



Business challenge

DRÄXLMAIER significantly enhanced its engineering and sales collaboration between its global sites, but existing networks and solutions could not support modern social, video, instant messaging and similar apps.

Transformation

IBM and Cisco provided integrated IP-based solutions to provide telephony, video and related IM and social media. Modern solutions enhance multi-team collaboration and help cut travel costs.



Gottfried Egger
Senior Vice President
Information Technology
DRÄXLMAIER Group

Business benefits:

Cuts

communications costs
between global sites

Enhances

multi-team collaboration

Raises

productivity with real-time
sharing

DRÄXLMAIER Group

Solving global communication challenges with unified video, instant messaging and social media

DRÄXLMAIER Group designs and manufactures advanced electronic and electrical components for the premium automotive sector. Founded in 1958 in Vilsbiburg, Germany, and still family-owned, the company employs around 55,000 people and is one of the top 100 worldwide automotive suppliers.

“For DRÄXLMAIER staff, the IBM and Cisco unified communications solution presses all the right buttons: it is significantly more cost-effective, and introduces new capabilities for the future.”

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Global expansion, worldwide challenges

For DRÄXLMAIER, expansion also means geographical diversity, with 60 sites across more than 20 countries. Connecting communities of engineers, human resources and other teams was a constant challenge. DRÄXLMAIER soon found itself with multiple, independent telephony systems that required customized gateways to enable connections between locations. In some cases, internal and conference calls were routed through public, expensively chargeable, networks. Additionally, the legacy equipment was at end of life, creating reliability issues amidst constantly rising support costs.

Gottfried Egger, Senior Vice President Information Technology at DRÄXLMAIER, explains, “We wanted to control our communications costs. System maintenance was becoming more expensive, and external routing of internal calls was an unnecessary expense. As the company expanded to more locations, travel costs were rising. We knew that video conferencing was a great opportunity, but the existing communications infrastructure simply could not support that kind of new application.”

The DRÄXLMAIER team identified key dates as certain contracts and leases expired, defined a solution architecture



and issued a tender to find the right technology partner.

The wish-list included instant messaging, presence awareness, and telephone and video conferencing. The company wanted a state-of-the-art solution with one point of support and ready for the future, supporting its VoIP strategy.

“Presence, instant messaging and integration with contact lists are great ways to improve personal productivity,” says Gottfried Egger. “Younger staff have grown up with these technologies. For them it is a normal way of working. At the enterprise level, we prepared a clear business case for the telephony

and video conferencing, with cost-saving objectives.”

Rapid and cost-effective industrial rollout

DRÄXLMAIER engaged IBM and Cisco to review possible solutions. Since the legacy systems were all being retired, the company took the opportunity to create an all-new unified communications and collaboration infrastructure.

The joint team designed a comprehensive solution capable of

carrying voice, video and data at a fraction of the previous cost, provided as a service requiring no CapEx.

DRÄXLMAIER and the IBM team rolled out a fully integrated communications platform that delivers video conferencing, telephony, presence, instant messaging and social media interaction. DRÄXLMAIER plans to integrate its IBM Connections and the Cisco applications using the Jabborate solution, which will enable users to switch from email to instant message, continue the conversation by phone by clicking the link, and add video – and multiple participants – if they choose.

Additionally, IBM deployed supplementary features like Manager-Assistant, an automated billing tool, Attendant Console and fax functionalities - all integrated seamlessly within DRÄXLMAIER's existing network infrastructure. The complex combination and interaction of all these components makes this project unique and underlines IBM's widespread expertise in the field of Unified Communications.

Gottfried Egger remarks, “The new solution combines a wide range of Cisco software and hardware solutions with Cisco Unified Communication Manager, Cisco Unified Presence and IBM Connections at the core to give us seamless crossover to enterprise

social media, mail and presence information in a way I have not seen before.

“We have retired the expensive legacy systems and contracts and replaced them with standard network connections and internet technologies meaning that calls, including video conferencing, between even geographically dispersed sites are free.”

Initially, DRÄXLMAIER implemented the solution in five international locations as test cases. Subsequently, DRÄXLMAIER engaged IBM® Global Technology Services® to operate the global rollout across all sites and countries.

“The two partners continue to work closely together. While Cisco provides comprehensive solutions, IBM provides international deployment, integration and project management experience, ensuring we replicate the solution effectively and efficiently at every location,” says Gottfried Egger.

“We proved the value and cost-savings at Vilsbiburg, and the challenge was then to industrialize the rollout to gain the benefits as quickly as possible. IBM proved it had the capabilities and skills to deliver the solution, moving rapidly to our operations in the other countries.”



Technology enables global collaboration and creativity

IBM provides the solution as a fully managed service to DRÄXLMAIER. This avoids new capital expenditure, and IBM handles maintenance, administration, updates and upgrades.

Gottfried Egger says, “DRÄXLMAIER now has a single contract to manage with IBM, which is a cheaper and more cost-effective way to run our communications, leaving us free to focus on automotive excellence.”

The unified communications service is hosted in-house at DRÄXLMAIER, and fully managed and operated by an IBM remote team. IBM delivered the Cisco hardware and licenses, IBM Global Technology Services designed the architecture and operated the rollout service, while the IBM Global Technology Services team provided operational services.

The network provides sufficient capacity to deliver HD video. Around 70 percent of users rely on softphones rather than physical handsets, greatly reducing the need to purchase hardware. In many cases, staff use wireless headsets, too,

freeing the desk of physical clutter and enabling them to make calls wherever they are. They can move around with their laptops and can still be reached via their central phone number.

Gottfried Egger says, “Video conferencing has become the norm at DRÄXLMAIER. Engineers at different locations now speak to each other on video link all the time, showing physical examples or switching to on-screen technical drawings.



“Using the same communications infrastructure, engineers help each other with machine maintenance, showing exactly where or how to fix faults, for example. As well as cutting down on travel costs, this kind of real-time sharing is a huge productivity boost, creating genuine collaboration that generates new ideas.”

Gottfried Egger concludes, “For DRÄXLMAIER staff, the IBM and Cisco unified communications solution presses all the right buttons: it is significantly more cost-effective, and introduces new capabilities for the future. Very importantly, the new solution is perceived as modern and ‘cool,’ enabling positive cultural change that helps us create and inspire the next generation of automotive solutions.”

“As product partners, IBM implements and operates innovative UCC solutions based on Cisco architecture all around the world. The partnership between the DRÄXLMAIER Group and Cisco is a very co-operative one – the perfect foundation for a project of this size and complexity.”

Hendrik Meyer, Focus Accounts Leader,
Infrastructure Services DACH, IBM

Solution components

- IBM® Global Technology Services®
- IBM Managed Service Center
- IBM TSS Maintenance
- IBM Connections with Jabborate
- Cisco UCS Servers, Cisco Integrated Service Routers 29xx, 39xx, Cisco IP Phones Series 78xx, 8961, 88xx, Cisco MX and SX Video Systems
- Unified Communication Manager, Cisco Unified Presence, Cisco Unity Connection, Cisco WebEx Meetings Server, Cisco Unified Contact Center Express
- Cisco Technical Assistance Center

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