



Case Study: BMW T-Forum

Holding live events globally

Every year BMW holds an event known as T-Forum, which is attended by approximately 700 production managers around the world. The event takes place at the company's Munich headquarters. Instead of traveling great distances to attend, international participants utilize videoconferencing, satellite links, and Netviewer from selected locations. This allows BMW to actively involve managers based in distant locations, thereby reinforcing the team spirit within the company.

The difference between being there and just watching

This yearly event has a long tradition. BMW's highest production manager uses this opportunity to present the achievements of the previous year and to discuss new challenges and responsibilities for the coming year with approximately 700 upper and middle level managers. But inviting all of the participants to the company's Munich headquarters would be far too costly. That is why BMW chooses to transmit the event via videoconference or satellite link to international production locations in England, the United States, South Africa, and India.

The objective is to involve the approximately 400 distant participants as much as possible so the communicated messages are understood and implemented. The individual locations also participate in the program in order to deliver opening remarks or introduce a new model, for example. In order to optimize usage of each location's available bandwidth for video transmission, BMW needed a way to separately transmit charts, photographs, and PowerPoint presentations.

BMW Group focuses on the premium segment of the automobile market, as represented by its three brands BMW, MINI, and Rolls-Royce. The BMW brand backs up its motto "Sheer Driving Pleasure" through the relentless pursuit of technological advancements in its cars and motorcycles. Diverse research and development centers in the most important core markets around the world help the company integrate new trends early while its flexible network of twenty-three production sites gives BMW a decisive advantage in international competition.



A rapid, stable solution

Following an extensive evaluation of several different options, the Web conferencing service from Netviewer proved to be the most suitable solution. According to internal discussions, the following criteria were important during the selection process:

- very fast, true-color page reproduction
- requires only a small amount of bandwidth
- does not require installation or other technical expenses
- stable during live operation
- straightforward, intuitive operation in multiple languages.

The results are impressive. In addition to video transmission of the overall event, Netviewer transmits material presented on a PC or overhead projector to every location where it is displayed on large screens. This lets the participants follow the events as if they were sitting in Munich. Technicians organizing the event can establish a connection within a few seconds simply by double-clicking on the Netviewer program. The low bandwidth requirements ensure that pages are reproduced quickly, so there is no delay between images and audio.

Support during the planning phase

As early as the planning phase, Netviewer assists BMW with coordination between project managers and external service providers such as graphic artists, drama consultants, and video specialists. Invitations to a virtual meeting are sent via Outlook to everyone involved so they can work together on a joint strategy. The time and hassle of sending tables and images back and forth is eliminated and, since everyone is looking at the same monitor, they always know what the speaker is referring to. The integrated Whiteboard is another bonus.

A service like Netviewer has great potential for all types of internal communication. The plans: The main communications office can easily connect with its counterparts at global plants in order to hold ad hoc meetings or for other purposes. Other groups spanning multiple locations can use the service to augment videoconferencing during their meetings, thereby reserving the bandwidth for higher image quality.

Netviewer lets you integrate global participants into an event as if they were on-site. It works equally well for the T-Forum with 700 managers or a virtual workgroup of 20 people.

Quick overview of the benefits

- realistic integration of remote participants during large events
- an ideal supplement to videoconferencing
- support during the planning phase
- very good image quality and rapid page reproduction
- easy to set up without installation
- stability during live operation
- straightforward, intuitive operation in multiple languages
- works straight through firewalls
- multiple security certifications

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