



Helping Almirall get new medicines to market

Providing global collaboration tools to keep millions free from medical problems.

Employees
Less than 10,000

Company
Almirall

Industry
Life sciences

Location
Global

Overview

Almirall's drugs help people across the world with medical problems, from allergies to migraines. The company had a headache of its own, though.

It was using different comms systems across its worldwide subsidiaries, and that made communication and decision-making tricky. It also made it tough to enter new territories and bring new products to market.

Now, thanks to a Cisco collaboration suite hosted by us, Almirall expects big improvements in productivity and staff satisfaction. And with worldwide research and development teams working together more effectively, they'll be able to deliver new patents – faster.

The challenge

Based in Barcelona, Almirall provides medicines and medical devices through its own patents, and through agreements and alliances. It's the leading Spanish pharma company in terms of research and development (R&D) spend.

Almirall grew rapidly, both organically and through acquisitions. But each addition brought introduced a new comms infrastructure. That made it difficult to support teams working in different territories. The company's telephone systems were separate from other comms channels and there was no global conferencing service.

That left the company relying on face-to-face meetings for decision-making. And with a rapidly expanding global footprint, this meant big costs and delays. Jordi Macià, enterprise collaboration manager, says: "We were starting to work in new markets, acquiring new companies, and we didn't have a global solution."

"Our M&A teams are able to work better with partners. Our sales teams are trained more often and more easily using WebEx."

Jordi Macià
Enterprise Collaboration Manager, Almirall.

The solution

We proposed a unified collaboration platform for the whole company, based on Cisco technology that's hosted in our data centre in Spain. One Enterprise Cisco platform gives Almirall a low-cost IP telephone system that works with a company-wide phone and email directory. Better still, it gives the company a range of video conferencing options, which reduces the need for business travel.

Mariam Gonzalez, Corporate Change Manager, says: "Collaboration allows us to schedule meetings easier, because we all have calendars integrated with WebEx. Jabber makes it easier to communicate with our colleagues from affiliates or other centres."

We made sure Almirall were well-equipped for video meetings, with twenty Cisco TelePresence suites, more than 180 video phones, and Cisco WebEx and Jabber for video-enabled meetings on desktops, laptops and mobile devices.

Better still, we deliver the entire infrastructure as a single managed service. This means that Almirall didn't have to invest in an infrastructure of its own. Instead, it only pays for the collaboration services it actually uses.

Mathias Moritz, Chief Information Officer, says: "We implemented unified communications all over the place to make our people connected anywhere at any time."

"Video follows me everywhere I go. With my iPad, with my iPhone, I can connect wherever I am. It's immediate, just a snap of your fingers. I have all my colleagues connected with TelePresence and I can instantly message them, call them and, if we need it, just WebEx."

Nuria Sane
Aqua Integration Project Manager, Almirall

The result

It used to be a big challenge to collaborate at Almirall. Now, it's simple. Mariam Gonzales, Corporate Change Manager, says, "The BT-hosted collaboration technology allows us to schedule meetings easier, because we all have calendars integrated with WebEx. Jabber makes it easier to communicate with our colleagues from other affiliates or centres. You can use your mobile phones, your desktop or video conferencing rooms."

Almirall expects that collaboration technology will cut travel costs and speed up decision-making. And for a company set on expansion, it's had a big impact on reducing the time it takes to complete mergers and get new sites on board.

And because they operate worldwide, it's easy to launch and maintain collaborative technologies wherever Almirall needs to work. "Now we can provide chat services or instant messaging to everyone in the company," says Jordi. "They can meet online with whoever they want, inside or outside the company. We can have video from anywhere, on any device. This is a reality now."

Almirall is using video to support even more innovation. R&D teams in Spain, Germany and beyond now work closer together thanks to TelePresence. Mariam concludes: "Video makes a difference. It makes us closer and more human."

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