Application Story
Tindall Corporation

Tindall Invests in e/pop Web Conferencing to Cut Business Travel Expenses in Half

Tindall Corporation is a family-owned company headquartered in Spartanburg, South Carolina, which designs, manufactures and erects pre-cast and pre-stressed concrete systems for various types of construction projects in the Southern and Mid-Atlantic states. It also produces furnished pre-cast concrete prison cells for use throughout the continental U.S. In addition to prison cell projects, Tindall's products are used in the construction of parking decks at numerous universities and colleges.

Tindall has a total of four locations including offices in Virginia, Georgia and Mississippi. Like most sales and service-oriented businesses, Tindall has a significant travel budget. Tindall spent nearly $500,000 on business travel alone last year. Steve Flacy, Tindall's Director of Information Technology, knew that there had to be a collaborative technology that would help to reduce travel expenses.

Problem:
- Tindall wanted an on-premise, collaborative software that would help to cut business travel expenses

Solution:
- e/pop Web Conferencing, a full-featured, affordable, on-premise web conferencing software

Business & IT Benefits:
- Tindall expects to save approximately $200,000 in travel costs per year
- Ability to communicate and interact with branch office staff in real-time using multi-party video
- Simple to install; web conferences were being held within an hour of deployment

Flacy first started researching virtual team software at the request of Tindall's CEO, Mr. Bill Lowndes. "Our CEO wanted collaborative workgroup software that would enable Tindall's teams to work together without sharing the same physical location. He thought it would take about two years for us to find, test and deploy a collaborative solution that would allow us to hold virtual meetings," said Flacy. "He was very impressed to learn that I had found an affordable solution so quickly."

After testing several on-premise web conferencing products, Flacy found that WiredRed's e/pop Web Conferencing was not only affordable, it was easy to use, simple to deploy and worked securely behind Tindall's firewall. Flacy was able to install and run e/pop Web Conferencing in minutes, holding the first e/Pop Web Conference within the hour.

WiredRed's e/pop Web Conferencing was designed for companies, like Tindall, with a small IT department that has limited time and resources. e/pop Web Conferencing is a fixed-price, out-of-the box solution that can be installed in approximately five minutes by a network or IT administrator.

It offers a comprehensive set of features that includes multi-party audio and synchronous video conferencing, remote control, plus complete desktop, application/document sharing and dynamic PowerPoint™ presentation sharing. In addition, the latest version of e/pop Web Conferencing offers Secure Socket Layer (SSL3) and Transport Layer Security (TLS) as standard security features. The new security features may help thwart common security breaches such as spoofing and eavesdropping that could potentially expose highly confidential corporate financial, personnel and customer information. More importantly, e/pop now includes new integration points for on-premise Public Key Infrastructure (PKI). This significantly decreases the chance that highly sensitive, confidential information is leaked or accessed by the wrong individuals.

"I was highly impressed and actually in disbelief that once it was installed there wasn't more to it. I had trouble with nearly every other web conferencing program I tried," said Flacy. "It took days or even weeks to install some and even then many just didn't work. Nor was I convinced of the security promises from the online conferencing vendors. I definitely wanted to internally manage and store our communications and conference sessions. Once I saw that government agencies such as the FBI, US Army and other US government agencies had chosen WiredRed for internal real-time communications, I was pretty convinced."

Flacy first deployed WiredRed's e/pop Web Conferencing to the sales and human resources departments. The general management team is also utilizing it for scheduled meetings. Flacy said that e/pop Web Conferencing used in conjunction with the Outlook calendar, task and event function, is just as effective virtual team or collaborative workgroup software -- plus there is the added benefit of audio, video and application sharing.

"Video adds to the richness of e/pop Web Conferencing and the interactive meeting environment," said Flacy. "We always have video running to see the other meeting attendees, it just sets a more interactive tone to the meetings. We feel like we're closer together and everyone that contributes to the meeting can go away assured that they were heard."

Using e/pop Web Conferencing application sharing feature, Tindall employees are able to share Outlook calendar functions and PowerPoint presentations dynamically, and the engineering department can share AutoCad drawings even if the conference attendee doesn't have AutoCad installed on their desktop.

"The ability for our engineering team to share drawings in real-time is astounding," said Flacy. "The team will be using e/pop to evaluate a new 3D CAD application very soon. The engineering team, which is divided amongst our four locations, can all evaluate the new programs in parallel. We were able to completely eliminate travel for this evaluation process – a cost savings of about $24,000."

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The Tindall network infrastructure easily accommodates e/pop Web Conferencing. It consists of 21 servers on a wide area network that are connected by fractional T1 connections.   The servers are a mix of Windows NT4, Server 2003 and Linux. Each location has either DSL, cable or T1 Internet connectivity and a Cisco PIX firewall and a WebSense server that controls Internet access.

Flacy is convinced that not only has Tindall received a quick return on investment e/pop Web Conferencing paid for itself, it will soon pay for itself many times over.

"I've estimated that e/pop may save us $200,000 on travel costs in 2005," he said.

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