

Providing a better experience and human touch for SAS

Client profile

SAS is the world leader in data analytics with their software installed at more than 83,000 business, government and university sites. With more than 40 years of analytics innovation they employ almost 20,000 people across the world with 92 of the top 100 companies on the 2018 Fortune Global 1000 benefiting from their expertise.

Which technologies?

- Cisco Webex
- Meetings with Cisco Webex
- Cloud Connected Audio
- Webinar technologies

Which services?

- Cisco Webex
- Cloud Connected Audio
- Digital Events
- Adoption and Change Management

Which partners?

- Cisco



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Our team has to be able to communicate and collaborate to be successful and they can't do that without a platform—and the platform can't be successful without a cloud service provider like NTT.

Eric Taylor, Senior IT Manager, SAS

Summary

Global analytics leader SAS depends on effective communication with their teams and customers across the world. With a globally distributed team, they needed an integrated solution from a reliable vendor. Partnering with NTT, they standardized on Webex Meetings and our Cloud-Connected Audio solution to create a seamless collaboration solution.

On the back of this success, we worked together to launch a self-service platform to enable them to create their webinar program enabling them to self-produce multiple webinars each week.

This allows them to set the stage to migrate their collaboration systems to the cloud, enabling anytime, anywhere communications.

Business need

Why SAS needed to improve global communications

SAS is the global leader in analytics. Headquartered in Cary, North Carolina, and with employees stationed in every major country across the world, they rely on their global presence to sell to Fortune 500 companies.

Through innovative software and services, they empower and inspire customers around the world to transform data into intelligence. With a globally distributed team selling solutions to customers around the world, SAS were using many different technology solutions to demonstrate, sell and support their software product portfolio.

With a multitude of different solutions in place SAS found that the effectiveness of meetings was being impacted, both internal ones and those with clients. As a result, they decided to re-examine their global communications strategy.

They identified that in order to achieve this they needed to find a modern, integrated solution from a reliable vendor.

SAS had been using Cisco Webex as one of their platforms, specifically for meetings and product demonstrations. The functionality of the solution met all their needs but, in some regions, as a result of their service providers, they were struggling with the quality of audio connections.

After an extensive search for a new provider for Webex Meetings, they chose NTT as their new partner.

Solution

How integrated collaboration helped SAS drive employee and customer satisfaction

"We chose NTT as our Webex provider due to the high quality of service, both from a customer and technical perspective," said Eric Taylor, SAS Senior IT Manager.

"Our customer success manager told us exactly what was going to happen, provided a communication plan for us to give our employees and then it was basically an overnight switch. Our employees were none the wiser," said Taylor. "Even after the transition, they offered multiple training opportunities and communications for staff, freeing up our IT team to focus on other priorities."

Following the successful transition to Webex Meetings, they decided to use our Cloud-Connected Audio solution to ensure a consistent experience at all their global locations.

"The NTT voice network — with respect to local access and toll-free numbers globally — was the best-in-class," said Taylor. "Users immediately noticed a significant improvement in the audio quality, as well as the user experience."

They were also looking for ways to deliver a range of interactions for their marketing webinar program including self-service webinars and fully produced large-scale meetings.

"We were trying to reimagine our webinar program," explained Dean Shaw, Global Advocacy Program Manager. "We already had a relationship with NTT so we knew they were a good partner to work with."

The digital events solution now allows them to self-produce multiple webinars each week. "Each step of the way, NTT provided the expertise that we didn't have, making sure we were doing things correctly, and were taking full advantage of the features and functionality of our new webinar platform," said Shaw.

Outcomes

What a cloud connected future looks like for SAS

Through their relationship with us, SAS has experienced the benefits of transitioning their communications to the cloud and is looking for additional ways to do so.

“We are definitely adopting cloud communications in a number of ways, and there are a number of business drivers for that,” said Taylor. “Chief among them would be ‘supportability’. If you have a global solution with global IT staff that is standardized and scalable, it’s easy to support. It’s easy to expand that and deploy it into other locations.”

The biggest benefit from the move to cloud communications is flexibility: the ability to work from anywhere, anytime, from any device. It’s very important to their team that they have a single, global service provider who can support their business, no matter where that business takes place. “With the advent of cloud communications, your communications are with you wherever you go, as long as you have a laptop or a smart phone. You can work anywhere, at any time,” said Taylor.

As they look to the future, their next step is moving from on-premises to the cloud. They want to be out of the business of supporting infrastructure and patching servers and working with disparate vendors across the globe. As they move through their unified communications and collaborations roadmap, Taylor stresses the importance of choosing the right vendor to help them on their journey: “We’re deploying a number of collaboration solutions. NTT provides us the foundation for implementing those solutions, and for our people to be successful.”



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Eric Taylor, Senior IT Manager, SAS