

India has never been so close, thanks to advanced Telepresence system



About Capgemini

Capgemini is the global market leader in consulting, technology, outsourcing and local professional services. The company, with its head office in Paris, employs more than 70,000 people and has regional offices in North America, Europe and the Pacific area. The head office in Holland is in Papendorp, Utrecht and its Belgian head office is in Diegem, near Brussels.

Capgemini is able to combine market expertise with business and technological expertise, and serves diverse markets such as the consumer market, the energy market, the hi-tech market, the financial market, the telecom market, public authorities, etc.

Bridging cultural differences

Within Capgemini, local front offices work together successfully for different projects with a back office located in India. Capgemini India currently employs more than 15,000 people and it is expected that this number will rise in 2007.

To promote the cooperation between the front office and the back office, Capgemini was looking for an advanced videoconferencing system that would give physically separated teams the feeling that they were in one and the same room ("telepresence").

The human aspect is key in Telepresence. In order to understand and bridge cultural differences as much as possible, it is important for individuals who are separated physically to be able to exchange both verbal and non-verbal communication signals.

In addition to promoting collaboration between the front office and the back office, Capgemini was also looking for a way to find customers to work together with India. Partly by bringing India closer to its customers via an advanced videoconferencing system, Capgemini are hoping they can show them how capable their Indian employees are. "Here too, the human aspect is again important," says Peter-Paul Tonen. "We would like our customers to realise for themselves that there are real people and colleagues on the other side of the world."

Products:

- PCS-1P and PCS-G50P using 768 Kbps over IP and 384 Kbps over ISDN

“It’s fantastic to see individuals 7,000 kilometres apart working as a team.”

Peter-Paul Tonen, Project Manager for cPort

cPort

Capgemini found its solution with Teleportel and christened it the “cPort”. “Compared to an ordinary videoconferencing system, our product enables users to look each other directly eye-to-eye. What’s more, we can work with life-sized images in 3-D that increases the feeling of physical presence,” says Teleportel’s Luc De Backer.

To this end, Teleportel worked together with Sony, which supplied the videoconferencing equipment. Teleportel then used its expertise to build this into an advanced videoconferencing system that creates the illusion of real presence. Luc De Backer explains why they opted for Sony: “We did speak to other providers, of course, but there is only one player on the market that offers such good value for money. What’s more, Sony provides excellent support during and after sales, and has top specialists in their professional fields.”

The results

Capgemini’s Peter-Paul is very happy with the results achieved. “The cPort has shown that the great distance between front office and back office is no bar to human interaction — and achieved, easily, quickly and inexpensively.”

Capgemini is registering good results, both in quantity and quality. The quantitative results are mainly to do with the number of flights between front office and back office, which has been reduced with the use of the cPort. The need for people to meet one another for real remains, but the cPort is often an excellent alternative to a second or third meeting.

There are qualitative results on the one hand in the prevention of failure costs. Thanks to the cPort, a decision on whether to change direction on a particular project can be taken faster and better. Here again, human contact plays an important role in being able to make the correct assessment of the person on the other side of the world. On the other hand, there is closer and more collaboration between both countries thanks to the cPort.