

Cerfrance takes up Lifesize video conferencing for its 700 agencies throughout France



A consulting and accounting associations network, Cerfrance is made up of 64 departmental or regional entities, united at a national level by the Cerfrance network National Council. Its 700 French agencies work with entrepreneurs across all business sectors (agriculture, arts and crafts, commerce, professional services, etc.). Regional and departmental entities operate independently, despite offering the same products under the same brand and using the same logo. The Cerfrance network employs 12,000 people, serving 320,000 customers.

Lifesize had the opportunity to sit down with Systems and Unified Communications Manager Laurent Marquet at RESOTIC, the network's IT subsidiary that serves both Cerfrance and its members.

Cerfrance adopts Lifesize with complete confidence

"The Cerfrance network organizes numerous meetings, requiring members to travel regularly," explains Marquet. "So in 2010, and again in 2013, we started the process of evaluating video conferencing solutions with the goal of preventing employees from each Cerfrance entity from being systematically sent to Paris or one of the many Cerfrance sites for national meetings. But these solutions did not fully satisfy our requirements," recalls Marquet.

So in 2016, the company launched a new evaluation of the video conferencing solutions available on the market, and they narrowed their search to six vendors. Following on-site meetings and various equipment trials, the steering group (made up of Cerfrance, National Council and RESOTIC representatives) opted for Lifesize.

"At the time, around 20% of Cerfrance employees were equipped with Skype for Business®. However, Lifesize showed itself to be



"Lifesize showed itself to be the most interoperable option with third-party solutions."

—Laurent Marquet, systems and unified communications manager at RESOTIC, Cerfrance's IT subsidiary

the most interoperable option with third-party solutions — a strong argument for the adoption of the system by the highest number of agencies," explains Marquet. "Users can connect from their PC, equipped with a camera, or with their smartphone through audio and/or video. They also have the option to use a thin web-based client or a thick desktop client."

For back-office infrastructure, the company chose the cloud-based Lifesize service, hosted in a data center in Paris. With Lifesize, no one has to buy or rent their own servers, which makes deploying a solution like ours that much easier. "Wherever they are located, our users can connect without a second thought, and we only have to settle a fixed subscription charge, meaning we can control our expenses," adds Marquet.

Very soon, members of the network who wanted a new installation or were about to renew their equipment chose to deploy Lifesize video conferencing solutions. Between the end of 2016 and the start of 2017, twelve video conferencing rooms were installed (six Lifesize® Icon™ 450 models for their smaller meeting rooms and six Lifesize® Icon™ 600 models for larger meeting rooms).

Lifesize Case Study

Extremely useful and flexible virtual rooms

“The solution is billed to us by the number of referenced users, but the cloud-based Lifesize software service offers the possibility to create an unlimited number of virtual meeting rooms,” said Marquet. “We’ve already created 633 virtual meeting rooms for employees, enabling each of them to set up meetings in these rooms. This also allows external contacts like organizational presidents to join us, and the fact that not every single person in the meeting needs to be equipped and can instead just join the room makes it easier to get our meetings started.”

Authorized administrators, wherever they are located geographically, are able to create a virtual room and send an email with a link to that room. All participants need to do is click on the given link and join the call.



200
Hours of Meetings

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“Operation Lifesize” a success at Cerfrance

Over six months, Laurent Marquet trained over 80 people via Lifesize (one to three individuals from each entity). “Users rapidly adopted Lifesize and are very satisfied with it, especially since the app has been specifically optimized for their use,” explains Marquet.

In fact, the statistics speak for themselves. In October 2017, the network had 80 users, 633 virtual rooms had been opened and around 200 calls per month had been placed — equivalent to 200 hours of meetings on average each month (with a peak of 264 meetings in June 2017).

“Our support team is receiving fewer and fewer calls from users. The technical representatives providing the first level of support for each Cerfrance office are fulfilling their roles, and the knowledge base I put online rounds off this support. Nowadays, people think that video conferencing really is simple, and even moreso from their smartphones. However, it’s always best to look ahead to the organization of business meetings — connection procedures, downloading plug-in applications, etc.,” Marquet said. “Lifesize is our network’s go-to and main video conferencing solution for inter-Cerfrance meetings and is sometimes also the internal solution for several Cerfrance entities.”



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