



MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL: A CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

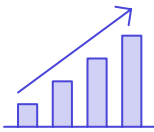
MLB Deploys Lifesize and Hits a Home Run for Collaboration



Meeting attendance increased by 42 percent



Attendees were able to join in a way most convenient to them - conference room, laptop or phone



Time, energy and money saved with more efficient communication and increased productivity



Attendees felt more involved and encouraged to share their ideas



Major League Baseball (MLB) knows how to put on show-stopping sports and entertainment events like the World Baseball Classic and the All-Star Game. The events attract thousands of spectators and require months of preparation and last-minute coordination, so communication is key — but it wasn't always easy.

Prior to the World Baseball Classic, MLB debated how to make managing the tournament, specifically its vital morning meetings, more effective, efficient and engaging. These meetings host more than 50 people in dispersed locations and were previously conducted via audio conference call only. For this reason, people weren't always fully engaged and were often multitasking, which resulted in a number of logistical issues in areas critical to the success of the events.

As a key MLB technology partner, Lifesize stepped up to the plate with its cloud-based video conferencing and collaboration platform and integrated conference room systems to transform collaboration from a ground ball to a home run.

Preparing for a Perfect Game

Baseball is frequently referred to as “The National Pastime” — and for good reason. MLB is the most historic professional sports league in the United States, bringing 73 million people to the ballparks to see 30 teams across North America throughout the regular season. Baseball today is a global phenomenon, and the league is dedicated to continuing to spread the game's influence. As a result, MLB and the Major League Baseball Players Association jointly operate the World Baseball Classic, a tournament that occurs every four years featuring the world's top talent competing for their home countries.

In preparation for the 2017 World Baseball Classic, which took place throughout March 2017 and was hosted in Los Angeles, Miami, San Diego, Seoul, Jalisco and Tokyo, MLB focused its efforts on collaboration rather than competition while evaluating several video conferencing solutions. They chose Lifesize based on its easy-to-use IT admin tools and interface for end users. “From an IT perspective, it was straightforward to implement, flexible to our needs and just as easy for our remote employees,” said Daniel Gainey, Manager of IT Operations at MLB.

Let's Play Ball!

During the deployment phase, Daniel connected with a dedicated Lifesize customer success advocate (CSA) who was involved throughout the deployment process. “He's been really good at helping our users get over the intimidation of video conferencing and have their ‘aha’ moment to see how the platform makes meetings more productive,” said Daniel. The Lifesize team suggested setting up the plug-and-play Lifesize HD camera and phone systems for conference rooms in each of the prospective locations to help the teams communicate better during the event. Tournaments like this require a wealth of logistics and coordination, and it's imperative to the event's success that everyone has the most current and accurate information. Given the high stakes of the event, Daniel and the IT Operations team wanted to immediately try video conferencing to help improve meeting productivity.

Event Planning: A Walk in the Park

MLB set a trial run in motion during the 2017 tournament's first week in Miami and then kicked the initiative into full gear when the tournament reached San Diego. It was a total game changer. Significantly more people joined the meetings, they were more engaged and there were fewer miscommunications during and after the call. Because news of the achievement within the meetings spread, counterparts facilitating the tournament in Tokyo started joining the calls as well.

By the time the tournament reached Los Angeles, more than 50 people were joining each morning meeting via Lifesize — either through the video conferencing system, the cloud-based Lifesize app or audio dial-in. With Lifesize, attendees could join remotely and experience better engagement and effective communication. In fact, meeting attendance increased by about 42 percent compared to the previous tournament in 2013.

“So many changes are made during these calls that it’s important we’re all on the same page. Lifesize makes that happen,” said Daniel. “I don’t use the term lightly, but Lifesize has truly revolutionized the way we conduct meetings.”

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Daniel Gainey, Manager of IT Operations, MLB

On to the Next One

After a successful run at the 2017 World Baseball Classic, MLB was excited to leverage Lifesize again for the 2017 All-Star Game, which was held in Miami. Similar to the World Baseball Classic, the Midsummer Classic experience embodies much more than just a single game; it is a week of festivities leading up to the main event. The complexity of the event increases the need for effective meetings to keep everyone on the same page. “An event this size requires a massive amount of coordination, going over every aspect of the game, including ballpark operations, security, broadcast timing and transportation of the players,” said Daniel.

Back-to-Back Home Runs

By using Lifesize HD camera and phone systems at the hotels and ballpark, in addition to the Lifesize app for more remote locations, MLB saved time, energy and money with more efficient communication and increased productivity. Personnel who were scattered throughout the city and would not have otherwise attended in-person meetings became regular, highly active participants. As a result, meetings actually expanded in time and number because more people were able to get involved and felt encouraged to share their ideas and opinions.

The most favorable reaction, however, came from a senior executive on the events management team who had not yet tried the conferencing solution herself. She was anxious about seeing it in action for the first time, especially in such a fast-paced environment, but by the end of the last day she was exclaiming, “Technology! Technology! Technology!”

Lifesize Poised for a Triple Play

In the end, more than 37,000 All-Star fans and players from each of the league’s 30 teams filled Marlins Park for three consecutive nights to witness, among other highlights, the first rookie to win the Home Run Derby outright; celebrities gathering multiple hits in the Celebrity and Legends Softball Game while inciting stadium-wide laughter; and an extra-innings battle that saw the American League squeak out a 2–1 win over the National League. Daniel credits Lifesize as the integral facilitator of communication, which was critical to this overall success.

“[Lifesize] will be a permanent addition to our events technology portfolio,” said Daniel.

Based on the positive changes MLB has experienced through its use of Lifesize, the oldest professional sports league in the United States is now on the forefront of collaboration technology with no signs of striking out. Rather, MLB is planning to continue using Lifesize for future events.

Learn More

Make sure to check out our other [case studies](#) to learn how Lifesize is transforming business communication.

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