

Top UK Property Firm Increases Business Efficiency While Reducing Travel with LifeSize

Carter Jonas stays connected by utilizing HD video communications

Organization

Carter Jonas, London, England

Established in 1855, Carter Jonas is a multidisciplinary firm of property consultants with a broad portfolio of services dealing with all aspects of residential, rural and commercial property, and with specialist development, planning, minerals and waste management teams. The firm has 18 office locations throughout England and Wales, five of which are in central London. Carter Jonas' rural division manages over 750,000 acres on behalf of its clients.

Challenge

Due to the nature of their business, the firm's locations are widely dispersed throughout the region and many offices are located in remote or rural areas. Travel between these offices is often difficult and costly.

With fuel prices persistently on the rise, the simple cost of driving to and from one of Carter Jonas' offices not only meant a full day of travel at times, but also a big expense for the company.

According to Pat Hastings, IT Director at Carter Jonas, a great deal of corporate focus centered on maximizing efficiencies and cutting unnecessary costs. Travel became an obvious target for this when analyzing budget spend and was an area in which Carter Jonas needed a solution.

"Reducing travel costs was the underlying driver for instigating an interest in visual communications," Hastings said. "Employees were driving to and from offices up to 3 times a week," he explains. "Not only was this a significant expense to the firm, it wasn't in line with the firm's environmental policy where we are trying to minimize our environmental impact."

"Also, we recently invested in an MPLS network, which unlocked the potential for video across the business. It was evident that video would also provide an added advantage of improved communication with key clients, like The Crown Estate," Hastings said.

Solution

After weighing the options and ultimately being discouraged with the low image quality of the other systems demonstrated, Pat Hastings and his team at Carter Jonas selected LifeSize HD video communications as the best solution. Wire One Communications (now BT Conferencing), an authorized LifeSize reseller, helped in the implementation process.

CARTER JONAS



Carter Jonas Implementation:

- 11 offices installed LifeSize[®] Team[™] HD video systems
- 15-20 days of IT department time from implementation and installation
- 2 champions per office fully trained
- 2 year payback

"BT Conferencing stepped in to review the challenges we were trying to address and came back with not only a higher quality solution, but also a more cost effective and complete solution, Pat Hastings said. "The LifeSize system is better suited to our business needs and expectations than anything else we've seen."

LifeSize® Team™ HD video systems were installed in meeting rooms across 11 of the 18 offices as well as an external multipoint control unit (MCU), which allows more individual video units to connect together to form a multiparty video communications session and gateway.

After the installation, Carter Jonas was provided with a training structure which allows non-technical end users to quickly learn how to use the system. This way, an employee can walk into a conference room, push a button, and instantly connect a call without the assistance of IT or technical staff.

Carter Jonas also implemented a system for the procedure of booking meetings. In this manner, the administration and reception staff can book the meetings via a third party managed services system in Microsoft Outlook.

Results

The LifeSize HD video elements have improved the way Carter Jonas does business.

"At first, people found it hard to comprehend how easy it was to use, they thought they had to do more," Hastings said. "But the high definition function of the systems and the ease of booking conferences meant that people adapted to it quickly and easily."

Although the solution has only been active for a few months, usage continues to increase and management sees a significant difference in how Carter Jonas employees communicate. Because much of the long distance travel has been eliminated, Carter Jonas employees now have easy access to communication options and are meeting more often among different office locations.

With seven divisions in the firm, the implementation of video communications provided the opportunity to improve cross divisional communications, employee morale and productivity levels.

Carter Jonas is able to offer multisite calls, which has been popular with many of their clients, including law firms, who use a lot of video communications. In addition, the systems have positively impacted the service they offer customers, as decision-making has been accelerated and knowledge-share among employees has increased.

The environmental benefits are becoming more apparent as the solution is being adopted and now video communications can be integrated into Carter Jonas' environmental policy.

Pat Hastings comments, "Carter Jonas is delighted with the LifeSize solution, based on even the short term results. We are now looking at adding more sites and additional products, such as desk cameras for more one-to-one spontaneous conferencing. The end to end solution enables us to feel confident in the results and payback we are looking to achieve over the next 2 years."



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Pat Hastings
Director of IT
Carter Jonas



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Corporate Headquarters:
901 S. Mopac Expressway
Building 3, Suite 300
Austin, Texas 78746 USA

Phone: +1 512 347 9300
Fax: +1 512 347 9301
Email: info@lifesize.com
www.lifesize.com

EMEA:
LifeSize Communications
Toll-free Europe
Phone: 008000 999 09 799

APAC:
LifeSize Communications
Hong Kong
Phone: +852 8239 3695