

# Alabama Deploys Video Solution to Reduce Costs and Boost Productivity



Alabama Department of Transportation deployed the Cisco® video platform solution to improve their employees' experiences with required training and to increase organizational alignment.

## Executive Summary

### Alabama Department of Transportation

- **Industry:** State and Local Government
- **Location:** Montgomery, Alabama
- **Number of Employees:** 5,000

### CHALLENGE

- Need to reduce travel expenses for a geographically dispersed workforce
- Desire to change how training is being delivered to employees to increase the effectiveness of overall training experiences and content retention
- Need to comply with employee training requirements

### SOLUTION

- Deployed video solutions to decrease travel and improve training
- Integrated video recording to increase training accessibility
- Used video portal to ensure recording ability, streaming, and playback feature

### RESULTS

- Increased productivity and enhanced efficiency of the workforce
- Reduced expenses both for calls and travel

## Challenge

The state of Alabama is located in the southeast region of the United States. Alabama has one of the longest navigable inland waterways in the nation, running 1300 miles and five major interstate roads. In addition to multiple major road systems, Alabama also has six airports with commercial operations, an Amtrak rail system that runs all the way to New York and a large seaport on the Gulf of Mexico.

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) manages all forms of transportation in the state. ALDOT was having trouble training all of its 5000 employees given the geographic area and the number of its employees. It was difficult to organize a training session and have everyone meet in one location for the course. If people could not attend the training ALDOT would then have to find additional times to host the course.

Additionally, with its workforce spread across the state, ALDOT needed a way to seamlessly communicate with everyone and host meetings while limiting travel. Years ago, ALDOT division chiefs from distant corners of the state would have to drive to Montgomery, Alabama, every Monday to attend one meeting, which was not a productive use of time.

ALDOT needed to find a cost-effective solution to help increase the ease at which it could host trainings and limit travel for those courses as well as everyday meetings. ALDOT also had to address the workforce that couldn't make the meeting because they were out of the office, in another meeting, or busy, but was interested in a recording of the session.

## Solution

ALDOT looked to video solutions to solve the challenges plaguing its training sessions. Having been a Tandberg and Cisco customer for years, ALDOT looked to Cisco once more to provide an unmatched video collaboration solution for both individuals at the desktop level and groups in conference rooms.

"Cisco was able to bring the two key components of a solution that we were looking for together: the visual communications at both the desktop and room level, and the ability to capture and distribute information," says Susan Butler, the telecommunications manager for ALDOT. "Essentially, we took two Cisco solutions and merged them to suit our needs."

Cisco worked with its partner Technical Innovation to make deployment a reality. Technical Innovation provides video-centric communication solutions to state government agencies. With its experience in video solutions, Technical Innovation system designers create solutions that can be integrated seamlessly with a building's infrastructure and information technology systems, which was essential for ALDOT.

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**Susan Butler**  
Telecommunications Manager, Alabama  
Department of Transportation

To share video solutions with all of its employees, ALDOT installed more than 50 of the Cisco TelePresence® System EX Series video endpoints in more than 25 locations across Alabama. ALDOT also deployed the Cisco Capture, Transform, Share (an enterprise video platform that delivers an engaging viewing experience for video on demand or live streaming video content) and Cisco TelePresence Management Suite (a solution that offers complete control and management of multiparty conferencing, infrastructure, and endpoints). Together, these two solutions were deployed to help ALDOT improve productivity, reduce costs, and increase return on its Cisco TelePresence investment.

## Results

The new communications technology at ALDOT has increased productivity for the workforce, reduced expenses for calls and travel, and enhanced the efficiency of employees. Workers who cannot attend meetings can watch recordings on their desktops, and those who still attend courses in person no longer have to drive up to four hours roundtrip for a 30-minute meeting or mandatory training session.

“Any employee 150 miles away from our headquarters used to drive in excess of 150 miles across the state to participate in meetings,” says Butler. “The minimum cost to the state for this expense for one employee is \$150, plus use of ALDOT vehicle, gas, and lost productivity. We are now saving fully on that cost.”

Because ALDOT's management of the Cisco video endpoints and video platform is centralized with the capability to remotely test and monitor devices, the IT team does not need to drive to distant locations to troubleshoot problems. This enhancement increases the efficiency of the team and saves the state money on travel expenses.

“Conservatively, we estimate that it will take between three and four years for the videoconferencing system to pay for itself including past TelePresence and AV deployments,” says Butler. “These estimates do not take into account the savings we have seen as a result of increased productivity.”

ALDOT has also found unplanned, unique applications for their new, integrated use of video. For example, when someone retires, that employee can now create a tutorial for the new employee. ALDOT also has the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program, which provides a vehicle for increasing the participation in bidding on ALDOT business. With the new video solution, businesses that do not think they have been given a fair opportunity can record a statement similar to a deposition and file it on record.

Another benefit of Cisco video collaboration solutions is ease of use. With Cisco TelePresence Management Suite, The ALDOT IT team configured its new system to be a virtual phonebook, accessible to all employees. ALDOT employees are also enjoying the Cisco TelePresence System EX endpoints because they enable remote

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## Product List

### VIDEO

- Cisco Capture, Transform and Share
- Cisco Jabber solution
- Cisco TelePresence products
- Cisco TelePresence Management Suite

dial-in. Due to the high demand for these endpoints, the IT team also deployed webcams and Cisco Jabber® solutions, an instant messaging, voice, video desktop sharing, and conferencing tool, so that more people can interact remotely.

“Our new video network can be used for almost any type of communication,” says Butler. “The system is not just for training and basic operational needs. In an emergency, secure calls can be made to respond to a disaster, and it can also be used to bridge departments of transportation in other states, like the Intelligent Traffic System group,” says Butler.

ALDOT also identified a need to use the video system as a call center in the case of an emergency. The team uses video to determine what roads need to be closed or how they should change the flow of traffic during a hurricane, ice storm, or other natural disaster.

## Next Steps

ALDOT is currently working on deploying a video cart that can be moved from room to room to meet the growing demand for videoconferencing throughout the organization. This cart will allow the IT team to deploy video solutions for less than the cost of permanent conference room locations.

In addition, the department plans to work with the state to use a Cisco WebEx® solution, a web conferencing, online meeting, video conferencing and webinar application, to expand the success it's experienced with collaboration to very small locations, including individual office spaces or smaller external locations.

## For More Information

To find out more about the Cisco Capture, Transform, Share, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/videoplatform>

To find out more about Cisco Jabber, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/jabber>

To find out more about Cisco TelePresence, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/telepresence>

