

# Focusing on the Culture Side of TSMO for Agency Adoption



By Missouri Department of Transportation

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## Benefits Statement

MoDOT's TSMO initiative improves safety through real-time traffic management, intelligent systems, and public education on safer travel. It saves time by streamlining incident response and increasing coordination across teams, reducing delays and duplicate efforts. It saves money by maximizing use of existing infrastructure and promoting low-cost, high-impact solutions. Their video series, website, and cross-departmental teams build a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring staff and stakeholders apply TSMO strategies efficiently and effectively statewide.

## In this case study you will learn:

1. How MoDOT uses TSMO strategies to improve safety and traffic operations.
2. How internal culture, communication, and training drive TSMO success.
3. How low-cost, innovative tools like videos and collaboration save time and money.

## BACKGROUND

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) has a proven track record of success in improving transportation system safety and mobility. MoDOT's commitment to Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) strategies is evident at many levels of the organization. MoDOT's core values of safety, stability, and service are at the heart of every program, especially the tangible results brought through TSMO. But what about the culture piece? This is often the largest and most challenging TSMO strategy in which to make progress. MoDOT recognizes that effective TSMO adoption throughout the organization depends on telling the story of TSMO. This is more than just deploying TSMO strategies - it's truly the heart of a shift in agency culture to institutionalize TSMO.

MoDOT recently launched its TSMO website as a way to educate, inform, and create buy-in for operations and technology throughout the department and with stakeholders. A carefully planned website is an excellent strategic and lower effort way to tell an agency's TSMO story. After the launch, MoDOT sought to add additional, meaningful content and added a video series. MoDOT's TSMO Success Stories video series is a practitioner-to-practitioner opportunity that provides examples of TSMO in action. The videos are publicly available and are often viewed by the public, key stakeholders, and elected officials in addition to MoDOT staff. By focusing on communication, collaboration, and internal engagement, MoDOT has transformed its approach to TSMO, making it more accessible and widely understood than ever before. MoDOT understands that a variety of mediums (website, print, and video) are a key strategy to making TSMO information accessible to a wide audience.

This unique nomination demonstrates MoDOT's focus on TSMO culture and how it led to clear

benefits for MoDOT, its employees, and the traveling public. This project is a model for other agencies hoping to advance TSMO within their culture, or any agency seeking an innovative in-house solution to demonstrate the benefits of TSMO.



## TSMO PLANNING, STRATEGIES AND DEPLOYMENT

Following MoDOT's Capability Maturity Model (CMM) exercises, the development of the MoDOT TSMO Teams, Success Stories, and TSMO website initiatives were truly ignited. With the goal of fostering a culture of collaboration, communication, and continuous improvement across the department and among key stakeholders, both the TSMO Team and video series go hand in hand.

It is important to note that MoDOT does not have its own TSMO department or dedicated TSMO position. This makes the creation of a TSMO focus and culture within the organization even more important by bringing TSMO to every department. This way, every MoDOT employee is encouraged to be a TSMO champion. The TSMO website is a critical component in assisting Mo-

DOT employees to have a foundation of TSMO in their everyday roles, thereby advancing MoDOT's Capability Maturity Model (CMM) ranking.



**TSMO Teams:** Bringing together diverse teams creates a collaborative culture with common goals. The MoDOT TSMO Teams include: traffic management, incident response, public information officers (PIOs), District Engineers, construction, maintenance, design, planning, IT, emergency management, central office program managers, agency leadership, and other partners.

MoDOT's TSMO teams were formed in 2018, establishing an early commitment to TSMO. This foresight was a catalyst to the excellent TSMO program that MoDOT has created. The fact that the TSMO Teams have surpassed COVID and have grown is a testament to the value of this leadership.

**TSMO Success Stories Video Series:** As the TSMO Teams grew and expanded in their focus, the members sought a creative way to showcase the benefits of TSMO. Approximately one year

ago, the first TSMO Success Story video was launched on the MoDOT TSMO webpage. The TSMO Success Stories series highlights innovative solutions to traffic management, safety, and mobility for all of Missouri. The way the information is presented makes it accessible and understandable for a wide variety of audiences. The project began by focusing on how to align organizational objectives with TSMO strategies, ensuring that each division and employee saw the value and role of TSMO in their daily tasks. To date, the MoDOT TSMO Success Stories series was posted 10 unique and meaningful short videos to tell the story and benefit of TSMO. Additional videos are planned to focus on rural TSMO, TSMO and safety, and TSMO Basics. View the current videos here: <https://www.modot.org/tsmo-success-stories>

## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING AND EXECUTION

Advancing TSMO at MoDOT takes a multi-faceted approach internal to MoDOT and with the public and key stakeholders. The goal: create lasting change in transportation management through strategic outreach, interagency collaboration, and with clear leadership awareness.

To implement the TSMO Teams, Success Stories, and website initiatives effectively, MoDOT worked on incorporating cultural change across multiple facets of the organization. Early on, MoDOT leadership identified the need to integrate TSMO into the core agency culture. This was done through:

- Internal Coordination Meetings
- Agency Training
- Long-Range TSMO Initiative Planning
- Workshops

These strategies offered in-depth opportunities

for TSMO learning, helping employees to understand the technical and organizational aspects of TSMO as well as the broader benefits of safety and mobility.

The TSMO Teams, Success Stories video series, and website all involved key stakeholders and agency partners to develop the foundational elements and test deliverables. This contributed to a shared vision for TSMO that goes beyond just MoDOT and into the broader transportation goals for Missouri and the region.

### **MoDOT uses their core values to enhance TSMO understanding with the public:**

**Safety:** In TSMO outreach, MoDOT prioritizes public outreach about how intelligent transportation systems, real-time traveler information, and incident management strategies contribute to safer roads.

**Service:** MoDOT's commitment to service is reflected in TSMO outreach by ensuring that innovative and effective transportation solutions are meeting Missouri's evolving needs. Collaborative engagement through visual storytelling is key.

**Stability:** TSMO emphasizes long-term stability by promoting technology in transportation that optimizes existing infrastructure. Real-time traffic updates keep motorists informed and helps the transportation network work more efficiently, now, and into the future.

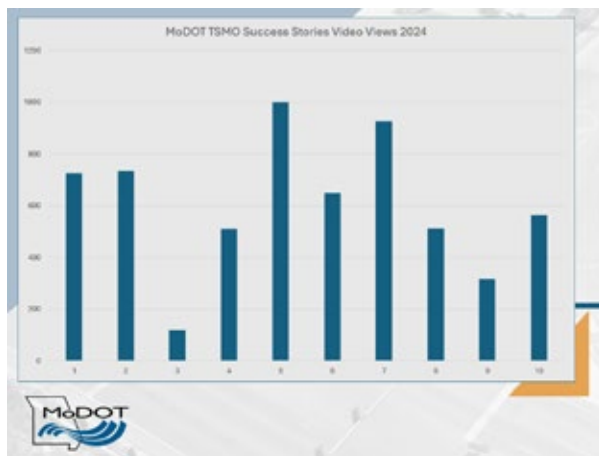
## **OUTCOME, BENEFITS AND LEARNINGS**

The TSMO Teams, Success Stories, and website solutions were successful and achieved their goals. The video series complements other MoDOT TSMO web resources and demonstrates value for TSMO solutions through a different engagement medium. The TSMO understanding fostered by the Success Stories videos has led to improvements in MoDOT operations in the areas of incident response, collaboration, and stakeholder engagement. The TSMO Success

Stories serve as examples of how TSMO can directly benefit communities through innovation and technology.

Through the TSMO Teams, a forum has been created for important discussions of real-world case studies on TSMO strategies. These case studies have a global perspective and not just the traffic operations silo. TSMO Team coordination has also helped to optimize resources through reduction of duplicate efforts.

MoDOT's strategic TSMO outreach endeavor to provide ongoing learning opportunities for MoDOT employees, key stakeholders, and the public. The TSMO website has additional content planned that will refresh the site, making it one to bookmark and return to for future learning.



Since its launch, the MoDOT TSMO Success Stories video series has reached an amazing viewership of over 6,000 views. The video series was not heavily advertised which makes this incredible milestone a testament to the quality and need of the series.