

## SaaS Model Enables Enterprise-Wide Switch to New IM Client

Cisco smoothly transitions 90,000 global staff members to cloud-based IM solution within 45 days.

### Executive Summary

#### Challenge:

- Switch entire global staff from previous IM solution to Cisco WebEx Connect IM
- Complete worldwide enterprise deployment in short 45-day timeframe
- Establish foundation for continued integration of collaboration tools across Cisco

#### Solution:

- In-house tool showcases rich capabilities of collaboration technology
- Highly scalable application easily accommodates large volume of new user accounts
- Easy-to-use solution requires very little end-user technical support

#### Results:

- Successfully implemented global, enterprise-wide technology deployment in 45 days
- Confirmed value of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model through fast implementation
- Enabled mobile IM and other new productivity-enhancing features

### Challenge

As one of the world's largest technology companies, Cisco helps employees at thousands of businesses around the world communicate more effectively every day. Of all of the companies that benefit from Cisco® solutions, Cisco itself is one of the most aggressive adopters of its own innovative technology.

In his role as director of strategy and architecture for communication and collaboration IT at Cisco, Bailey Szeto's top priority is implementing technology tools that Cisco employees need in order to successfully manage projects and communicate with colleagues. "There's been a definite change in how employees want to interact with each other," Szeto says. "Instead of using separate applications for instant messaging, collaboration, and phone calls, they want to use one solution for increased productivity."

Szeto envisions a new collaborative landscape where Cisco employees can switch between modes of communication in a process he calls "media escalation." "When employees use IM, they'll often decide mid-conversation that the subject is too complex to explain in writing, so they'll pick up the phone to discuss in more depth," he says. "Instead of losing valuable productivity by stopping an IM conversation to search for a phone number, employees should be able to escalate their conversation with one click from IM to a phone call, and then click again to start a WebEx meeting."

To achieve that level of media escalation, Szeto and his team needed to continue the process of integrating Cisco collaboration tools across the organization. That meant switching from the company's existing IM client to Cisco WebEx™ Connect IM for more expansive collaboration within a single web-based workspace. "Making the enterprisewide move to WebEx Connect IM was essential for achieving tighter integration across Cisco," he says. "But the biggest challenge of all was that we only had 45 days to make the switch."

### Solution

Szeto and his team had no complaints about their previous IM client, but with WebEx Connect IM they saw an excellent opportunity to embrace their own technology while accelerating productivity across the organization. "WebEx Connect IM offers far more features than your standard IM client," he says. "It also provides the perfect platform for enhancing integration with other communication tools."

Long before the large-scale deployment of WebEx Connect IM, a majority of Cisco employees had already participated in the application's beta program. "By the end of the test phase, 50,000 Cisco staff members had opened a WebEx Connect IM account," Szeto says. "For that reason alone, I had complete confidence that the system could scale to meet our needs."

Even so, Szeto and his team were prepared in case technical issues did arise. They assembled a team that could troubleshoot problems around the clock, but the worldwide implementation went so smoothly that the extra support was unnecessary. "During a typical deployment, we would expect 10 percent of users to experience some difficulty adopting the new technology," Szeto says. "In this case, we added 40,000 accounts to our initial group of 50,000 beta users over the course of a single week. Of those 90,000 total users, only one percent opened support cases. WebEx Connect IM is such an easy-to-use, well-designed solution that the vast majority of employees were able to start using it without incident, which was a phenomenal outcome for us."

**"The fact that we could implement the solution enterprise-wide in a month and a half highlights the strength of WebEx Connect IM technology."**

**— Bailey Szeto, director of strategy and architecture for communication and collaboration IT, Cisco**

## Results

In the end, Szeto and his team managed to meet their deadline. They completed the entire deployment process, from planning through implementation, in just 45 days. "Normally, a project of this scope would take 12 months from the planning stages to full deployment," he says. "The fact that we could implement the solution enterprise-wide in a month and a half highlights the strength of WebEx Connect IM technology."

For Szeto, the speed of the enterprise-wide WebEx Connect IM deployment also proves the value of the Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) business model for Cisco. "Because WebEx Connect IM is a cloud-based technology, I didn't have to worry about adding infrastructure," he says. "I was able to focus 100 percent of my time and energy on making sure that Cisco staff members were aware of the new application, creating localized support materials, and handling other important aspects of change management. Using a SaaS solution was the key factor that made it possible to deploy the new application in such a short time period."

Now employees can use WebEx Connect IM to communicate with colleagues via IM from within a feature-rich Cisco collaboration platform. "Instant messaging isn't a new technology, but integrating IM into one comprehensive communication tool means that employees don't have to waste time switching between different solutions," says Szeto. "The change may seem small, but the time savings can add up to big productivity gains across the enterprise."

WebEx Connect IM offers the added bonus of easier mobile IM access and federated business-to-business IM. "Cisco staff can use mobile devices to send IMs, and they can invite external contacts to IM them using the same platform," says Szeto. "WebEx Connect IM allows employees to move easily from communicating with coworkers to interacting with customers, whether they're at their desks or traveling around the world."

## Next Steps

In addition to helping Cisco employees communicate more effectively, the WebEx Connect IM implementation has provided a springboard for Szeto and his team to explore other ways to transform collaboration technology at Cisco. "Using WebEx Connect IM is the first phase of what we want to accomplish," he says. "With this deployment, we've been able to lay a solid foundation so that we can make our vision for the future of collaboration a reality."

## For More Information

To find out more about Cisco WebEx™, go to <http://www.cisco.com/web/products/webex/index.html>.

## Product List

Cisco WebEx Connect IM



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