



SANTA ANA, CA

CASE STUDY

ONEMEETING ROCK SOLID

OVERVIEW

Recognizing the need to be as inclusive and transparent as possible for all its residents, the City of Santa Ana made its public meetings accessible in both English and Spanish. The City hired translators and provided its meeting agendas in both languages, even making them accessible by QR codes. In order to provide meeting documents in two languages, however, city staff was forced to develop a tedious manual process that juggled five different software tools, including their current meeting software, and that required countless staff hours. By implementing the OneMeeting meeting management suite, Santa Ana was able to make the process infinitely more efficient, freeing up staff time to connect further with diverse populations in their community.

POPULATION

332,318

ONE MEETING COMPONENTS

- Agenda Automation
- Meeting Management
- Video Streaming
- Citizen Engagement
- Committee Manager



Santa Ana, CA Increases Public Meeting Access through Use of Spanish Language Tools

CHALLENGES

- Providing the diverse community of Santa Ana access to public meetings, including 77% of the population that speaks primarily Spanish
- Long, tedious “Agenda Publication Days” frequently kept staff working past midnight
- A manual process to provide multi-lingual access meant juggling five different systems to publish an agenda

Over the past decade, the numbers of non-English speakers have risen in all but seven states in the United States, with California reporting the highest growth percentage. The City of Santa Ana, California is home to a diverse population that includes 76.6% of their constituents identifying as Latinx.

Santa Ana City officials, including City Clerk Daisy Gomez, were faced with the challenges of increasing access to public meetings in terms of language and of pivoting to remote meetings.

CHALLENGES

As the City Clerk, Gomez wanted to ensure that meeting agendas available in both English and Spanish. While the current system was able to provide this capability, it required following a very extensive and manual process.

In fact, Gomez's team had to shuffle between five different software tools and required IT involvement to publish their city council agendas, which often kept them up working well past midnight on their "Agenda Publication Days".

SANTA ANA'S DRAWN-OUT AGENDA PROCESS

1. An Access database generated a draft or preliminary agenda
2. Attachments and exhibits were saved to SharePoint
3. Internal emails prompted review of the SharePoint attachments
4. Approved staff reports were reviewed and scanned to Laserfiche's Snapshot, and Laserfiche's Quick Fields numbered the pages
5. The agenda title and recommendation action were copied to an MS Word document, and saved as a text file
6. The text file was imported to the other agenda management solution where the signed staff report, and exhibits were attached
7. The entire agenda was reformatted into an MS Word document
8. IT would convert the document from Word to HTML to allow for Google Translate
9. A QR code was added so that residents could access the meeting easily on their phones

Though this process did provide multilingual access to the meeting agenda, the tedium and late hours it required were not sustainable.

With a distinguished 19-year public service career, Daisy Gomez was all too familiar with designing and deploying modern technologies, having supported the design and implementation of everything from voting and elections systems to legislative management and public records management tools. She clearly understood that there was a need to streamline the process for efficiency, transparency, and accountability, and set out in search of a better way to meet the City's goals.



Daisy Gomez

THE SOLUTION

The City of Santa Ana, CA broke the greater challenge down into smaller pieces and began addressing them one by one

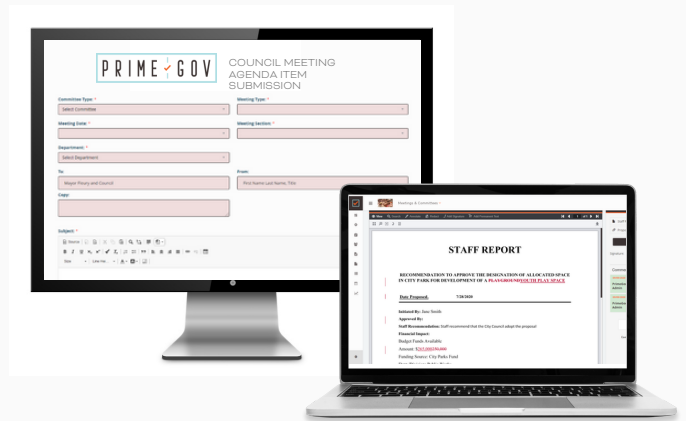
VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Like many other cities, the COVID-19 pandemic forced Santa Ana to move to virtual meetings at a moment's notice. Quickly after the shutdown began, Santa Ana offered virtual access to council meetings via Zoom, removing the sometimes-insurmountable step for residents to make it to chambers for meetings in person. Participation quickly grew as residents no longer had to coordinate transportation, line up childcare, or fight Southern California's notorious traffic to join a public meeting; instead, they could take part using their computer or mobile device. An option to simply dial in was available as well, and participation numbers continued to grow, far surpassing viewing numbers for the meeting on the local cable access channel (CTV3).



With such a strong demand from the public for this virtual access, virtual meetings are still practiced by many California cities, including Santa Ana. While bills presented to the California state legislature to allow

continued virtual meeting access failed this legislative session, Daisy is hopeful and optimistic that they will eventually be adopted.



NEW MEETING MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Santa Ana transitioned their meeting management solution to the OneMeeting meeting management suite, upgrading their manual process to a truly integrated, streamlined meeting management solution.

OneMeeting manages agenda translation using Google Translate. HTML agendas available on the public portal automatically display a language drop down option that converts the agenda into 100+ different languages.

**ONEMEETING'S
TRANSLATION FEATURE
MAKES AGENDAS
AVAILABLE IN OVER 100
DIFFERENT LANGUAGES**

THE SOLUTION

MEETING TRANSLATION

Because the City of Santa Ana has such a large population of Spanish speakers, Daisy also found it vital to have a Spanish translator on hand to interpret public comments made in Spanish during City Council meetings. Additionally, a separate encoder interprets council meetings in Spanish, so that residents can listen to meeting recordings in their choice of English or Spanish.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Although she had already made such headway in opening up public meetings to the community, Daisy didn't stop there. She discovered another interesting challenge of helping non-English speakers participate in public meetings: an undercurrent of government distrust. This sense of unease in the community prevented constituents from even wanting to participate in public meetings, never mind learning how to do so. Daisy set out into the community and trained members of neighborhood associations and culture-specific community groups how to use the new technology to join meetings virtually. Daisy's willingness to truly connect allowed her to establish inroads in her community, shifting wariness to a desire to participate, to be well informed, and to understand policymaker decisions.

In working towards Santa Ana's goal to be as transparent and inclusive as possible, Daisy ultimately found that there were three main areas of focus to increase access:

- 1 Streamlining the process that made meeting items accessible to the public
- 2 Improving the ease of access and overall transparency for the public by using user-friendly online portals
- 3 Increasing ways the public can contact the City and access information



RESULTS

Impactful results presented themselves across the board, in a variety of different areas for staff and residents alike.

SPANISH ACCESS

Meeting agendas are now available in 100+ languages with minimal IT support. Spanish translators assist with live interpretations during meetings, and residents can listen to meeting recordings in their choice of English or Spanish.

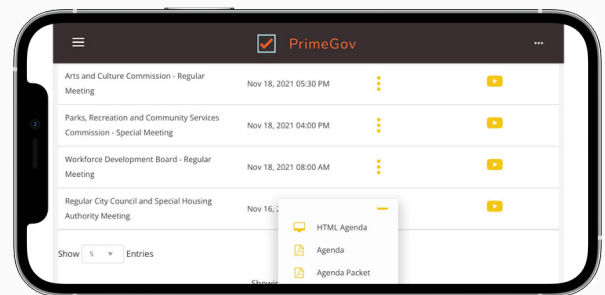
Daisy admits that though Google Translate isn't always perfect and lacks contextual clues, it is still a massive improvement and has been much easier overall for residents to use.

EFFICIENCY, UNLOCKED

The OneMeeting meeting management suite truly streamlined the process. The long nights spent on Agenda Publication Days are now long gone, and the staff can work regular hours again. IT involvement is no longer necessary. And with COVID-19 still interrupting "normal work", OneMeeting's cloud-based solution also means staff can access the full system on any modern browser, from anywhere, removing the need to be in the office to collaborate and to get their work done.

RESIDENTS, ENGAGED

Remote meetings increased the number of public meeting attendees. Santa Ana residents find the new OneMeeting meeting management solution helpful, as it provides an organized, centralized, and informational platform that is accessible from any device, including cellphones. Spanish speakers are better equipped to understand and to join public meetings. Mobile device access helps diminish the participation gap for those that remain less likely to own a traditional computer or have high-speed internet access at home.



Additionally, residents can now provide feedback digitally on initiatives with comments on agenda items and even request to speak remotely, further improving resident engagement.

“My staff and IT had sometimes been working through a manual process until 8pm and sometimes even midnight to publish our agenda. Now, with OneMeeting, we leave by the end of business day.”

- Daisy Gomez
Clerk of the Council, Santa Ana, CA

RESULTS

EQUITY ACROSS PUBLIC MEETINGS

All public meetings now receive the same functionalities, workflows, and streamlined process, not just City Council meetings. Residents get meeting information a lot sooner and it's a lot easier for staff.

A TRUE SOFTWARE PARTNER

Daisy admitted that the City left its previous meeting solution because not only was a certain functionality lacking, but there were also many technical issues and not enough knowledge or drive on the vendor's end to improve. In fact, the company had contacted Daisy to ask, "How are you doing the Spanish translation on our platform?"



OneMeeting's meeting functionality was built knowing the end goal, a result of the leadership team's extensive industry experience and knowledge. Instead of piecing multiple products together over the years via acquisitions, OneMeeting's meeting management suite is truly one solution for the entire public meeting process, making it not only easier to use, but also more stable and secure.

When Santa Ana moved to OneMeeting, Daisy appreciated OneMeeting's dedicated implementation team that not only understood her city's needs, but truly partnered with them to ensure the project's success. OneMeeting's customer service team continues the successful relationship, proving to be incredibly responsive and knowledgeable across the product suite, ensuring that there isn't just one expert for the team to rely on. Daisy confirms the OneMeeting customer service does "an excellent job."

ABOUT ONEMEETING BY ROCK SOLID TECHNOLOGY

OneMeeting, formerly known as PrimeGov, empowers local governments to optimize and digitize their agenda, meeting, and committee management processes with a single end-to-end, cloud-based solution. With OneMeeting, you can seamlessly host hybrid meetings with remote voting capabilities, saving time, increasing efficiency, and promoting transparency with your constituents.