



## Industry

Government

### Daily Use

- Distance training
- Workgroup collaboration
- Preparedness and response training
- Interviewing
- Distant witness testimony

### Solution

- Polycom® HDX™ 8000 and HDX 9000 room telepresence solutions
- Polycom RSS™ 2000 recording and streaming server
- Polycom RMX 1000 and 2000® real-time media conferencing platform
- Polycom Video Border Proxy solution

### Results and Benefits

- Recorded savings of more than \$91,000 in first half of 2009
- Significant increase in productivity, eliminating frequent employee travel
- Enhanced training consistency as classes are delivered simultaneously from a single source

# Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences Saves Money, Improves Productivity with Polycom® HD Telepresence

The State of Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences (ADFS) provides scientific assistance to local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies by examining evidence in as many as 40,000 cases per year. Forensic science services are provided from 11 laboratories located throughout the state and cover disciplines ranging from drug chemistry to pathology, toxicology, firearms and DUI evidence.

In early 2009, ADFS faced deep budget cuts that essentially suspended travel among its facilities around the state, severely limiting the agency's ability to offer vital in-person training. The importance of training in areas such as safety protocols and proper evidence handling cannot be overstated in the ADFS laboratory environment. The agency needed a solution for keeping its employees up-to-speed without the cost of travel and turned to Polycom's room telepresence solutions.

"We used to travel to sites for training or have people travel to a central location for a class," explains James Foster, senior IT specialist for ADFS. "When travel was eliminated, video conferencing jumped in and we had a virtual statewide meeting that saved us \$5,000 in one day. We haven't looked back since."

Relying on grant money, Foster equipped each of the 11 ADFS labs with Polycom® HDX™ telepresence solutions that connect all of the agency's 225 employees. In the first half of 2009 from January through June, the agency recorded a savings of over \$91,000 due to travel reduction.

### An In-Demand Solution

Forensic Science staff members at all levels of the agency have embraced the video conferencing technology. Users include pathologists, scientists, investigators and administrative services personnel. They participate in statewide meetings, regional meetings, training of all types, and even job interviews. In addition, the comprehensive Polycom solution allows the video conferences to be recorded for viewing at a later date or by those unable to attend the original meeting or training.

In addition to travel cost savings, Foster cites greatly increased productivity as a key benefit of implementing Polycom HD video. "Travelling to attend meetings takes scientists away from the bench—away from working cases," he says. "For example, if there is a training class or lab directors' meeting in Huntsville, it's an eight-hour round trip drive from our headquarters in Auburn. That's eight hours away from working cases."

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The drug chemistry and forensic biology disciplines hold monthly meetings over video and have reported great satisfaction with the experience. And recently, a statewide training conference on pandemic flu was held over video and the recording was sent to the lab employees that couldn’t watch it live.

“When the budget cuts were instituted, we could no longer bring trainees to a central location so our next best option was to “train the trainer” and send that person back to pass along the knowledge to colleagues locally,” says Foster. “With video conferencing technology, we’re able to reach a much broader audience than ever before.”

Safety training classes are offered over video and have benefited both ADFS staff and other state agencies. For example, during autopsies pathologists sometimes encounter a body with an implanted device in the chest such as a pacemaker or defibrillator. A class on how to remove those devices safely was presented over video to all of the ADFS labs throughout the state. In addition, the class was recorded and distributed to all of the Alabama state coroners offices.

### The Right Technology for the Job

ADFS houses a Polycom HDX 9000 telepresence solution at its Auburn headquarters and has equipped each of its additional lab facilities throughout the state with the Polycom HDX 8000 systems. The Polycom RMX 2000® platform facilitates multipoint bridging and scheduling for the agency and the Polycom RSS™ 2000 recording and streaming server enables video calls to be recorded, archived, and shared.

In discussing his decision to implement high-definition video systems, Foster comments: “You really need the high resolution the Polycom HD systems offer when you’re looking at slides, autopsy photos, and crime scene photos.”

Foster recently purchased a Polycom Video Border Proxy solution to enable conferences with parties outside of the ADFS. Analysts in forensic biology will be conferencing on the Federal level with the FBI to provide input for its Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database.

When it came to choosing a video vendor, Polycom’s reputation in the industry sold the solution. “I simply relied on recommendations from others who had positive experiences with Polycom,” says Foster.

### Moving Forward

Foster sees the volume of video conferences on the network increasing significantly over time. “The more our people have gotten used to it, the more they use it,” he says. Foster is especially optimistic about increasing use in the pathology discipline being that you can easily share autopsy images in high definition.

Another exciting application on the horizon for ADFS is a video network link with the state’s judicial system. “Our pathologists and analysts are required to give depositions and testify in court frequently, which translates into time away from working cases,” explains Foster. “Instead of sending our people to testify in person, video will allow them to participate in the proceedings right from the lab. This is going to save us a lot of money in terms of travel costs and lost productivity.”

Foster is also looking at deploying desktop video conferencing solutions for lab directors and discipline chiefs to provide enhanced privacy and greater interactions. And in new labs that are being built now, he will integrate Polycom HD video systems directly into the conference room facilities.

### About Polycom

Polycom is the global leader in standards-based unified communications (UC) solutions for telepresence, video, and voice powered by the Polycom® RealPresence™ Platform. The RealPresence Platform interoperates with the broadest range of business, mobile, and social applications and devices. More than 400,000 organizations trust Polycom solutions to collaborate and meet face-to-face from any location for more productive and effective engagement with colleagues, partners, customers, and prospects. Polycom, together with its broad partner ecosystem, provides customers with the best TCO, scalability, and security—on-premises, hosted, or cloud delivered.

For more information, visit [www.polycom.com](http://www.polycom.com), call 1-800-POLYCOM, or contact your Polycom sales representative.

**Polycom Worldwide Headquarters**  
4750 Willow Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588  
1.800.POLYCOM or +1.925.924.6000  
[www.polycom.com](http://www.polycom.com)

