

Userful Video Wall brings command center to a whole new level

The Empresa Malagueña de Transportes (EMT) has been in charge of public transportation services for 30 years. They run a fleet of 242 vehicles, distributed across 47 lines in the city of almost 570 thousand people.



Challenges

EMT monitors the entire transportation system from a single command center run by a 4-inspector team. The team makes use of the city's network of approximately 80 traffic cameras as well as proprietary cameras installed in strategic places and inside the vehicles themselves. EMT needs to be able to monitor the inside of the vehicles in real time, and switch quickly between the different feeds throughout the transportation network. Drivers can activate an alarm that automatically ensures the feed from that vehicle is monitored in the command center.

EMT needed a solution that was flexible and that could pull in multiple sources of content from the many different feeds throughout their network and quickly switch among them. They also needed something that was simple to use, that their team of inspectors could quickly learn to operate. Finally, it had to be cost effective. In the video wall market today there are a lot of solutions that are simply not in a reasonable price range.



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Solution

After careful review of different display technologies—including specialized hardware solutions for video walls, as well as digital signage—the team at EMT learned about Userful's video wall solution.

Right away, they appreciated the simplicity and flexibility of the solution. According to Jose Manuel Fernandez, Systems Engineer at EMT, "the support for real-time interactive content, seeing how simple it was to manage, and also the possibilities to easily switch content sources between displays, was what really convinced me that Userful was the solution we were looking for."



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Userful fit EMT's needs perfectly in part because it's able to handle a virtually unlimited number of inputs, and it can also easily scale the number of outputs it can offer. This is unique in the video wall space and is a result of Userful's architecture. Userful leverages the network to deliver content from the PC onto a video wall. With Userful, a single PC can support a video wall of up to 60 displays. Each display has a simple and cost effective zero client device on the back that connects to the PC through the local area network. Userful software turns that PC into an appliance that is easily managed through a browser. Using the browser based interface, customers can easily pull content from almost any available source including network sources in real time. The solution can display everything from video to a full screen browser to a desktop and even a series of virtual desktops—multiple independent desktop sessions running on the same PC. According to Fernandez “the integration for virtual machines in the system made the solution even better for us.”

EMT deployed a 3x3 video wall with nine 55" LG commercial displays, all running from a single Intel Core i7 PC and 32 GB of RAM, which is securely located away from the wall itself in a locked room, with a monitored environment—which helps to prolonged the PC's lifespan. EMT added HDMI capture cards to pull in external content sources to display on the video wall in real time.

The Result

The solution was functional out of the box, and the easy configuration provide a smooth transition, with minimal downtime. Throughout, the EMT has been very happy with the level of quality of the technical support—all their questions were promptly answer via phone or text, with subsequent follow ups to ensure a high performance of the system.

The EMT has achieved their goal of refreshing the command center with better visualization, more simultaneous cameras on display, and the flexibility to show desktop content and online notifications in real-time.

With Userful, the EMT can expand their command center as their fleet grows. When they need to add more displays, they simply add more zero clients onto the network and the PC they've already deployed will support the additional displays. Now they can continue to grow without needing to undergo a big expansion project.

