

Lync 2013 Customer Solution Case Study



Global Manufacturer Consolidates Telephony Solution with Communications Solution



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Olaf Piper, Lync Project Manager, Festo

Overview

Country or Region: Germany

Industry: Manufacturing

Customer Profile

Festo is a global leader in automation technology and learning systems. It has about 15,500 employees across 59 independent national companies.

Business Situation

Festo was evaluating its future technology needs and decided it wanted a unified communications solution to provide one easy-to-use interface for all of its communications needs.

Solution

Festo deployed Microsoft Lync Server 2010 for voice, conferencing, and instant messaging. It is also evaluating Lync Server 2013.

Benefits

- Improves usability of communications
- Speeds business processes
- Centralizes management of communications solutions

Festo builds innovative systems that make manufacturing and education processes easier and more effective. Thinking about the future of its workplace, the company wanted a communications system that would achieve the same objectives for its internal business processes. To give its employees a single, easy-to-use communications solution, Festo deployed Microsoft Lync Server 2010 for voice, meetings, instant messaging, and presence. Lync Server has been well-received by employees who have rapidly integrated Lync functionality like presence and click-to-call from an email message into their business processes. Festo has now deployed Microsoft Lync Server 2013 for its high-availability capabilities and for the updated Lync Web App.



Situation

Founded in 1925, Festo is a privately owned industrial automation company based in Esslingen, Germany. Festo has 59 independent national operating companies supported by the headquarters staff. More than 300,000 customers in 170 countries rely on Festo products to make their manufacturing processes more efficient. While Festo is constantly focused on ways to improve automation technology and increase manufacturing efficiencies, it also strives to ensure its own employees are productive. In 2008, it undertook a project to envision the future of work at Festo and evaluate the technologies needed to implement that vision.

The previous communications infrastructure at Festo was based on disparate voice and conferencing services. Each office had its own private-branch exchange (PBX) equipment. Festo primarily used Siemens PBX equipment at its headquarters and branch offices, which was all managed by the central IT organization. However, there were numerous other brands of PBX equipment distributed throughout the company and managed locally.

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For conferencing, employees used numerous audio and web conferencing services. On the whole, these services worked well. But with so many options, employees had difficulty navigating the unique logon requirements of different services. Festo had also deployed 85 videoconferencing devices throughout its offices. These devices were too complex for most employees, so they seldom used them.

Looking toward the future, Festo decided that upgrading its PBX equipment would be too expensive and would not provide the level of functionality the company desired. Festo wanted to take advantage of a unified communications solution to provide all of its communications needs from a single, unified platform that would be easy for its employees to use.

Solution

In early 2011, Festo deployed Microsoft Lync Server 2010 as its communications solution. "By all measures, Lync was the best product we looked at," says Olaf Piper, Lync Project Manager at Festo. To provide advice on the deployment, Festo engaged

Microsoft Partner Network member Glück & Kanja, which has multiple Gold competencies, including unified communications. Glück & Kanja also delivers Lync support services as a Microsoft Lync certified support partner.

Festo deployed Lync Server 2010 at its main data center in Germany. This deployment supports more than 9,000 employees worldwide for instant messaging, presence, and conferencing capabilities and 1,300 employees for enterprise voice.

When it provides Lync voice to employees, Festo insists they choose to receive phone service from either the existing PBX or Lync Server. "Our goal is to have a clean infrastructure. We don't want a mixture of legacy systems and Lync Server, which could confuse employees," says Piper.

Employees using Lync voice can select from a variety of headsets. For employees who work at their desks, the most popular headset is the Jabra PRO 930 wireless unit. "Our employees really like the Jabra PRO 930 wireless headsets, which enable them to move around while they are on a call. The docking station also has a ringer, which is nice because many employees keep their computer volumes low," says Piper.

For conferencing, Festo has deployed Logitech web cameras. "We really like the Logitech BCC 950 and would like to make this a standard device for Festo because people can use it in a conference room or at a desk," says Piper. Festo is also deploying Polycom CX7000 videoconferencing units in its larger conference rooms. Today, approximately 200 videoconferences are held each day using Lync.

Looking to the Future

Festo has been testing Microsoft Lync Server 2013 to see what additional benefits it can gain from the latest Microsoft communications solution. It is impressed with the high-availability capabilities and the ability to easily include external contacts in meetings.

Festo plans to deploy additional Lync Server pools in Singapore and the United States over the next year to extend Lync to its companies in Asia and the Americas. It will then deploy a Ferrari gateway at each local company to provide public switched telephony network (PSTN) access and provide local telephone numbers. The Ferrari gateways route the calls to the appropriate system for each employee. This system will be in place until the PBX systems are retired. "We plan to centralize our global deployment in these three data centers," says Armin Schlichthärle, Technical Product Manager at Festo. "We would prefer to invest in better networks than deploy local servers, but we do like having the option of deploying additional servers and gateways for individual countries.

"Lync is our world-wide telephony system, so high availability and disaster recovery are important to us," Schlichthärle continues. "We

will implement Lync Server 2013 with two enterprise pools so that we have full automatic failover with no loss of functionality for our employees." The enterprise pools have extra capacity to handle individual server failures. If an entire pool fails, employees are automatically transferred to a backup pool.

"Conferencing with our partners and clients is very important to us and the Lync Web App will improve the conference experience for them," says Piper. External meeting participants can join a meeting from any current browser without needing administrator privileges to install the browser plug-in. Once they join the conference, they can use the full voice, video, and desktop sharing capabilities of Lync Server.

Benefits

Lync is the communications solution of the future for Festo. Lync will eventually replace the other communications options that are currently deployed. "We have 59 IT managers for our operating companies, and though they may have different opinions on timing and other details of the deployment, almost all agree that Lync Server is the best way forward for Festo," says Piper. "Lync provides easy-to-use communications capabilities, which will improve our business processes, from a centrally managed solution."

Supports Simple Communications

Festo conducted a survey of employees in Germany who had been using Lync enterprise voice for a few months. More than 80 percent of the employees said they prefer using Lync to using a traditional telephony solution. "Our employees are not always

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excited to adopt new technology, so this was a great result for the Lync deployment," says Piper. "They have quickly integrated Lync presence information and click-to-dial from an email message into their routines, and almost everyone said they would not want to go back to their desk phones."

Employees adopted Lync quickly because it is easy to use. "Microsoft does usability well. Our issues with our previous conferencing services were usability issues," says Piper. "Too much effort was required to learn to use them. All of our employees can use Lync with little or no training."

Festo would like to replace all of its conferencing services with Lync as soon as the Lync Server 2013 rollout is complete. "With Lync, our employees can handle all of their communications the same way. It makes all forms of communication accessible," says Piper. In addition, the Lync Server 2013 version of Lync Web App will make it easy for Festo to host conferences that include customers or external partners.

Improves Business Processes

Festo sees that Lync can help it to improve business processes across the company by making it easier for employees to communicate. "At the end of the day, the majority of our business processes have to do with communication," says Piper. "Making communications easier makes all business processes better. For instance, if you receive an email message as part of a Microsoft SharePoint Server approval workflow, you can call the sender directly from the email message if you have any questions. You don't have to look up a phone number in the corporate directory and call them."

Centralizes Communications Management

When Lync is fully deployed, Festo will retire the PBX equipment it currently has located around the world. "With Lync, we can unify telephony and conferencing onto one centrally managed solution. We will not need local PBX equipment in 60 countries," says Piper. Lync Server 2013 provides the redundancy capabilities that Festo requires to use Lync as its world-wide telephony solution.

Microsoft Lync Server 2013

Microsoft Lync Server 2013 ushers in a new connected user experience that transforms every communication into an interaction that is more collaborative and engaging—and that is accessible from anywhere. For IT, the benefits are equally powerful, with a highly secure and reliable communications system that works with existing tools and systems for easier management, lower cost of ownership, smoother deployment and migration, and greater choice and flexibility.

For more information about Microsoft Lync Server 2013, go to:
www.microsoft.com/lync

Glück & Kanja

Based in Germany, Microsoft Partner Network member and Microsoft Cloud Accelerate Partner Glück & Kanja Consulting AG is one of Germany's leading communications consulting partners. Glück & Kanja focuses on enterprise IT infrastructures and communications solutions based on Microsoft communications, collaboration, and messaging technologies. It also creates proprietary solutions and develops applications based on Microsoft technologies, and provides monitoring and support of business-critical systems.

For more information about Glück & Kanja products and services, call or visit the website at:
glueckkanja.com/lync

Logitech

Logitech delivers the advanced, business-grade audio and video performance needed for a superior video calling experience. Logitech webcams and video calling solutions are designed especially for business, with the highest quality optics and sensors across all price points.

For more information about Logitech devices tested and qualified for Lync, visit:
www.logitech.com

Jabra

Jabra offers a complete portfolio of corded and wireless devices that are "optimized" for Lync. These devices are tested by Microsoft and built to offer a rich and integrated experience for Lync users. Jabra enables users to derive the full business productivity, efficiency, and cost benefits they expect from Lync through enhanced voice collaboration based on device simplicity, reliability, and ease of use.

For more information about Jabra devices tested and qualified for Lync, visit:
www.jabra.com

Polycom

Polycom solutions optimized for Microsoft Lync provide unified, intuitive collaboration solutions that allow individuals and groups to instantly see, hear, and speak with colleagues around the world. The result is improved collaboration; streamlined operations; and faster, more informed decisions. Polycom provides comprehensive voice and video collaboration solutions for Microsoft Lync with more than 40 different solutions—from USB/IP/wireless phones to desktop video, to immersive room-based systems.

For more information about Polycom solutions tested and qualified for Lync, visit:
www.polycom.com/microsoft

Software and Services

- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
 - Microsoft Lync Server 2013
- Microsoft Office 2013
 - Microsoft Lync 2013

Partners

- Glück & Kanja
- Jabra
- Logitech
- Polycom
- Ferrari



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2. For more information about Festo products and services, visit the website at: www.festo.com

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