



Daily fleet-wide health diagnostic checks ensures efficient maintenance operations and streamlines communications between agency departments.

In 2008, Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) was in need of an advanced mobile security solution that would enhance the safety of its passengers and drivers onboard its 60 fixed-route and 40 paratransit buses. With minimal surveillance experience and a population of over 200,000 to serve throughout Whatcom County, WTA selected Apollo Video Technology's (Apollo Video) RoadRunner™ system for its high quality recordings, optimal network performance and easy-to-use software. Following deployment, WTA was pleasantly surprised by the unexpected impact Apollo Video's solution would have across the agency.

From the start, Apollo Video's advanced and comprehensive equipment has proven invaluable to WTA's daily operations, particularly ViM (Vehicle Information Management) Software. As one of the earliest transit agencies to utilize the management software, WTA has taken full advantage of ViM's extensive capabilities to maximize operational efficiencies and fleet management. The solution enables WTA's technicians to seamlessly view and download on-board video footage from desktops and mobile devices for review.

WTA Statistics:

Fleet Size: 140 vehicles

Yearly Fixed-Route Trips: 5,000,000

Weekday Fixed-Route Trips: 17,000

Operated By: Whatcom County, Washington

Service Area: Bellingham, Lynden, Ferndale,
Blaine/Birch Bay, Kendall, Sudden Valley,
Lummi Nation, Everson/Nooksack/Sumas



"I cannot stress enough how helpful Apollo Video's ViM software has been to our operations and the extent of its value for our entire team," said Geoffrey Beaumont, Operations Supervisor at WTA. "Manually sorting through video from a stock pile of hard drives used to be a laborious and time-consuming process. With ViM, we can easily request footage from the comfort of our own desks and it's available whenever our vehicles establish a network connection."

In addition to saving time and increasing productivity, ViM has also been vital in facilitating a proactive approach to WTA maintenance operations and fleet-wide health of on-board equipment. In the past, troubleshooting and repairs were performed only when IT notified maintenance there was an issue. In order to stay ahead of potential system errors and streamline communication between departments, Apollo Video trained WTA staff to perform daily fleet-wide health status diagnostics checks utilizing ViM.

"Previously, our maintenance program was mostly a reactive process driven by failures and complaints," said Kurt Karlson, Fleet Maintenance Manager at WTA. "Thanks to ViM Software and guidance from Apollo Video staff, we have changed our approach to diagnostic procedures. The information obtained from the software helps maintenance crews remotely identify what equipment needs to be serviced or replaced, eliminating in many cases repeat service calls on our buses and enabling a proactive approach in maintaining more than 90 Apollo Video systems."

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A key requirement that WTA was looking for in a video surveillance partner was retaining a 24-hour resolution timeline, and thanks to ViM's reporting features, they have been able to achieve this result consistently. WTA has a dedicated electronics technician to monitor the health of the system, establishing a proactive schedule to check in on the health of the fleet by working with both the IT and operations departments. By utilizing ViM's diagnostic feature, WTA has considerable savings in labor costs and has also avoided potential litigation issues by ensuring that recording systems are always operating properly.

Apollo Video's RoadRunner™ system has also been advantageous to the security and safety of those onboard WTA vehicles, serving as a crime deterrent and support in criminal investigations. The security cameras onboard and outside of buses have provided law enforcement officers and investigators with high resolution images that have aided in cases regarding thefts and missing persons. Most recently, investigators used camera images to clearly identify intent in a criminal incident, proving that effective video surveillance is vital to both passenger and community safety.

Superb video footage has also facilitated investigations into liability claims. "No longer is it a case of he said/she said—thanks to Apollo Video's system, video evidence can be quickly downloaded and reviewed to dispute or verify testimony," said Beaumont. In a recent incident, a passenger alleged that they lost hold of a handrail and fell while the bus was in motion, but video evidence proved that the bus was stopped during the fall. Thanks to the reliability of Apollo Video's equipment and footage, fraudulent claims have appeared to go down to nearly zero.

Even route scheduling has been positively impacted by Apollo Video's GPS tracking feature. By monitoring the punctuality and last location of each vehicle, WTA discovered one high volume route was coming in late every day, compelling the agency to add another bus to that route and thus improving overall passenger transit experience. And when WTA upgraded some of their systems to RoadRunner HD™ earlier this year, the new equipment integrated seamlessly with the existing system infrastructure.

At every operational level, Apollo Video's system has demonstrated to WTA how valuable a state-of-the-art video monitoring system can be. By decreasing fraudulent claims and improving the efficiency of fleet-wide maintenance, WTA is taking full advantage of all the benefits Apollo Video's system affords – shifting WTA's approach from a reactive agency to one that maximizes the benefits of their surveillance solution on a daily basis.

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Whatcom Transit Authority



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