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Scientific Computers improves call resolution time and customer satisfaction with WebEx Support Center



INDUSTRY

High Tech – Software

WEBEX APPLICATIONS

Meeting Center, Support Center

SUMMARY

WebEx is used to provide remote support to customers across the UK and throughout EMEA.

ABOUT SCIENTIFIC COMPUTERS

Line of Business

Software distributor and reseller

Headquarters

Crawley, Sussex, UK

Number of Employees

12

WebEx Customer since 2004

Scientific Computers is a niche IT services company, based in Crawley in Sussex. The company provides software and value added services, such as post-sales training and support, to hundreds of customers across the UK and throughout Europe and the Middle East. Its customers are primarily blue chip companies and include Excel Airways, EDS, BT Global Services, UCAS, PGS and Logica.

Like all small businesses, Scientific Computers is acutely aware that its people can only be in one place at any one time. The company prides itself on the high level of post sales service it provides to its customers, but with customers dispersed in locations from London to Stockholm to Tel Aviv resources very quickly become stretched.

It was because of the limited resources and its goal of providing top client service that the company decided, that it needed to look again at how it served its customers.

The Challenge

Managing director Alan Hall explains that the issue facing Scientific Computers was one of not being on the spot to see the problem its customers faced. “I guess what really characterised the problem is a bit like that children’s game where you get someone to describe something to you and you have to draw it – that illustrates technical support quite well!” Someone would call up and say they had a problem, explain what they were trying to do, but beyond that it was a matter of guesswork. The solution would often be associated with the environment and what else they were running on their system,” explains Hall.

Inevitably, not being able to ‘see’ what was happening on the customer’s system would mean an element of trial and error in which the solution to the customer’s problem was not immediately apparent. “What you’d end up with would be a whole bunch of e-mails pinging back and forth from our support people to the customer, just trying to understand the problem.”

The Solution

In late 2004, Scientific Computers decided it needed to do something to control costs and make the most of its staff availability. It didn’t need to look far since one of its suppliers seemed to be using the perfect solution for its problem – WebEx Support Center. WebEx Support Center takes advantage of WebEx’s MediaTone Network to allow support professionals to establish secure, web-based remote access connections with users anywhere. IT support professionals can view and control the customers’ entire desktop and applications, diagnosing problems, downloading patches or updates and testing applications for proper installations.

Setting WebEx up only took a matter of days. “We literally phoned up WebEx and said, can we have some too please!” says Hall. “We found that a lot of our customers were very familiar with WebEx as a brand. They understood what it was, and our belief was that would make it a lot easier when we said we were going to WebEx onto their machine.” Hall was also impressed with how easy it was to train support staff. With only a half-hour session they were up and running on the service.

The company can now hold a WebEx meeting with its client as if they were in the same room – sometimes rectifying the difficulty on the spot. Now, when a customer calls in with a technical problem, one of the support staff asks for permission to take over their computer remotely using WebEx. The Scientific Computers staff members can then see the customer's desktop and operate it to diagnose and resolve problems instantly.

The Benefits

Hall happily confirms that 100 per cent of his customers are now getting better service from Scientific Computers using WebEx. "For the ones where the problem gets interesting, we just ask for access through WebEx and solve the problem there and then." He confirms that although there are no formal figures on ROI, there have been instances in which a problem has been solved within hours when previously it would have taken days or even weeks, and when you're paying for someone's time that's a huge saving.

"There was one situation in which it would have been almost impossible to solve the problem without WebEx, so in terms of delivering a better standard and sticking to our service level agreements it's certainly helped a great deal."

It has offered side benefits too. The company can demonstrate new software remotely and allow customers to consider buying products without a costly visit that would take staff offsite, incurring train or even air fares. "Sometimes it's also been useful as a pre-qualification – to show people what we're doing initially so we only visit if they're really interested."

The Future

Scientific Computers is completely convinced that its business is in much better shape thanks to using WebEx. Although happy with the current application of WebEx, the company is also considering other applications of the service. Hall explained, "In the future, we may look to do a more with the Webinar service, Event Center, rather than just meetings and support. Our real requirement, however, was that we were finding some support requirements very difficult to address. It's dealt with that perfectly."

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Scientific Computers is using WebEx to provide remote support to customers across the UK and throughout EMEA
- WebEx has allowed the business to dramatically improve call resolution time by providing a 'real time' solution
- WebEx has allowed the business to deliver a better level of service to its customers leading to increased customer satisfaction