



The City of Superior Deploys Granicus' Open Platform

City saves financially by implementing a low-cost, streaming video solution

Problem

Superior wanted to reach a broader audience with government content, specifically non-cable subscribers, and needed to find an alternative to cable broadcasting meetings and in-person attendance. Because they had to consider the city's budget, they needed a cost-effective solution.

Solution

By deploying Granicus' Open Platform, a low cost solution, the city was able to provide citizens with a more convenient means to public meetings through live and archived streaming on their website.

Benefits

During the first few months of streaming, Superior saw a significant reduction in public information requests and close to a thousand views to their council meetings. The city also gained the flexibility to easily add Granicus' Suites to their Open Platform, should they want to enhance their system in the future.

Superior needed an alternative to cable broadcasting council meetings

Superior has been cable broadcasting public meetings for over 20 years. With the increase of satellite TV and dish networks, city staff began to recognize that a large portion of the public could not gain access to their public meeting content. Non-cable subscribers could only obtain a copy of the meeting if they checked out a DVD through the public library or submitted a public information request to the city.

Staff members wanted to keep their citizens informed but needed a way to increase public awareness outside of the cable viewership. "We were really looking for a way to reach a wider audience," recalls Dan Shea, IS Manager for the City of Superior.

Additionally, it could be difficult for members of the public to attend meetings in-person, especially during the winter. "On a Tuesday night in January in Wisconsin, you don't always feel like going out to your car and driving to the government center to attend a meeting. We needed a flexible alternative," says Shea. Superior wanted to ensure that those who were interested in the public debate would have convenient access to it.

In late 2007, Superior began working with Granicus to find a solution for streaming media. "Everyone was on board with streaming council meetings but we had to consider our budget for the system. We talked about it and decided we did not need every bell and whistle, just a simple solution,"

Client Profile

Agency Type: Local Government
Population: 27,500
Client Since: 2009

Superior is located on the northwestern coast of Wisconsin and the westernmost tip of Lake Superior. It is home to the University of Wisconsin-Superior and offers many seasonal tourist attractions including Barker's Island Marina.

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- Dan Shea, IS Manager City of Superior

recalls Shea. Superior wanted to stream two Council meetings a month on their website, live and archived with the option of easily adding additional features in the future.

Superior deployed Granicus' Open Platform to stream council meetings through the city's website

To combat a challenging economy, Granicus created its Open Platform to provide government agencies with a basic streaming media functionality at a lower cost than an all-encompassing package. "We got a call from our sales representative last year who told us that Granicus had created some low-cost options to help customers with budgetary constraints," recalls Shea.

The Open Platform allowed Superior to stream meetings live and archived through their website. Superior's archived content has been indexed by agenda item, facilitating faster end-user access for specific topics in the video.

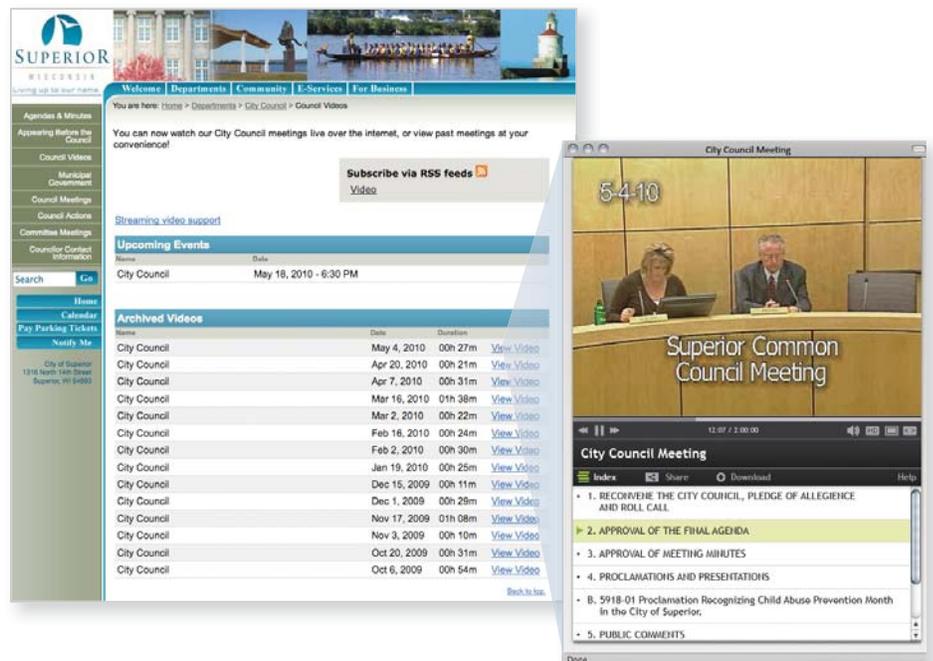
The Open Platform gave Superior optimal digital streaming with unlimited storage and distribution. It also gave the city the ability to webcast for an unlimited number of meeting bodies, allowing them to put more content online than just City Council meetings. Additionally, residents could subscribe to RSS feeds to receive automatic notifications when new videos have been posted to the city's website. With the Open Platform, the city could build onto their existing system with a variety of Granicus' Suites. Each Suite would provide additional functionalities and allow Superior to take their government transparency, efficiency, and citizen participation strategies to the next level.

Superior increased citizen awareness while reducing staff time fulfilling public information requests

Superior expanded access to public content, improved government communication, and provided a flexible alternative for citizens who cannot access the city's cable broadcast or attend meetings in person. The city received close to a thousand visitors to their online content within the first few months of webcasting with Granicus, broadening their reach to a wider audience and building more informed constituents.

"Because our citizens have another way to watch public meetings, this solution has helped get people more involved in government, and at a relatively low cost to the city," says Shea.

The public has been able to logon to the city's website to review meeting content and agenda items, decreasing the number of public information requests and the duplication of DVDs. The city also reported a reduction in staff time as well as the purchasing of resources, saving the agency funds related to open records requests.



Superior deployed a low-cost solution to provide video streaming to residents, live and archived.

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-Dan Shea, IS Manager City of Superior