

Global Transportation Company Sets Innovation Milestone, Delivering Business-Critical Information to Employees Companywide

Executive Summary

CUSTOMER

Global Transportation and Logistics Company

INDUSTRY

Transportation

CHALLENGES

Replace outdated, paper-based communications platform with digital media platform that provides business-critical information in real time to tens of thousands of global employees, regardless of location

STRATEGY

- Conducted workshops focused on long-term vision for digital communications
- Developed roadmap that prioritized strategy initiatives and provided solutions concepts

SOLUTION

- Digital media platform: centralized content management system, video-enabled network technology, caching engines, digital media players, and large high-definition LCD screens enable end-to-end delivery of business-critical content

RESULTS

- Solution implemented at one of company's sorting facilities
- Plans to deploy solution at hundreds of locations over the next two years, with an estimated economic benefit of up to US\$50 million annually

Background

Tens of thousands of employees of a large transportation and logistics company reside in a “non-office” environment (such as terminals and sorting facilities around the globe) and do not always have access to company news, corporate communications, and business-critical information. Other means of delivering information—for example, printed materials and videotapes—had become outdated, making it difficult to communicate with employees companywide. To address this, the company set out to provide every employee access to important information—anywhere, anytime—using engaging digital media formats.

Challenges

The ambitious plans of providing every employee, regardless of role or location, with access to important company news and other critical business information in real time is a lofty, yet doable undertaking.

For decades, this large transportation company has relied on more traditional means for delivering company information. For example, a satellite network delivers content such as daily company news feeds and executive communications to television screens; paper-based processes such as signage and memos posted on break-room bulletin boards keep employees apprised of policies and procedures; and VHS tapes enable employees to stay current on the company's quality, green, and community initiatives.

Such methods, however, have become outdated and are neither efficient nor effective. For example, the television screens that broadcast content via satellite are rarely used and some of the paper-based information is rarely read. The fast-paced work environment leaves employees little time to stop working to read a bulletin or view a broadcast. In addition, many of the delivery people take breaks while on the road instead of in the facility break-room where VCRs reside, and thus are unable to access certain content.

Furthermore, field management has limited time in which to share operational information with employees daily and in-person. “I have very lim-



Cisco Internet Business Solutions Group (IBSG)

ited face-to-face time with my staff—maybe five to ten minutes a day—to share critical shift information,” said a general manager of a field facility. “There isn’t enough time in employees’ schedules to familiarize themselves with the overwhelming amount of printed and videotape information we receive from various corporate and regional functions.”

Strategy

Fast-forward to the 21st century: To improve communications, the company set a goal of delivering information to all employees using an innovative digital communications platform that enables a high degree of interactivity and inspires action.

The company believes that such a platform will transform intracompany communications, helping it achieve its goal of becoming an industry benchmark using the latest digital media tools to drive messaging and culture, and enable operational excellence, superior customer service, and sustainable revenue.

The company engaged with the Cisco® Internet Business Solutions Group (IBSG) to discuss challenges and brainstorm on a real-time communications strategy. “We chose Cisco IBSG because of its transportation industry expertise, management consulting abilities in technology and innovation, and proven track record in successful customer engagements,” said the company’s head of corporate communications.”

Cisco IBSG worked with the company’s corporate communications group and conducted several workshops to help set a long-term vision for digital communications, develop a prioritized initiative roadmap to achieve that vision, and execute on the strategy.

The engagement process also included briefings on advanced solutions concepts with Cisco experts, as well as examples of real-life use cases of similar solutions at other large enterprises.

In addition, Cisco IBSG consultants toured regional sorting facilities to observe workflows and processes. Doing this enabled IBSG to understand how such processes inhibit employees’ ability to go to a break room to watch a company video or read other company correspondence. Conversely, IBSG discovered that during a typical work shift, managers rarely have time to reach out to their hundreds of employees on the sorting floor to update them on new information from multiple corporate sources. Further interviews with regional/local management and employees also revealed which internal communications methods currently in use were effective, if at all.

Based on specific quantitative and qualitative results from its analysis and from workshops on strategy initiatives/prioritization, Cisco IBSG worked with corporate communications to develop a cohesive plan for designing, building, and implementing a global, enterprisewide digital communications business platform that would enable and improve business processes in key functions across all lines of business—communications, operations, human resources, and marketing.

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**General Manager
Company Field Facility**

Solution

After the high-level solution framework was laid out, Cisco solutions specialists and engineers worked with the company to architect a digital media platform consisting of a centralized content management system, video-enabled network technology, caching engines, digital media players, and large high-definition LCD screens that enable end-to-end delivery of business-critical content. The customer's IT organization was engaged as a key partner in the process.

Funding the project was not a trivial task, as this large transportation/logistics company had to prioritize investment against other business-critical spending and expenses such as fleet replacement and fuel cost. However, the company's people-centric culture, passion for the end customer, and visionary thinking about collaboration and communications strengthened the business case and convinced senior management to approve a project budget.

Results

The first phase of the solution was implemented at one of the company's sorting facilities, with plans to roll it out to hundreds of facilities over the next two years. The joint engagement team identified up to US\$50 million in economic benefit annually (a combination of cost and efficiency improvements) for these locations. While the solution is still in the early stages of implementation, the company anticipates a number of additional key benefits:

- Increased employee engagement—exposing employees to important corporate information will drive culture and behavior, and improve the effectiveness of communications
- Increased visibility into critical corporate/operational information—digital media will enable easy access to such information, which is no longer “hidden under piles of paper”
- Improved timeliness of information—digital media will enable greater share of real-time information and scalability (more digital displays at more company locations)
- Improved process of onboarding new employees—the solution is expected to provide timely information that new hires may not have seen otherwise

In regard to operations, the solution is expected to reduce costs—especially costs related to paper-intensive tasks and processes—as well as increase employee productivity and improve speed/quality of decision making. The company also estimates that the platform will help increase sales at its retail outlets once it is rolled out to those locations. Through rich-media formats such as digital signage, the company can promote the breadth of its various lines of business services to customers, as well as enable employees to upsell and cross-sell services.

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Head of Corporate Communications

Next Steps

In addition to the first implementation of the digital media platform currently under way, the company plans to deploy it to other locations and businesses worldwide. Future implementations under consideration include capabilities that enable interactive applications and two-way communication through touch screens.

More Information

Cisco IBSG (Internet Business Solutions Group) drives market value creation for our customers by delivering industry-shaping thought leadership, CXO-level consulting services, and innovative solution design and incubation. By connecting strategy, process, and technology, Cisco IBSG acts as a trusted adviser to help customers make transformative decisions that turn great ideas into value realized.

For further information about IBSG, visit <http://www.cisco.com/ibsg>



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