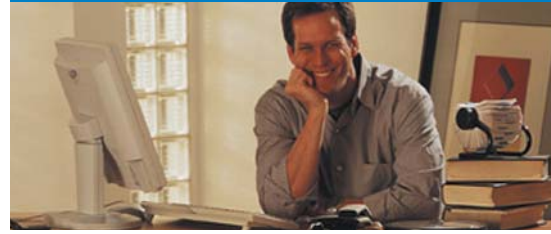


Kalahari

“Without WebEx, it would be very difficult to sell to places like Singapore, Hong Kong or Sydney from the UK. With WebEx, we can make first contact with interested parties without having to jump on a plane and travel half way around the world for a sales lead that turns out to be an inappropriate fit.”

– Graham Mansfield, Deputy Managing Director and Co-Founder, Kalahari



Kalahari expands global footprint with real time remote support from WebEx



INDUSTRY

High tech – Software

WEBEX APPLICATION

Meeting Center, Support Center

SUMMARY

WebEx Support center is used to provide 24/7 technical support for Kalahari's financial customers. WebEx Meeting Center is used to give remote demonstrations of Kalahari's analytical software kACE to prospective customers.

ABOUT KALAHARI

Line of Business

Provider of real-time analytic solutions to banks and financial institutions, such as its price discovery software kACE.

Headquarters

Woking, Surrey, UK

Number of Employees

20

WebEx Customer since 2000

Kalahari is a leading provider and developer of desktop analytics to companies in financial markets. Its software, kACE, gives real-time pricing for the most complex financial instruments currently traded. kACE runs mathematical solutions in real time to fully analyse market changes and provide accurate prices for a diverse range of products including bonds, equities, interest rates, foreign exchange, electricity and gas. In a fast moving world with very sensitive margins, Kalahari offers a solution that meets the demands of traders worldwide.

Kalahari's kACE is used in trading rooms worldwide, at major financial institutions and banks such as Barclays, ABN AMRO, Fortis, HBOS, ICAP, Tullett Liberty and Standard Group.

The Challenge

The changeable nature of financial markets means that anyone wishing to trade requires access to the very latest data. With potentially thousands of changes in markets every second, this is not an easy task. However, Kalahari's kACE software is designed for just that – by analysing traders' data feeds to work out new prices resulting from every change in the market. Accurate price discovery is mission critical for Kalahari's customers, for whom every lost second is vital.

In such a competitive financial services market, it's critical that Kalahari provide real-time technical support for kACE. Graham Mansfield, Deputy Managing Director, explains: "With so much complex data to analyse and so many different variables within the software, it's natural to expect that some customers will encounter difficulties. The important

thing is that we help customers to iron out these problems in as short a time as possible." Prior to implementing WebEx, any technical issues had to be discussed in lengthy phone calls and emails. "It was pure guesswork," continues Mansfield. "We were resigned to imagining the problem, relying on nothing more than a voice at the end of the phone. Considering a lot of our customers don't even speak English, you can see where the problems started."

The other option was for Kalahari's engineers to travel to the customer site to tackle the problem directly, but for clients on the other side of the world, this option wasn't feasible due to cost and time limitations. As a result, Kalahari's twenty employees found themselves increasingly stretched, spending a disproportionate amount of time supporting customers and not being able to focus on other aspects of their business.

The Solution

Kalahari needed a method to speed up the technical support operation and give them a way to reach overseas customers quickly and easily. Having decided that web conferencing could provide a way to collaborate with customers and diagnose problems more rapidly, it chose the market leader, WebEx. The decision was made partly thanks to its ease of use, with technology that transcends firewalls and requires very little set-up. Mansfield says: "We considered various web conferencing solutions, but quickly settled on WebEx. We tried Live Meeting but had difficulties setting it up and running it over firewalls. In the end WebEx was just simpler and easier to use. There's no hardware to be installed,

you simply need a phone and internet connection. This means we can deal directly with our customers, without having to first go through their IT department.”

Using WebEx Meeting Center™ and Support Center, Kalahari is able to interact with customers in real-time, with the added benefits of screen and application sharing, voice and multi-point video. Now if any customer encounters a problem, they can immediately meet online with Kalahari staff who can see the exact problem. They can then either explain how to fix it, or take control of the machine remotely and fix it themselves.

The Benefits

Technical issues that once seemed, or became, complicated on the phone are now solved in minutes on WebEx. Mansfield says: “Using WebEx means that we can give 24/7 support to customers anywhere, no matter which time zone or country they’re in. We’re on the road and in planes far less, which has led not only to an increase in productivity, it has also saved us time and money.”

With the time saved on technical support, Kalahari’s employees have more time to focus on other parts of their business – like growing international sales. Using WebEx Meeting Center, Kalahari has expanded its footprint to reach customers on the other side of the world. Mansfield explains: “Without WebEx, it would be very difficult to sell to places like Singapore, Hong Kong or Sydney from the UK.”

The sales department is now pre-qualifying sales leads and showcasing the software to potential clients. Mansfield explains, “It wasn’t in our plans initially, but WebEx is proving to be a valuable sales tool. kACE is a very complex piece of software; so being able to walk people through it before they buy is invaluable. It also means that

we can make first contact with interested parties without having to jump on a plane and travel half way around the world for a sales lead that turns out to be an inappropriate fit.”

Moreover, to be able to truly provide a first rate, round-the-clock support service for new international customers, Kalahari knew it would need an office somewhere in the region, and more local employees. “With WebEx we can reach new customers remotely, allowing us to expand our reach globally. To put this into perspective, the Asia-Pac region now makes up roughly 10% of our overall income.”

“WebEx is mission critical for us now. We can reach our customers at the click of a button and we wouldn’t be the same company without it.”
– Graham Mansfield, Deputy Managing Director and Co-Founder, Kalahari

The Future

Rather than just supporting customers when they encounter problems, Kalahari is looking to complement the existing service with a dedicated training programme, delivered worldwide via WebEx Training Center. With real-time training available to anyone, anywhere traders will be better equipped to resolve any problems as they happen, meaning less downtime.

The company is also planning to increase its use of WebEx for sales purposes, further streamlining the process and generating more cost savings from reduced travel. “It really helps to make a strong and memorable first impression,” adds Mansfield. “With WebEx we can easily demonstrate kACE’s full potential and overcome any initial objections from prospects.”

“WebEx is mission critical for us now,” says Mansfield, “we can reach our customers at the click of a button and we wouldn’t be the same company without it.”

HIGHLIGHTS

- WebEx is used to provide technical support to customers using the kACE software.
- Kalahari is also using WebEx to demonstrate its software to prospective clients by demonstrating its product in ‘real time’.
- WebEx has led not only to a reduction in travel costs, but has allowed the company to serve the Asia-Pacific market, which it would otherwise not be able to offer real-time support. The Asia-Pacific market is worth 10% of Kalahari’s income.