

Procter & Gamble Revolutionizes Collaboration with Cisco TelePresence

Executive Summary

CUSTOMER NAME
Procter & Gamble

INDUSTRY
Consumer Packaged Goods

CHALLENGES

- Generate greater collaboration across multiple global businesses
- Accelerate decision making and faster speed to market
- Reduce business travel to lower costs, improve quality of life, and reduce carbon footprint

SOLUTIONS

- Video collaboration strategy built around the TelePresence solution
- Scalable managed-service solution that fits budgetary model with multiple TelePresence SKUs
- TelePresence studios located in select P&G, partner, and customer sites

RESULTS

- Global usage is 35 percent and growing
- Some sites are seeing more than 70 percent usage (target was 60 percent)
- Some decisions are now made in minutes versus days
- Significant travel cost avoidance

Two years ago, A.G. Lafley, chairman and CEO of Procter & Gamble (P&G), took a visionary stance on product development, mandating that 50 percent of product innovation and development come from collaborating with partners and customers. Cisco worked closely with P&G to create a communication-enabled business process founded on the Cisco® TelePresence solution—one that would enable true collaboration with partners and customers, without the need for excessive travel. Cisco TelePresence is a powerful collaboration tool that enables innovation and offers a viable alternative to travel.

Business Challenges

From a small, family-operated soap and candle company to a global empire with 138,000 employees working in more than 80 countries, Procter & Gamble brands touch the lives of people around the world three billion times a day. With one of the largest and strongest product portfolios in the industry, P&G products include some of the world's best known brands such as Pampers, Tide, Bounty, Folgers, Pringles, and Charmin.

The visionary stance that Lafley took on product innovation and development two years earlier was simple. He said: "We want P&G to be known as the company that collaborates—inside and out—better than any other company in the world."

At the time, P&G's internal and external teams used the company's 300 videoconferencing rooms to collaborate, but the technology was unreliable and users found the set-up difficult. Poor audio quality and low video resolution often prohibited effective and regular use. Because of this, usage of the videoconferencing rooms was low. Procter & Gamble's internal IT team, Global Business Services (GBS), began investigating what true collaboration meant and the level of technology required to support it.



The team knew that to achieve Lafley's mandate, P&G's global users needed the ability to conduct conversations through technology.

"You can't truly collaborate when you are constantly reminded of the technology," says Laurie Heltsley, director of strategic initiatives, P&G. "Collaboration must happen very naturally, with the technology disappearing into the background."

Solutions

TelePresence Solution Defines True Collaboration and "In-Person" Conversation

With 200 TelePresence systems deployed in its own offices worldwide, Cisco firmly believes in the quality of the technology that creates "in-person" experiences between individuals in remote locations using life-size high-definition video, advanced audio, and a finely tuned environment. A longtime strategic partner of P&G, Cisco began to work with GBS to develop a video collaboration strategy based on the TelePresence solution.

The initiative began in February 2007 with a visit to Cisco's office in Virginia where Filippo Passerini, president of P&G's Global Business Services Organization and CIO, participated in a live TelePresence session with Cisco in San Jose, California. Passerini saw the potential of the technology and asked Cisco to conduct a 90-day pilot on P&G's own network.

"Cisco believed in the solution and didn't blink an eye when we asked them to prove their technology would work on our network," Heltsley says. "Cisco stepped up without hesitation or restriction and got it done within 90 days."

Impressive Technology Thwarts User Skepticism

With the success of the pilot, P&G decided to expand the program to more than 40 Cisco CTS3000 TelePresence studios. Users initially were skeptical about the "next generation" in videoconferencing. With memories of the challenges created by conventional videoconferencing still fresh in their minds, many remained unconvinced of the true value of TelePresence. Procter & Gamble proactively worked to communicate the benefits of the technology and to create an environment that ensured that the new TelePresence experience would not be reminiscent of the old technology.

"When you walk into the room, it has to feel different," Heltsley says. "We invested in that 'feeling different' part, and it has paid back dividends 10X [10 times]."

From ease of set-up, to unique audio and video quality, to the feeling of actually being in the same room with the remote participants, acceptance was quick and usage began to increase almost immediately.

"Once it was in the door and people saw how it affected their business process, the technology sold itself," says Heltsley. "We had early successes, and from that point on, it's been like rolling a stainless steel ball down a marble surface."

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Laurie Heltsley
Director
Strategic Initiatives,
Procter & Gamble

Results

Adoption Rate Exceeds Target for Remote Collaboration

As employees became more comfortable with the TelePresence solution, studio usage at some sites reached 70 percent (against a target of 60 percent). Service volume topped 1,000 hours, and a user satisfaction survey indicated that the approval rating of the new technology was a nine out of a perfect 10.

Procter & Gamble sees the technology as an enabler of innovation; it will help create a “supply chain of ideas” that will allow P&G to envision, create, and deliver great brands to market.

“For us, Video Collaboration Studios (where we are implementing the TelePresence technology) empower collaboration, so you really can “be there without leaving here,” says Passerini. “They are saving money and enabling us to collaborate and innovate faster, smarter, and more sustainably than ever before.”

Reduced Business Travel Saves Money and Improves Quality of Life

The TelePresence solution does not just improve business processes, it also helps improve employees’ quality of life. With partners and customers, located around the world, P&G’s employees are often away as much, or more, than they are at home. The TelePresence system enables road-weary travelers to conduct business more quickly and effectively, without leaving the office.

“With Cisco TelePresence, you can be in Rome in the morning and Sao Paulo in the afternoon, and still be home for dinner. That’s priceless,” says Heltsley. “We’re scaling our people, with all the productivity benefits attached.”

Today, savings via TelePresence meetings are immediate—and significant. P&G estimates that TelePresence studios will be a real and viable alternative for travel and will facilitate travel reduction.

“We accomplished what we set out to do,” says Heltsley. “Our employees can walk into the studio, sit down, and talk. That’s what you do when you have a real conversation, and that’s what we wanted to do with TelePresence.”

With the success of its new TelePresence studios, P&G hopes to take the technology further. “I believe we’ll begin to see TelePresence going beyond collaboration into true business-process reinvention that includes this technology in unexpected areas of our business,” says Heltsley.

Procter & Gamble’s GBS team has provided an environment where P&G can blaze a trail to collaboration and innovation leadership.

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Filippo Passerini
President
Global Business Services
and CIO, Procter &
Gamble

More Information

The Cisco Internet Business Solutions Group (IBSG), the global strategic consulting arm of Cisco, helps CXOs and public sector leaders transform their organizations—first by designing innovative business processes, and then by integrating advanced technologies into visionary roadmaps that address key CXO concerns.

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