

# WORK

## SOFTWARE SYSTEMS

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—Jim Rice, MIS Director



## Work Software Systems redefines internal communications with WebEx AIM Pro.



### LINE OF BUSINESS

Retail Management Software

### WEBEX SERVICE IN USE

WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition, WebEx Support Center, Meeting Center, Training Center

### SUMMARY

Work Software Systems required a better way to manage corporate-wide internal communications. WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition enabled the company to provide every employee with robust instant messaging capabilities while managing and securing usage across the organization. As a result, the company regained control over internal communications while increasing network security and employee productivity. WebEx AIM Pro also integrated with other WebEx solutions, giving Work Software Systems one centralized system that dramatically changed the way the company worked.

### ABOUT WORK SOFTWARE SYSTEMS

#### Headquarters

Charlotte, NC

#### Number of employees

50

#### Target market

Wireless and decorating center retail stores

#### WebEx Customer Since 2005

Work Software Systems is a leading provider of software solutions enabling retailers to manage business operations more successfully. At the core of the company's product line is its Retail Management System (RMS). From point-of-sale transactions and inventory management to commissions and accounts receivable, the RMS makes it possible for Work Software Systems' clients to manage the key transactional components of their businesses within a single software system. The company's other retail-focused software products address issues such as workstation security, hiring, and employee time and attendance.

### The Challenge

For a company like Work Software Systems, with offices spread across the US and Canada, choosing the right internal communications tools is essential. To facilitate communications between employees corporate-wide, the company relied heavily on ICQ and America On Line instant messaging solutions for a number of years. As the company grew, however, it became increasingly difficult to manage and control user communications through these solutions. "We wanted to make sure all employees could instant message with each other but not with outsiders. Because the solutions we had in place did not provide us with centralized control over users, instant messaging began to decrease our overall productivity and created a security risk for our company," explains Jim Rice, MIS Director at Work Software Systems. The company required a solution that would manage its internal communications more effectively and securely.

### The Solution

Initially, Rice researched many instant messaging solutions, including Akonix. Some solutions required the company to purchase hardware and host the service. Rice recalls, "To make these solutions work, we would have needed a dedicated PC with an open IP running at all times. These solutions were not only costly, but they required us to manage all of the maintenance as well." Work Software Systems learned that a beta version of WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition was available for testing soon after it implemented several WebEx solutions corporate-wide. The company became a beta customer and purchased WebEx AIM Pro when it launched publicly in August 2006. "We chose WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition because it integrated fully with all of our WebEx solutions, it was easy to use, and added the level of security we needed for our internal communications," says Rice.

Rice immediately implemented WebEx AIM Pro to provide every employee in the company with secure instant messaging capabilities. He says, "We rolled out WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition within a day, and finally gained control of our user lists." Within WebEx AIM Pro, Rice sets up users at the server level, assigning company-standardized screen names to each employee. "The WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition administrative tool enables us to define user policies. For instance, one of the policies makes it possible for us to block out communication with anyone outside of the company domain," he explains. By eliminating their screen names from



the company user list, Work Software Systems bars previous employees from returning to chat with existing employees.

WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition now provides all employees with robust instant messaging functionality that saves time and makes internal communications practically effortless. The file transfer feature makes it possible for users to send files from within the program, while the history save capability enables them to keep their instant messaging dialogues for future retrieval. According to Rice, "Everyone loves the history save feature because it provides users with a record of important conversations right at their fingertips." In addition, activating the one-click meeting button conveniently starts a WebEx meeting within the main instant messaging window. "Employees use the one-click meetings to conduct one-on-one customer meetings as necessary," says Rice.

The WebEx AIM Pro solution has become part of the company's initiative to leverage integrated WebEx solutions across the enterprise. The company uses WebEx Support Center to provide remote technical support and one-on-one trainings to customers; Meeting Center to conduct company-wide meetings; and Training Center to develop efficient customer training programs. "Now, when new employees start work, we provide them with an email address, a WebEx account, and a WebEx AIM Pro screen name," Rice remarks.

#### The Benefits

WebEx AIM Pro enabled Work Software Systems to control enterprise-wide instant messaging, increase network security, and improve employee productivity. "WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition helps us define

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authorized users, ensuring employees use instant messaging for work purposes, and increasing employee productivity" says Rice. WebEx AIM Pro also closed technical security holes as well as those created by human error. "Using WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition, we limited instant messaging to internal employees only, so we've eliminated the risk of an employee sending sensitive material to a family member or friend by accident. Plus, WebEx AIM Pro encrypts all messages for secure transmission," explains Rice.

WebEx provided Work Software Systems with one centralized, streamlined solution that furthers business efficiencies. With a fast growth rate over the last two years, Work Software Systems found that ad hoc solutions with multiple business systems and vendors did not provide long-term answers for the company. "We needed an integrated, multi-functional solution that could meet the objectives of various departments within our organization. WebEx provided us with the integration we required to support our company growth, streamline our business processes, and offer the highest levels of service to our customers," states Rice.

Deploying WebEx enterprise-wide dramatically changed the way the company worked and yielded significant results for Work Software Systems. Rice says, "Implementing WebEx Support Center

drastically decreased our support calls and enabled us to reduce the number of support representatives by 25%. The quality and speed of support we offer has greatly improved. "WebEx Training Center also improved the efficiency of the company's training programs. "With WebEx Training Center, we train larger numbers of customers more quickly, resulting in enormous time-savings for our company," says Rice.

#### The Future

To integrate WebEx solutions fully into the company, Work Software Systems expects to expand its use of WebEx significantly. "We are currently developing a shared corporate calendar using Microsoft Exchange and once complete, we plan to integrate it with WebEx AIM Pro Business Edition," says Rice. This capability will enable users to view and schedule meetings on each other's calendars from within the instant messaging main window. In addition, the company is in the process of leveraging a number of Training Center features to make its training offerings more robust. Rice concludes, "By streamlining our processes, WebEx provided the foundation for us to grow in an organized way. Now, we're growing without bloating. We are looking forward to exploring the many capabilities within WebEx that are still untapped."

## HIGHLIGHTS

- WebEx AIM Pro enabled Work Software Systems to control enterprise-wide instant messaging, increasing both network security and employee productivity.
- WebEx provided Work Software Systems with a single integrated solution that supports growth, streamlines business processes, and enables high quality service.
- WebEx dramatically changed the way the company worked, significantly improving the quality and speed of service, and training program efficiency.