

New secure webinar solution enhances company-wide communications for Citrix

Client profile

Citrix builds the secure, unified digital workspace technology that helps organizations unlock human potential and deliver a consistent workspace experience wherever work needs to get done. With Citrix, users get a seamless work experience and IT has a unified platform to secure, manage, and monitor diverse technologies in complex cloud environments.

Which technologies?

- Webcast Pro Platform

Which services?

- Digital Events project management
- Multimedia event production



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To me that extra step of somebody picking up the phone and calling an executive who needs a little bit of reassurance, talking through it seven minutes before showtime, that's invaluable.

You can't put a price on it. That's already our return on investment.

Don Fox, Technical Producer, Citrix

Summary

Citrix needed a new partner for their regular Global Employee Meeting (GEM), a webinar attended live by between 5,000 and 6,000 employees. A decision arrived at following a string of human errors and an overarching problem of poor-quality interactions between the incumbent vendor and the Citrix team. With only six weeks until the next event, they had to ensure their requirements were met.

Working with us, a new platform was selected and complex SSO, security and process requirements were overcome. The Citrix C-suite executives presenting were trained, rehearsed, and guided through the webinar by our production teams, resulting in a seamless live delivery and timely on-demand access for 5,000 attendees.

Business need

Fully managed webinars to deliver a high-quality employee experience

As an organization whose core go-to-market strategy is built around improving employee experience, delivering high-quality internal communications events at Citrix is key.

Central to these communications is the regular Global Employee Meeting (GEM), a webinar attended live by between 5,000 and 6,000 employees. The meeting, hosted by the CEO and their executive team – including CTO, CMO, CPO and CFO – is used to make major announcements and showcase global initiatives. It's an hour long with a tightly packed agenda requiring professional-level production values to deliver high-quality content to the employees.

Citrix had a run of unsatisfactory events with the incumbent webcast vendor. The challenges included technical failures, inability to seamlessly deliver high quality video content and delays in making the event available on-demand.

Citrix needed a new partner, but they had to ensure their requirements were met with only six weeks until the next event.

Solution

Flexible solutions for complex infrastructure and logistic requirements

Citrix considered leveraging self-service platforms, but the scale of the job made this a non-starter.

Don Fox, Technical Producer, explained: 'We all have full time jobs so we wanted somebody else to be the producer. I wanted to describe what we needed and say, "can you please go and build it?" We also realized we needed a single vendor and contact – a full-service solution – responsible for the selection of the webcast platform and the production and delivery of all our webcasts including the management of on-site production services.'

A major factor in the selection of NTT was our ability to deliver the breadth of services required, underpinned by robust and flexible platforms. We recommended the Webcast Pro platform as it has a similar attendee experience to the incumbent solution while benefiting from rapid development cycles and an agile development team able to build the customizations needed by Citrix. To successfully deliver the GEM in the six-week timeframe, the teams faced several challenges:

Complex and lengthy procurement process

Citrix usually allows three to four months to bring a new vendor onboard due to its stringent legal, financial and security checks but we were able to work with Citrix to complete the process inside six weeks.

Single sign-on (SSO) for 10,000 employees

With highly confidential content, access to the webinars had to be secure; passwords that could be freely shared weren't acceptable. Putting the SSO integration in place was the ideal scenario but SSO through Okta, their secure SSO platform, wasn't available on the platform.

Late change of event format

The first webcast had been set up for all the executives to present remotely from home. 24 hours prior to the event, it was confirmed that most of the team were going to be in the Citrix office instead. Due to the strict security protocols, access from the Citrix network to some sites and applications was restricted.

'With 24 hours to go; we had to test on multiple wireless networks, the corporate network, guest networks and visitors' networks. The main issue was the firewall blocking video. If we've got a presenter that can't turn their camera on, it's a massive failure.

'I think we were on a Teams call for seven hours. We had people driving into the office and the NTT team stayed on with us the entire time. Never left. We needed to have this vetted, tested and confirmed that it worked that day,' said Fox.

Outcomes

Seamless event experiences securely connect Citrix's global team

For Fox, the measure of success is the ability of employees to easily connect to a seamless event.

'We had 5,000 people watching this event and it was flawless. We have a help desk and chat channels to answer questions and help with support issues and it was silent. That's never happened before. We've done two events since and they were just as flawless as the first.' There were four key benefits:

SSO

The most critical requirement for Citrix was taking out attendee facing event registration, removing the need to enter first name, last name, email and a password. The access experience, via Okta, required a custom build made possible by the Open API infrastructure of the Webcast Pro platform. After two days of thorough testing, the link for the SSO integration registration was released to all employees 24 hours prior to the event.

On demand

For Citrix, sharing the GEM with the global team as soon as possible after the live event is vital; the webinar stream is posted on the Citrix intranet, often with some minor editing and is watched on-demand by up to 5,000 people. With NTT, this happened the same day compared to the previous vendor, when it could take up to three days.

Executive support

Fox highlighted the support provided to executives, detailing a situation where one of the speakers had challenges connecting 10 minutes before the event: 'They called her and talked her through it and she got logged on. That extra step of somebody picking up the phone and calling an executive who needs a little bit of reassurance, that's invaluable.'

Hybrid plan

In 2022, the meetings are expected to move to a full hybrid model with some of the executive team in the office in Fort Lauderdale in front of an on-site audience and other executives joining remotely. Having a service and platform that could support this model was a clear differentiator for Citrix.



We also realized we needed a single vendor and contact – a full-service solution – responsible for the selection of the webcast platform and the production and delivery of all our webcasts including the management of on-site production services.

Don Fox, Technical Producer, Citrix