

TANDBERG CUSTOMER PROFILE

Cement
Australia



- **GOAL:** Reduce travel costs, improve productivity and enhance the efficiency of Cement Australia employees.
- **SOLUTION:** TANDBERG Meeting Room Videoconferencing
- **RESULTS:** Significant savings in travel expenditure (Up to \$1m per annum), increased staff productivity, enhanced team collaboration, real-time communication and faster decision making.

Reliable, cost-efficient videoconferencing, delivering face-to-face communication in an easy to use environment.

“ The TANDBERG solution has revolutionised the way Cement Australia communicates across the business, while at the same time delivering significant travel cost savings.”

**PAUL MCNAY
MANAGER KNOWLEDGE AND CAPABILITY
HUMAN RESOURCES
CEMENT AUSTRALIA**

STREAMLINING COMMUNICATION

Cement Australia is Australia’s leading supplier of cement and related products and services. With plants in Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania, the company has a production capacity of over 3 million tonnes annually. It manages the largest dedicated distribution network in the industry with a fleet of ships and more than 200 road and rail tankers.

The company’s operations range from the mining of raw materials to the manufacturing, marketing and distribution of a diverse range of high performance cements and cement related products. In addition to its bulk and packaged range of cements, Cement Australia specialises in the manufacture of Lime products and the distribution and handling of Fly Ash and Slag.

With operations extending across the Eastern Seaboard and additional markets in Southern and Western Australia, Cement Australia needed a solution that would limit business travel and help its employees be more productive. Following a frustrating history with ISDN-based videoconferencing that proved unreliable and at times unprofessional, the company decided to take a look at the new generation of visual communication solutions available over Internet Protocol (IP). It settled on a TANDBERG solution that would ensure a consistent video experience and allow participants to collaborate more easily and intuitively.

IMPACTING THE BOTTOM LINE

Headquartered in Sydney with an administrative and financial hub in Brisbane as well as major manufacturing plants in Gladstone (QLD), Kandos (NSW) and Railton (TAS), the company’s challenge of supporting these sites was enormous. “When you consider that some of our manufacturing centres are in regional towns, getting to Gladstone from Kandos, for example, is expensive and time-consuming,” said Paul McNay, Manager Knowledge and Capability, HR, Cement Australia. “Some of these trips would involve a combination of planes, trains and automobiles and would quite often eat into our staff’s business and personal time.”

“More importantly, from a bottom line perspective, we needed to cut down on our \$3m a year travel spend, yet employees and managers still needed face-to-face time,” adds Paul. “With TANDBERG we have the best of both worlds. Not only are we benefiting by enhancing productivity, minimising downtime and making decisions in real-time, but we’re also aiming to reduce our travel expenditure by \$1m per annum.”

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A COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT

From that original deployment, usage grew more rapidly than anticipated, given the company's previous experience with videoconferencing. It wasn't long before Cement Australia employees were branching out beyond simple point-to-point video calls by leveraging the built-in multisite functionality to connect with multiple internal sites and extend an invitation for suppliers and customers to use the system.

“The more people use the system, the more they understand the myriad of benefits that can be realised,” explains Paul. “Videoconferencing is now a mission-critical system for Cement Australia, especially from a supply chain perspective. For example, if one of our manufacturing plant was down, it could take as little as a few days to shut down the entire Queensland construction industry. Faced with this situation, our operational staff can use videoconferencing to collaborate effectively, address any production or supply issues and make decisions in real-time. In addition, with meetings of this nature where hard decisions must be made, it's helpful to have face-to-face contact to reduce ambiguity.”

IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS

TANDBERG videoconferencing is simple for employees to use with integration into the company's Lotus Notes system helping drive adoption and improve communication. “When meetings are initiated, videoconferencing is booked as a resource within the Lotus Notes framework,” says Paul. “Once the meeting takes place, the system automatically dials up the recipients and shuts itself down at the end.”

Paul adds, “The quality and reliability of the technology is helping usage grow, and the positive feedback reflects well on the TANDBERG technology,” says Paul. “It's important to us that all the videoconferencing systems in use throughout the company have the same functionality, so that users can walk in, sit down and be productive. But most importantly, TANDBERG delivers excellent picture quality with little delay. Overall, videoconferencing helps us improve company-wide communication, by personalising the experience and more readily engaging the participants.”

Today, a number of meetings are held over video, including executive sessions and internal operational reviews. “In the past our executives would travel for a face-to-face meeting once a month,” explains Paul. Thanks to videoconferencing, our executives stay put and we have a number of other meetings and reviews that are now handled this way. “We see TANDBERG and videoconferencing as a true collaborative tool for team performance.”

CONNECTING PARTNERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

While internal meetings are by far the most common use of the IP video network, Cement Australia is extending usage outside the organisation, for recruitment partners and service providers.

“Our recruitment partners and service providers are aware of our videoconferencing facilities and we actively encourage them to make use of the technology,” says Paul. “It delivers savings in the recruitment process for the company and helps us convey a professional image to the potential employee. On the service provider front, we can see great opportunities for cost savings as initial scoping meetings could be undertaken this way, instead of hopping on a plane.”

CONTINUED GROWTH

“There is no doubt that videoconferencing has become an important communication tool for us, and I believe we will continue to see an increase in the use of this technology” concludes Paul. “The TANDBERG solution has revolutionised the way that Cement Australia communicates across the business while at the same time delivering significant travel cost savings.”