

Enterprise Records Video, Shares Events with Global Workforce

Mentor Graphics deployed Cisco TelePresence Content Server for live broadcasts and video on demand.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mentor Graphics Corporation

- Hardware and Software Design
- Wilsonville, Oregon
- 4700 Employees

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Include global workforce in corporate events and training
- Reduce travel time, costs, and environmental impact
- Minimize IT burden for video recording

NETWORK SOLUTION

- Cisco TelePresence Content Server for high-definition video recording and streaming
- Cisco TelePresence C Series and Cisco TelePresence Movi Software for viewing

BUSINESS RESULTS

- Avoided US\$200,000 for professional recording of annual sales event
- Enabled employees to easily record video without involvement by IT
- Contributed toward \$2 million in annual travel savings

Business Challenge

Headquartered in Oregon, Mentor Graphics Corporation is a global leader in electronic hardware and software design solutions, providing products, consulting services, and support for electronic, semiconductor, and systems companies. Approximately 4700 employees work in 75 sites, 27 of those in North America alone.

Communicating with a dispersed workforce is a traditional challenge in global enterprises. "We try to minimize travel because of the costs, time, and carbon emissions," says Jamie Hanifin, a collaboration engineer for Mentor Graphics. "But being able to participate in corporate events and meetings is critical for employees to work effectively on virtual teams and feel part of the company."

In 2007, Mentor Graphics began capturing video of events to share with employees who could not attend in person. Initially, the IT team hired an audio-visual production company to record major events, such as the annual sales meeting. The results were good, but costs for the film crew, transforming the video to digital format, and publishing on the web approached \$200,000.

Mentor Graphics IT team avoided these costs for smaller events, such as training sessions, by using a commercial video recording solution. But the user experience was unreliable, mostly because employees needed a specific version of the video player software to view the event. "We kept a chat window open during video broadcasts to respond to frustrated users with the wrong software," says Hanifin.

To increase the business value of video for travel reduction and global collaboration, Mentor Graphics sought a more efficient method to capture training and companywide meetings. "To maximize the business value of video, we needed high adoption, which requires a simple, reliable user experience," Hanifin says.

Network Solution

Mentor Graphics found its solution in Cisco TelePresence® Content Server, which records video from any video conferencing endpoint, adapts it for viewing on different devices, and streams the video live or on demand. "We already used Cisco TelePresence Systems for collaboration within the company," says John Byers, collaboration engineer with Mentor Graphics. "Using the same vendor for video recording would simplify support. Cisco TelePresence Content Server also meets our requirements for high-definition video, flexible storage options, and ease of use for employees."

PRODUCT LIST

Telepresence

- Cisco TelePresence Content Server
- Cisco TelePresence Movi
- Cisco TelePresence C-Series Systems

The IT team needed only two hours to set up the Cisco® TelePresence Content Server, and two days to move existing videos from the old server.

A sampling of events that Mentor Graphics has recorded and shared to date includes:

- **Annual sales meeting, with 700 attendees:** The IT team brought Cisco TelePresence Content Servers to the hotel where the meeting was held, capturing video of the presenter as well as presentations. Remote employees could view the live broadcast from any of Mentor Graphics' 100 or so conference rooms that have Cisco TelePresence systems. In addition, employees who had Cisco TelePresence Movi software could watch the high-definition broadcast on their PCs, either live or on-demand. Other employees watched from their Windows-based PCs, without any special software other than a browser. The company has also successfully tested playback on iPads and Android-based tablets.
- **Annual companywide meeting with the chief executive officer:** Employees viewed the live broadcast in conference rooms or on their own desktops with Cisco TelePresence Movi. After the meeting, the IT team published a link to the recording for employees in other time zones or employees who had scheduling conflicts. "Video capture, live broadcast, and recording worked perfectly," says Byers. "A consistent video user experience strengthens executives' confidence in IT, making it easier to get budget for other projects that will increase company efficiency."
- **Meetings and events held in Mentor Graphics' offices:** Employees simply visit a webpage to schedule a video recording or streaming session in one of the company's 100 conference rooms. They receive an email with a web address that they simply paste into calendar invites so that people can watch the meeting live or on demand. A few minutes before the meeting, the Cisco TelePresence Content Server automatically begins recording. "We have conducted eight simultaneous recordings on Cisco TelePresence Content Server, with no performance degradation," says Hanifin.

To avoid limiting recording length, Mentor Graphics decided to store recordings on a separate device rather than on the Cisco TelePresence Content Server itself. Most videos are one to five hours, and the company currently has 1500 hours of archived video, useful for training.

"The Cisco TelePresence Content Server provides a simple and reliable user experience, leading to higher adoption than our previous solution."

— Jamie Hanifin, Collaboration Engineer, Mentor Graphics Corporation

Business Results

High Adoption, Increasing Return on Investment

Since 2007, Mentor Graphics employees have increased video capture from 90 hours to approximately 1000 hours monthly, a more than 1000 percent increase. The company attributes growing adoption both to travel reduction initiatives and the simple user experience. "The Cisco TelePresence Content Server provides a simple and reliable user experience, leading to higher adoption than our previous solution," says Hanifin.

Mentor Graphics reduced travel costs by \$2 million from 2009 to 2010, and credits Cisco TelePresence Content Server with playing a major role. “Hassle-free recording and viewing make managers more likely to use video for events instead of requiring in-person attendance,” says Byers.

Enabling Collaboration with a Global Workforce

Business video is helping Mentor Graphic’s global workforce to collaborate across time zones. “With Cisco TelePresence, employees in India can easily view a team meeting in California, either as it is happening, or days, weeks, or months later,” says Byers. “Being able to see people face to face helps foster trust in virtual teams.”

Self-Service, Freeing up IT Team

Mentor Graphics no longer needs to assign IT engineers to set up and manage video recording. Instead, employees schedule the Cisco TelePresence System as they do ordinarily, and simply check a box to indicate if they want to record the event, broadcast it live, or both. Recording begins automatically, a few minutes before the meeting is scheduled to begin. “We on the IT team don’t even need to know when recordings are occurring,” says Hanifin.

Certain employees can do simple editing, again, without involvement by IT. “It’s easy to edit videos to trim off the ends, for instance, or to omit sensitive information such as customer names,” says Byers.

The IT team saves itself the time to add and delete users, because Cisco TelePresence Content Server integrates with Microsoft Active Directory. The IT team only needs to indicate whether employees are authorized to edit videos in addition to viewing.

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— John Byers, Collaboration Engineer, Mentor Graphics Corporation

Next Steps

Now Mentor Graphics is preparing to further increase its use of video for communications and training. One plan is adding load balancing across multiple Cisco TelePresence Content Servers, to make sure performance remains consistent with more simultaneous recording sessions. Another plan is taking advantage of the feature that exports recorded videos to a podcast format.

“The scalability and ease of use of Cisco TelePresence Content Server are helping us deliver a great user experience, even as more employees use it for more events,” says Byers.

For More Information

To learn more about Cisco TelePresence solutions, including Cisco TelePresence Content Server, visit:
<http://www.cisco.com/go/telepresence>.



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