

Demand Management Expands Web Conferencing Capabilities and Cuts Costs by Switching from WebEx to iLinc



After approximately five years of using WebEx™ for Web and audio conferencing, Demand Management, Inc. (DMI) decided it was time for a change. The company, a global resource for managing the supply chain, learned that equally feature-rich options were available for far less money.

Challenge:

Find a WebEx™ replacement to reduce overall Web and audio conferencing costs, decrease travel, and expand conferencing usage to new areas of the busi-

Solution:

Reduce costs by switching to the iLinc Web Conferencing Suite and allowing iLinc to host the software to eliminate downtime and use of IT resources. Also, take advantage of iLinc VoIP, phone, and video conferencing to further expand capabilities while shrinking costs.

Web conferencing had become a very valuable tool to the globally diverse company, but the costs were beginning to outweigh the benefits. Under its agreement with WebEx, DMI was charged for a predetermined number of Web conferencing seats and a per-minute per-line audio fee with a maximum usage limit. The company was regularly accruing overage charges due to exceeding its limit. DMI leadership was torn between encouraging staff to take advantage of Web conferencing to reduce travel, while also telling them to limit usage to stay within the bounds of the contract.

As a software provider for manufacturing, distribution, and retail operations, DMI's leadership understood that technology should come with flexible pricing options to suit a broad range of customer needs. They began to search for a new Web conferencing solution that would ensure better pricing and strengthen its online collaboration capabilities.

In addition to iLinc, DMI researched Citrix GoToMeeting and Raindance, which was in use at DMI's parent company, Logility, Inc.

The company purchased the iLinc Web Conferencing Suite, as well as iLinc phone conferencing and VoIP licenses. iLinc's flexibility in offering either installed or hosted software was a very appealing choice for the decision-makers at DMI.

"iLinc Communications is hosting our iLinc software because we don't want to worry about downtime or using IT resources," commented Theodorou. "But, we really like the flexibility of being able to bring it in house eventually, if we wanted. Other vendors do not offer that option."

"We researched vendors on price point and features, and found iLinc to be the strongest in both categories."

Steve Theodorou, IT Director, DMI

Transitioning to the iLinc Web and Audio Conferencing Suite

DMI gave its users ample time to transition from WebEx, encouraging them to take iLinc's online tutorials and classes, and to rely on iLinc customer support. As the users began to get comfortable in the iLinc application, they began to expand how they utilized Web conferencing, taking advantage of iLinc features that allowed them to better interact with customers.

"One of the primary reasons that we switched to iLinc is because it provides more flexible tools for communicating with customers, such as surveys, questionnaires, and real-time participation meters" said Theodorou. "It's a more interactive tool than what we had with WebEx."

“Because the iLinc suite includes modules for sales, marketing, training, and support as one package, we’ve been able to expand how we use Web conferencing without adding costs, which was not possible with WebEx,”

Steve Theodorou, IT Director, DMI

The majority of DMI’s iLinc users work in customer support. Using SupportLinc to help customers resolve technical issues, these representatives appreciate the improved interactivity, as well as the Desktop Sharing feature that gives them real-time insight and access to customer problems.

As DMI Support began to benefit from iLinc, other departments followed their lead. Sales teams started to leverage the iLinc Communications Center to create saved meetings that can be accessed for on-the-fly product demonstrations. They especially like the ability to store permanent content such as documents and presentation slides for quick, easy display during sales calls.

Usage spread to the marketing department, as well, which adopted ConferenceLinc to broadcast program information to sales reps. Other groups at DMI now use MeetingLinc to host quarterly staff meetings.

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Saving Money Now and Over Time

With many remote employees and locations in Europe, DMI can potentially accrue large expenditures for long-distance calling. With iLinc, the company now opts for Voice over IP (VoIP) to communicate internally with remote and European staff, as well as with resellers. As an organization, DMI has already saved significantly by offsetting some traditional telephone charges with less costly Internet audio.

DMI also implemented video conferencing capabilities when it switched to iLinc. Although not fully rolled out to users, the company will proceed with using video in the coming year. As Theodorou explained, “Video is going to be a very important aspect of communicating with remote employees. It adds another layer to keeping everyone in touch, literally face-to-face.”

With iLinc, DMI has increased the number of people using Web conferencing and as a result has improved customer support, sales, marketing, and communication over all.

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