

Technology Deployment Initiatives and Partnership Program

Request for Funding

FY 2002

FHWA Strategic Goal Area: Corporate Management Strategies

Project Title: Personal Video-Conference System

Problem Statement: Video-conferencing is becoming more common for meetings between distantly located participants when the duration is less than one day, often one or two hours in length. Travel costs, lost production during travel, and inconvenience to the participants are reduced by using Video-conferencing technology. With the inclusion of data sharing capability at the participants work site, the sessions can be productive, efficient, and convenient. Often the use of the larger Concord 4500 video conferencing equipment ties up a conference room or requires relocation of the equipment to an individual=s location, which has caused equipment failures and disruption of service. By providing personal Video-conferencing capability on the individual=s personal computer, a conference can be conducted at the desk, without inefficiently committing a conference room, relocating equipment or unnecessary travel.

Proposal: Purchase and install the necessary camera, computer software, and hardware, compatible with the PictureTel Concord 4500, to enable personal Video-conferencing initially for the Western Federal Lands Division Engineer, followed by the other two Federal Lands Highway Division Engineers as funds permit. The system will operate over the existing T-1 line, similar to the systems operating in the Federal-aid Divisions. This installation will demonstrate the effectiveness of the personal system to the Federal Lands Program, savings in time and travel costs, and ability to share data during a conference sessions. Based on the results of this demonstration and anticipated need, other individuals in FLH will acquire personal Video-conference capability in the future.

Benefits: The personal Video-conference system is expected to reduce travel time and costs, which will offset the system purchase costs with one or two uses. It is anticipated that the Video-conference technology will be used more frequently with the availability of this personal system because of increased efficiency .

Resources/Cost: All hardware and software, including upgrading of current personal computer, with one system in each FLH Division is estimated to be \$15,000. In- house time from Computer Services for software loading is expected to be one hour. Set up and training by the Champion is expected to be two hours.

Duration: The demonstration will be conducted over 12 months during regularly scheduled Video-conference sessions applicable only to the Division Engineer.

Organization/Method: Contract purchase of equipment and software, set up and installation by in-house personnel.

Submitter:

Agency/Division: Western Federal Lands Division
Name: Cal Frobig
Phone: 360-696-7648
Date: 16 April 2001

Champion:

Name: Brad Roberts
Phone: 360-696-7777