



▶ Michigan County Saves Money, Boosts Safety with Polycom Video and Integrated Document Management Solutions

Government

▶ Daily Use

- Alleviate security and logistical problems for courts and law enforcement caused by over-crowded judicial system

▶ Solution

- Polycom set-top and rack-mounted group video
- Conferencing systems including the award-winning Polycom® VSX® line
- Polycom desktop video conferencing solutions
- Polycom MGC™ bridges
- Polycom Path Navigator™ advanced gatekeeper
- Polycom Global Management System™ software

▶ Results

- Annual cost savings of \$4.2 million for county
- Improved public safety

Oakland County, Michigan boasts a mix of economic activity and quality-of-life programs and resources, making it an ideal destination for families and businesses. Covering 910 square miles in southeast Michigan, Oakland County comprises 180 cities, villages and townships and its population is growing steadily. The region has historically been the highest job-producing county in Michigan and is home to six Fortune 500 companies. Located in the heart of "Automation Alley," Oakland County is a world technology center and has earned a nationwide reputation among local units of government as a leader in the development and implementation of cutting-edge technology for the benefit of citizens and communities.

Growing Pains

As Oakland County continues to grow, so do the number of cases that need to be processed through its court systems. "With growing court dockets, our judicial districts are facing less time to handle more cases as well as higher costs to maintain proper levels of security when cases require movement of arraignees from the jail to a courtroom," explains Bob Daddow, deputy county executive for Special Projects with Oakland County.

To overcome these challenges, Oakland County developed a judicial arraignment solution known as OakVideo. OakVideo is unique among judicial arraignment systems in use today because it integrates multipoint video conferencing with digital document management and transfer capabilities. With OakVideo, the county is able to process an inmate or detainee, from arrest through arraignment, using Polycom video conferencing equipment and an integrated web-based software solution. It has replaced rapidly aging warrant teleconferencing equipment with state-of-the-art technology and uses Oakland County's fiber optic, gigabit OAKNet network. OAKNet consists of more than 400 miles of fiber optic cable that connects the cities, villages and townships within the county borders.

Web-based control of the Polycom endpoints and a digital document transfer system set the OakVideo solution apart. The custom software that enables control of the Polycom endpoints also allows law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, community corrections and the courts to save and secure case records on a centralized server with instant retrieval for viewing or printing. Law enforcement personnel can also track pertinent information as

Unique video and digital arraignment system for courts, law enforcement and corrections facilities significantly cuts processing time, increases safety and saves the county \$4.2 million per year.

cases are created on the system, including: specific officer and prosecutor assigned to a case; housing facility for the offender; and court of jurisdiction.

By selecting a case folder on the web page, a simple click can initiate a face-to-face video conference from any courtroom to any officer, prosecutor and holding cell in the county. To manage the work flow and paperwork associated with processing the video arraignment cases, OakVideo automates and digitizes documents that were traditionally printed, delivered or faxed between law enforcement agencies, the prosecutor and the courts. The effect, among other benefits, is to minimize offender transport, thereby improving court security and mitigating law enforcement costs.

Change for the Better

The typical arraignment process used to take up to ten working days to complete with prisoner transport and the hand carrying and faxing of items such as booking documents and warrants. Offenders were often transported twice or up to three times for felony charges.

“Before OakVideo, arraignment involved physical prisoner transport, which is labor intensive and a security issue. Now, prisoners are arraigned directly from their holding cells. We’re saving four to six hours per arraignment and making the process far safer. Today, the arraignment process can be completed within hours instead of days,” states Daddow.

The OakVideo system offers three basic configurations that can be tailored to meet end-user needs.

The courtroom sites use a rack-mounted Polycom video system connected to a server that records the audio and outputs from the conference for court records. Video and audio are also captured on digital video recorders and are automatically uploaded to the case file. The courtroom's desktop computers are equipped with digital signature pads and printer/scanner units, allowing the judge to review case documents during the arraignment, sign documents in real time, and add additional documents to case files in written or digital format.

At holding cells, custom cabinets house set-top Polycom IP video conferencing solutions that have been designed for full remote control.

The IT Perspective

The OakVideo judicial arraignment system of Oakland County, Michigan enables the initiation of a video conference from any courtroom to any officer, prosecutor and holding cell in the county, facilitating the processing of inmates from arrest through arraignment with integrated document management and digital signatures.

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At holding cells, custom cabinets house set-top Polycom IP video conferencing solutions that have been designed for full remote control. The law enforcement, prosecutor and community corrections systems are comprised of desktop computers equipped with Polycom desktop video solutions. Two Polycom MGC video conference bridges enable seamless connections with sites outside of the OakVideo network, and the Polycom Path Navigator advanced gatekeeper and Global Management System software facilitates network management and administration.

This includes dimming of the lighting systems, control over the local and remote Polycom video equipment from the web interface controls at any time in point-to-point and multipoint conferences, and full remote diagnostic capabilities.

The law enforcement, prosecutor and community corrections systems are comprised of desktop computers equipped with Polycom desktop video solutions. The Oakland County Department of Information Technology recently added two Polycom MGC video conference bridges that connect OakVideo to the outside world. For network management and administration, Oakland County relies on the Polycom PathNavigator advanced gatekeeper and Global Management System software.

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Getting Results

“The benefits of the OakVideo project are wide ranging, but undoubtedly the most important are increased public safety and substantial cost savings,” says Daddow.

The cost savings related to arraignments are estimated at nearly \$4.2 million annually thanks to the reduction in defendant transportation and prisoner housing costs. The OakVideo project has helped improve security for Oakland County’s communities by redeploying hundreds of officers for other duties, holding fewer offenders at community correction facilities and jail holding cells, and minimizing the transport of arraignees to court facilities.

Additional benefits include accelerated after hours warrants for activities such as arrests and searches; access to county officials via video; and the flexibility to develop a centralized, off-hours video arraignment function that allows magistrates to be deployed for other court duties. Oakland County has estimated the annual savings from streamlining the warrant issue process alone to be \$1.5 million.

Taking the Next Steps

Moving forward Daddow sees almost unlimited uses for the OakVideo network. “I see the role of video conferencing expanding in jails,” he says. “We could avoid moving inmates

in standard lock up and mental facilities to the hospital for minor health related issues by leveraging video for telehealth. We could also connect with the Michigan Department of Corrections over video to limit the transportation of prisoners to and from state facilities, and I’d like to see inmate visitation over video to improve security.”

The county installed its OakNet fiber backbone with even greater goals in mind, including broadcasting events such as Board of Commissioner meetings and centralized training over the Internet; initiating county department-to-department meetings over video; facilitating testimony by expert witnesses in Oakland County courtrooms over video; and allowing access from around the world over the public Internet into the county’s network for community development purposes.

Learn more

To find out how Polycom solutions can help your organization, visit us at www.polycom.com or speak with a Polycom Account Representative.

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