

Easy-to-use video conferencing helps executives manage rapid international expansion.

“Video conferencing proved a definite advantage in helping us set up our Sydney and Singapore sites during 2011. The feedback from the entire executive team has been excellent.”

Tony Harding, Information Technology Services Manager, William Angliss Institute

For Melbourne-based William Angliss Institute two strategic project timelines aligned in 2011 with the establishment of new training centres for the Institute’s hospitality, food and tourism courses in Sydney and Singapore. Establishing each new centre would require close executive monitoring and engagement, but the Institute did not want executives to spend excessive amounts of time overseas.

Microsoft Gold Certified Partner JASCO Consulting (JASCO) helped deploy a unified communications platform based on Microsoft Lync Server 2010. With Lync, executives can conduct desktop video conversations, join meetings globally or whilst working remotely and share each others’ desktop. JASCO was also able to facilitate federation capabilities within Lync, which has allowed the Institute to easily collaborate with external partners.

Video conferencing has rapidly become the preferred method for executives to transact routine business between remote sites. They find Lync intuitive and highly effective, and by reducing the time and cost of travelling it has helped executives save time in opening new centres. By helping staff identify each others’ availability, Lync has also improved communication efficiency and knowledge transfer.

William Angliss Institute

Industry:
Education

Location:
Australia

Organisation size:
400

Organisation Profile

William Angliss Institute is a hospitality, tourism and food training organisation based in Victoria that delivers short, medium and degree-length courses to approximately 20,000 students each year.

Business Situation

During 2011, the Institute planned to open new training centres in Sydney and Singapore. Success depended on thorough management oversight, but the Institute wanted to limit the time executives spent travelling.

Solution

JASCO Consulting helped the Institute deploy video conferencing capabilities using Microsoft Lync Server 2010 and extend access to remote and mobile staff. This enables executive and key staff to launch desktop video conversations, collaborate online and join International and Interstate videoconferences.

Benefits

- Instant collaboration with interstate and overseas colleagues
- Improved efficiency
- Easy access to external partners

“Microsoft Lync Server 2010 brings those communications together onto a single platform. From one desktop tool, you can check the availability of any contact or email correspondent, and instantly commence a messaging, voice or desktop video conversation.”

Andrew Homewood, Unified Communications Sales and Marketing Manager, JASCO

Business Needs

Founded in Melbourne, Victoria, in 1940, William Angliss Institute provides skills training to students and employees who are pursuing careers in the food, tourism and hospitality industries. Training consists of accredited vocational (VET) courses, Australian accredited apprenticeships, short courses and four-year degree programs, delivered by approximately 400 staff.

2011 promised to be an exceptionally challenging year for the Institute. The Institute’s committed to opening two new training facilities: an industry training centre in Sydney and a new college in Singapore to operate as part of the country’s Continuing Education and Training (CET) network. “The Institute looked set to incur huge costs in setting up these centres, specifically in travel costs and executive time,” says Tony Harding, Information Technology Services Manager, William Angliss Institute. “The Institute anticipated a period of intensive engagement. They wanted to closely monitor activities as these new branches started operations.”

The Institute had already successfully trialled Lync video conferencing technology for Board meetings. The solution selection criteria were also influenced by a desire to improve communications capabilities for the Institute’s staff in Australian interstate operations. “A significant proportion of our staff train students at the customer site – in cafes and hotels,” says Harding. “We want to help them stay in touch while working remotely, and to enable class-based teachers to collaborate

Cost and usability issues dominated the selection process. “We looked at one video conferencing solution and the hardware alone was more than A\$10,000,” he says. “We

wanted something more cost effective.

“We also wanted any communications tools to easily integrate with our existing systems,” Harding adds. “If the instant messaging integrated with Microsoft Exchange, staff would find it easy to use. If the contact details database integrated with Active Directory, we would find it easy to set up and maintain.”

Solution

In late 2010, Melbourne-based JASCO Consulting (JASCO), a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner in Communication, Messaging and Virtualisation, toured state capitals to demonstrate the capabilities of the newly-launched Microsoft unified communications platform, Microsoft Lync.

“The idea behind unified communications is to integrate real-time communications, such as messaging, voice and video conversations with non-real time communications, such as email,” says Andrew Homewood, Unified Communications Sales and Marketing Manager, JASCO Consulting.

“Microsoft Lync Server 2010 brings those communications together onto a single platform. From one desktop tool, you can check the availability of any contact or email correspondent, and instantly commence a messaging, voice or desktop video conversation.

“Unified communications means that if you want to see who is trying to contact or communicate with you, you only have to check in one place. And if you want to get hold of a contact or communicate with them, you can do that from one place as well. Having all these capabilities brought together on one platform makes Lync unique to the marketplace.”

“Despite using international video conferencing, we have made significant savings on international telephone calls. This is because all our internal telephony is now carried on our own network.”

Tony Harding, Information Technology Services Manager, William Angliss Institute

Beginning in April 2011, JASCO helped the Angliss IT team deploy Lync to staff, including the Institute Board, executives, interstate and overseas sales managers, and Melbourne Campus staff. The deployment consisted of one Microsoft Lync Server 2010 in Melbourne and an edge server. This allows staff to securely connect to Lync services from anywhere in the world over the internet, providing them with the contact availability function called presence and instant messaging.

As part of the deployment, the IT team commissioned a new video conference room at the Melbourne Campus, using the Polycom CX 5000 HD Unified Conference Station. The system’s active speaker technology identifies which participant is speaking and projects their image onto conference room screens as well as desktops that are connected via Lync, improving conference interactions and making discussion more intuitive.

JASCO technical staff helped the Institute extend Lync capabilities in two critical ways. First, by extending Lync communications capabilities to staff who work at locations anywhere on the Institute’s wide area network, key staff in Melbourne, Sydney and Singapore can instantly engage in desktop video conversations.

Second, JASCO staff enabled Lync to easily connect with other organisations’ Lync systems utilising the Microsoft-approved secure federation framework. As a result, Institute staff can use Lync to contact and converse with people in other nominated organisations.

“We had a surprisingly smooth installation,” says Harding. “It took six weeks and we had no interruptions. JASCO staff were highly experienced with unified communications and they did a good job, including using the federation capability to conduct

testing from their own offices. Since May 2011, it has worked well and proved to be robust.”

Benefits

With a unified communications platform based on Microsoft Lync Server 2010, William Angliss Institute significantly reduced the costs and difficulties of establishing new centres in Sydney and Asia. Executives and key staff are now using Lync conferences to collaborate internationally. As a result, travel requirements have dropped and staff work more productively.

Instant collaboration with interstate and overseas colleagues

The Institute’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Executive Director of the new Singapore CET now use Lync to hold video conferences, which means the CEO does not have to fly up to Singapore so frequently.

“Video conferencing, instant messaging, the presence feature and desktop sharing have proved a definite advantage in helping us set up our Sydney and Singapore sites during 2011,” says Harding.

“The feedback from the entire executive team has been excellent, and Lync has become the regular means for them to communicate with each other. Now, our CEO regularly chairs Executive meetings by video conference.”

Improved efficiency

Lync reporting software reveals a steady increase in messaging and video conferencing usage among teaching staff. Harding believes this is because the presence function helps colleagues contact each other at the optimal moment, and because they like using messaging.

“Business issues are resolved faster, because staff can assess each other’s availability, start instant messaging or video conversations

Technical Information

Software and Services

Microsoft Lync Server 2010

Hardware

Portable Notebooks with inbuilt cameras

Lync certified / compatible headphones

Polycom CX 5000 HD Unified Conference Station

IT Issues

Reducing executive travel needs and carbon footprint

and share their desktops," he says. "They don't defer dealing with an issue until they can physically meet up.

"Despite using international video conferencing, we have made significant savings on international telephone calls. This is because all our internal telephony is now carried on our own network."

Easy access to external partners

Collaboration with external partners is also easier because the Institute federates Lync with their communications systems. As a result, staff can easily bring contacts in other companies into messaging and video conversations.

"We have federated with our technology service providers," says Harding. "We can share desktops, or their technical specialists can just jump in and take over a desktop. Technical issues are resolved faster because we don't have to wait for specialists to come in."

According to Homewood, the ability to easily federate Lync will improve the Institute's long-term ability to adapt to communications needs.

"It would be very easy for the Institute to federate Lync with student Office 365 platform, for example" he says. "This means you could get two communications systems to work as one without a

complex integration. With Lync, the technology does not dictate the setup: this is one of the key benefits."

Microsoft product that was featured

Microsoft Lync Server 2010 is a unified communications platform that enables staff to manage all communications through their desktop. Staff can identify colleagues' availability, start instant messaging conversations, escalating to voice calls and establishing desktop audio and/or video conferences, all with just a few clicks. Lync integrates with Microsoft Office 2010, Microsoft SharePoint 2010 and Microsoft Exchange 2010, so that colleagues can start collaborating directly from whichever Office application they are using at the time.

For IT staff, the benefits are equally powerful, with a highly secure and reliable communications solution that works with existing tools and systems to provide easier telephony management, lower cost of ownership, greater flexibility and smoother deployment. The Microsoft Lync 2010 desktop client is available for Windows and for Mac, and mobile versions are available for Windows Phone, iPhone/iPad, Android and Nokia Symbian devices.



Partner Information

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For More Information

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