



Consolidating technology in the cloud with a single vendor to better support a global workforce

Client Name:
SAS

Region:
Americas

Country:
United States

Vertical:
Software

GTM Theme:
Intelligent Workplace

- Service:
- Cisco Webex Meetings with Cloud Voice Calling
 - Webinar Technologies
 - Adoption and Change Management



‘Unified communications and collaboration is critical to the success of SAS. We can’t do that without a great platform, and the platform can’t be successful without a cloud service provider like NTT.’

Eric Taylor, Senior IT Manager, SAS

Overview

SAS is the leader in analytics. Through innovative software and services, SAS empowers and inspires customers around the world to transform data into intelligence. SAS gives its clients the Power to Know.

Headquartered in Cary, North Carolina, and with employees stationed in every major country across the world, they rely on their global presence to sell to Fortune 500 companies.

Unfortunately, important meetings with customers around the world were negatively impacted by previous providers and outdated audio solutions, leaving SAS in need of finding a modern, integrated solution from a reliable vendor.

'It's essential to have a partner such as NTT who can help us navigate that roadmap and successfully implement the solutions that fit that roadmap. Our team has to be able to communicate and collaborate to be successful, and they can't do that without a platform—and the platform can't be successful without a cloud service provider like NTT.'

Eric Taylor, Senior IT Manager, SAS

Connecting with NTT Ltd.

As a globally distributed team selling solutions to customers around the world, SAS used many disparate technology solutions to demonstrate, sell and support their software product portfolio. They were using Cisco Webex for meetings and product demonstrations, and while they liked the product's functionality, they found the audio quality was insufficient, particularly for their Asia users, and their service provider was unresponsive to their concerns.

After an extensive search for a new provider for Webex Meetings, they chose the Cloud Communications division of NTT Ltd. as their new partner. 'SAS chose NTT as our WebEx provider due to the high quality of service, both from a customer perspective and from a technical perspective,' said Eric Taylor, Senior IT Manager.

NTT Ltd. made the transition extremely easy on the SAS team. 'Our customer success manager told us exactly what was going to happen, provided a communication plan for us to give our employees and then it was basically an overnight switch. Our employees were none the wiser,' said Taylor. Even after the transition, NTT offered multiple training opportunities and communications for staff, freeing up the IT team to focus on other priorities.

Adding to their solutions

Following the successful transition to Webex Meetings provided by NTT Ltd., it was time to address the audio issues. With twenty years of providing audio conferencing, the NTT team offered an ideal solution: Cloud-Connected

Audio, which replaces the built-in audio in Cisco Webex with a cloud-based audio service.

'The NTT voice network—with respect to local access and toll-free numbers globally—was the best-in-class,' said Taylor. Users immediately noticed a significant improvement in the audio quality, as well as the user experience. 'When users connect by phone, they can only hear others speaking. But with computer audio, users could participate in video, content sharing and instant messaging. It was a game changer.'

During a quarterly business review with SAS, their NTT Customer Success Manager realized the team was looking to improve their marketing webinar program, and introduced the team to NTT's digital events solutions—from self-service webinars to fully produced large-scale meetings. Dean Shaw, Global Advocacy Program Manager, was brought into those discussions. 'We were trying to reimagine or re-envision our webinar program. We already had a relationship with NTT so we had trust in them they were a good partner to work with.'

Several months later, NTT rolled out and trained the SAS team on a digital events solution which has allowed them to self-produce multiple webinars each week. 'Each step of the way, NTT provided expertise that we really didn't have, to make sure that we were doing things correctly, and we were taking full advantages of the features and functionality of our new webinar platform,' said Shaw.

Looking toward the future

Through their relationship with NTT, SAS has experienced the ease of transitioning their communications to the cloud and is looking for additional ways to do so. 'SAS is definitely adopting cloud communications in a number of ways, and there are a number of business drivers for that,' said Taylor. 'Chief among them would be "support-ability." If you have a global solution with global IT staff that is standardized and scalable, it's easy to support. It's easy to expand that and deploy it into other locations.'

The biggest benefit SAS has experienced by adopting cloud communications is flexibility: the ability to work from anywhere, anytime, from any device. It's very important to the SAS team to have a single, global service provider who can support their business, no matter where that business takes place. 'With the advent of cloud communications, your communications are with you wherever you go, as long as you have a mobile device such as a laptop or a smart phone. You can work anywhere, at any time,' said Taylor.

As SAS looks to the future, their next step is moving from on-premises to the cloud. They want to be out of the business of supporting infrastructure and patching servers, or working with disparate vendors across the globe. As SAS moves through their unified communications and collaborations roadmap, Taylor stresses the importance of choosing the right vendor to help them on their journey: 'We're deploying a number of collaboration solutions. NTT Ltd. provides us the backbone for implementing those solutions, and for our people to be successful, using those solutions.'