



Government

Daily Use

- Team collaboration
- Administrative/team meetings
- On going support of rotating home worker "Smarter Working" initiative

Polycom® HDX™ 7000 room telepresence solution

- Polycom RMX® 2000 multimedia conference platform
- Polycom Video Border Proxy™ (VBP™) network device
- Polycom Converged Management Application™ (CMA™) Desktop

Results and Benefits

- Substantial time and cost savings
- Real return on investment
- Greater user uptake of video conferencing by remote and mobile workers

Partners

- Broadband Visual Communications
Website :
www.broadband-vc.com
- The Visual Environment
Website :
www.thevisualenvironment.com

Polycom and partners work together to support the 'Smarter Working' initiative at South Gloucestershire Council

A drive towards 'Smarter Working'

Located in the south west of England and covering an area of 497 square kilometers, South Gloucestershire Council employs 7800 staff and is responsible for a population of over a quarter of a million. In keeping with its policy of ratepayer accountability and cost-reduction, the council has recently embarked on a 'Smarter Working' initiative designed to deliver more productive working practices and reduce its environmental impact.

For South Gloucestershire Council, this means operating a more flexible working environment with a greater proportion of rotating home-workers and a more versatile use of existing desk space.

The Council recognised that it needed to look for outside communications solutions that would support this strategy, reduce costs and underpin its 'green' credentials.

Tim Peters, Head of IT at the Council, takes up the story: "The Council is spread across a number of locations. When meetings take place, this can lead to a number of people having to travel to the meeting with attendant costs in both time and environmental impact. This, combined with our Smarter Working initiative increasing the spread of staff meant that we wanted a communication solution that would integrate all home-workers and remote workers with the office-based staff."

The Polycom solution

Tim Peters and his colleagues conferred with Bristol-based Polycom reseller, Broadband Visual Communications. As a total solution-provider, from pre-sales to system implementation and on-going training, Broadband recommended the Polycom® HDX™ 7000 room telepresence solution and a user-base of Polycom CMA™ (Converged Management Application) desktop units. These combined with a Polycom RMX® 2000 bridge for multisite conferencing and the Polycom VBP to enable private-to-public gateway and remote Polycom CMA desktop access.

The result was a communication solution that gave the Council the ability to manage and deploy video conferencing centrally as well as across the extended organisation of remote and home-workers.

The Polycom HDX 7000 system is a large, single-screen, floor-standing unit that delivers exceptional video conferencing with high definition (HD) sound, picture, and content. It offers an easy-to-use directory search and dialing thanks to the integrated Polycom CMA solution taken up by the Council.

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Tim Peters, Head of IT, South Gloucestershire Council



“Today, we can leverage our investment and produce genuine ROI information to our executives, and our ratepayers.”

Tim Peters, Head of IT, South Gloucestershire Council

The Polycom RMX 2000 bridge with an ISDN access card provides a multipoint conference solution so that the Council can perform video conferences across internal and external (ISDN) networks.

Lawrence Larque, Managing Director of Broadband, continued: “Because South Gloucestershire Council wanted the system to show tangible benefits and real returns on their investment, we brought in the services of The Visual Environment to integrate their Video-Miles® monitoring software.”

A revolutionary project

The Visual Environment, a Polycom Arena Partner, are leaders in decision-making information for video conferencing. Their Video-Miles® solution has two components: Video-Miles® Fetchit™ and Video-Miles® Server. Together, they present video conferencing usage information on environmental, financial, utilisation and user-time in easy-to-read graphics, text, and pie chart formats.

Calum Miller, co-founder of The Visual Environment, explained that a ‘video mile’ is the mileage NOT travelled as a result of replacing in person meetings with video conferencing. Therefore, the more video miles accrued, the more time, cost, and carbon-savings an organisation is making.

Lawrence Larque admitted this was a revolutionary Polycom installation, and an important step towards delivering genuine ROI information to video conference users.

“Accountability and justification of expenditure are particularly important in today’s economic climate and we are very impressed with the performance of the Video-Miles® software.”

Broadband went on to install two Polycom HDX 7000 units with plans to install more in the future. Tim Peters also agreed to licenses for up to 200 Polycom CMA desktop users to cover the expected demand from mobile and home-users. Currently, 90 users are operating Polycom CMA units from their homes or within Council offices.

In order to maximise uptake and usage, Tim Peters ensured that the implementation of the Polycom equipment was supported by a concerted campaign of familiarisation and training for the council users.

A supportive education strategy

The council went ahead and established fixed video conferencing rooms and identified video conferencing ‘champions’ for each. These are people who want to learn about the system and who can be always on hand to support users, so if anything goes wrong or users need help setting up, the champions can resolve it.

Lunchtime ‘drop-in’ demonstration sessions were also instigated as well as trialing the CMA desktop system with small groups of managers to help them gain confidence with video conferencing.

This education strategy is working for the council and user uptake of the installations was smooth and painless. Rooms are being booked, home-workers are benefiting from being connected to the network and Tim Peters and his colleagues are beginning to glean usage and video miles information thanks to the Video-Miles® software.

“The big saving for us is time,” Tim Peters confirmed. “With Video-Miles® monitoring our use of the Polycom equipment, we can see the hours saved by staff by not driving to a meeting and thanks to Video-Miles® we can create reports that will demonstrate the productivity and cost-savings achieved by video conferencing.”

Future plans

Tim Peters admitted that there is still a lot of work to do to maximise the use of the Polycom system and to tailor the Video-Miles® software to be more relevant to the council environment.

“We also have plans to bring our councillors into the video conferencing network as well as our mobile workers via a 3G link,” Tim Peters concluded. “Further optimizing the Polycom installation with the Video-Miles® software will help us demonstrate the benefits and savings to our executives and Council Tax payers.”

Learn more

Polycom, Inc. is the global leader in telepresence, video, and voice solutions and a visionary in communications that empower people to connect and collaborate everywhere. Visit www.polycom.com to find out how Polycom solutions can benefit your organisation.

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