



## SimpleSignal Expands its Business Virtually with SimpleMeetup Video Conferencing and Collaboration

### Case Study Summary

#### Challenge:

Multiple locations made unifying a disparate workforce economically unfeasible.

#### Solution:

SimpleMeetup Video - Cloud-hosted video conferencing bridge

#### Conference Rooms:

- HDX 8000 Telepresence
- HDX 7000 Telepresence
- Eagle Eye Director Cameras

#### Offices:

- VX-1500 Video Phones
- VX-600 Video Phones
- VX-500 Video Phones

#### All Employees:

- RealPresence Video App on:
  - iPhones
  - iPads
  - Android
  - PC and Mac Desktops

#### Results:

- Substantial decrease in meeting travel budget
- Immediate increase in employee productivity
- Increase in sales closing through face-to-face engagement
- Improvements in corporate culture and interpersonal relationships

Ask any employee at SimpleSignal what the single business tool they could no longer live without is and it would be video communication, hands down.

### The Challenge

With their primary offices located 850 miles apart in Orange County, California and Denver, Colorado, and employees scattered across six states, SimpleSignal, a fast-growing, hosted unified communications service provider has dealt with the myriad challenges of a geographically diverse workforce since its founding in 2004. The company made it a priority to seek out products and services that would make it easier to tie their team together. SimpleSignal's cloud-based PBX, web and audio conferencing, IM and chat made things easier, but collaboration continued to be challenging.

### The Solution

It wasn't until the company added video-as-a-service (VaaS) to their product lineup and started using the service themselves internally that things began to change quickly and dramatically.

SimpleSignal partnered strategically with Polycom to provide video-as-a-service by combining the Polycom RealPresence platform in a hosted environment with SimpleSignal's robust, cloud-based, unified communications platform. This combination provides customers with the secure, reliable and scalable video infrastructure of Polycom's RealPresence, without building out or maintaining expensive on-site equipment. It's called SimpleMeetup Video, a true enterprise-grade solution for an affordable flat monthly fee. The company began using SimpleMeetup company-wide with surprising results.

"From the moment we first deployed video communications, starting with Polycom's VX-1500s, and then expanding into room telepresence and mobile video, we immediately knew VaaS was the answer we and many others were looking for," said Dave Gilbert, CEO of SimpleSignal. "What we didn't realize at the time was how profound the impact of this one technology would be on our company's ability to unify our divergent teams, reduce costs, increase employee productivity, and improve customer experience."

Video has enhanced SimpleSignal's ability to collaborate on a level previously not possible by getting the technology out of expensive conference rooms and into the worker's individual devices. Every business day begins with a virtual standup meeting of all employees. Many of the Denver-based employees gather in the company's

*"Face-to-face contact forces you to focus on the conversation more than you would if you were just on an audio call. It makes you more accountable...you're paying attention and you are fully engaged."*

*Shannon Martin, Channel Manager, SimpleSignal*

"cloud room" with an HDX 8000 telepresence system and two Eagle Eye cameras that track the person speaking. The real breakthrough at SimpleSignal came from tying these room telepresence systems together with other team members using video deskphones and mobile devices in home offices, coffee shops, and hotels across the globe. Here are a few of their experiences.

### **Executive Team**

SimpleSignal's executive team is spread out over multiple locations. SimpleMeetup Video allows them to communicate as easily as walking into the office next door. "For me, so much of it is about cost savings and improving the bottom line," said Ron Ireland, SimpleSignal's CFO. "When I no longer had to fly our management team and our board in for face-to-face meetings, we saw an immediate and significant drop in travel expenses!" Dave Gilbert, CEO, said, "It changes the experience of a conference. We're multi-taskers, so we have a tendency not to solely focus on the conversation. I know I am guilty of that myself, because I get called out when I'm not paying attention." Michael Sterl, EVP of Sales agreed, "Our video meetings are now not only more personable and considerate of each other but also shorter, to the point, and incredibly efficient." Ireland continued, "From a management perspective, you don't necessarily buy video to hold remote workers accountable, but it has definitely brought a new level of accountability and engagement to our entire team, regardless of their location."

### **Sales**

Shannon Martin, Jeff Sexton, and Ira Feuerstein are three channel managers working out of their homes in California, Virginia, and Arizona. Each manager is now able to tie in to the rest of the sales and support team for one-to-one video calls and video conferences using SimpleMeetup Video, enabling a profound sense of connection they didn't have before. "We live in a visual world, and we are becoming more dependent on visual cues," said Martin. "Face-to-face contact forces you to focus on the conversation and makes you more accountable." Sexton uses video conferencing with his channel partners. Many have SimpleSignal's hosted PBX service and the RealPresence app on their iPad so it's easy to connect either on a one-to-one or group video conference. "I have a shared call appearance on each of my devices so when a call comes in I can decide where I take it.

Once you get used to eye contact, body language and facial expressions, it's hard to go back to audio-only calls." Feuerstein said, "From a sales perspective it's amazing how powerful it is when you can tell if you are losing someone just from their visual cues. When one of my partners has the video demo in front of a customer and I can talk face-to-face with them, our close ratio goes way up."

### **Marketing**

For Donna Sudderth, Director of Marketing and Paul McQuade of Fireworx Digital, SimpleSignal's marketing agency, SimpleMeetup Video closes the gap between client and vendor. "We don't think of Paul and his group as vendors but as a part of the inside team," said Sudderth. "Virtually meeting face-to-face any time of the day unites the marketing team in a way not possible outside of our meetings at the office." McQuade collaborates in real time through the RealPresence app on his iPad. "I believe there is a trust factor, a rapport that is instantly established in a video meeting that might never happen in a blind audio call," said McQuade. "I love that I can feel as much a part of the inside team as the full-time SimpleSignal employees, regardless of my employment status or where I am working. Video has done that for me."

### **Summary**

Research shows that video conferencing enables a level of communication that goes far beyond the spoken word and certainly beyond the written word. SimpleSignal has indeed become their own best customer because VaaS works. It works because it's ubiquitous, it fits their flexible culture in and out of the office, it reduces travel costs, and it's a quality collaborative experience for both internal and external communications.

### **Learn More**

SimpleSignal provides video as a service for free to its PBX customers. SimpleMeetup is a suite of services that includes SimpleMeetup Video, a flat-fee, hosted video conferencing service, SimpleMeetup Desktop, a web conferencing service, and SimpleMeetup Audio, a hosted HD audio conferencing service. To find out more about how SimpleSignal's video solutions can help your organization, visit us at [www.simplesignal.com/videoconferencing](http://www.simplesignal.com/videoconferencing) or speak with a SimpleSignal representative at 866-434-4404.