



NATO Improves Communication, Saves Time and Money with Polycom® Telepresence

Government

Daily Use

- Central command communications
- Emergency management
- Critical needs assessment
- Crisis communications
- Intra/Inter-department collaboration
- Workgroup collaboration
- Project management

Solution

- Polycom® Telepresence Experience™ High Definition (TPX™ HD) solution

Results and Benefits

- Quarterly in-person meeting replaced with a telepresence conference resulting in: cost savings of \$51,000; elimination of 500 hours travel time and 21,000 kg of carbon emission
- Increased collaboration resulting in improved efficiency and productivity of daily operations, expanded team participation and more effective program management
- Significant travel reduction resulting in decreased costs and improved safety for agency personnel

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an alliance of 28 countries from North America and Europe committed to fulfilling the goals of the North Atlantic Treaty signed on April 4, 1949. NATO provides a forum in which the United States, Canada, and European countries can consult together on security issues of common concern and take joint action in addressing them. The organization is committed to defending its member states against aggression and has helped to end bloody conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo and head off a civil war in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Today NATO-led forces are working to bring stability to Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Darfur.

Given its global charter and presence, NATO is a highly geographically dispersed organization and this can make effective communication a challenge. Information flow is vital to the organization for fulfilling organizational goals and mandates, maximizing the productivity and efficiency of personnel, and even bolstering the success of field operations. These challenges made clear the need for a cost-effective solution to enable teams to collaborate over long distances.

Polycom video conferencing systems have been deployed at NATO headquarters and in outposts of the organization around the world. Daily use of the systems supports improved coordination with NATO liaisons working in operational theatres around the world. The technology is also being used to increase multi-agency collaborative communication on topics that include logistics, project management, and updates on theatre progress.

“[Video conferencing] has certainly shortened the fuse on NATO’s ability to act in this dynamic environment,” says Brigadier General Gyorgy Lehel, director of operations at the NATO Communications and Information Services Agency (NCSA).

Life-Like Interaction

The most recent NATO implementation of Polycom video conferencing is a joint project between NCSA and the NATO Consultation, Command and Control Agency (NC3A) which is responsible for the seamless provision of unbiased scientific support and common funded acquisition of Consultation, Command, Control, Communications, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) capabilities. The collaborative effort marks the first permanent use of immersive telepresence technology in NATO.

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Tasked with implementing technological solutions that will enable NATO to improve the efficiency of its operations, the NC3A initiated a project to provide Virtual Meeting Rooms (VMRs) to locations in Brussels, Den Haag, ACT Norfolk, and the NC3A Rep at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE). NC3A worked in close partnership with its sister agency, the NCSA, with the goal of improving efficiencies and cooperation between the two agencies while expanding its service capabilities in support of its mission.

After testing and evaluating leading competitive solutions in the collaborative space, NC3A chose the Polycom® Telepresence Experience™ High Definition (TPX™ HD) 306M solution to create its collaborative and immersive network of VMRs. The VMRs are a part of an ongoing mission to expand the use of technology in order to serve the NATO Alliance. The entire VMR network currently runs over IP among Den Haag, Brussels and SHAPE and is being expanded to a sixth location in Norfolk, Virginia.

A Compelling Solution on Every Level

The Polycom TPX 306M system, delivers a natural and productive meeting environment that supports a far superior collaboration experience over traditional conferencing. With life-size images and high-quality surround sound, participants can clearly see nuances in facial expressions and other non-verbal communications that lend to the feeling of being in the same room. In addition, each VMR was designed with the same paint, lighting and multipurpose, boardroom-style tables to further enhance the virtual meeting experience. The VMRs also provide a content development and sharing environment to facilitate teamwork.

Whether participants are seated, standing, or walking around the room, with the Polycom TPX HD 306M solution they can still be seen by the far end. When not being used for telepresence meetings, participants can sit all around the conference table, maximizing the utility of the room, supporting both telepresence and traditional meeting experiences.

The Polycom TPX HD 306M solution is also completely interoperable with existing standards-based video conferencing systems. This ensures that when complex missions require a well-coordinated response among other government agencies and international organizations, NATO will be able connect and reach locations worldwide. In addition, NATO can maximize its previous investments in video conferencing technology throughout the Alliance.

Impacting the bottom line

Video conferencing technology from Polycom is helping NATO reduce its need for travel and thereby save money and boost productivity. In addition, the geographic disparity among locations that made it difficult to bring teams together to manage program issues such as budget requirements and technical concerns has been virtually eliminated through the use of immersive telepresence. And the risks to operational theatre personnel imposed by travelling are greatly reduced as is the burden placed on the hosting Agency's resources with managing visitors.

Learn More

Visit polycom.com to find out more about Polycom solutions and services.

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