

## University Gains Significant Savings by Reducing Travel

The University of Missouri uses TelePresence to reduce travel costs and increase productivity.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p><b>THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry: Higher Education</li> <li>• Location: Columbia, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Rolla, Missouri, United States</li> </ul>
<p><b>CHALLENGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High travel costs for inter-campus meetings</li> <li>• Traveling long distances between campuses caused hours of lost productivity</li> </ul>
<p><b>SOLUTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cisco TelePresence and Cisco Planning and Implementation Services</li> </ul>
<p><b>RESULTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quickly achieved high system utilization</li> <li>• Avoided travel costs for 51 meetings in one month</li> <li>• Enables administrators to have high-quality meetings and go home at night</li> </ul>

### Challenge

The University of Missouri was the first public university founded west of the Mississippi River and today is Missouri’s largest public research university. Four campuses are located in St. Louis, Columbia, Kansas City, and Rolla, with the distance between campuses ranging from 120 to 255 miles. Senior administrators travel frequently between campuses for meetings, and with long distances to drive, the time and costs of having multiple people travel for meetings add up. For example, an administrator might lose four hours of time each way if traveling between Kansas City and Rolla. He or she might require an overnight stay if traveling from St. Louis or Rolla to Kansas City.

The University is always seeking ways to reduce costs and improve productivity. Cost benchmarks were established basing each trip on an average of US\$38 per hour, per person, for time spent traveling, and six hours of lost productivity for the shortest trip.

Overnight trips cost approximately \$300 per person. There were typically 12 attendees per meeting, and up to 75 percent of attendees had to travel to attend. Using these numbers, the University calculated that it could potentially save \$4500 per meeting.

The University had successfully used videoconferencing systems for many years, beginning with compressed standard-definition video and migrating to single-screen, high-definition systems. Uses included both business meetings and course delivery. However, video quality was not optimal and video systems could be difficult to use. A technician would have to schedule the meeting and be on site or available to help ensure that the meeting began successfully. With these limitations, many meeting attendees elected to use simpler audio conference calls. However, for large or important meetings, it was often more productive to meet in person, and so people traveled.

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— Gary Forsee, President, University of Missouri System

## Solution

When Gary Forsee became president of the University in 2008, his experience as former chairman and chief executive officer of Sprint Nextel in telecommunications brought a new appreciation for innovation to the school. Mr. Forsee is also an alumnus of the University of Missouri with a passion for education.

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A first step toward using technology to help improve education was the decision to implement Cisco TelePresence™ solutions at the University of Missouri. The immediate objective was to help the University reduce travel costs while preserving the quality of meeting interaction. Four TelePresence systems were deployed, one at each campus in 2009. Cisco® Services was engaged for Design, Planning, and Implementation of the first system in Columbia.

PRODUCT LIST
<b>Voice and IP Communications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cisco TelePresence 3200</li> </ul>

Working hand in hand with the University's facilities department on each campus, Cisco Services provided the TelePresence standards and advised on initial room choices and design. Room sizes, lighting, paint color, and other factors were implemented consistently at each campus to help ensure a consistent experience for meeting

participants. Cisco Services then implemented the system and worked with AT&T, the University's wide-area network provider, to connect the TelePresence systems through MOREnet, the organization that links Missouri schools, public libraries, academic institutions, and state agencies through a statewide research and education network. MOREnet assumed management of the TelePresence systems after they were deployed.

“Cisco Services worked closely with us to provide the expertise required for the project and to help ensure a successful launch,” says Terry Robb, University IT project manager for the project. “We had deployed all four systems by June of 2009 and launched the service into production in August. People have taken to it immediately.”

## Results

The TelePresence system at Columbia is installed in Ellis Library, providing a public, central location for administrators to meet. To date, senior administrators, IT managers, and members of the University's Sustainability Committee rely on the system to avoid having to travel between campuses. Meetings are scheduled through Outlook and commence with the touch of a button. Users no longer have to wait for a technician to start a conference, and meetings can start on time without aggravation.

Usage is growing steadily. In March 2010, 51 meetings were conducted for over 89 hours and 43 percent utilization. The University is well on its way to seeing significant reductions in travel costs and now participants can meet and go home in the evening.

“I had never been a fan of video, because it was always difficult to use and hard to schedule,” says Robb. “Additionally, compressed video limited picture quality. Cisco TelePresence completely changed my mind. Finally, there is a video platform that is really easy to use, and the quality is unbelievable. It is working out extremely well.”

## Next Steps

As use increases, the University of Missouri plans to continue in its quest for using technology to improve education.

## For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Services, visit: [www.cisco.com](http://www.cisco.com).

To learn more about University of Missouri., visit [www.missouri.edu](http://www.missouri.edu).

This customer story is based on information provided by the University of Missouri and describes how that particular organization benefits from the deployment of Cisco products. Many factors may have contributed to the results and benefits described; Cisco does not guarantee comparable results elsewhere.

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