



DEWEY & LEBOEUF



Major Law Firm
Stakes its Reputation
on Video Technology

CHALLENGE

As the fifth largest law firm in the nation and the 16th largest in the world, Dewey & LeBoeuf has offices spanning the globe, from New York to San Francisco, from London to Beijing, from Frankfurt to Warsaw — a multinational enterprise with 1,400 attorneys resulting from the merger between Dewey Ballantine LLP and LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae LLP.

The environment at Dewey & LeBoeuf, like any major law practice, “is very demanding,” remarks Luis Vanderhorst, Manager of Technical Support at the New York-based firm. “Everything has to be solid; everything is expected to work well; there’s not a lot of room for error.”

While the firm employed TANDBERG codecs for videoconferencing, it relied on bridging services to provide connectivity for anything more than three sites. However, notes Vanderhorst, “Unlike TANDBERG, a lot of the companies that provide bridging services refused to invest in newer technology.” As a result, Dewey & LeBoeuf was unable to take full advantage of what Vanderhorst refers to as “TANDBERG’s rock-solid equipment.”

As he recalls, “It was very important to find a provider that had a TANDBERG bridge. We did find one that was installing a Tandberg bridge, but after two months it still had not made the arrangements to get it into production. At that point, I saw an opportunity to justify us getting our own TANDBERG bridge.”

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Using TANDBERG videoconferencing technology, a major New York-based law firm streamlines the hiring, training and trial preparation processes.



SOLUTION

Vanderhorst put together a plan making the case for investing in the TANDBERG bridge. Having that plan gave Vanderhorst and his CIO the leverage they needed to get approval from the firm's Executive Director.

"Now we have the technology we need for high-quality videoconferences," remarks Vanderhorst. "And beyond that, once we merge the legacy networks, into one WAN (wide area network), the bulk of our videoconferencing will be over IP, which is the preferred solution. You get better quality of service, you can use higher bandwidth than what you would with ISDN, and if you own the WAN you can use it as much as you want. So, for all intents and purposes, the calls are free — which is the best solution."

"The benefits of videoconferencing," he continues, "are pretty clear — it reduces travel costs and allows everybody around the world to come together. We use it for many things. For example, attorneys have to attend a certain number of hours of continued learning education every year to maintain certification. Before, we used to spend a lot of money sending those DVD recordings out. Now, we keep it in house and it's just a matter of having the video session and providing a code for each individual to jot down to say 'Yes, I did attend this course.'"

Vanderhorst also describes the firm's "moot courtroom, which we use for depositions, associate training, witness preparation and litigation case preparation. It's a full-fledged A/V (audio/visual) courtroom with the judge's desk, the witness stand, jury box, podium for the speaker, defense and prosecution tables, the desk for the court reporter — it's just like a real courtroom."

"We use it to go through mock trials for some of our high-end clients," he continues, "and we also use it to train our attorneys — taping the mock trials and showing them how to go through litigation."

Vanderhorst says that Dewey & LeBoeuf takes advantage of video technology during the hiring process as well. "We have what's called a 'fish bowl' where, for example, we have a potential lateral Partner for the Frankfurt office. Instead of flying him everywhere around the world to meet with partners in different offices, he can sit in our Frankfurt office and we'll connect with different offices one at a time. Partners at each location will go into their respective videoconferencing rooms, and meet and greet the potential hire."

"It's very convenient," Vanderhorst remarks. "Without videoconferencing, either we would have to disrupt that person and fly him or her all over the world, or we would have to disrupt our business and fly management committee members to meet the candidate. Why do either when you have the option to connect via video?"

"We're looking to do business the best way we can," says Vanderhorst. "And videoconferencing offers a win-win scenario. We can be a green company by limiting travel, and we can have more billable hours by eliminating the need for someone to fly several hours in both directions just to have a one-hour meeting. If you can get on a videoconference call instead of spending all that time and money traveling, that's what you'll do."



RESULTS

Three years after installing the TANDBERG bridge, Dewey & LeBoeuf will receive a return of investment of almost \$390,000.

"I'm quite proud of what we've accomplished here with A/V," Vanderhorst states. "We have a multi-purpose room for 220 people with 6 rear-projection, 100-inch screens, and all of our A/V codecs are TANDBERG. We're even purchasing a bridge for our London office, which will give us toll bypass for our videoconferencing calls. If we need to reach out to clients in Europe, we don't have to call them from the US over ISDN — we can go through the bridge over the WAN."

"When it comes to ROI," he continues, "we are removing eight sets of BRIs (dedicated ISDN lines for voice and data traffic) that cost over \$3,000 a month — and they weren't even very dependable. It was actually horrible technology."

"We were able to replace them with dedicated PRIs, each of which have 23 available channels instead of just two," explains Vanderhorst. "So instead of paying more than \$3,000 a month, we are now paying \$1,800 a month— for technology that is a lot more solid and has much better long distance pricing. That saves a lot of money. Beyond that, once the entire firm is on one WAN, all 24 of our sites will be able to have videoconferencing over the data lines."

"Having that quality of service and class of service over the WAN is great," Vanderhorst points out. "You must have that on a network in order to have quality video. The partners here expect that quality will always be there; the product behind it has to be solid because your reputation is at stake. With TANDBERG, I have confidence. I wouldn't trust any other video company. I think they're amazing."

"In the end," he says, "going with TANDBERG was a great, great idea. The ROI was amazing; we're looking at a payoff for the bridge in 14 months."

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LUIS VANDERHORST, MANAGER
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Contact TANDBERG today to learn how our solutions can support your business processes.

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