Train to win:

Harnessing the latest technology trends for government training and learning

SAMSUNG

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The training gap

Federal government agencies are no strangers to training and continued learning. A Pew Institute survey found that 83% of those who work for the government have had some job training in the past year, while only 50% who work for small businesses have had such training[3]. With employees already familiar with training, certification and professional development, federal, state, and local government agencies are uniquely poised to attract and retain high-caliber workers in civilian and DoD sectors alike.

Though government workers often participate in a broad range of ongoing training, they also tend to have technology gaps–just because training is continuous doesn't mean it is effective. The key to successful training is incorporating the right technologies to improve employee upskilling and retention. Government agencies need to invest in secure, compliant interactivity adapted for remote, hybrid, and in-person work environments.

Curating the necessary technology can transform training and education programs, but outfitting conference rooms and other learning environments often appears at the bottom of a long list of budgetary needs. However, it's important to note that 65% of people are visual learners[2]–emphasizing that environments where learning and training take place need modern display technology and compatibility.

So, what can be done to bridge this technology gap, and how can agencies train to win?

The technology-driven solution

The executive branch has made clear that it wants federal agencies to be more agile, secure, and equitable. A big part of that involves empowering federal workers to use advanced technology to engage with the public, share information, and collaborate with peers. In an effort to meet those goals, some agencies are evaluating the use of the latest interactive technology to support ongoing training requirements for hybrid work while ensuring equity and strong outcomes.

The key devices to enhance engagement in training programs:

- **Interactive displays:** Perfect for in-person or remote training, displays provide exciting visuals and allow for team members to effectively collaborate with multi-touch interactivity and robust annotation capabilities.

- **Video conferencing:** Many devices support this, and it's the easiest to have a face-to-face with hybrid or remote teams.

- **Monitors:** Many monitors come equipped with a camera to support video conferencing, while providing a larger personal screen than mobile or tablet.

- **Wall displays:** Custom large-format displays are suitable for bigger areas where the need to share information with an entire team can be done on a visually stunning floor-to-ceiling screen.

- **Content management:** Screens can do more than help train and educate, they can also serve as a way to update employees. A connected device fleet can help with communication of goals, appreciations, or emergency warnings.
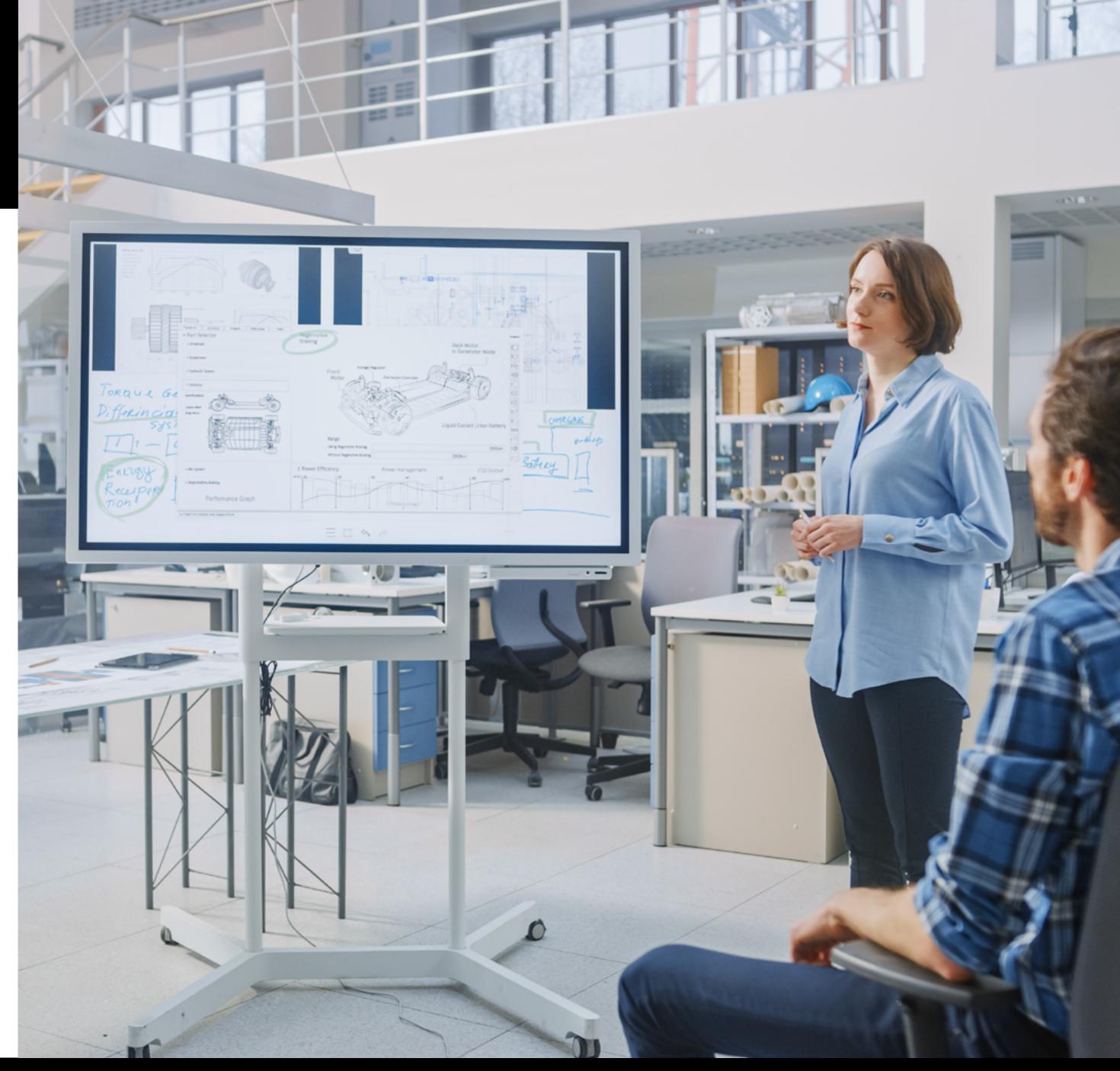
These technologies are most effective when integrated into a digital ecosystem that delivers on all of an agency's or department's needs. When more advanced models are purchased, an agency will see improved longevity and ROI.

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The battle to stay current

Why is improved training so important? Many agencies only update training materials and practices as required or add learning when they see employees falling behind. Instead of reacting to immediate needs, agencies should move toward proactively training for forecasted issues. This not only allows better planning for workloads and HR, but helps combat potential staffing shortages.

When planning for technology training investments, it's important to keep in mind that many federal employees are "digital natives" who have grown up interacting with intuitive touch screens rather than with older analog equipment. They expect that same experience in their jobs. In order to recruit and retain the best employees, the training technology used must provide a level of visual excitement while making it easier to access materials when and where employees want it.

For example, by the end of 2020, one-third of U.S. employers said the skills gap had increased compared to 2019[6]. At least 80% said they had difficulty filling openings because of skills gaps and 28% of government executives said they are experiencing digital skills shortages[1], a major hindrance both now and in the future. Keep teams and agencies competitive and avoid skills gaps by offering the most up-to-date learning and training.

Continuous training

Federal, state, and local agencies are charged with protecting, serving, and representing the interests of the U.S. public on a daily basis. However, not all aspects of government have adapted to accommodate the needs of the American people. Government jobs and training are not always aligned with employee needs or expectations.

Today's workplace has seen an increase in the number of employees pursuing upskilling and reskilling, with or without requirements from companies. A survey from Monster found that 29% of candidates expect employers to care about training staff[11]. Therefore, many agencies are rethinking their approach to training with an eye toward continuous learning. Instead of a one-time "event," continuous learning is an ongoing process that ensures employees have access to the most relevant training materials at all times— both online and on-the-job. By implementing continuous learning, agencies will also lay a foundation for a culture of learning and curiosity.

Interactive learning in action

With a well-designed module on an interactive display, employees can access training when they need it, while managers can assess individual performance in real time and provide feedback as necessary. Real-time interaction and multiple ways to connect and participate can be key for saving administrative time while producing better lessons and content.

Imagine a dashboard where each individual employee's training progression was visible and where the supervisor could provide feedback on that progression in several ways. The supervisor could annotate on the learning module to provide suggestions for the employee to consider or they could direct an employee to more relevant material to help them better grasp the ideas at hand. This interaction helps make the training feel more collaborative and less like an isolated chore.

Support continuous on-the-job learning

Outdated learning and training systems deliver weak user experience and poor outcomes, which can drain motivation while creating a negative feedback loop from employees. Federal entities need to offer more sophisticated and visually stimulating training experiences to gain people's attention and improve memory retention[5].

One challenge many agencies are facing is that employees are often spread out across multiple locations, making it difficult for them to come together for training or to collaborate with one another when working on projects. Teams can participate by:

- Training via video conferencing

- Collaborating on projects using screen sharing tools in interactive displays

- Connecting their devices to participate in brainstorming

- Annotating on any screen or document live

- Problem solving together with touch screen interactivity

Start by adding interactive technology in high-traffic communal spaces like conference rooms and training facilities for the most immediate impact with upgrades. Then consider improvements to additional collaboration areas, such as smaller meeting rooms used for one-on-one virtual training or open-plan gathering spaces that encourage teams to congregate and interact.

By integrating displays and video conferencing into your agency's networks, teams can collaborate and share more easily on-site and remotely. Employees can work together in real-time to brainstorm using interactive displays as a collaboration hub while relying on video conferencing to enhance team communication—encouraging greater internal alignment and a culture of learning.

Embracing tech trends and hybrid work

The future of many government workplaces will be hybrid. The challenge for agencies is figuring out how to best equip employees with the right technology and solutions as they work across hybrid environments—whether they are remote or in the office. Luckily, a training technology upgrade can also directly support the switch to permanent hybrid workplaces.

By analyzing critical needs and the types of work best suited to virtual environments, teams can transition or adapt smoothly to tech upgrades and new modalities of training. In fact, interactive displays are ideally suited for meeting the needs of public sector workers—especially those who perform jobs requiring data analysis and visualization.

Hybrid training can be done easily and efficiently using interactive displays combined with video conferencing tools. Together, these technologies allow for an interactive experience where participants are actively engaged and learning new skills in collaboration whether in the classroom or dispersed across time zones. For example, if an employee needs to learn how to

use new software or equipment, they will be able to see the instructor demonstrate it on an interactive display with video conferencing, ask questions and then practice what they learned. This can make all the difference when training people to do essential tasks correctly and safely.

Interactive displays also allow multiple devices to connect for broader collaboration and can promote hands-on training with touch screen technology. Unlike online webinars that merely involve passive lecture watching, interactive displays enable employees to physically engage with the training at hand, whether they're sketching, taking notes, asking questions, answering polls, or posting ideas. Employees can also share content from their device's screen to the interactive display or to other individual classmates, and vice versa. Agencies can even choose to have a large monitor and an interactive display in the same room so the display can be used to work on while the monitor can act as a video conferencing gallery featuring employees in different locations.
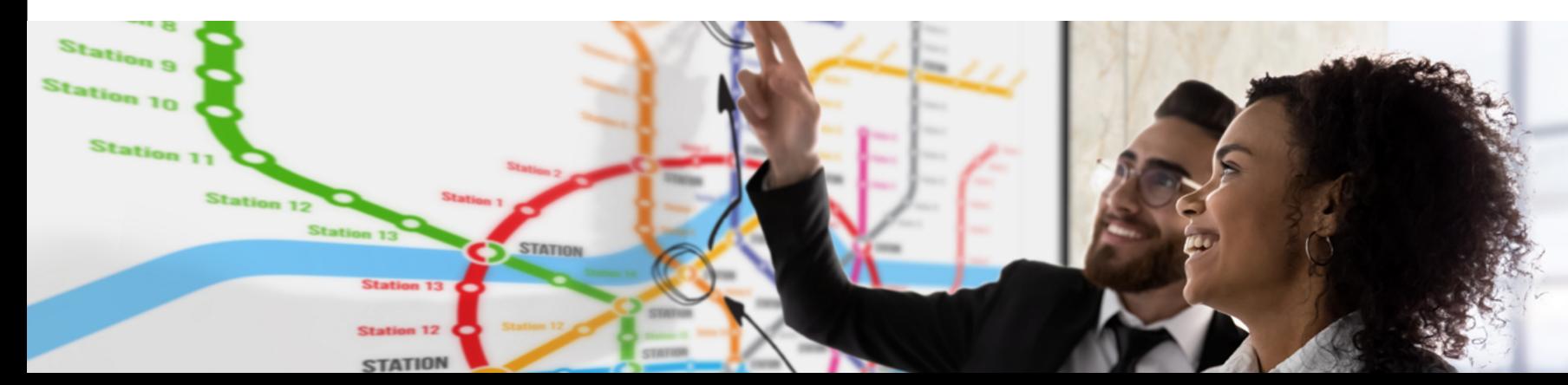
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Key technology: interactive displays

Government agencies and teams need agility and confidence in complex and dynamic environments. The right technology can provide that while also amplifying messages and directives. Interactive displays are a key piece of training technology and can serve as an all-in-one training and educational resource. Used as the centerpiece in modernizing training programs, displays can combine tactile learning with the unlimited potential of digital platforms and content.

Interactive displays offer high-quality visuals that are expected from any top television or computer monitor along with the benefits of a tablet-like touchscreen. A full HD display provides crisp, clear images with vibrant colors that bring content to life and help people stay engaged in dynamic discussions and training environments. Here are some of the key considerations to bear in mind while evaluating partners and solutions:

- **Simplicity:** Instructors and presenters do not want to stand at the front of a room while struggling to pull up a presentation. They want to be able to turn on a device, display content, and start engaging with their audience in as few steps as possible. Avoid wasting time calibrating screens or addressing connectivity issues by selecting interactive displays that provide a quick and intuitive experience right out of the box. Test connectivity with a range of devices when evaluating display options.

- **Security:** Keeping technology compliant and secure is of the utmost importance for government agencies. All modern devices should allow for password protection or other authentication, but with advanced interactive displays, there should be more customizable security features. For example, IT teams can work in-person or remotely to control critical display settings like powering the display on and off, changing pin codes, locking the network settings or USB ports, and adjusting proxy server settings. They can also ensure no unauthorized person can access a display or change its content.

- **Responsiveness:** Check how many touchpoints can be used at once while also testing the real-time responsiveness of the interactive displays you are considering. Look for whether instantaneous annotation over any internet search or document is available and if recalibration is forced. Also see what kind of tools can be used to interact with the touch screens so the costs of replacing writing implements can be factored into maintenance.

- **Upgradeability:** One of the great advantages of displays with cloud-based technology is the ability to continually upgrade the operating system and software as new features and security updates are released. But not all interactive displays enable such upgrades or make them easy to install. Without periodic upgrades, all devices become antiqued quickly. An advanced display should always provide ways to seamlessly access the latest features.

- **Versatility:** Good interactive displays should work in a variety of settings with a broad array of devices, operating systems, and apps. Interactive displays should also integrate seamlessly with various kinds of media–this versatility is crucial for driving the strongest return on investment and future-proofing.

- **Sustainability:** Choose a partner whose sustainability goals align with your agency's by looking at their long-term objectives and programs. Some of these initiatives include sustainable packaging design, the reduction of carbon footprints through the use of recycled materials, or using renewable energy.

- **Collaboration:** Go beyond only projecting to annotate on any screen or document to share ideas more fully. From hybrid work and experiential learning to training and professional development, there are a multitude of ways an advanced display can elevate any collaborative environment. Interactive displays also streamline hybrid collaboration for teams in different locations or with dynamic needs.

- **Seamless ecosystem:** While one display can engage teams inside a room, multiple displays in multiple locations can be connected to act as a responsive communication system. This can be especially helpful if an announcement or emergency alert needs to reach everyone immediately. Typically this is done through a CMS like Samsung's MagicINFO Cloud that acts as a single source for display fleets.

Implementing security and compliance

With the increasing number of cyberattacks and security breaches, identity theft, and other cybercrimes, it is crucial to have a secure training system in place that adheres to regulations for each agency. A growing dependency on electronic communications and records makes agencies especially susceptible to hackers and other threats.

How does this affect a training technology refresh? To begin, security across the entire hardware and software network is critical. Agencies will need to support security awareness training for both IT professionals and employees by installing the right devices. This will ultimately help or hinder an agency's overall security.

Security is a key topic for employee training, as human error is a leading risk to cybersecurity[4]. Despite products that meet federal security requirements, employees still need to be trained around:

- Malware
- Email scams
- Removable media
- Safe web browsing
- Social networking dangers

- Data management
- Physical security and environmental controls
- Clean desk policy
- Bring-your-own-device

If an agency invests in high-quality interactive displays, those devices can be remotely controlled and connected for cohesive messaging and notifications. With the ability to manage security features at different levels, both in-person and remotely, interactive displays can provide immersive learning while meeting all compliance standards.

Security principals for all agencies

Another sizable challenge is that government agencies are diverse entities with highly varied missions, which means that a one-size-fits-all approach to security simply won't work. In addition, both security and compliance issues differ from one agency to another. Each agency must develop its own solutions, but in doing so, there are some broad security principles that can be applied across all agencies:

- **Visibility:** A key aspect of effective security is visibility into who is doing what with what data.

- **Authentication:** The ability to verify the identity of users before allowing access to information can play a critical role in maintaining confidentiality.

- **Encryption:** Storing information in an encrypted form will prevent unauthorized people from accessing it even if they should obtain it somehow.

- **Controlled communication:** Limiting access to information to only those who need it will help maintain confidentiality as well as help with compliance issues.

- **Reporting/auditing:** Effective systems for reporting on who accessed what data makes it easier to maintain compliance with regulatory requirements at minimal cost.

A technology refresh should incorporate pieces that satisfy security needs without leaving lingering questions. Ensure key stakeholders in IT and other departments are involved in the evaluation process before settling on purchases to create peace of mind while checking all the right boxes on security.

Transforming training for tomorrow

Adapting an agency or department's ongoing training requirements to hybrid work while ensuring equity and strong outcomes is no longer optional. However, selecting which tools an agency employs is still a choice. For government agencies, technology is the most critical component in employee training, and interactive displays are essential to make that training engaging and effective.

Only half of respondents to an in-depth study by Accenture say their agency is leveraging data effectively[1]. Training backed by the latest technology can ensure that is no longer the case, while broadening team skill sets, and attracting and retaining top talent.

Agencies can train to win with Samsung's brilliant interactive display solutions. With deep expertise working alongside government agencies, Samsung is a great strategic resource for elevating any training program with secure, compliant interactive technology adapted for remote, hybrid, and in-person work. Our solutions are designed to ensure government employees learn and retain the skills they need to successfully serve the American people.

If you'd like to learn more about how Samsung's dynamic and brilliant interactive displays bridge the technology gap and how your federal agency can train to win, get in touch today.

Footnotes

1. 2 Bradford, W. C. (2011). Reaching the Visual Learner: Teaching Property Through Art. SSRN.

2. 3 Horrigan, J. B. (2020). Lifelong Learning and Technology. Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech.

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