlanta, Georgia

Vanguard Truck Centers is a leading provider of commercial transportation solutions. With headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, and other locations in Texas and Arizona, Vanguard is a full-service truck dealership providing sales, leasing, parts and services of new and used Volvo, Mack, GMC and Isuzu trucks.

Vanguard began as a single dealership in 1989 by veterans of the truck sales and service industry. From the start, Vanguard wanted to build a model of success and profitable growth. They had seen many flourishing truck dealerships fail to grow beyond a single market because they could not successfully replicate their success. As Vanguard grew, the leadership team carefully studied and documented their operations to allow for future expansion.

Vanguard now has dealerships in Tucson, Phoenix, Austin and Houston, with continued profitable growth and expansion planned for the future. The company values integrity, ingenuity and excellence and strives to lead the transportation industry in consistently meeting or exceeding their customers' expectations. Developing their employees and paying attention to details are key factors in the company's continued success.

Challenge

Vanguard's senior management team in Atlanta understands the value of face-to-face communication with their dealership managers. Vanguard President Tom Ewing and CFO Nathan Rawlins hold monthly management meetings at each of the company's offices to assess the previous month's sales, profits, pending purchases as well as address any work flow issues within each branch. These detailed, all-day meetings are a tremendously valuable management tool – but the travel associated with the meetings wasted time and money.

The cost of travel was growing, but more importantly, lack of executive availability was impacting operations. Including travel time, each monthly meeting required two days. With two executives visiting four locations, the meetings cost the company 16 executive work days each month. Time away from headquarters also meant time away from their families and their lives.

Key needs included:

- **Video quality:** Deliver video quality that would feel natural enough to use for an all-day, face-to-face meeting
- **Bandwidth efficiency:** Deliver superior video quality on existing network with no additional bandwidth
- **High ROI/fast payback:** An ideal solution would pay for itself quickly by eliminating routine travel

Solution

Vanguard learned about LifeSize through a trusted IT consultant who researched the videoconferencing market and recommended LifeSize HD video. Vanguard then met with a local representative from GBH, an authorized LifeSize reseller. When Greg Baxter, Director of IT & Targeted Marketing, saw LifeSize in a demonstration, he immediately understood the value and planned a strategic implementation.



"We did not have videoconferencing in our IT budget for the year," Baxter said. "But the LifeSize system paid for itself almost immediately through travel savings."

Baxter was particularly impressed with the video quality and bandwidth efficiency of the LifeSize systems.

"We planned our data network around IT needs and didn't want to buy additional bandwidth for video if we didn't have to," said Baxter. "We found that the LifeSize system delivers a great DVD quality image with only 512Kbps of bandwidth; We didn't have to change anything to implement video in all five of our locations."

Vanguard used a LifeSize® Room™ system at their headquarters and LifeSize® Team™ systems in their offices in Texas and Arizona.

"I'm amazed at the quality and the ease of use. The LifeSize implementation did not impact our strategic IT budgeting or Vanguard's network operations. While our initial goal was to eliminate monthly travel for two executives, we have found uses for the system that we never even considered but now find indispensable," said Baxter.

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Director of IT & Targeted Marketing
Vanguard Truck Centers

Results

Initially, the LifeSize HD video systems were primarily used for the month end management meetings in their various locations. Vanguard executives were more than pleased with the simplicity and ease of use of the system, but also the ability to get the very same amount of work done in less time without ever leaving their office.

"It's like being in two places at once," said Vanguard President Tom Ewing.



Because the Vanguard management response was so positive, the company began using the systems in other areas of their business as well.

The human resources department, based in Atlanta, began using LifeSize to conduct out-of-state interviews with potential candidates. The accounting department uses the technology for their month-end and weekly financial meetings, as their CFO, who offices out of the Atlanta location, was frequently traveling to the Arizona and Texas offices to meet with his team. Now, he is able to meet more often while significantly reducing travel cost.

"The value of being face-to-face with our employees, even though they are states away, is priceless," said Baxter. "We actually enjoy using LifeSize so much, the only time we use our cell or desk phones is when we're away from the system!"



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