

Manufacturer Closes More Sales Through Collaboration

Lovejoy, Inc. uses integrated Cisco and IBM Lotus solutions to quickly consult with an available expert.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p>LOVEJOY, INC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing • Downers Grove, Illinois • 220 employees
<p>CHALLENGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase sales • Improve productivity • Minimize support requirements
<p>SOLUTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replaced PBX system with Cisco Unified Communications • Integrated IBM Lotus Sametime instant messaging software with unified communications and presence technologies • Integrated IBM Lotus Notes email with messaging technology • Implemented Cisco Unified Contact Center Express
<p>RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated time to respond to customer questions from three days to one • Saved an average of 30 minutes daily for every employee, with unified messaging • Implemented complete solution in one night

Challenge

Founded in 1900, Lovejoy, Inc. originally manufactured tooling and machinery for the railroad industry. Today, the company is a premier supplier of flexible shaft couplings and other power transmission components. Lovejoy has 220 employees in three locations in the United States and Canada, and works with a German partner to serve European customers.

Communication and collaboration are vitally important to Lovejoy’s salespeople, who rarely visit the main office. “It’s an inefficient use of time and money for salespeople to travel to the office for meetings,” says Sandra Swaim, vice president of information technology, Lovejoy. “They need collaboration tools so that they can reach out to other people from any location: the office, the field, or home.”

The need for collaboration is especially important in Lovejoy’s industry because many products are commodities. Customers often place their order with the first vendor that can provide a quote or commit to a delivery date. But Lovejoy found that collaborating across time zones was delaying its response, causing the company to lose business.

When the economy faltered in the summer of 2008, Lovejoy concluded that it needed to improve its communication and collaboration

processes to sustain and increase market share. “It was not the best time for discretionary capital expense, but we could see that doing nothing would harm the business,” Swaim says. At the time, Lovejoy used a private branch exchange (PBX) voice system and Lotus Notes email. The company wanted to continue using IBM Lotus Notes, add Lotus Sametime for instant messaging, and implement a new communications system that would transform the way the company responded to customer requests.

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—Chris DuBois, Network Administrator, Lovejoy, Inc.

Solution

After evaluating leading unified communications solutions, Lovejoy chose Cisco® Unified Communications, including Cisco Unity® Unified Messaging and Cisco Unified Contact Center Express. “Our main criterion for technology purchases is reliability, because we have a small IT staff,” Swaim says. In addition, Cisco Unified Communications is already integrated with IBM Lotus Notes and Lotus Sametime, eliminating the time, expense, and delays of integration work. And Lovejoy already used Cisco network gear and had a very positive experience with Cisco support.

Deployment

For assistance, Lovejoy engaged CDW, a Cisco Gold Certified Partner and IBM Business Partner. After several weeks of planning and testing, Lovejoy transitioned to Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0, fully integrated with the IBM Lotus Notes and Lotus Sametime, in just eight hours, at night. "Cisco and IBM had already done the integration, so we didn't have to worry about interoperability issues," says Chris DuBois, network administrator, Lovejoy. CDW deployed Cisco Unified Communications Manager, Cisco Unity Unified Messaging, and Cisco Unified Contact Center Express servers at company headquarters. The other North American offices receive voice and voicemail services over the network.

Integrated Cisco and IBM Solutions

The integration between Cisco and IBM solutions enables employees to communicate and collaborate more easily. For example, a salesperson who needs an answer to close a sale can find currently available experts using IBM Sametime presence plus integrated telephony presence from Cisco Unified Presence. Then the salesperson can use the same interface to send an instant message or click to call the expert's preferred phone number. Lovejoy sales teams can collaborate more easily by sharing and exchanging files and sales information in a secure, real-time environment, speeding decision making.

Employees save more time because of the integration between Cisco Unity Unified Messaging and Lotus Notes. They can see a list of their voicemail messages in their Lotus Notes inbox, click to play them back in any order, and forward voicemail attachments like any other email.

Contact Center

Cisco Unified Contact Center Express provides more flexibility than Lovejoy's previous contact center solution. "With our old contact center solution, we had to call the vendor to make even minor changes," says DuBois. "Now we can make changes ourselves, such as adding an employee to a skills queue if we get more interest in a particular product."

"When we communicated across different time zones with voicemail and email, customers sometimes did not receive an answer for two or three days, causing us to lose business to competitors. Now, with the integrated Cisco and IBM solution, we can often get the answer the same day, with instant messaging and click to dial."

—Sandra Swaim, Vice President of Information Technology, Lovejoy, Inc.

Results

Enhanced Collaboration

If a customer calls to ask which type of coupling is best for an unusual application, the salesperson might need to consult with a coworker. "When we communicated across different time zones with voicemail and email, customers sometimes did not receive an answer for two or three days, causing us to lose business to competitors," Swaim says. "Now, with the integrated Cisco and IBM solution, we can often get the answer the same day, with instant messaging and click to dial."

Increased Productivity

Cisco Unity Unified Messaging saves approximately 30 minutes each day for employees. One reason is that they can manage their voicemail from their Lotus Notes email inbox, eliminating the time that they used to spend dialing into

office voicemail multiple times a day. Employees also leave fewer voicemail messages because presence information helps them reach the right person on the first try.

Improved Quality of Life for Employees

As a family-owned business, Lovejoy highly values quality of life for employees. The company is beginning to allow employees to work from home, using Lotus Sametime to stay in touch with instant messaging. Lovejoy is also thinking about giving its teleworkers Cisco IP Communicator software on laptops so that they can make and receive calls on their office number, from any location “Saving an hour or two commute each day is good for morale and saves fuel costs,” says Lovejoy. “And the work-at-home option might also reduce our real estate costs.”

Next Steps

Lovejoy is planning to use Cisco WebEx™ for customer meetings, combining voice, web sharing, and video. Meeting without travel will reduce costs and free up more time for salespeople to spend with customers.

PRODUCT LIST

Switches and Routers

- Cisco Catalyst® 2900 and 3500 Series Switches
- Cisco 2800 Series Routers

Cisco Unified Communications

- Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0
- Cisco Unified IP Phones 7920, 7921, 7941, 7960, 7970, and 7912
- Cisco Unified Contact Center Express
- Cisco Unified Communications with IBM Lotus Sametime
- Cisco Unity Unified Messaging for IBM Lotus Domino

Security

- Cisco Adaptive Security Appliances 5520 and 5505

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Unified Communications go to:

www.cisco.com/go/unifiedcommunications



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