

Telecommunication Provider Reduces Travel without Reducing Meetings

TeliaSonera uses Telepresence for face-to-face long-distance meetings.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p>TELIASONERA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecommunications operator and service provider • Helsinki, Finland and Stockholm, Sweden • 31,292 Employees (in 2007)
<p>BUSINESS CHALLENGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased business travel, leading to high travel costs, lag in business decisions, and unproductive downtime • Employees able to spend less time with families • Air travel affecting environment through carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions
<p>NETWORK SOLUTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco TelePresence solution using CTS 3000 endpoints • Cisco TelePresence Manager • Cisco Unified Communications Manager IP-telephony call-processing solution
<p>BUSINESS RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 10,000 work hours saved annually • Cutting travel decreases time spent on the road and increases family time • CO2 reductions calculated to be almost 400,000 kilograms annually

Business Challenge

TeliaSonera is the leading Nordic telecommunications operator and service provider. With its biggest operations in Sweden and Finland, the company recently reorganized to unify business processes across the Nordic region. The reorganization created functional, pan-Nordic business units, rather than country-level business units, resulting in more business function team meetings taking place across the two countries. This change, in turn, meant major increases in the amount of travel between Sweden and Finland and the amount of time required to finalize business decisions.

On the average, the total number of flights made by TeliaSonera executives and experts between Finland and Sweden amounted to dozens each day. The air travel bill rapidly increased. In addition, even though TeliaSonera employees have the latest email and other tools for working on the move, the unproductive downtime when travelling averaged four hours per person per day.

“Challenges were just popping up everywhere. Employees were commenting on how the time spent on airplanes and at airports put strains on families, with less and less quality time with children. Environmentally conscious employees were pointing out that all the air travel was not doing the atmosphere any favors, either,” says Janne Pesu, market development director. “We simply needed to cut down travelling between Stockholm and Helsinki.”

Network Solution

TeliaSonera had to find a solution that would both enable faster decision making and allow people to see each other face to face.

“We came across Cisco® TelePresence for the first time when the President of TeliaSonera Finland and his management team visited Cisco in San Jose. He was immediately impressed, and the decision to buy was made almost on the spot,” Pesu says.

The installed Cisco TelePresence 3000 consists of three 65-inch plasma displays for life-size images at 720p and 1080p resolutions. The high-definition cameras provide high-quality images. The full-duplex, CD-quality audio facilitates a natural conversation with no perceivable latency. The clarity of the audio allows participants to talk in relaxed or soft voices and still be heard as if every participant is in the same room.

“Implementing Cisco TelePresence did require work. Apart from the technical installation, we had to renovate two conference rooms, one in Helsinki and one in Stockholm. But, as we were remodeling our offices in Helsinki anyway, this was no big deal.”

TeliaSonera’s first two Cisco TelePresence systems were implemented by Cisco Advanced Services and Cygate, a TeliaSonera company and Cisco Advanced Technology Partner.

“The service reduces travelling needs, and therefore saves employees time, makes their life easier, and increases their productivity.”

—Juho Lipsanen, President, TeliaSonera Business Services

Business Results

After four months of using the solution, the initial business case for the Cisco TelePresence investment has already been exceeded at TeliaSonera. The average usage has increased steadily to more than three meetings per day between the two locations. This even improves on the original business case; the payback time is now calculated to be less than 12 months.

“The TelePresence room is in use during normal business hours, and then some. Three three-hour meetings per day amount to almost full capacity for business hours. And, employees prefer investing two hours in a virtual meeting, even after ordinary work time, as opposed to spending an entire day travelling. Utilization is well spread out, with no single user group representing more than 20 percent of the usage,” Pesu says.

Some management teams are already having four of five meetings with Cisco TelePresence. The increase in executive and expert productivity has been significant. On an annual level, the solution saves over 10,000 work hours, previously spent sitting around in airplanes, airports, or taxis.

Another benefit of Cisco TelePresence is the ease of putting together unplanned meetings for urgent and immediate face-to-face discussions. Virtual teams become “teams” in the real sense of the word, because people are able to interact as in real life. This makes Cisco TelePresence the ideal tool for “virtual boardroom” discussions and meetings, something that earlier systems have failed to deliver.

“The experience is so real that people are forgetting who’s virtual and who’s really present in person. We have had situations where people going to lunch in Helsinki have wondered where so-and-so is. And the person in question has been sitting at the Stockholm end,” Pesu says.

Cisco TelePresence also has positive effects for employees from a private life perspective. “Just look at your calendar and compare a day of travel to Stockholm versus a three-hour TelePresence meeting. You are home in time for dinner and tucking your children to bed,” Pesu says.

From the environmental perspective, Cisco TelePresence makes everything greener. The average amount of CO2 emissions per one Helsinki-Stockholm-Helsinki meeting trip totals 178 kilograms per person. “This means that annually, we reduce our carbon footprint by as much as 400,000 kilograms. That is the equivalent of driving over two million kilometers,” Pesu says.

“The service reduces travelling needs, and therefore saves employees time, makes their life easier, and increases their productivity. TeliaSonera TelePresence also helps corporate customers reduce carbon dioxide emissions,” says Juho Lipsanen, president of TeliaSonera Business Services.

PRODUCT LIST

- Cisco CTS3000 TelePresence Units
 - Cisco TelePresence Manager
- Cisco Unified Communications Manager

Next Steps

TeliaSonera has already decided to invest into additional Cisco TelePresence sites. Building more sites brings virtual meetings and their benefits to other TeliaSonera offices as well.

The Cisco TelePresence solution will also be offered by TeliaSonera as a service for corporate customers. The targeted customers for Cisco TelePresence will be in the Nordic countries. These customers range from banks to paper manufacturers, most of which operate globally.

“Customers who have seen this are really excited,” says Pesu. “They have even begun to envision more things that could be done with TelePresence. These innovations present golden opportunities and have the potential to further improve the ways we work and increase our productivity, but also enhance our quality of life by providing more personal time.”

Table 1. Savings for TeliaSonera

	Cost of one meeting trip, Euros	Total time required by one meeting, hours	Annual CO2 emissions, kilograms
Before TelePresence	400	9	200,000-400,000
With TelePresence	0	3	Less than 8,000

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Telepresence, go to:

<http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/ps7060/index.html>.

To learn more about TeliaSonera, go to: <http://www.teliasonera.com>.



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San Jose, CA

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