



Rembrandt F&O: Effective, Open Meetings with LifeSize HD Video Communications

Leading Dutch finance agency now 'meet face to face to inspire greater confidence' with LifeSize

Organization

Rembrandt Fusies & Overnames, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Rembrandt F&O (Fusions & Acquisitions) is an independent organization whose core activities include consultation and supervision of the acquisition and sale of businesses. Rembrandt assists the owners of large, medium-sized and small businesses looking for a solution for their succession and assists ambitious entrepreneurs who wish to solidify their plans for expansion. The company has been part of the Rabobank group since 2003.



Rembrandt F&O handles 50 transactions per year and has 30 consultants and three support personnel. The company operates from three locations, Amsterdam, Eindhoven and Rotterdam.



Challenge

Transparency is an essential element of Rembrandt F&O's philosophy. It was the desire of the company to apply this philosophy on all levels while managing costs. Once a month, the management team participates in a marketing coordination meeting at one of the sites. Also, consultants participate in monthly coordination meetings lasting three to four hours and organized at each site. This coordination structure costs time and money but remains indispensable, because Rembrandt F&O needs to continue to meet face to face.

For Rembrandt, it is essential to offer support and prevent conflict when dealing with multiple clients. Equally essential is the ability to make decisions quickly and work side by side with colleagues and clients. The management team at Rembrandt F&O needed a new communications tool that would allow for simple, high quality interactions at the press of a button that would also reduce the need for travel and the associated costs.



CHALLENGE

To create an immersive communications experience that allowed partners and clients to communicate and collaborate in real-time.



SOLUTION

After evaluating several products, LifeSize® Room™ HD video systems were chosen for their quality, ease of use and price performance.



RESULTS

Quick ROI in less than 24 months, reduced travel and travel-related costs, improved communication among colleagues and clients.



Solution

Peter Ruig, Manager of Information Systems at Rembrandt F&O, contacted GO Telecom, an official LifeSize importer and distributor for Benelux.

"After taking inventory and analyzing the situation, GO Telecom advised us to use LifeSize® Room™, a video conferencing system based on HD technology with an internal conference bridge," he said. "In the end, it proved to be an excellent choice. Thanks to high definition image technology, you get the feeling you are looking them right in the eye, which was a fundamental requirement given our business philosophy."



"As soon as you see someone's face, communication immediately becomes more personal."

– JOHN HOEKMAN, CONSULTANT FOR REMBRANDT F&O



Results

Rembrandt's three offices are now equipped with LifeSize systems, each complete with a built-in Multipoint Control Unit (MCU), allowing simultaneous communications between all locations.

"We were surprised how easy it was to use," said Ruig. "Starting up a videoconference yourself is especially simple. Of course, first you have to take the time to learn how to operate the system. For example, the two plasma screens we have allow us to share PowerPoint presentations on one screen and view the meeting participants on the other in real time. Once you learn how to use it, you never forget."

"Since we've been using the videoconferencing system, we've saved money on travel expenses as well as saving time. This has translated into a return on investment in less than two years," adds Ruig. "Also, the meetings have become more effective. More of the items in the agenda can be handled in the same amount of time."

Rembrandt F&O recently used the LifeSize system for a video conference with a new client in China that has locations in China and the Netherlands. A video conference was set up with the Rembrandt offices in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, and those of the client in Utrecht and China.

"Previously, for discussions like this, we would organize an audio conference. However, this presented several challenges, particularly language and cultural barriers. It's hard to tell precisely from someone's tone of voice what he is really feeling, especially when a cultural difference exists," remarks John Hoekman, consultant for Rembrandt F&O. "As soon as you see someone's face, communication immediately becomes more personal. You can see the facial expressions and non-verbal language of all participants and vice versa. This also takes away a barrier and makes meetings and collaboration easier. Face to face meetings simply inspire greater confidence."

As for the future, Rembrandt is looking to bring video conferencing into their parent company's communications repertoire.

"For us, the ideal situation would be to directly set up videoconferences with consultants from Rabobank," adds Peter Ruig. "A significant number of our clients are referred to us by Rabobank and their consultants are involved in the entire transaction procedure. By implementing video, we could better facilitate coordination with these colleagues, share real-time images and essentially better understand these clients."



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