



Transforming the Event Experience Through Collaboration

Executive Summary

Faced with increasing business demands and corporate cost-cutting initiatives, today's savvy event marketers are finding creative ways to reach new audiences, extend their brand, and improve their return on investment (ROI). While many events take place face to face in a physical location, event marketers are increasingly incorporating Collaboration solutions that allow them to virtualize their events to extend and enrich participation.

The Cisco® Collaboration for Events experience, which includes technologies such as telepresence, web conferencing, high-definition video webcasting, and social video sharing portals, offers event marketers new ways to transform the way they conduct events by:

- Enabling attendee and speaker participation from any location
- Sharing sessions and information before, during, and after events
- Extending their brand and the life of their content
- Facilitating rich interaction and building communities of interest
- Reducing travel and event costs

Overview

Although global economic conditions have affected trade show and corporate event in-person participation, meetings and conferences remain critical to achieving business objectives. Conferences and trade shows give attendees opportunities to learn, meet new people, share information, and purchase new products and services. According to the Event Marketing Institute, 53 percent of survey respondents chose event marketing as the best way to accelerate and deepen relationships with target audiences. However, many factors affect attendance, including reduced travel budgets and corporate cost-cutting initiatives. These factors are causing event hosts to rethink traditional ways of sharing information with employees, engaging customers, motivating sales teams, and building loyalty with partners.

Cisco's Event Experience

During the past three years, Cisco has been using innovative collaboration solutions to deliver significant event improvements. Its efforts were recognized at the 8th Annual Event Marketers Ex Awards, where Cisco swept the virtual event and hybrid event categories and was awarded "the Grand Ex" over more than 600 other programs from major consumer brand luminaries. [The Global Sales Experience \(GSX\)](#) and [Cisco Live](#) events were recognized for breaking new ground with virtual-only and live-virtual hybrid programs.

"This recognition represents a major shift in how organizations think about event marketing. It underscores the importance of combining digital and physical experiences in the future to extend the reach and improve the effectiveness of events," said Nancy Neipp, Senior Director Global Corporate Events. With the Cisco Collaboration for Events experience, Cisco has:

- Reduced the cost per live attendee by 78 percent
- Extended the reach and lifespan of its events
- Simplified logistics
- Accelerated time to market
- Saved more than \$100 million in the past three years alone
- Delivered innovative experiences for employees, customers, and partners

Cisco Collaboration Enhances the Event Experience

"As part of the Cisco Collaboration for Events experience, Cisco advised us on how to use collaboration technologies to meet our business goals. As a result, we were able to extend our brand, our content, and our conversation beyond the four walls of the Fortune Brainstorm GREEN conference."

— P.J. Boatwright, Vice President of Conferences, Fortune Live Media

Cisco Collaboration solutions improve and accelerate rich personal, team, and customer experiences before, during, and after events. The Cisco Collaboration for Events experience, along with services from Cisco and our partners, brings together solutions such as conferencing, high-definition video, enterprise social software, IP communications, and telepresence to deliver new and exciting use cases:

- **Remote Presenter:** Imagine having feature speakers, regardless of location, with all of the energy and social interaction that the audience expects. Now event marketers can offer a broader range of industry expertise for their events using immersive telepresence and interactive web conferencing while reducing scheduling challenges and expenses related to booking sought-after public speakers.
- **Remote Audience Participation:** Include virtual attendees by using web conferencing and telepresence solutions to reach more locations and types of attendees. Remote attendees can engage with thought leaders and panelists from around the globe, ask questions, and receive feedback. Breakout session speakers can use remote audience participation to gather information that helps them target and personalize their "physical" session materials.

- **Pre- and Post-event Planning:** Improve operational efficiency by streamlining pre- and post-event planning. The Cisco Collaboration for Events experience enables collaboration across firewalls to share documents with agencies and event providers, manage and coordinate schedules, and transparently integrate updates while managing version control through shared workspace and video conferencing solutions. Event marketers can drive virtual event success with customized registration pages, lead source tracking, post-event registration, attendance reporting, and help from online event experts.
- **Licensed Content Repository:** Collect, share, package, and sell content from the event using a social video portal as part of the conference or sponsor packages. Extend the conversation and increase interactivity by enabling ratings and comments for in-person and remote attendees. Build a stronger ongoing event community before, during, and after the event.
- **Real-Time Operational Analytics:** Monitor attendee behavior and make real-time adjustments using real-time operational analytics. Permanent or temporary video surveillance cameras can deliver real-time information to event management staff, giving them insight into traffic flows or the number of people in particular locations to minimize wait times and help avoid room overcrowding. Event marketers can monitor areas of interest and provide sponsors with reports about attendee responses, delivering higher value for sponsors' marketing investments.
- **Interactive Digital Signage:** Easily and quickly communicate with large numbers of people in multiple areas of the venue from a central location. Instantly communicate schedule changes and room adjustments, make announcements, and minimize the need for staff to manually replace signs in numerous locations. Expand sponsor marketing opportunities by offering additional visibility in areas of high traffic. Event marketers can also help meet corporate sustainability goals by reducing the quantity of printed signs.



Expand Your Audience and Brand

Until recently, most events were closed environments. However, that scenario is changing. According to the **FutureWatch 2009** report produced by Meeting Professionals International (MPI), respondents see virtual meetings as an important trend, and many of them predicted a shift to web-based learning as a way to control meeting and travel costs. Today, technology allows event marketers to extend their brands and events. With the Cisco Collaboration for Events experience, organizations can easily include attendees and speakers from all corners of the world and expand their brand beyond the walls of the physical event.

Transform the way attendees engage as they participate in person and virtually with two-way interaction and immersive video. Guest speakers and subject matter experts can participate at the time needed, regardless of time zones.

Increase Interactions

People want to engage according to their own schedules and preferences, which might be before or after the actual event, as well as during the event. Cisco Collaboration for Events enables event marketers to provide access to content, such as video sessions, presentations, and chats with other participants before, during, and after the physical event. Organizations can customize the event experience and enable participants to connect with the information they want when they want it. A rich and diverse set of video sharing tools enables two-way dialogue.

Collaboration tools also make it easier to keep the spirit of an event alive. Event marketers can share event content long after the event is over to continue conversations and facilitate ongoing relationships with customers. Finding new ways to maintain those communities can help promote attendance at future events, increasing sponsor and stakeholder satisfaction.

Boost Operational Efficiency

In **Digital + Exhibit Marketing Insights 2009**, the Center for Exhibition Industry Research found that the majority of respondents conduct virtual media to more easily accommodate a geographically widespread workforce and customer base. Corporate brand respondents also see virtual media as a means to save money, whereas exhibition management respondents use virtual media as a complement to live events.

Now event marketers can increase their ROI by driving more interactions between speakers and attendees, in multiple ways. The ability to bring remote presenters or audiences together addresses cost concerns while increasing business impact to align with the realities of today's economy and stakeholder expectations.

Event marketers can also improve the efficiency of event execution while increasing attendee satisfaction by deploying staff to the right areas at the right time. Data from video surveillance can provide better overall visibility, leading to improved resource deployment and event contingency decision making. Real-time analytics also tell sponsors precisely the number of impressions their marketing signage received or substantiate the effectiveness of booth activities in attracting attendees.

Why Cisco?

Cisco has provided IP communications services and applications to more than 100,000 customers and 85 percent of Fortune 500 companies. Extending this leadership, Cisco has aggressively expanded its Collaboration portfolio through R&D innovation and acquisition. The Cisco Collaboration portfolio now includes Cisco WebEx™ meeting applications, with more than 20 million hosted meetings per month. And today, Cisco TelePresence™ conferencing delivers face-to-face meetings at more than 2000 installations. With recent innovations in collaboration application software, Cisco's end-to-end collaboration system gives organizations the flexibility to deploy the right mix of collaboration services on premises, on demand, and in hybrid delivery models.

Cisco's approach to collaboration can help organizations gain business value and achieve operational excellence while reducing capital expenditures (CapEx). With Cisco Collaboration, organizations can provide rich collaboration experiences, connect the right people with the right information, and get the most value from IT investments.

As a pioneer in adopting collaboration solutions, Cisco has transformed the way it has conducted its own meetings and events. The company has delivered proven benefits across dozens of events, including reduced costs; expanded reach and participation; and enhanced attendee experience by adding technology to transform the event experience. Notable examples include:

- Cisco quarterly company meetings used Cisco TelePresence collaboration systems, IPTV, and videos on demand (VODs) to increase employee participation rates from about 15 to 20 percent 10 years ago to as high as 67 percent for Cisco's recent 25th anniversary meeting.

- At Cisco Live, an annual customer conference, Cisco used real-time web video to enable 5,000 remote attendees to join the 9,000 in-person participants, setting a record for total attendance.
- At the Cisco global sales meeting, the largest virtual event the company ever conducted, all 17,000 sales personnel participated virtually, reducing event costs by 85 percent.

Cisco Advanced Services

Cisco Advanced Services help make networks, applications, and the people who use them work better together. With experience in designing and building large medianets, Cisco's Lifecycle Services approach provides fixed-price planning, design, and optimization services to help increase business value and return on investment. Cisco can address implementation and deployment needs to maximize business uptime, while supporting solutions on an ongoing basis through technical and remote support options.

Cisco WebEx Event Services

The Cisco WebEx Event Services team can help bring online events to a new level of professional presentation. Customers can rely on the skills that Cisco has developed in helping organizations deliver thousands of events worldwide. Cisco WebEx Event Services provides project consulting, event consulting, event production services, engineering input and assistance, audio and video services, and network and media management services.

Cisco Partners

Cisco collaborates with a wide range of partners, providing solutions and strategic integration with products from global leaders. Cisco's rich ecosystem of partners provides a wide range of proven video, communication, and collaboration products and services to maximize the value of the Cisco Collaboration for Events solutions. In addition, Cisco offers a sliding scale of options, depending upon the size and type of event, and with services from partners, event marketers can take advantage of proven practices to enable the best possible experiences for attendees.

Cisco Capital

Cisco CapitalSM offers flexible financing options to help customers obtain Cisco equipment and software at highly competitive rates. Organizations can initiate a Cisco Collaboration for Events implementation without a large initial investment and preserve cash without new debt. Cisco can help match expenses to technology benefits and revenue, to deliver increased business flexibility. Cisco also provides flexible migration and upgrade options, while enabling organizations to avoid having to dispose of equipment. Cisco Capital solutions help put event strategies into action faster—and with minimal risk.

Learn More Today

Call your local Cisco account executive to learn how the Cisco Collaboration for Events experience can help you achieve your event and ROI goals. Explore how Cisco Collaboration for Events can help transform the event experience by visiting www.cisco.com/go/collaboration4events.



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