



**BDO Seidman, LLP**  
Accountants and Consultants

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— MaryEm Musser, Assistant Director, Center for Professional Development



## BDO Seidman saves millions with WebEx Enterprise Edition.



### LINE OF BUSINESS

Accounting and Consulting Firm

### WEBEX SERVICE IN USE

WebEx Enterprise Edition

### SUMMARY

At BDO Seidman, LLP, in-person classroom training methods could no longer support the company’s growing technology initiatives. With WebEx Training Center, BDO was able to provide more training to more employees in less time, improving productivity, and saving \$5 million in travel costs. Adopting WebEx Enterprise Edition company-wide has transformed BDO’s communication processes by removing geographic barriers and increasing the quantity and quality of information exchanged between constituents worldwide

### ABOUT BDO SEIDMAN, LLP

#### Headquarters

Chicago, IL

#### Number of Employees

2,000

#### Target Market

Private and public businesses

#### WebEx Customer Since 2001

Founded in 1910, BDO Seidman, LLP is a professional services firm providing assurance, tax, financial advisory, and consulting services to businesses nationwide. Recognized as the fifth largest accounting firm in the world, BDO Seidman serves clients through 35 offices and 250 independent alliance firms located throughout the US. The company also serves multinational clients by leveraging the BDO International global network of alliance firms in 105 countries.

#### The Challenge

At the turn of the millennium, BDO Seidman was evaluating the future of its technology training programs. Despite the barriers of time and travel, it had always relied on in-person, instructor-led classes to deliver internal training to its globally distributed employee base. However, the initiatives coming up in the next few years were going to require hiring additional staff to successfully train the company’s 35 regional offices. “We knew that wasn’t the answer. Our training model just didn’t work anymore,” says MaryEm Musser, Assistant Director of BDO’s Center for Professional Development.

To support its many upcoming technology initiatives, BDO needed to find a way to provide training on-demand to a large number of people within the shortest possible timeframe.

#### The Solution

Musser began investigating online solutions that would facilitate BDO’s live trainings. “We knew we needed something more than your average online meeting solution,” she says. “We needed a solution

that simulated an online classroom.” After thoroughly evaluating five online applications by testing them on different technology projects, Musser chose to implement WebEx for enterprise-wide training at BDO Seidman. “We selected WebEx Training Center because of its robust feature set, as well as the reliability and scalability of the application,” Musser says.

Musser chose the right solution. Today, BDO Seidman conducts 1800 classroom sessions a year using WebEx Training Center. With approximately 25 people in attendance at each session, BDO is able to reach 45,000 people annually through WebEx online trainings.

The overwhelmingly positive response to Training Center led BDO to adopt WebEx Enterprise Edition, making the full suite of WebEx services available to its employees—along with its subsequent process and productivity benefits. BDO uses WebEx Meeting Center for ad hoc meetings, project planning, team meetings and providing support to overseas offices. WebEx Event Center has been adopted to deliver large, “town hall” style meetings that keep its vast distributed organization connected during the company’s numerous product and service rollouts.

For example, during its international “Switch the Network On” event, BDO combined a live Event Center corporate-wide meeting with 35 regional in-person meetings to effectively introduce new programs and goals to thousands of attendees located worldwide. “Participants from each BDO office gathered in local conference centers to participate in the WebEx



live event, followed by regional breakout sessions that enabled attendees to review localized information. Then we had everyone reconvene for a WebEx question and answer session,” explains Musser. “WebEx made it possible for us to conduct business like we were all at the same venue.”

Today, Event Center is used for a wide range of events, and BDO makes accessing and using WebEx as convenient and seamless as possible for its employees. This includes integrating Enterprise Edition with the corporate Intranet. According to Musser, “When employees log in to our Intranet, they’re also logging into WebEx. They don’t have to log in twice and we don’t have to manage two sets of passwords and user IDs for every employee.”

BDO also provides WebEx as a standard tool to every new employee. “When new employees join our organization, they receive a phone, a PC, and a WebEx account,” says Musser. “WebEx is now a part of our standard IT toolkit—it’s ubiquitous throughout our organization.”

### The Benefits

WebEx has transformed BDO’s communication processes by streamlining the dissemination of information from the top of the corporate hierarchy to the entire distributed enterprise. According to Musser, “WebEx has allowed us to remove time and geographic barriers. We no longer consider ourselves a distributed organization. It’s given us the ability to meet face-to-face more frequently. And since everyone now receives the right information, partners and employees are equally

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accountable for properly implementing corporate initiatives and programs.”

BDO experienced these benefits during its recent implementation of numerous PeopleSoft applications. A project review board with various partners continues to meet quarterly via WebEx to discuss project milestones and collaborate on next steps. “This is an example of communications that probably would not be happening without WebEx,” says Musser. “If faced with the costs to fly everyone in for live meetings, plus the time away from the office, the travel wear and tear, and other expenses., we probably would not be engaging in these projects. That’s a huge shift in how we conduct business.”

WebEx Training Center has also stimulated productivity by enabling BDO to transition to a blended training model that reaches more people and created huge cost-savings in the process. According to Musser, “During the first eight months using WebEx, we delivered training on five new technologies to over 2000 people, and we realized our return on investment during that time.” Musser adds, “To date, WebEx Training Center has saved us approximately \$5 million in both travel costs and estimated time out of the office.”

### The Future

As a result of the successful internal online programs, some of BDO’s business customers have expressed interest in using WebEx to deliver training to end-users. BDO’s health care practice consultants, for instance, spend time traveling to conduct training at nursing homes. Moving follow-up trainings online will give more nursing homes the opportunity to join a single training session, minimizing time and travel costs. BDO’s fraud and investigation service business would also like to provide online training for its clients, and the company is considering using the built-in WebEx e-commerce module to take payment at the registration interface. “This represents new revenue opportunities for us, and obviously provides our consultants with better training tools to use in the field,” says Musser.

Musser credits WebEx for making it easy to identify and implement strategic uses for the system at BDO right from the start. “It’s made us think differently about our organization’s communication and training processes. We couldn’t do what we’re doing now and what we plan to do in the future without WebEx,” she says.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- BDO’s in-person classroom training methods could not scale efficiently to support the company’s growing technology training initiatives.
- WebEx Training Center broadened BDO’s training reach, maximizing productivity and saving \$5 million.
- With WebEx Event Center, BDO now conducts hybrid town hall meetings that keep its vast distributed organization seamlessly connected.
- Adopting WebEx Enterprise Edition has improved BDO’s communication processes by making WebEx meetings ubiquitous across the organization.