



# Sport and technology: green innovation rakes in the gold medals.

The World Rowing Federation (FISA) chooses Elmec's experience and reliable IT architecture to reduce environmental impact and guarantee greater efficiency in its event staging and international operations.

“Digital technology is a key factor for international organizations such as ours, and Elmec has made it possible to organize our World Rowing events much more sustainably.”

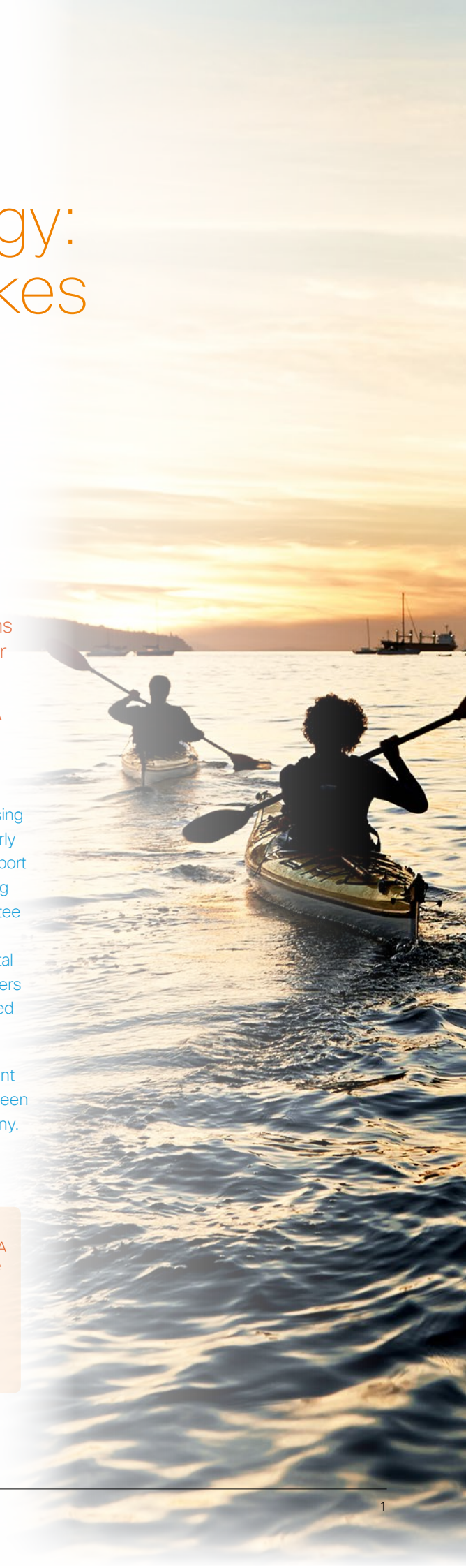
**Matt Smith, Executive Director, FISA**

Sports federations are not so very different from companies in terms of their challenges and approach to innovation. They need technology and network solutions that can meet the flexibility and performance requirements of organising committees, media, athletes and spectators. These requirements are particularly important when setting up the kind of IT infrastructure that is necessary to support the success of an international competition. For these needs, the World Rowing Federation chose Elmec which in turn uses Cisco best technologies to guarantee connectivity and a trust-worthy collaboration during international regattas such as the World Rowing Cup in Varese, Italy; also to improve the efficiency of digital communication between the FISA and its committees, commissions and partners who are distributed throughout the world. This in itself has considerably reduced FISA travel costs.

Only technology can shorten the distances for an organization that is present in nearly 150 countries and whose needs for efficient communication between its offices and organisers is on a par with those of any multinational company.

## The challenge

- Enable fast, easy and ubiquitous network access for FISA staff, organisers, media, spectators and the teams at the competition sites  
Simplify Internet access procedures for all University users
- Provide the organising committees with an effective system of communication and remote collaboration.





Working for the success of top-level international sports events such as FISA's World Rowing regattas involves numerous complexities, and not just of the logistical and organizational variety. "Judges, team members, operators and staff need high performance services, resources and platforms to enable immediate communication of data, information, results and updates," said Matt Smith, Executive Director of FISA, "while journalists and photographers must be able to rely on a fast, always-available network to transmit news items and images in real time to their respective newsrooms."

Added to that is the need to provide a positive experience for the local audience, which is increasingly and actively engaged in disseminating real-time information from their mobile devices via social and digital channels. Using Elmec solutions based on Cisco technology, FISA has undertaken to integrate a modern and innovative approach to meet this demand.

In 2012, FISA launched an ongoing collaboration with Elmec to achieve the kind of environmental and operational efficiency targets that are expected by its partners, (such as WWF International). Its goal is to be "best in class" in these areas. "The support we provide for FISA is based on the adoption of Cisco Collaboration technologies," confirmed Alessandro Ballerio, CEO of Elmec, "which allow members of the FISA to communicate and collaborate from their offices, homes and events thus enabling with significant savings in time and travel costs."

## Case Study | FISA

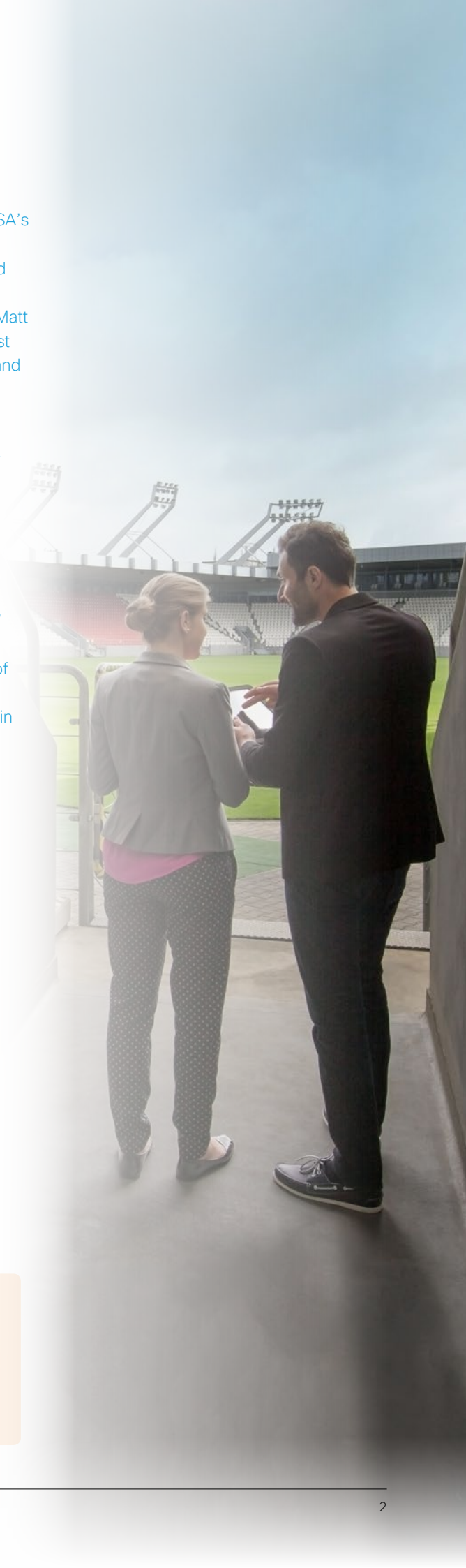
Headquarters: Lausanne

Sector: Sports

Computerizing processes can make even sporting events more efficient. That approach solutions enable the design of customized architectures for complex outdoor locations where the unavailability of services would otherwise make it impossible, all while respecting the environment.

### The solution

- Elmec Network Managed Service
- Cisco TelePresence
- Cisco Jabber
- Cisco Collaboration Meeting Rooms Cloud
- Cisco Switches
- Cisco Access Points





## Sport is now crossing the finish line of business transformation too

In response to the request for technology support in the field, Elmec set a team of experts to work to design the most appropriate infrastructure. The approach was exactly the same as the one that enables technology to meet the needs of companies in any sector that must leverage innovation to win their market challenges. In the case of FISA, it was also essential to provide the best possible communication and collaboration experience to ensure the success of its international sports events.

The project involved integrating a video-conferencing infrastructure based on Cisco TelePresence conference rooms installed at FISA offices throughout the world. Thanks to Cisco Jabber, the unified communications application that enables real-time multimedia communications across an entire organization, users can leverage the potential of video communication on mobile devices. The solution also includes Cisco Collaboration Meeting Rooms (CMR) Cloud, the platform whose virtual collaboration and communication environment makes it possible to get the most out of the implemented solutions.

Concurrently, Elmec provides FISA with the technology that guarantees connectivity in the field for operators and participants at sporting events and enables the events themselves to be more efficiently managed, while respecting the most advanced requisites of sustainability. Thanks to a network architecture based on Cisco switches and wireless Access Points, organizers, members of the sports delegations, media and spectators can reap the benefits of an unprecedented communication and data & information access experience. The infrastructure provides Internet connectivity via high performance wi-fi to digitally distribute the key processes that support the activities of the organizing committee as well as useful services for the public. The system is also able to optimize internal communication flows between participants at these events, such as the team members, FISA staff, judges and all the personnel employed on site.

What's more, the computerization of all these components has enabled FISA to reduce its paper consumption, thanks to the increased use of smart devices, and contain its environmental impact. "Our principal goal is to keep pace always with the times as regards the level of sustainability with which we organize events," said Matt Smith. "The technology provided by our Partner Elmec, helps us reduce the quantity of paper produced and used and simultaneously improve the experience of the spectators at these events. Thanks to the reliability of the wi-fi, our spectators are able to access all the relevant information on their mobile devices without the need for us to distribute printed material." Not to mention the big plus for the organizers and participating teams of always having all the updates on weather conditions and the progress of the competitions available in real time.

Those solutions provided by Elmec responded so effectively to the stringent requirements imposed by the Federation that their very first support activity for the local IT team won the trust of the organization internationally.





“Working with them and leveraging their experience we realized that federations are not so very different from companies that are serious about the challenges and business opportunities tied to a smarter and more logical adoption of technology,” said Ballerio. The consistent use of that TelePresence solution also enables video communication between the competition sites and Federation headquarters in Lausanne, to supply updates and allow direct contact between headquarters and the operating units on the ground.

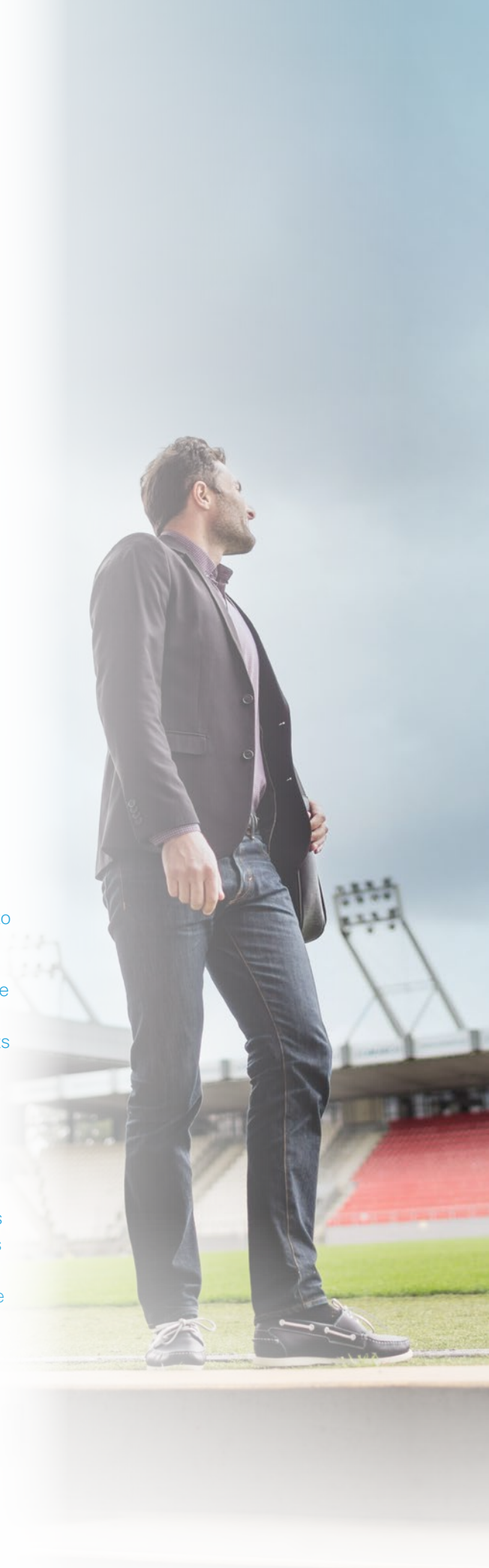
### From rowing to other sports: a model worth copying

The experience gained during the FISA’s international World Rowing competitions has enabled to develop an authentic technology model that can easily be replicated in similar contexts. Thanks to these solutions, other sports federations will be able to measure and verify in real time the organizational outcomes of their events, the cost savings in consumption and the time it took to organize the initiatives.

“Technology is changing every aspect of our lives,” noted Matt Smith, Executive Director of FISA, “and that’s happening with sport, too, where more and more investments are being made in digital technology and computerization.” Sports federations and teams are increasingly realizing the importance of having the most reliable systems of performance measurement possible to improve results and ensure the safety of the athletes. No less important, spectators and fans of all sports have responded enthusiastically to the many advances technology has brought to competition sites, making the experience in the stands far more exciting.

Thus it is crucial that federations and organizing committees understand the changes taking place if they are to address the demand for innovation and deliver more engaging services. “We think that partnerships between sports organizations and technology providers like Elmec and their own partner Cisco, will become increasingly important in achieving these goals,” added Smith. “Collaboration enables us to achieve our objectives and create a better overall experience.”

An invitation that Elmec has enthusiastically accepted: “We are very proud of the results with FISA since it is one of the oldest and noblest federations in sport,” concluded Ballerio, “which is why it’s important to encourage this process of transformation in which the technology acts as the enabler of new services without compromising the ethics and values of disciplines like rowing.”





## Results

- A high-performance network enables the use of value-added services during competition events
- FISA has reduced its use of paper at competition sites by 80%
- Thanks to those collaboration solutions, the national committees of the Federation can communicate with each other while simultaneously reducing travel costs
- The project developed with FISA will enable the development of a model that can be used in other similar contexts

## For more information

More information about the Cisco architectures and solutions referred to in this case study are available at [www.cisco.com](http://www.cisco.com)

For more information about FISA, see [www.worldrowing.com](http://www.worldrowing.com)

## Cisco products and solutions

- Cisco TelePresence
- Cisco Jabber
- Cisco Collaboration Meeting Rooms Cloud
- Cisco Switches
- Cisco Access Points



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