



Dallas County Probate Court Sets Precedent for Courtroom Technology

When the Dallas County Probate Court had to accommodate virtual court hearings, they realized they did not have the technology to properly simulate an in-person, open court proceeding. The court turned to Sharp to provide an all-in-one solution that would enable them to continue to provide justice for their constituents.

Business Environment Challenges

The second-most populous county in Texas, Dallas County, has approximately 2.6 million residents, making it the 9th most populous in the country. The Dallas County Probate Courts, located in downtown Dallas, are a statutorily created probate court system headed by elected judges. In general, the court probates the wills of deceased persons, establishes guardianships for incapacitated persons and minors and supervises court-ordered involuntary mental health commitments in Dallas County.

When the COVID pandemic hit, under the Open Courts Provision of the Texas Constitution, Texas courts were required to maintain public access. In order to facilitate court activities, the Office of Court Administration provided judges the ability to stream and host court proceedings via video conferencing platforms. The Dallas County Probate Court was able to utilize these platforms, however they did not have the audio and video setup to foster the in-person interactions that the judge, attorneys, litigants and the public viewers were used to.

Technology Solutions

To properly serve the numerous constituents of Dallas County, the court needed a streamlined, reliable solution to enhance their technological capabilities and meet the expectations of the Texas Supreme Courts emergency orders during the pandemic. They enlisted the help of Sharp Business Systems to assess and provide solutions to their technology challenges. For an all-in-one remote meeting solution, Sharp provided six (6) 70" Class (69.5" diagonal) Windows collaboration displays (WCD) from Sharp. To ensure that they were able to be used wherever needed, they were installed on height adjustable carts with Shuttle® PCs.



Proven Results

By installing the WCDs for use throughout the courtrooms, remote proceedings and meetings were nearly effortless. With a 70" (69.5" diagonal), 4K Ultra-HD LCD touch screen, modular 4k camera with microphone array and a built-in audio system, the WCD provided everything the court needed to conduct proceedings as if the constituents were in the room, and without technological delays. The large screen allows everyone in the courtroom to view the participants, and the modular 4k camera allows virtual participants to see the entire courtroom. Also, the WCD made it easier to share evidence and other documents without the need for multiple connectors and cables to accommodate various hardware with the use of an 8m long USB-C cable that enables data transfer for multiple functions and file types. In addition, the all-in-one solution was easily supported on their IT network's limited bandwidth. The plug and play simplicity of the interface was key for the court.

"The Windows collaboration display was so easy to use and was everything we didn't know we needed." said John F. Warren, Dallas County Clerk. The court doesn't see an end to virtual proceedings any time soon – and they couldn't be happier with how the WCD has supported them.

Industry

Legal, Government

Organization

Dallas County Probate Courts

Challenges

- Provide an open court environment to remote attendees
- No audio-visual technology
- Limited network bandwidth
- Needed an easy all-in-one solution, not complex hardware

Solutions

Six (6) Windows Collaboration Displays from Sharp

Results

- Simplified and enhanced overall courtroom proceedings
- Permitted interactive presentation capabilities in the courtroom
- Plug and play in any room needed

"The Windows collaboration display was so easy to use and was everything we didn't know we needed."

— **John F. Warren**
Dallas County Clerk

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