Communications agency leverages Adobe® Connect™ and Talking Stick to deliver high-end multimedia seminars

Since 1998, Tat Communication has been leveraging the latest in communications technologies and software to help corporate clients manage internal and external communications programs that fuel growth and meet corporate objectives. As a small multimedia company, Tat Communication has carved a niche in the mass communications market, helping clients of various sizes conduct large-scale webinars and public events, as well as offering more traditional visual communications, like graphic design and other services to reach target audiences.

However, the company was challenged to compete with larger media services organizations. "Other organizations in our industry had more resources at their disposal, so they could execute communications strategies without paying a lot of attention to efficiency and cost effectiveness," says Tom Thompson, president of Tat Communication.

To gain an advantage, Tat Communication adopted Adobe Connect to reduce the costs of creating and delivering richer, more engaging multimedia content and pass the savings along to customers. "Adobe Connect provides an array of enhanced features and an extensible architecture that lets us use third-party extensions efficiently to deliver high quality across media," Thompson says. "It gives us a leg up on the competition because we can facilitate higher-impact, more interactive features at the same or lower cost."
The Adobe Connect solution enables the company to zero in on helping global clients reach as many as 700 people worldwide simultaneously with live streaming broadcasts of high-impact, interactive content.

**Livelier, more engaging webinars**

One of the key advantages of choosing Adobe Connect over other web conferencing solutions is its enhanced software developer kit (SDK), which enables seamless integration of third-party extensions that can bring additional liveliness and interactivity to large-scale webinars.

For years, one of Tat’s pharmaceutical clients relied on webinars as a cost-effective, convenient alternative to more infrequent and costlier in-person gatherings for engaging its field sales staff of thousands. Tat Communication produced and managed the events, but found other conferencing solutions limiting.

Other platforms, like WebEx, required participants to download special viewing software that could create obstacles to entering a conference. In addition, many users were trying to attend a session from home, from hotels on the road, or other places with limited Internet connectivity or weaker signals that severely limited the amount and quality of content that could be delivered.

"Bandwidth and other limitations eliminated video and other highly interactive functions as options for webinars. They were essentially just large-scale teleconferences," Thompson says. "Adobe Connect provides seamless, reliable access to dynamic content using the free Adobe Flash Player, in conjunction with Refined Data Solutions’ Talking Stick extension, enabling delivery of video and audio."

**Recreating the webcast**

Working with Refined Data Solutions, an Adobe partner that creates eLearning, webinar, and web meeting solutions for Global Fortune 1000 companies, Tat Communication integrated the Refined Data Solutions Talking Stick application into its existing Adobe Connect platform.

Talking Stick is a software add-in designed to enhance web conferencing and eLearning sessions delivered via Adobe Connect through advanced video and audio functionality. With features and capabilities like high-quality webcam (up to 30 frames per second) and digital video streaming, picture-in-picture video feeds, and a preview mode enabling hosts and moderators to preview any content prior to broadcast, the extension provides webinar producers with a bevy of options for delivering high-quality, high-impact content to webinar attendees.
With Talking Stick, Tat Communication can extend the fully integrated audio and video functionality of Adobe Connect by asserting greater control over video pod layouts and ongoing interactions within an Adobe Connect session.

"Adobe Connect leads the market in providing its customers with interactive web conferencing," said Terry Shane, president of Refined Data Solutions. "Delivering full-motion, high-quality video and audio within a controllable bandwidth using Adobe Connect and Talking Stick is a winning combination. It eliminates latency issues, which reduces distractions and keeps the audience more engaged."

"The ability to leverage an outside extension and run it like a native app greatly expands what we can offer within a conference session," says Thompson. "The flexibility Adobe Connect provides in adding virtually any functionality we want is a tremendous advantage both for our clients and for us."

With Talking Stick, meeting hosts can stream concurrent external video feeds into a meeting and match audio volume across multiple streams from a single console. In addition, the solution gives meeting hosts the ability to control attendees' web cameras remotely, privately preview cameras before broadcasting, enable meeting attendees to play pre-recorded videos that can be paused and rewound on demand while still viewing a live stream, and several other enhanced features.

The secret weapon: VoIP
Some of Tat Communication’s long-standing clients historically resisted using video as part of their online meeting and eLearning activities, opting only to leverage voice over IP (VoIP) connections in certain instances to help reduce telephony costs, but not for rich content delivery.

Now, Tat Communication uses Adobe Connect and Talking Stick to derive greater value—financially and in terms of user experience—by leveraging VoIP connections, and delivering voice, video, and dynamic content from a single platform.

"Even though some webinar participants may have to participate via phone because they’re not by a computer, the majority will still access the session via computer," Thompson says. "Because all the audio for a session can be delivered via VoIP, there's no need for a telephone, which can substantially reduce the cost of putting on a webcast while simultaneously making them higher-impact and more engaging."

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Adobe Connect and Talking Stick enable meeting hosts to customize screen layouts and determine which video feeds will be shown to each meeting attendee. Meeting managers can control the size, screen quality, and framerate for each presenter and attendee individually to deliver the cleanest, most engaging experience possible.

Tat Communication facilitates and manages more than 30 large-scale webinars per year, reaching an average of 300 participants per session. In the past, basic teleconferences could cost as much as $.17 per minute per phone user and didn’t include a video component as part of the experience. With the Adobe solution, content is aggregated and delivered seamlessly through more cost-effective, flexible VoIP channels, which Thompson estimates helps Tat save thousands of dollars per webcast for its clients.

"The efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the Adobe solution has brought tremendous value to our clients. The cost savings alone essentially pay for all the production time that goes into a webinar," Thompson says. "More importantly, the integration of Talking Stick with Adobe Connect and increased use of VoIP offers a new way for our clients to engage staff and partners while creating a significant competitive advantage for us."

For more information
www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect

http://RefinedData.com/adobe-connect/talking-stick