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IPL / LifeSize with AUSTAR CASE STUDY

LifeSize through IPL Communications - A Case Study

The Challenge

With over 800 employees, AUSTAR provides subscription television using digital satellite technology to approximately one-third of Australia's homes.

Around 700 are based at the company's National Customer Operations Centre on the Gold Coast. The remainder is based in AUSTAR's corporate office around Australia.

AUSTAR's senior management team understands the value of face-to-face communication with staff around the country. AUSTAR holds regular meetings at each of the company's offices, ranging from team meetings between sites, cross-departmental meetings and project meetings.

These meetings are a critical management tool, but the travel associated with the meetings wasted time and money.

Key Needs:

Video & Audio Quality - Deliver video and audio quality that would feel natural enough to use for an all-day face to face meeting

Bandwidth efficiency - Deliver superior video quality on existing network with no additional bandwidth

High ROI/fast payback - An ideal solution would pay for itself quickly by eliminating routine travel.

Solution:

When Dean Walters, AUSTAR'S CIO, learned about LifeSize and saw a demonstration, he immediately understood the value and planned a strategic implementation.

"The LifeSize system paid for itself almost immediately through travel savings and increased productivity." Mr Walters was particularly impressed with the video and audio quality as well as bandwidth efficiency of the LifeSize systems.

"We found that the LifeSize system delivers a great DVD quality image with only 512Kbps of bandwidth."

AUSTAR uses a combination of LifeSize® Team™, Express & Express 200 systems at their NSW & QLD offices. This allows AUSTAR to achieve high definition across multiple parties, all at the same time and all at 30 frames per second. Full fluid motion at High Definition.

"I'm amazed at the quality and the ease of use. The extra quality digital audio makes our people want to use it and they love the fact that they can share PowerPoint presentations," said Mr Walters. "We have found uses for the system that we never even considered but that we now find indispensable."

Results

AUSTAR has been using the LifeSize High Definition product for 6 months and has recently added further units to satisfy demand and quality expectations. LifeSize is now AUSTAR's primary Video Conferencing system.

The quality is so superior that the "LifeSize Rooms" are booked out first for meetings.

Initially, the LifeSize HD video systems were primarily used for the month-end management meetings in their various locations. AUSTAR management and staff were happy with the simplicity and ease of use of the system, but also the ability to get the very same amount of work done in less time without ever leaving their office.

"I am a HUGE fan," said AUSTAR CIO Dean Walters. "Since the introduction of this new technology we have increased our Video Conferencing from 3 to 30 hours per week.

"Until you've tried High Definition Video you don't appreciate how good it really is. The quality is first rate – it makes using other systems seem prehistoric.

"Obviously we have had a reduction in travel costs, and with that, a positive environmental impact, but it's the increased productivity that also needs to be considered. We are getting exactly the kind of results we hoped for."

About AUSTAR

AUSTAR United Communications Limited (AUSTAR) is a leading subscription television provider. AUSTAR provides subscription television using digital satellite technology in a service area of approximately 2.4m homes, one-third of Australia's total.

Established in 1995, AUSTAR's television business is the company's core business. Since its establishment, AUSTAR's television subscriber homes have grown to more than 720,000, or 2.2 million people, the largest subscription television operator in regional and rural Australia.

AUSTAR includes over 120 premier channels, a near video-on-demand service, and increased levels of interactivity, such as BOX OFFICE, Sports Active, Weather Active and SKY News Active. AUSTAR launched MyStar, its personal digital recorder, in February 2008. With live pause, live rewind, and recording functionality for two programs while reviewing a third, MyStar also provides viewers with the opportunity to record entire series as they're aired, at the touch of a button. Additionally, MyStar has two standard definition free-to-air tuners, allowing viewers to see all of their local, digital channels.

