



Application Story

14th Judicial District

14th Judicial Court and Lake Charles City Use e/pop® Video Conferencing for Jail-to-Court Proceedings

Transporting inmates between jail and court was an easy task back in the old days when the lockup was down the hall. Today, administrators for district courts, cities and jails face an increasingly challenging burden of providing physically safe and secure transport – for inmates and staff – between widespread facilities. Adding to the challenge, administrators must do so under tight budgets and operating schedules.

The 14th Judicial District and the Lake Charles City Court in Calcasieu Parish, Lake Charles, Louisiana, opted for e/pop Video Conferencing software for video arraignment and assignment of counsel court proceedings.

Prior to e/pop, the 14th Judicial District Court (JDC) utilized an expensive traditional point-to-point hardware-based video conferencing system that was complex to use and required expensive peripherals to increase the audio quality in the cinder block room where inmates were arraigned. The cinder block room presented several acoustical challenges, and it was a poor environment for traditional boardroom-style video equipment. In addition, these hardware end-points used hard IP addresses, which often required manual updates when changes were made to the underlying physical network.

The District installed e/pop on a standard PC server at the courthouse, and connects to remote sites via Frame Relay. Conference traffic is secure as all traffic routes over their private network.

e/pop was selected as a replacement in part because it uses readily available, low-cost PC-based audio and video peripherals. In particular, the wide variety of 3rd party peripherals included specialized echo-cancelling microphones that worked in cinder block rooms. e/pop was also helpful because it is a software-based solution that runs on standard PCs and operates over shared TCP/IP-based networks, without requiring dedicated lines or specialized video switching equipment. Customers that opt for on-premise software can install the entire system behind their firewall or on their VPN for secure conferencing requirements. In addition, customers can register their conferencing server with their domain name service (DNS), eliminating the use of hard IP addresses in video conferencing links.

“Before video conferencing, Lake Charles City Court was forced to either shuttle inmates to the court, or the Judge and minute clerk had to drive to the jail, both of which required transportation time and marshals for security,” said Tim Leger, MIS Manager for the 14th Judicial District and Lake Charles City Court. “We have increased the amount of arraignments fivefold, our Judges get more work done, and we’ve cut the cost of transportation and security for trips to and from the jail, thanks to e/pop.”

Problem:

- Secure inmate transport
- Cost and complexity of legacy video conferencing hardware

Solution:

- e/pop desktop video conferencing for arraignment proceedings
- Budget-friendly PC-based audio and video peripherals
- Existing private network, without infrastructure changes or video switching equipment

Business & IT Benefits:

- Fivefold increase in arraignments processing; improved safety for inmates and staff
- Reduced transport expenses
- Reduced hardware complexity and maintenance
- Ease-of-use saves IT staff time