



Australian Sports Commission Gets More Play with Verizon Business Conferencing Solutions

With more than 700 staff nationally, and athletes and coaches travelling around the world, the Australian Sports Commission looked to Verizon Business for a conferencing solution that would help them connect easily, increase productivity, control costs, and reduce their carbon footprint.

Organisation Background

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) is the Australian Government body that manages, develops, and invests in sport at all levels throughout the country. It works closely with a range of national sporting organisations, state and local governments, schools, and community organisations to ensure sport is well run and accessible.

The world-renowned Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), a key division of the ASC, is a world-leading centre of excellence for the training and development of elite athletes and coaches. Other key divisions within the ASC are also leading the way in developing programs which are aimed at increasing participation in sport at the community level, such as the Active After-school Communities (AASC) program.

Services provided by the ASC are in a range of fields including elite coaching, sport sciences, sports information, sports management, sports facility management, sports education and resources, sports participation development and delivery of funding programs to national sporting organisations.

The majority of staff are located at the head office in Canberra, with the remainder of staff spread across 82 sites around Australia, as well as an office in Varese, Italy.

Key Business Challenges

ASC focuses on two key objectives: securing an effective national sports system that offers improved participation in quality sports activities by Australians, and securing excellence in sports performance by Australians. Its operations are diverse and geographically dispersed. With operations both in Canberra and around the country, and with athletes and coaches travelling overseas several times throughout the year, it's important for the ASC to be able to contact staff quickly and easily to share information and provide updates.

Until 2005, the ASC relied on teleconferencing or videoconferencing to link people when they could not fly them out to distant locations for meetings. However, it found these options inflexible for many of its requirements.

Videoconferencing is a point-to-point system that calls for substantial, expensive infrastructure, dedicated links and resources, and high-performance Internet capacity.

AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION

Canberra, Australia

Challenge

- Share information easily and quickly with staff, coaches and athletes nationally and internationally
- Reduce costs and increase productivity through a richer, more collaborative conferencing environment
- Reduce its carbon footprint by diminishing the need for travel through improved communications and conferencing services

Solution

- Verizon Video Conferencing and Audio Conferencing services

Business Value

- **Communicate.** Ability to convene anything from small, impromptu meetings to large global coaching sessions with ease
- **Collaborate.** Real time collaboration allows issues to be resolved faster, tackle projects in real time and deliver interactive world-class training
- **Savings.** Cost benefits achieved in application licensing fees, travel and productivity gains. Ability to reduce number of meetings from four to one



The Solution

In 2005, the ASC canvassed web conferencing solutions from several vendors and selected Verizon Business Conferencing Solutions, a hosted service based on collaboration applications provider WebEx.

Verizon Business developed a web portal with ASC branding that served as a virtual meeting centre where staff could create, list, and book meetings, access online training, and initiate meetings.

Verizon Business also provided initial onsite training supplemented with online resources such as documentation and demonstrations.

Within weeks of signing the contract, the site was up and running and ASC trainers and administrative staff were using the service to connect to colleagues and athletes in different locations and time zones using only a PC, a phone, and a web browser.

ASC realized an immediate benefit when it linked athletes in the sled-racing skeleton team who were in Europe undergoing training with coaches in Colorado, USA, and sports scientists in Australia. "They were able to meet online using web conferencing to discuss cornering and exiting techniques and they could look at high-resolution stills to analyze what they were doing right and wrong," Morgan said.

The service is often used to stream video of an athlete's performance live via web conference to a coach who then reviews individual techniques and provides instant feedback on strength and conditioning.

More than 200 staff located across Australia also use the application to work together to coordinate the ASC's AASC program. The AASC's eight state managers meet regularly with regional coordinators, with up to 20 people sometimes participating online to share applications such as policy documents, budget sheets, and media releases.

The facility is commonly used in conjunction with teleconferencing to let participants work jointly on applications under discussion or share documents online through the web portal. They can edit these in real time while they exchange messages via text or talk as they work via synchronised teleconference.

"Teleconferencing was fine for getting people together but we also wanted a richer collaborative environment that would let us visualise in real time what we were talking about. We needed something that would allow us to share documents interactively and get more value out of our meetings without having to fly people to Canberra or regional offices."

DAVID MORGAN, ASC IT COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Results and Next Steps

Although the ASC continues to use a combination of audio and Internet-based conferencing, its web conferencing solution is now its single most popular resource for distance meetings. Being able to collaborate in real time allows the ASC to resolve issues faster, tackle projects more effectively, and deliver interactive world-class training.

Morgan said that every department that has started to use the web conferencing solution has found a new use for it. Because the service encourages high levels of interaction, it drives productivity and keeps people engaged.

"We can never replace face-to-face meetings altogether, but if we can prepare for those that do meet by sharing information before the meetings occur, we can increase productivity because people will already be on the same page," Morgan says.

The service has delivered significant benefits in terms of reduced travel time and costs, which has also enabled the ASC to reduce its carbon footprint. Web conferencing has the ability to cut the number of meetings by three quarters.



The ASC has achieved further savings in license fees by using applications on an on-demand basis. That allows users to assess whether an application suits their needs before they go to the expense of extending the license for additional users.

The ASC has two IP videoconference units that can be used with the Verizon Business bridging service, which delivers one-to-many video services. It is keen to make better use of this technology and is particularly interested in video that can address more diverse needs for the hearing impaired.

"We are waiting for the technology to evolve. Teleconference-style web conference functionality would be of real benefit to regional users who are unable to access dedicated teleconference facilities," Morgan notes.

Why Verizon Business

Verizon Business Web Conferencing provides an intuitive, easy-to-use collaborative tool that has allowed the ACS to easily connect its stakeholders, wherever they may be.

The tool lets staff convene anything from small, impromptu meetings to large global coaching sessions with ease. Athletes can call up and replay web sessions up to 30 days after the meetings take place.

If users run into difficulty, they can make use of Verizon Business' round-the-clock conferencing support. The ASC has further peace of mind knowing that communications traffic passes through the Verizon Business server, which is a highly secure environment safeguarded by encryption and access-code-protection.

In addition, the ASC was attracted by the efficient billing and flexible pricing model provided by Verizon Business. It also liked the fact that it would gain a dedicated account manager and a single point of technology for its audio and web conferencing needs.

"Verizon has a lot of resources behind them that they can bring to bear if we want to use other solutions in time," says Morgan.

For More Information

Visit: verizonbusiness.com/products/conferencing/

About Verizon Business

Verizon Business, a unit of Verizon Communications (NYSE: VZ), operates the world's most connected public IP network and uses its industry-leading global-network capabilities to offer large-business and government customers an unmatched combination of security, reliability and speed. The company integrates advanced IP communications and information technology (IT) products and services to deliver leading enterprise solutions including managed services, security, mobility, collaboration and professional services. These solutions power innovation and enable the company's customers to do business better. For more information, visit www.verizonbusiness.com

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