

Web Meetings Help Manufacturer Transform Customer Support

Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG uses web-based tools to resolve 90 percent of technical support requests remotely.

Summary

Customer Name:

Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG

Industry:

Provider of printing presses, software, and services

Location:

Heidelberg, Germany

Number of Employees:

20,000

Challenge:

- Provide rapid, effective technical support to large global customer base
- Help ensure complex print management software runs smoothly on presses worldwide
- Reduce travel to customer locations for onsite support and maintenance

Solution:

- Hosted solution provides advanced technology without IT resources or management
- Strong security features protect customers operating in sensitive industries
- Online application can be used across multiple computer platforms

Results:

- Dramatically reduced need for onsite support, resolving 90 percent of requests remotely
- Provided faster, more effective technical support to customers worldwide
- Improved effectiveness of onsite support by pre-diagnosing issues before arrival

Challenge

With over 40 percent of the market share of sheet-fed offset printing presses, Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG (Heidelberg) is the world's leading provider of solutions for the print media industry. Headquartered in Heidelberg, Germany, the company develops and manufactures precision printing presses and equipment for printing press imaging and print processing, and also offers consulting and training services. Heidelberg operates approximately 250 branch offices located in over 150 countries, with more than 200,000 customers worldwide.

Heidelberg is also the only manufacturer to offer printing press workflow software that automates the entire printing process. The software, called Prinect, significantly boosts press productivity. "With Prinect, the entire manufacturing process of print products is controlled and integrated, from printing press management and online customer service all the way to color and quality control," says Klaus Schelble, head of the service division at the company's office in Kiel, Germany. "The combination of all of these functions streamlines the printing process, but the software itself is quite complex. If customers experience any technical problems, we must be able to resolve them as soon as possible."

To help ensure that customer presses keep running smoothly and without interruption, Heidelberg created a service team with over 500 employees in 250 service centers worldwide that could provide onsite support. However, due to the increasing complexity of Prinect, Heidelberg also wanted the ability to resolve more technical support issues without sending technicians to customer locations. "In order to help our customers more efficiently, we needed a remote support solution that we could use to address technical problems anywhere in the world," says Schelble.

Solution

Before deploying Cisco WebEx™ solutions, Heidelberg tried using other remote support solutions, but found that they were slow, unstable, and difficult to set up. "With the previous applications we tried, clients had to install special software on their machines, which meant that both our customers and our technicians were reluctant to use them," Schelble says.

After deciding to implement a new solution, the company selected WebEx® technology based on its easy accessibility and reliable connectivity. "With WebEx applications, the only technical requirement that our clients really need is having an Internet connection," says Schelble. "Because WebEx technology is a hosted software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution, we can provide robust support features with an advanced, easy-to-use technology that does not have to be managed by customers in any way."

customers worldwide. "With only a few mouse clicks, our service engineers in our regional service centers can connect to a customer's system no matter where they're located," Schelble says. "Even though they may be hundreds of miles away, our team can control the Prinect software remotely,

which makes it easier for our engineers to diagnose system problems and resolve technical issues more quickly.”

Finding an online solution that offered strong security features was also a top priority for Heidelberg. “We have a number of customers in sensitive industries such as government and pharmaceuticals,” says Schelble. “Naturally, they’re a little skeptical when a technician wants to link into their systems over the Internet, but WebEx solutions offer strong encryption and a protected, reliable network, so it was easy to convince them that they could trust the technology.”

In addition to strong security, the fact that Cisco WebEx solutions can be used on any computer platform also played a major role in Heidelberg’s decision to use the technology. “Many customers in the graphic design pre-press industry use Apple computers, while our engineers use Windows systems,” Schelbe says. “With WebEx solutions, customers and technicians can communicate across platforms without limitations or losses in performance, so we can effectively collaborate with our clients no matter what system they use.”

“Using WebEx technology has become our standard procedure, and we’ve been able to resolve more customer issues while dramatically reducing how much time we spend traveling and at customer sites.”

— Klaus Schelble, head of service, Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG

Results

After implementing the technology in 2005, Cisco WebEx solutions have become a core part of Heidelberg’s customer support process, allowing technicians to provide fast, effective technical service to customers worldwide. “High-quality support is absolutely indispensable for technically sophisticated products,” says Schelble. “WebEx solutions are critical business applications that allow us to provide world-class support to our customers no matter where they are, which gives us the edge over our competition.”

Heidelberg now uses WebEx technology to address 90 percent of Prinect support requests, saving both the time and cost of traveling to provide onsite support. “When we first started using WebEx technology, we used remote support to assist our technicians at customer sites when they couldn’t figure out a problem,” Schelble says. “Now, that’s completely changed. Using WebEx technology has become our standard procedure, and we’ve been able to resolve more customer issues while dramatically reducing how much time we spend traveling and at customer sites.”

Even when customers do need onsite support, Heidelberg technicians are much more prepared to address specific problems. “We can resolve support issues more efficiently because the technicians have already used WebEx technology to diagnose problems before they arrive at a customer’s business,” says Schelble. “With WebEx solutions, our technicians not only understand the customer’s issue beforehand, but they’ve also considered possible solutions and can bring the correct replacement parts with them when they arrive.”

Given the growing complexity of the company’s presses, Heidelberg also relies on Cisco WebEx solutions to help their team resolve even the most complicated issues quickly. “Instead of offering individual machines, we provide complete printing solutions that range from pre-press to folding

and encompass a variety of different systems,” Schelble says. “If problems do emerge, we often have to consult a number of specialists with diverse expertise. By allowing us to reach technicians anywhere in the world at any time, WebEx technology makes the most difficult problems easier to solve.”

Next Steps

In the future, Heidelberg plans to continue using Cisco WebEx solutions to provide superior customer support and service. “For many of our customers, our printing presses are a vital part of their businesses, so customer service is one of our top priorities,” Schelble says. “WebEx technology has transformed how we provide support, and we’re excited to see how the application can help us improve the customer experience even more.”

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



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Singapore

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