



Cisco Meeting Server: On-Premises Collaboration Support Designed with the Future in Mind



Introduction

Cisco IT recently faced a challenge that also presented a unique opportunity to create a programmable solution to support the collaboration needs of select user groups within Cisco. In a 3-month migration completed in early 2017, Cisco IT moved about 130,000 users from the Cisco Collaboration Meeting Rooms (CMR) Hybrid solution with Cisco Webex-enabled Telepresence and on-premises resources to the Cisco CMR Cloud solution. However, not all users in the organization could move to the cloud. That includes users who initiate ad-hoc conference calls by pressing the “Conference” button on the Cisco Jabber client, on an on-premises Cisco IP phone, or from an on-premises Cisco TelePresence endpoint. Other users unable to make the transition are employees who cannot utilize meeting collaboration in the cloud for security and compliance reasons.

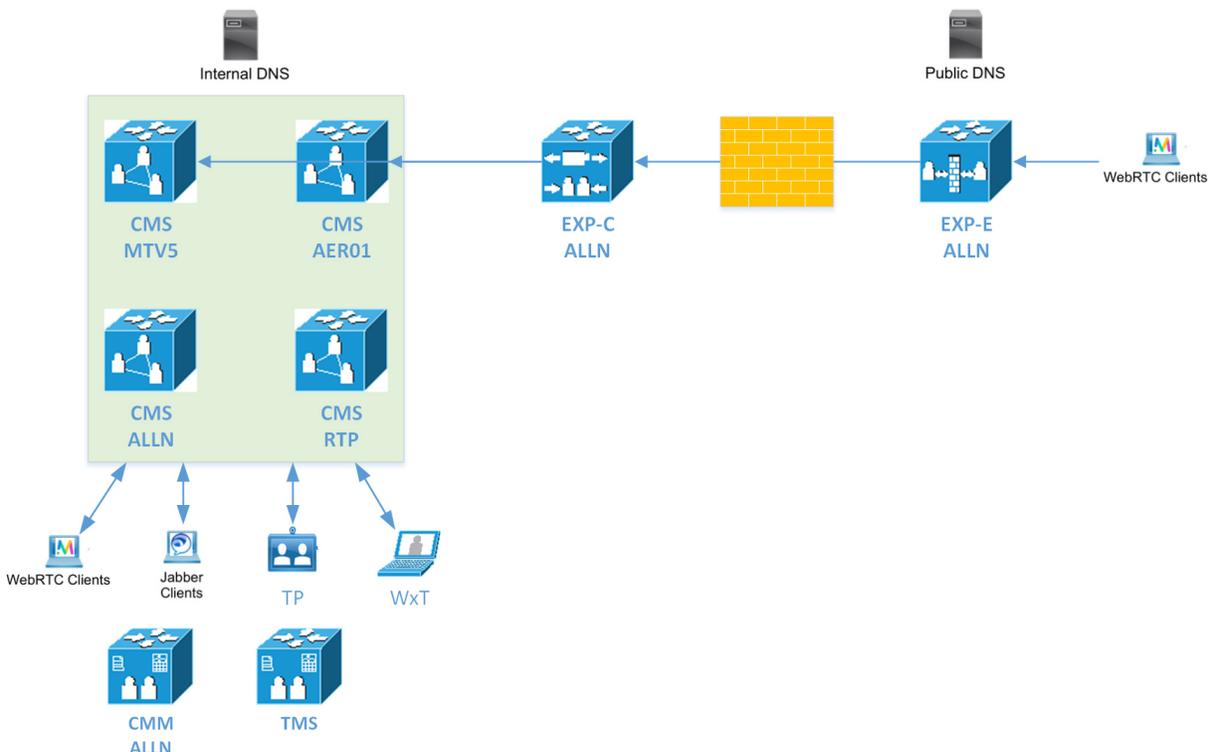
Cisco IT supported these users with legacy hardware solutions that are now in end-of-sale status, and which will soon transition to end-of-life status: Cisco TelePresence Conductor, which supports Cisco CMR deployments; Cisco TelePresence Server MSE 8710; and Cisco TelePresence MSE 8000 Series chassis-based conferencing blades. So, Cisco IT had to create a new solution to support these users. The result is Cisco Meeting Server, which brings audio, video, and web communication together into one on-premises conferencing solution.

“Cisco Meeting Server does all the work of the old solutions that we’re phasing out, but with dramatically less hardware,” says Richard Carroll, senior IT engineer at Cisco. “It also has many application programming interface (API) capabilities, which means we’ll be able to do much more with it in the future than we ever could with legacy products like Cisco TelePresence Conductor.”

Solution and Deployment

Cisco IT’s setup for Cisco Meeting Server, shown in Figure 1, includes two Cisco Meeting Server 2000 hardware appliances, two Cisco Meeting Server virtual appliances, one Cisco Meeting Management (CMM) virtual appliance, one Cisco Expressway core cluster of two nodes, and one Cisco Expressway edge cluster of two nodes.

Figure 1. Overview of Cisco IT’s setup for Cisco Meeting Server



Cisco Meeting Server helps every user to have a simpler and more intuitive meeting experience, whether they use Cisco or third-party video endpoints, a Cisco Jabber client, or the Cisco Meeting App (via a WebRTC-compatible browser) to join a meeting.

With Cisco Meeting Server, any number of people can join a meeting, up to the maximum limit supported by the cluster, and bandwidth usage is optimized to reduce cost. Cisco Meeting Server is interoperable with third-party solutions and is designed to scale easily for small or large deployments, allowing for capacity to be added incrementally as needed.

A More Sustainable and Cost-Effective Solution for On-Premises Conferencing

By April 2019, Cisco IT had moved all users within Cisco who need an on-premises conferencing solution to the new Cisco Meeting Server. The new solution is supporting about 2,000 conference calls per month. Meanwhile, Cisco IT is working on uninstalling all of the obsolete Cisco TelePresence products in Cisco data centers.

Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE) consultant Leon N'Guetta led the design process for Cisco Meeting Server in Cisco IT. He says that transitioning away from Cisco TelePresence Conductor, Cisco

TelePresence Server MSE 8710, and Cisco TelePresence MSE 8000 Series chassis-based conferencing blades is already helping Cisco to reduce its data center costs.

“Cisco Meeting Server is a more sustainable, on-premises conferencing solution because it doesn't have a heavy hardware footprint or consume a lot of energy like the legacy products that it is designed to replace,” says N'Guetta. (See Table 1 for an overview of per-day power savings for Cisco realized by transitioning to Cisco Meeting Server.)

Table 1. Per-Day Power Savings Due to Transition to CMS 2000 Hardware Appliances

Number of MSE 8000 Chassis with TelePresence Server Blades Removed	Maximum Power Savings per Day	Number of CMS 2000 Chassis Installed	Maximum Power Consumption per Day
31	110.05 kW	2	6.72 kW

Next Steps

Cisco Meeting Server relies on a Representational State Transfer (REST) API, so it can be programmed to meet the changing needs of users. So, unlike the Cisco Telepresence products it replaces, the solution has the potential to evolve. Cisco IT is now looking at ways to use the APIs in Cisco Meeting Server to create more value for Cisco and its customers.

For More Information

To learn more about Cisco Meeting Server, www.cisco.com/go/meetingserver.

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



Note

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