

How Cisco Redesigned Japanese Offices for Workforce Collaboration

Limited-space office combines innovative design with IP telephony and wireless technologies.

Cisco IT Case Study / Office Design / Connected Workplace in Japan: This case study describes Cisco IT's internal use of Cisco wireless and IP Communications technologies in conjunction with an innovative workplace design to create a highly effective workplace for Cisco Systems® employees in Osaka. The Cisco global network is a leading-edge enterprise environment that is one of the largest and most complex in the world. Cisco customers can draw on Cisco IT's real-world experience in this area to help support similar enterprise needs.

BACKGROUND

Until early 2004, Cisco Systems® had two offices in Osaka, Japan, where the company managed its regional sales efforts and operations. Although the offices were geographically close, the arrangement was inefficient and the company was not realizing the benefits associated with adjacencies, in addition to financing two offices, in two locations. Both offices had traditional layouts, with open-plan offices for staff and assigned offices for managers. With an increasing number of staff spending more time working remotely, this arrangement was not cost-effective because the traditional allocation of one person to one desk did not align.

In early 2004, the leases for both offices were due for renewal, offering Cisco® the opportunity to consolidate the existing offices into a single location. It was also an ideal chance to implement a planning strategy to accommodate the projected increases in employees anticipated over the next three years, as the existing offices did not provide sufficient space for growth.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Because of a shortage of suitable commercial real estate in Osaka, options for moving were limited. In addition, Cisco was reluctant to increase operating expenses or incur unnecessary capital expenses. As a result, relocating to a third, larger office was out of the question. Instead, Cisco needed a cost- and space-efficient solution for expanding and reconfiguring one of the existing adjoining offices.

Cisco analyzed the company's corporate and business needs in Osaka and identified the criteria for the new workplace, as well as employee working requirements. An internal employee representative group solicited feedback from employees and provided guidance to the Cisco Workplace Resources (WPR) and Workplace Effectiveness (WPE) teams. Together, they determined that the new workspace should encourage collaboration among teams and be flexible enough to accommodate changes in staff size, and the implementation of new technologies. Ideally, the newly designed offices should provide:

- Wireless connectivity in all working spaces
- Sufficient space for collaboration
- Quiet areas where employees could think, read, learn, and study
- Informal team meeting areas

The teams also recognized that interlinking business areas should be a priority when considering the redesign of the offices. They wanted to provide an environment that facilitated mobility as well as supporting open discussion, collaboration, and teamwork.

Another important objective was to design the office to serve as a showcase for Cisco technology to prospective customers. Sales teams envisioned office tours for perspective customers, who could observe Cisco networking technology at work. As a result, employees in the Osaka office would become part of the customer-facing showcase.

Finally, the redesign of the Osaka offices offered Cisco an opportunity to introduce Osaka employees to new ways of working that other Cisco offices worldwide had adopted and merge them with the local workplace culture to provide an optimum working environment.

SOLUTION

After reviewing several options, the teams determined that it would be possible to consolidate both offices in one of the original buildings and acquire additional space in adjacent units. Although this wasn't considered an ideal solution, it encouraged the teams to implement more efficient working practices. Representatives from the Tokyo-based WPR team travelled to Osaka to conduct meetings with the local staff to help familiarize the Osaka team with the new working environment and tools. To successfully encourage teamwork and interaction, the new offices deployed several networking components, including:

- Cisco AVVID (Architecture for Voice, Video and Integrated Data)
- IP Telephony and the Cisco IP Communicator solution
- Extension mobility
- Wireless networking capabilities
- A highly available network
- Standard collaboration applications

The new network and applications helped facilitate the effective use of the office space available and provided employees with options in how they could use the different technologies available to improve productivity. Assigned offices were dismantled and managers moved into open office areas (see Figure 1). Work spaces such as virtual offices and quiet rooms provided employees with a more dynamic and interactive environment, encouraging collaboration and improving productivity. The redesign encouraged employees to shift their focus from individual workspaces to a collaborative environment. This further assisted the interlinking of business areas to improve mobility, allow open discussion, and encourage team work.

Figure 1. Open Collaborative Work space, next to individual work areas



In addition, the Osaka team now had an office that incorporated a wide range of new technologies providing an ideal showcase opportunity for customers, as well as offering employees new flexibility in both physical environment and in work practices. For example, the adoption of IP Telephony meant that desk space no longer had to be allocated to specific personnel. Instead, employees were now free to move around the office as their work required. A wireless network allowed office space to be altered with no interruption to daily routines, and the costs required previously for office moves, adds, and changes was eliminated.

RESULTS

The below table illustrates the significant results of WPE consolidation.

Metrics	Existing	Traditional Consolidation	WPE Consolidation
Total office area	1,159 square meters	1,100 square meters	1,100 square meters
Allocation of space	36% individual work space	35% individual work space	21% individual work space
	17% collaborative work space	25% collaborative work space	32% collaborative work space
Usage pattern	Traditional	Traditional	Shared
Sharing ratio of people to desk space	1 : 1	1 : 1	1 : 1.3
Traditional capacity	72	76	82
Traditional capacity per square meter	16.0	14.4	13.4
Client-facing area, in square meters	300	360	360
Private offices	3	3	0
Project cost	–	US\$1.3 million	US\$800,000

In total, 82 percent of the mobile workers in the Cisco Osaka office now use the shared environment as workspace, and the reduced total office area can accommodate a 13 percent increase in workstations. The office also saves an additional 10 percent in rent in comparison to financing two separate offices. The collaborative work environment at Osaka has inspired other regional and local managers to shift from a traditional office layout to collaborative working

space, similar to Cisco offices in Europe and the United States. In addition, the Osaka office has provided an opportunity to test new solutions that can later be implemented in other offices in the Asia Pacific region. Today, managers report that the newly designed collaborative space has promoted and improved communication among the sales team.

LESSONS LEARNED

Cisco determined one important best practice in its conversion of the Osaka offices: it's necessary to review lease break early, as this gives real estate managers the time and flexibility to make well-informed decisions regarding their real estate options and offers the greatest opportunities for reducing costs.

SUMMARY

Implementing a WPE solution can help reduce operations costs, encourage better collaboration among employees, and increase productivity. Table 2 lists the business benefits and the solutions that will help enable them. :

Business Benefit	WPE Solution
Unified teams	Build collaborative environment
Increased revenue	Sales contribution with office tours
Reduced costs and increase space efficiency	Share workspace environment
Optimized flexibility and convenience	Implement highly available network with wireless and voice technologies

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read the entire case study or for additional Cisco IT case studies on a variety of business solutions, visit Cisco on Cisco: Inside Cisco IT www.cisco.com/go/ciscoit

NOTE

This publication describes how Cisco has benefited from the deployment of its own products. Many factors may have contributed to the results and benefits described; Cisco does not guarantee comparable results elsewhere.

CISCO PROVIDES THIS PUBLICATION AS IS WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, EITHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE.

Some jurisdictions do not allow disclaimer of express or implied warranties, therefore this disclaimer may not apply to you.



Americas Headquarters
Cisco Systems, Inc.
170 West Tasman Drive
San Jose, CA 95134-1706
USA
www.cisco.com
Tel: 408 526-4000
800 553-NETS (6387)
Fax: 408 527-0883

Asia Pacific Headquarters
Cisco Systems, Inc.
168 Robinson Road
#28-01 Capital Tower
Singapore 068912
www.cisco.com
Tel: +65 6317 7777
Fax: +65 6317 7799

Europe Headquarters
Cisco Systems International BV
Haarlerbergpark
Haarlerbergweg 13-19
1101 CH Amsterdam
The Netherlands
www-europe.cisco.com
Tel: +31 0 800 020 0791
Fax: +31 0 20 357 1100

Cisco has more than 200 offices worldwide. Addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco Website at www.cisco.com/go/offices.

©2007 Cisco Systems, Inc. All rights reserved. CCVP, the Cisco logo, and the Cisco Square Bridge logo are trademarks of Cisco Systems, Inc.; Changing the Way We Work, Live, Play, and Learn is a service mark of Cisco Systems, Inc.; and Access Registrar, Aironet, BPX, Catalyst, CCDA, CCDP, CCIE, CCIP, CCNA, CCNP, CCSP, Cisco, the Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert logo, Cisco IOS, Cisco Press, Cisco Systems, Cisco Systems Capital, the Cisco Systems logo, Cisco Unity, Enterprise/Solver, EtherChannel, EtherFast, EtherSwitch, Fast Step, Follow Me Browsing, FormShare, GigaDrive, HomeLink, Internet Quotient, IOS, iPhone, IP/TV, iQ Expertise, the iQ logo, iQ Net Readiness Scorecard, iQuick Study, LightStream, Linksys, MeetingPlace, MGX, Networking Academy, Network Registrar, Packet, PIX, ProConnect, ScriptShare, SMARTnet, StackWise, The Fastest Way to Increase Your Internet Quotient, and TransPath are registered trademarks of Cisco Systems, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and certain other countries.

All other trademarks mentioned in this document or Website are the property of their respective owners. The use of the word partner does not imply a partnership relationship between Cisco and any other company. (0705R)