



## CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

# Polycom-Based Online Training Solution Is a Life-Saver for Pike Township, Indiana Fire Department

## Industry

- Government

## Daily use

- Instructor-lead training sessions are captured as rich media presentations
- Sessions are published to a searchable portal for online replay and review
- Integrated online tests provide auditable record of professional compliance

## Solution

- Polycom® RealPresence® Capture Station solution captures and publishes streaming video synchronized with all visuals shown by instructors on their computers
- Polycom® RealPresence® Media Manager software enables firefighters to review training presentations and instructors to create, administer and record online tests

## Results and benefits

- Replace time-consuming, in-person training
- Enable time-pressed staff to access learning materials online
- Record specialist training for staffers with shift conflicts
- Gather reportable certification data



## Overview

The Pike Township Fire Department in Indianapolis, Indiana, serves one of the nation's fastest growing counties with a population of over 74,000 people spread out over a 44-square-mile area. The department's nearly 160 firefighters respond to some 8,700 fire and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls annually, providing services via specialized apparatus including five engines; two aerial, one dive tactical and one Hazmat tactical vehicle; and four Advanced Live Saving (ALS) ambulances.

## Professional certification demands trigger operational alarms

Fire Chief Gerald George presented a multi-year master plan for the department—heavily leveraging skills and professional training—in order to meet its mission to achieve the highest levels of professionalism and extend its record of excellence.

“A department should run like a business. We always look at how we could do things better. We are most proud of our ability to deliver ALS response on all apparatus and we believe the service delivery is second to none,” said Fire Chief George.

Pike Township firefighters undergo extensive training in order to provide life saving and rescue services in virtually any environment. Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians must continuously be certified and re-certified in Emergency Medical Service and Advanced Live Saving procedures that include an exhaustive array of medical information presented by fire department medical professionals and doctors from nearby hospitals. Additionally, firefighters must be trained on how to deliver services in virtually any environment, (vehicular, structural or environmental), in contact with virtually any substance (water, hazardous materials, explosives) and using highly specialized apparatus.

The department's new shift system, which added an additional day off during a three-week period, compounded the department's training challenges. Even scheduling classes as many as three times still could not ensure 100% attendance. With the firefighters' additional mandatory “practical” instruction—which has to be completed in person—the training load was becoming overwhelming.

“This truly has been a great asset, particularly the ability to record our Audit and Review sessions when our Medical Director is on site for ALS training. By offering online recordings of these sessions, we can now be assured that every paramedic will be able to watch them.”

Rob Saunders, Division Chief of Emergency Medical Services for the Pike Township Fire Department

### Online training comes to the rescue

Pike Township needed a way to enable firefighters to do as much non-practical (hands-on) training as possible from home and fire stations when their schedules would allow.

Their requirements included a system that would be easy to operate, that could create and deliver information rapidly, and that could measure and track firefighter participation in order to meet EMS and ALS certification and re-certification guidelines.

The following year, they chose an automated rich media capture and management solution from Polycom. The system—which includes Polycom® RealPresence® Capture Station and Polycom® RealPresence® Media Manager solutions located at headquarters—now enables Pike Township to capture any training session and make it available via a searchable online portal.

The room-based Capture Station solution helps ensure that the fire department’s training classroom is recording-ready, complete with its own camera, audio source, and network connection. Instructors—including doctors, specialists and trainers—simply connect their laptop computers to the unit while the Polycom solution captures and publishes streaming video of the speaker synchronized with all visuals shown on their computers.

All sessions are automatically published to the Polycom RealPresence Media Manager Software, which not only gives Pike Township firefighters the ability to search for and review training presentations, but enables instructors to create, administer and record online tests. The online testing has been so successful that Pike Township provides viewing and online certification reports to meet state and local EMS and ALS certification requirements, delivering an auditable record of who logged in, what they viewed and how they performed on various tests and certification modules.

The department also uses the solution to ensure that the next generation of leadership is ready by providing a program that allows firefighters to transition from a probationary firefighter to an officer over a five-year period. The online materials enable the firefighters to view and review for monthly training and education courses that help them prepare for an annual written and practical evaluation once a year that gradually provides more responsibility and training.

### Voice Content Management

- Polycom® RealPresence® Capture Station
- Polycom® RealPresence® Media Manager
- Polycom® RealPresence® Media Editor

“We’re in the process of extending access to our system to neighboring fire departments in Hamilton County, including the Zionsville and Fishers fire departments, to extend the same benefits to their emergency medical technicians.”

Rob Saunders, Division Chief of Emergency Medical Services for the Pike Township Fire Department

### Firefighters respond to online materials

In just a few months, the department has already created hundreds of hours of online content which has been very positively received by firefighters, many of whom are “YouTube” generation age and already accustomed to searching for and enjoying online video.

The online videos enable firefighters to take advantage of down time during shifts at the firehouse to access training sessions and complete course certification online.

Firefighters can also access the materials from PCs at home, so they now use virtually any time to view even a portion of a training session and log in later to resume where they left off and complete the testing or certification process.

Rob Saunders, Division Chief of Emergency Medical Services for the Pike Township Fire Department, talks about the success of the Polycom-based online training program. “This truly has been a great asset, particularly the ability to record our Audit and Review sessions when our Medical Director is on site for ALS training. By offering online recordings of these sessions, we can now be assured that every paramedic will be able to watch them. We’re in the process of extending access to our system to neighboring fire departments in Hamilton County, including the Zionsville and Fishers fire departments to extend the same benefits to their emergency medical technicians,” Saunders said.

### About Polycom

Polycom is the global leader in open standards-based unified communications (UC) solutions for voice and video collaboration, trusted by more than 415,000 customers around the world. Polycom solutions are powered by the Polycom® RealPresence® Platform, comprehensive software infrastructure and rich APIs that interoperate with the broadest set of communication, business, mobile and cloud applications and devices to deliver secure face-to-face video collaboration in any environment. Polycom and its ecosystem of over 7,000 partners provide truly unified communications solutions that deliver the best user experience, highest multi-vendor interoperability, and lowest TCO. Visit [www.polycom.com](http://www.polycom.com) or connect with us on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn to learn how we’re pushing the greatness of human collaboration forward.

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