

Unlimited. DSM

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– Marcel Mertens, Corporate eBusiness Account Manager, DSM

WebEx Success Story



Interactive, real-time multimedia communication increases employee productivity, shortens product time-to-market and reduces travel costs at DSM.



INDUSTRY
Specialty Chemicals

WEBEX APPLICATION
WebEx Meeting Center

SUMMARY
The entire DSM organisation benefits from WebEx by reducing travel expenses, minimising non-productive time, increasing employee productivity, and maximising customer results.

ABOUT DSM

Line of Business
Life Science, Nutritional Products, Performance Materials, Industrial Chemicals

Headquarters
Heerlen, The Netherlands

Number of Employees
22,000 worldwide

WebEx Customer since 2002

DSM is a leading producer of life science products, performance materials and industrial chemicals. In its 100-year history, DSM has grown from a state-held mining company into an experienced and dynamic chemicals company. In 2005, its 22,000 staff members brought in a turnover of € 8,2 billion. DSM's core range of biotech and chemical products and materials are sold into the pharmaceutical industry, food and feed sectors, the automotive market, and to electronics manufacturers.

The Challenge

As a global business leader in the Chemicals Industry, DSM must continually maximise interactions with customers, suppliers and employees. With more than 200 offices worldwide and production sites in 40 countries, DSM faces the challenge of increasing internal and external collaboration without increasing costs or impacting employee productivity levels.

At DSM, many projects and initiatives involve geographically dispersed teams. Still, they need to be able to co-operate closely, share information and applications and work as efficiently and effectively as possible. For that reason DSM sought to increase team interaction and coordination, while at the same time reducing expenses and non-productive time associated with travel. DSM identified several groups and audiences whose day-to-day interactions relied on effective collaboration.

The Solution

By early 2002, DSM concluded it needed a reliable, secure, easy-to-use conferencing solution with a broad range of interactive capabilities.

DSM investigated several different offerings and ran a number of pilots and decided that WebEx best met their requirements. According to Marcel Mertens, Corporate eBusiness Account Manager, DSM, “WebEx Meeting Center was chosen for its ease of use, great real-time collaboration capabilities, and its excellent security.” Mertens continues, “Within the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, confidentiality and security are extremely important. The fact that WebEx offers SSL and AES encryption, that each session has secure entrance and exit, and that information is never stored and cannot be traced after the session are real differentiators. In addition WebEx provides easy tools for users to see which applications are being shared and by whom, which is also a differentiator.”

WebEx provides a global communications service, requires no physical infrastructure or installation resources, has negligible up front costs, and can be provisioned across an organisation within a matter of days. The DSM eBusiness unit was the first group to pilot WebEx, evangelising the solution, and subsequently introducing WebEx Meeting Center to other departments and offices. The use of WebEx has steadily increased across teams and offices over the six continents in which DSM operates. DSM has also leveraged WebEx's integration capabilities to link the service with its Outlook/Lotus Notes calendar, enabling users to schedule WebEx meetings from their calendars. The company also uses the WebEx Player and Recorder that enables users to view recordings of how, for example, a specific SAP function is used. This functionality is especially suitable for training purposes. “Our



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intranet already contains a number of these recorded files, explaining employees how to solve a specific problem or situation with an application”, says Mertens.

After using WebEx Meeting Center for some years, the company now logs about 500 online meetings per month. Everyone within DSM has access to WebEx Meeting Center, with over 18,000 attendees and some 4,000 regular users. Marcel Mertens comments: “The effectiveness and flexibility of online meetings is obvious, with IT departments using them for planning and project collaboration, sales teams for pre-sales qualification and increasing customer contact, and global management teams for meetings with participants in different countries and departments, which are becoming more and more normal business meetings on a recurring basis next to physical sessions. Another major advantage is that physical meetings with a large group of people can be better prepared by small groups who can easily exchange and collaborate on presentations. And it is also easier to manage one’s calendar. Being in one location for a face to face to meeting does not necessarily mean that you have to cancel another meeting on the same day in a different location. An employee can decide to attend one meeting in person and the other online.”

The Benefits

Since its March 2002 implementation, DSM has experienced multiple benefits within and beyond the initial areas of use. The IT organisation, the first group to implement WebEx, now accounts for

20% of overall WebEx meetings and increased its productivity dramatically. For a new, worldwide implementation of a new ERP system, DSM used WebEx for business process analysis, technical implementation and integration, daily and weekly project meetings, and business user training. Moreover, WebEx enabled IT to run multiple implementations concurrently, shortening cycle times and increasing productivity. Using WebEx reduced costs for training business end users significantly, as the solution enables to offer ‘instant’ and very targeted courses to small groups of end users.

DSM used WebEx also extensively when it implemented its new Webshop, where WebEx played an important role in development, testing and implementation. The operation of the DSM Webshop is critical as it enables customers to order products online and view order status, 24 hours times 7 days. The project team for the new Webshop was located in seven cities in four continents. WebEx was used for bi-weekly meetings and used heavily during the integration tests. Finally, WebEx was also used to inform and train DSM customers on the new functionalities of the DSM Webshop.

The DSM sales organisation also benefits from using WebEx by replacing costly in-person meetings with WebEx for status meetings, market and forecast updates, technical project management, reduced development time and faster decision making. With WebEx, DSM engages the proper experts more quickly and efficiently. In addition, reducing travel gives DSM personnel

more time to serve other customers. And increased customer satisfaction builds stronger business relationships. “We also plan to use WebEx to increase communication with customers to develop better working relationships with them,” says Mertens. “We can for example share research data with them, including graphical chemical analysis, mechanical properties of materials, and even real-time laboratory equipment output.”

DSM believes that its financial return from WebEx falls into different categories: increased employee productivity, recovery of non-productive time, improved training facilities and results, more effective communication with customers and reduced travel costs. The return on investment from travel savings alone easily justifies the implementation of the solution with DSM estimating the ROI from travel cost savings to be several hundred per cent. But maybe more important is the fact that WebEx has enabled DSM to improve organisation-wide communications, resulting in improved decision making. “Thanks to WebEx employees are much better prepared for meetings and much better informed on relevant issues”, says Mertens.

The Future

The momentum of WebEx use has resulted in the service being deployed at all levels within the company, from product development to top level executives. “The awareness of the service around the company means that employees using WebEx want to know more about it and want to use it more.” says Mertens, “We plan to start using the service increasingly for customer interactions, for one-to-many type presentations, and for web events such as investor meetings.”

HIGHLIGHTS

- DSM holds about 500 meetings per month with about 4,000 regular users and over 18,000 attendees in total.
- The IT organisation accounts for 20% of WebEx usage within DSM, reducing the need for travel and improving productivity throughout the organisation.
- DSM estimates ROI from travel savings to be in excess of several hundred per cent.
- Thanks to WebEx employees are much better prepared for meetings and much better informed about relevant issues.

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