



Application Story

SMi Group

Conference Management Company Offers Seminars Online and Eliminates Travel Costs with e/pop Web & Video Conferencing

SMi Group is at the forefront of linking businesses with information, organizing more than 160 conferences and 100 executive briefings every year. As a key provider of management report publications, subscription products and conference documentation, SMi helps businesses to keep up-to-date on the latest developments in their sector. Within the past year, thousands of senior executives from blue chip companies have benefited from SMi's highly targeted conferences, executive briefings, newsletters and management reports.

“The aim of SMi is to link business with information through the delivery of high quality business to business information services. Our overriding advantage is the flexibility and ability to respond quickly to the requirements and needs of all our customers, ensuring that all SMi products are highly relevant, innovative and timely,” explains SMi Multimedia Manager James Talbot.

The SMi Group runs conferences throughout the year across a variety of subjects, but with a strong focus on finance, defense, energy and pharmaceutical sectors. Although the conferences are based in Europe, many of the keynote speakers live and work in the U.S. “Once payment, travel and accommodation costs were brought into consideration, we realized just how much of an expense this was becoming. What we wanted was a way that they could participate without the need for them to be in the same locale,” says Talbot.

Firstly, Talbot and his team tried setting up a teleconference at the events, where delegates could hear the speaker – through a phone link – but could neither see, or properly interact with them. The feedback from delegates was not good so SMi decided to explore other options.

“Traditional video conferencing systems proved far too expensive,” explained Talbot. “Also, whilst ISDN is defacto in the U.S., in the UK it is still emerging technology and many of the venues we use simply don't have the bandwidth required for such technology.”

After trying to develop a solution in-house, a simple web search put SMi in contact with web and multiparty video conferencing specialist WiredRed. “It was amazing. WiredRed's e/pop did everything we were trying

Problem:

- SMi sought a means to decrease the cost of event management by eliminating speaker travel expenses

Solution:

- e/pop Web Conferencing, a full-featured, affordable, multiparty web and video conferencing software

Business & IT Benefits:

- e/pop allows speakers to provide fully-interactive presentations
- SMi is able to offer more conferences every year without the added expense of international travel
- Conferences and seminars are held on secure connections

to do in-house,” enthused Talbot. “In addition, we were impressed by how cost effective it was when compared to the competition.”

e/pop provides the solution to organizations looking for a convenient and secure form of communication. It allows users to liaise via voice and video over IP, so that organizations can share ideas, applications and desktops in real-time. e/pop also offers the ability to conduct online meetings, training seminars and conferences with anyone at any time, no matter where they are, which is ideal for users such as SMi who utilize speakers from across the globe. In addition to multipoint IP video, e/pop includes the full-suite of traditional web conferencing features: desktop, document and PowerPoint™ presentation sharing, plus whiteboard and annotation tools. These allow a variety of speakers to use their own unique, multi-modal styles of presentation, whether on-camera doing a chalk-talk, formal presentations, or back-and-forth interaction with their participants.

e/pop Web Conferencing is one of the most secure web conferencing solutions available today. It is installable software, so SMi has control over physical security, web conference routing, and access to server event logs. At the click of a mouse, SMi can set its conference server to always use SSL3/TLS or let its conference hosts decide whether they want to use secure connections. For sensitive applications, SMi can also set its conference server to use a third-party Public Key Infrastructure (PKI).

“As well as using international speakers, we have been burnt in the past when speakers would pull out at the last minute,” comments Talbot. “Now with e/pop we have been able to proceed with ten presentations by important speakers in the past two months that otherwise may not have been possible or cost effective, to do in the past.”

“The delegates have provided excellent feedback on the technology and have especially liked the fact that the speaker is able to interact and point to examples on the screen just as if they are in the same room,” continues Talbot.

“We have been very impressed with e/pop and the support WiredRed has given, and have found it very easy to administer. In addition, there is no doubt that we have made significant cost savings in not having to fly in keynote speakers,” concludes Talbot.

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