

Executive Summary
<p>iCON (Indians Connecting People)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Employee Resource Group (ERG) • San Jose, CA • 950 employees
<p>Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase usage of Cisco TelePresence suites among members of Indian technology community in Silicon Valley and India • Demonstrate effectiveness of social networking and targeted marketing
<p>Solution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and distributed targeted email blasts • Distributed materials at in-person marketing events and presentations • Used Twitter to promote Guy Kawasaki meeting
<p>Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected with some 5,000 professionals in Indian technology community • About 100 of these professionals used Cisco TelePresence suites or used TelePresence for videoconferencing with colleagues in India

Most Advanced Way to Market to Indian Technology Groups

iCON uses social networking and targeted marketing to increase Cisco TelePresence public suite usage.

Challenge

iCON, or Indians Connecting People, is a Cisco® Employee Resource Group (ERG) that drives professional development, business development, and community outreach within Cisco, and has strong connections with various Indian partner associations. In December, 2009, Preethy Padmanabhan, iCON's director of professional development, spoke to David Martella, director of operations and strategy for Cisco TelePresence™. Martella wanted to increase the usage of TelePresence public suites by professionals between cities in India and Silicon Valley, and sought iCON's help.

Solution

Working with Charlie O' Hanlon, marketing manager for TelePresence suites, Padmanabhan and her team developed a plan to utilize iCON's connections with Indian organizations, including the Silicon Valley Indian Professional Association (SIPA) and The Indus Entrepreneur (TIE). Through email blasts, in-person marketing and promotions, and the use of Twitter, iCON delivered the TelePresence message to thousands of Indian technology professionals in these organizations. iCON targeted senior management in technology companies, as well as venture capitalists, entrepreneurs, and other industry leaders. "The goal is to find 100 people (like Guy Kawasaki) who in turn promote Cisco TelePresence to 1000 people, and become ambassadors for Cisco TelePresence," says Padmanabhan.

Highlights of the campaigns included:

- Using Twitter to reach over 2500 professionals to promote a "Tweet-up" with author and entrepreneur Guy Kawasaki. Some 50 people attended the event, which used TelePresence to connect Santa Clara, Boston, London, and Chennai. A video of the event was posted on YouTube, and has had over 1000 hits to date.
- Email marketing to 3000 SIPA members, as well as promoting TelePresence at various live SIPA events.
- An "Ask Silicon Valley" event, a TelePresence meeting connecting professionals and aspiring entrepreneurs between Santa Clara and Singapore.

Results

Between January and April 2009, iCON reached out to over 5000 Indian technology professionals in SIPA, TIE, and other organizations. Over 100 of these professionals ended up using pay-per-use TelePresence suites in Santa Clara for face-to-face meetings with colleagues in Chennai, Mumbai, and other cities in India.

“The goal is to find 100 people (like Guy Kawasaki) who in turn promote Cisco TelePresence to 1000 people, and become ambassadors for Cisco TelePresence.”

— Preethy Padmanabhan,
Director of Professional
Development for iCON

Next Steps

To build on its success with TelePresence, iCON participated in TIEcon, which was held at the Santa Clara Convention Center on May 15 and 16, 2009 (<http://www.tiecon.org>). Representatives from TelePresence had a booth at this event, and connected with over 1000 attendees, including venture capitalists, entrepreneurs, and executives.

Over the next few months, iCON plans to drive interest in TelePresence by:

- Reaching out to venture capitalists and their portfolio companies, to show them how to use TelePresence to work with professionals in India, and hold more effective meetings, increase productivity, greatly reduce travel costs, and go green.
- Connecting with higher education institutions, including the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), which has already installed a TelePresence unit.
- Hosting another “Ask Silicon Valley” event, a “Startup 101” series for potential entrepreneurs, which may be expanded to India, Canada, and other countries.

For More Information

To learn more about iCON, and how its marketing efforts helped promote TelePresence, please contact i-con-pd@cisco.com.



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