



● Improving global communications increasing business efficiency. ●

The Background

PPDG was established in the UK in 1997 and became part of Australian company ESH Holdings in 2009. The company has a philosophy to grow within the communities and societies in which it is based – and to really make a difference. The UK business has developed from a single site in North Solihull to a network of more than 40 Advancement Centres across the UK, employing almost 800 people. Since 1997 it has assisted more than 100,000 long-term unemployed individuals into sustained employment and has trained over 130,000 people in vocational skills.

Pertemps People Development Group (PPDG) is a customer of Daisy Corporate Services (formerly Damovo UK).

The Challenge

PPDG had already been considering Microsoft Office Communication Server (OCS) to assist the business with training staff who were located throughout the UK. However, after the acquisition by ESH Holdings, the need to communicate with remote colleagues became far more urgent. Executive Director Andy Pettigrew explains, "Bringing organisations together after an acquisition is complicated enough, but when the two businesses are on opposite sides of the planet it's a whole new challenge!

The executive teams within the UK and Australia needed to communicate not only for things like board or budget meetings, but also for ad hoc meetings and conversations about day to day business issues.

This is a requirement not only between countries, but within countries – which in Australia also means different time zones."

The Solution

Andy turned to longstanding technology partner Daisy for the answer. Daisy recommended Microsoft Lync, the next generation of Communications Server, with full presence management to provide the communication ability PPDG required, as Andy continues, "Daisy are a trusted partner of PPDG and the solution they recommended has been very beneficial for us. With geographical and time zone issues, we try to communicate but don't always know the other person's working patterns. Presence is an incredibly useful tool as it enables us to see when people come online and then have the quick conversation we need - without having to wait 12 or 24 hours for them to reply to an email. This speeds up productivity enormously and gives us very genuine business benefits."

PPDG uses the Daisy solution on a daily basis, with over 260 key staff relying on it as a means of communicating with colleagues both in country and between countries. From formal audio or video conferences, right through to ad hoc conversations, Lync has enabled PPDG to dramatically reduce cost and to work more efficiently. Andy explains further, "All you have to do is send an Instant Message when someone comes online, to check they are free. Then you can have an audio call, video call or share desktops



– whatever you need to get the job done. It's superb from the point of view of both productivity and cost. The ability to see each other is also very useful. It has been a key benefit for 'company integration' and has helped working relationships to develop more quickly."

With offices on both sides of the globe, round-the-clock technical and user support is essential. As part of the solution, Daisy also provides PPDG with a dedicated 24/7 helpdesk to deliver 1st, 2nd and 3rd line support, meaning that the Australian side of the business has not had to recruit its own staff. In addition, the solution is also federated with Daisy's own systems, so key stakeholders can use the same presence management and collaboration facilities to communicate with PPDG.

The Result

With the new solution in place, PPDG has been able to adjust its working practices and to become more flexible in the way it operates, as well as reducing cost and increasing business efficiency. Home working has increased, and teams are now shared between the UK and Australia, as Andy outlines, "Long distance video and audio calls used to be expensive, and long distance flights even more so! But now with Lync it's all done over internet via an encrypted link. I have a Health & Safety Team which is spread across Birmingham, Hereford and Teeside - and I also have an

IT team that's split between the UK and Australia, but in both cases we all operate as one team, regardless of where we are. From a productivity standpoint you can be anywhere and that's the key - it doesn't matter where you are, you don't have to stop making decisions and you don't have to stop making things happen effectively. It makes meetings meaningful and useful."

PPDG is now rolling out Microsoft Lync for the original training requirement, and also for staff inductions throughout the UK. The company was recently voted 4th in the Sunday Times 'Top 100 Best Companies to Work For' and part of that recognition was all about 'engaging with people' effectively, something which PPDG is keen to continue. The Daisy solution will help with this aim, and is also central to the company's application for its ISO14001 sustainability accreditation, which will further enhance its environmental credentials. Andy concludes, "Daisy are very innovative. They sorted the integration with applications such as Microsoft Office suite and SharePoint, as well as recommending a complementary call centre management solution called Geomant Contact Expert. This made us more effective when taking calls from Job Centres or the Department for Work and Pensions, meaning we can deliver an even better service. Daisy looks at the business and integrates a solution to enable it to be effective, they understand that it's not about the technology, it's about how you use it as a business."

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