

SUPPORTING A GLOBAL WEBCAST AS PART OF A COMPANY CONFERENCE

context

A global UK-based manufacturing company held its annual conference in Shanghai, to send a signal to staff of its intention to expand into developing markets. Because of the distance from most of its locations, it was decided to hold the conference for a relatively small number of delegates. Some of the topics under discussion, however, needed to be heard by a much wider group. So for a key session, dealing with a new account management structure being implemented by the company they decided to link 20 of the company's locations into the conference via web-cast.

challenges

Given the impact the new strategy was going to have both on the attendees in the conference, and employees attending the web cast, the company was keen to:

1. Encourage open questioning from delegates in the conference
2. Capture questions and concerns from web cast attendees and;
3. Ensure parity between the two constituencies (so that the web cast attendees did not feel as if they were "missing out" on the action.

solution

The company employed three, linked technologies to support the session. Principle among these was Crystal Interactive which provided wireless laptops on tables in the conference hall. At the end of the presentation, delegates entered their questions regarding the presentation anonymously. The ideas appeared in real-time on the main screen (where it was picked up by the web-cast and relayed to the attendees in other locations). In parallel, web cast attendees could submit questions and issues via the internet. The "virtual" input was published on the main screen alongside the "live" input by Crystal Interactive giving parity between both sets of questions. In a 30 minute Q&A session that followed, the CEO was able to cover the 20 most critical questions raised both by the conference and the web-cast attendees.



benefits

1. Everyone was able to put their issues and concerns anonymously to the CEO overcoming the employees' natural reticence when speaking openly.
2. The fact that everyone entered their questions in the same way ensured that those in the conference room and those attending the web cast had an equal say.
3. A large number of questions was collected – (90-100 in total) and the critical issues were answered live.