



Global | Manufacturing

## Dimension Data helps Unilever boost global collaboration and hit sustainability goals with innovative Videoconferencing-as-a-Service



'As part of the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan, we're **on a mission to democratise video – making it accessible to more employees** and external partners, while ensuring they all enjoy the very best experience.'

Ian S Dunning, Global Voice, Video & Workplace Services Director, Unilever



### Challenge

- commitment to reduce environmental impact of operations
- all areas of the business – including IT – to play their part in shaping a sustainable business
- operating in 190 countries – videoconferencing a critical communications strategy
- new solution must add value to end-user experience, touch a wider user community
- high visibility of video project owing to senior executive team's heavy video use

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### Solution

- combination of new and legacy videoconferencing solutions delivered 'as-a-Service'
- high-quality and consistent video experience for employees across the entire business
- connectivity to external parties
- consulting and professional services
- 24/7 live video helpdesk support services
- concierge service
- committed usage and adoption services
- training

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### Result

- entire video service delivered using an open-based managed service model, increasing flexibility and scalability via a cost-effective solution with return on investment (ROI) delivered from day one
- single, open-architecture video service that delivers a consistent user experience, regardless of technology, device, or location
- entire integration and installation process completed in just seven months
- ongoing metrics tracking growth in usage and adoption in order to demonstrate ROI
- further metrics in place to meet environmental goals, cost savings, and productivity gains

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 Challenge

### Towards sustainable living

Unilever is one of the world's three largest manufacturers of fast moving consumer goods, and is the name behind some of the world's most well known and loved brands, including Dove, Flora, Hellmans, Lipton, Magnum, Persil, Sunsilk and Walls. Today, Unilever's products are sold in 190 countries with two billion people – that's more than a quarter of the world's population – using its products on any given day. The company employs 174,000 people worldwide and 57% of its turnover now comes from emerging markets.

In 2010, the company launched the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan, committing to a ten-year journey towards sustainable growth. The plan sets out the ambitious target to double the size of the business by 2020, while at the same time reducing its environmental footprint and increasing the positive social impact of its operations. Not only does this plan apply to all parts of Unilever's direct operations, but it also impacts suppliers, distributors, and even the way consumers use Unilever's brands.



'In Dimension Data **we found a partner which wasn't just adept at the technology, but one that really took time to understand** the key role video plays in us hitting our goals around agile workforce and sustainable business operations.'

Ian S Dunning, Global Voice, Video & Workplace Services Director, Unilever

## AGILE WORKING COLLABORATION UNLIMITED

### More agile ways of working

As part of the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan, Unilever is committed to reducing the carbon footprint of its IT and business operations, as well as promoting more effective and positive ways of working for its employees. The plan also includes an 'Agile Working' initiative, which is designed to promote flexible, collaborative working practices that drive business efficiencies, while improving employees' day-to-day experience of working at the company. The greater use of video has been identified as a key component of this initiative.

Furthermore, with operations all over the world, Unilever has long understood the environmental and productivity benefits of videoconferencing as a way to foster close collaboration between teams, while reducing the need to travel and improving productivity. In fact, in recent years, Unilever has been pioneering the use of videoconferencing and telepresence solutions.

### Revisiting video strategy

In 2013, Unilever recognised that – in order to meet its goals for sustainable growth, agile working, and global collaboration – it needed to revisit its video strategy to ensure it could scale to match the company's growth projections, and that video was accessible to all parts of the business. This was particularly important to support Unilever's growth in emerging markets.

The previous solution, which comprised a disparate mix of high-end immersive telepresence rooms and desktop systems, was costly to run and didn't integrate well. Many of these deployments were independently delivered and supported. Crucially for Unilever, this complexity meant the user experience was inconsistent, which impacted the utilisation rate of the technology, especially for desktop video across the whole estate.

Furthermore, the existing solution had limited support for external communications with customers, suppliers, or other key stakeholders on a consistent basis.

Finally, with Unilever's senior management team among the most frequent users of the company's video solutions, it was vital that any new solution worked straight out of the box, and was supported by a service provider that wasn't just focused on technology, but also committed to delivering service excellence. The high visibility of the project meant there was absolutely no margin for error.

Having recognised the limitations of its current solution, Unilever decided to embark on a programme entitled 'Generation 2' to overhaul its entire global video and telepresence strategy and underlying infrastructure.

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## Solution

### Cost-effective, scalable, user friendly video

In 2013, Unilever launched a rigorous competitive tender process to identify and appoint best-in class connectivity, technology, and managed service providers which together could design, install, maintain and drive the use of a fully integrated video service. The solution needed to be cost-effective, scalable, user friendly and governed by a single global service level agreement (SLA), while it was vital that this could support any-to-any communications, regardless of device, location or the number of call participants. It also needed to be expertly managed on a day-to-day basis, freeing up Unilever's team to focus on other mission-critical activities.

### Breadth of expertise

Dimension Data had a history of working with Unilever, having provided support services for the company's local area network (LAN) estate. This proven track record, alongside Dimension Data's expertise in designing and supporting video and telepresence solutions for other global brands, ensured the company's name was included on the tender list.

Dimension Data's breadth of experience meant that it was able to respond to all three of Unilever's tender lots, dramatically simplifying the tender process for Unilever. Dimension Data even went through its own RFP process to select the most appropriate partner to deliver the overlay network, while it also demonstrated its experience of supporting video solutions offered by the market's leading vendors, therefore giving Unilever complete control over which technology to deploy. Dimension Data's ability to respond to all three lots with one integrated solution, was one of the principle reasons it won the bid.

### Emphasis on user experience

Also central to Dimension Data's approach was the emphasis placed on the user experience that would be delivered to Unilever's employees and external partners. This went beyond the usability of the hardware, to include live in-call video support and a comprehensive employee training programme designed to drive utilisation rates across the globe. The bid included a dedicated User & Adoption Programme Manager whose role would be to help Unilever employees get the most from the new solution as well as identify local evangelists within the business who could further promote participation.

'Unilever's 'Generation 2' programme is one of the world's largest and **most ambitious initiatives to make video a cornerstone** of internal and external communications,'

Calvin Goom, Managing Director, Dimension Data UK.

### Leading technologies united

Unilever's newly installed Generation 2 video infrastructure has been architected using leading technology to provide the organisation's internal and external users with the very best call experience, that's underpinned by a cost-effective, scalable, and open standards-based solution.

A dedicated MPLS overlay network has been delivered by NTT Europe, the European division of Dimension Data's parent company, and has been designed to support the specific security, latency and resilience requirements of live video applications. This network connects multiple sites in some 23 countries, comprising 74 purpose-built videoconferencing suites as well as office-based and remote workers relying on desktop solutions via Microsoft® Lync (Skype for Business). NTT is also hosting the core infrastructure in three of its regional data centres, in North America, UK, and Asia.

The solution brings together both new and legacy equipment, which Dimension Data has knitted together to ensure it can be supported and managed as a single unified infrastructure. Cisco TX9000 TelePresence endpoints together with Cisco Dual Profile 65 TelePresence endpoints have been deployed, replacing the existing Teliris estate. To complement this, Lync (Skype for Business) integration is being rolled out to deliver PC-based video to the user community.

All these systems interoperate with the Condeco booking system, which makes booking any call – whether it's a single point-to-point call with a supplier or a multisite call involving Unilever's senior management team – a completely seamless experience.

### Global private video cloud

In support of Unilever's Generation 2 programme, Dimension Data is providing a global private video cloud that enables seamless internal and external visual communication from any device. In addition, a broad range of managed services are delivered. Dimension Data managed the entire global installation and integration of the project, a process that was completed in just seven months.

Dimension Data is also delivering a number of services to ensure the smooth running of the new programme and to bolster usage, including first line support and a video helpdesk that automatically tests and sets up calls and proactively monitors /troubleshoots any issues associated with call quality. The company has also embarked on a Usage & Adoption Programme to train and empower staff to adopt video services.

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Result

### Tracking success of sustainable living

The Generation 2 programme is a five-year project running until 2019, which has been specifically designed to promote the wide-scale usage of video throughout Unilever.

As an initial measure of success, Dimension Data is monitoring usage across the estate. In the first month alone, the service supported nearly 3,000 video calls, a figure that is targeted to grow over the five year project. In addition, users are asked to grade their call experience after each interaction and metrics have been set around the continual improvement of these scores.

Over a longer period, the rich capabilities of Cisco's TelePresence and Analysis Reporting Service (TARS) will enable Unilever to track the success of the programme based on a number of sophisticated business metrics including, CO2 footprint reduction, decrease in real estate costs and productivity savings. All these statistics will feed into Unilever's Sustainable Living Plan, which the company provides progress reports on every year.

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#### Services overview

- consulting and professional services
- 24/7 live video helpdesk support services
- concierge
- committed usage and adoption services
- training

'The decision to move to a cloud-based video service provides Unilever with **numerous cost and scalability benefits**, but it requires 100 percent faith in the team delivering and managing the service – we're delighted to have been given this responsibility.'

Calvin Goom, Managing Director, Dimension Data UK.

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