



PR / 06/2009

# Symetria – Success Story EFTEC

***Virtual meetings create sustainable added value for the future***

## **Optimized communication, improved customer proximity and competitive advantages thanks to videoconference solutions**

EFTEC, a global automotive supplier for the transport sector in the areas of bonding, coating, sealing and damping, relies on videoconferencing technology from Polycom: thanks to this technology, corporate communication has been optimized and the exchange of information speeded up. Travel costs have also been reduced dramatically.

The ability to ensure efficient, optimized communication and information flows, to make cross-company decisions within a very short period of time and to react to market conditions quickly is extremely important for a company like EFTEC, an EMS Group subsidiary which has around 750 employees at 21 locations in 18 countries and which is one of the leading suppliers of process materials and application facilities for the automobile industry. The development, production and sale of solutions and products for various automobile manufacturers necessitate close cooperation between international locations and customers. Regular meetings, during which development results are presented, projects are discussed, new developments and construction plans approved and an intensive exchange of knowledge nurtured, are part of everyday life. Furthermore, time-consuming, expensive business trips were consuming large amounts of valuable employee resources.

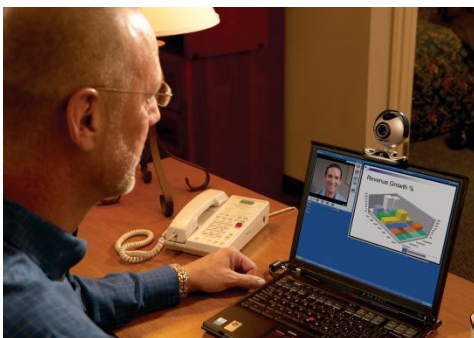


### **New building block for corporate communication**

The company had already looked into the subject of videoconferencing five years ago. Urs Hüttenmoser, IT Manager at EFTEC: “The driving motive behind the use of a videoconference system was the possibility of simplifying communication and information flows between the EMS Group headquarters in Romanshorn and the EMS locations in Herrliberg and Domat/Ems, as well as the EFTEC locations in North America, Asia and Europe. However, due to the high initial costs of approximately half a million francs which were required to equip numerous locations, the project was quickly rejected.” The idea emerged once more in 2007, however, during the realization of a media room for presentations. Technological advancements, large bandwidths, improved sound quality and picture transmissions in HD quality, in addition to prices which were now far more reasonable, helped tip the scales in favor of a videoconference system.

### **Partnership convinces in many areas**

It was clear to Hüttenmoser even before the evaluation phase that a videoconferencing system would have to survive its “initial introduction” and also be very easy to use. “Otherwise, users wouldn’t want to use it”, he adds. The features and performance of videoconferencing systems from various providers were tested, from simple plug-and-play systems to technically complex solutions. The latter proved too expensive and complex, because an IT employee had to be present at all times during the test conferences. Hüttenmoser, who provides global IT support for EFTEC along with two other employees, could not and was not willing to make such an investment. At the end of the evaluation phase, the HDX7002 XL and HDX7002 XLP videoconferencing systems from Polycom, with a multi-point license, SMS rolling stand and plasma screens, were the winners. The solution’s simple installation, flexibility and intuitive operation were convincing arguments. Furthermore, the videoconferencing system is fitted inside a rolling stand and, thanks to the existing IP infrastructure and plug-and-play technology, can be used in different rooms. Another criterion was the notebook client that was provided with the system. EFTEC is currently using two such clients, and may increase this number in future. Hüttenmoser: “The notebook client offers a high degree of flexibility and allows employees, who are often on business trips, to carry out videoconferences from any location and/or participate in virtual meetings.” The collaboration with Symetria AG, Polycom’s integration company in Switzerland, was extremely important for Hüttenmoser during the entire decision-making



process, as they were responsible for the overall planning, implementation and installation of the solution at EFTEC. “The chemistry between the two companies was good from the very beginning”, explained Hüttenmoser. “The maintenance of the entire communication process is a business-critical factor for us. Symetria gave us the feeling that we had the right implementation partner at our side from the very beginning. They speak the same language, understand us and are available around the clock. In the event of

an emergency, they can be contacted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.”



### **Smooth implementation, high level of employee acceptance**

In addition to the headquarters in Romanshorn, the companies in Genk (Belgium), Shanghai (China) and Detroit (USA) were also equipped with a videoconference system. The individual components were configured centrally by Symetria in Switzerland before being sent to the various locations. The systems could then be set up, installed and connected onsite very easily. Network rights were assigned in Romanshorn, and the IT team can monitor and adjust all settings centrally from this location. Furthermore, thanks to the intuitive menus, training requirements were very low. Internal instructions containing usage rules were also provided. “Employee acceptance levels were high from the very beginning”, according to Hüttenmoser. “And the added value, with regard to time and cost savings as well as ease of use, speak for themselves: the contact lists of all companies and customers are stored in a directory. The desired contact person can be selected at the touch of a button and the connection is then established. In addition to picture and sound transmissions in HD quality, the exchange of multimedia content such as presentations, videos and pictures is also possible. Furthermore, the smallest product details can be enlarged thanks to a document camera. A huge advantage for our development department.”

### **Visible added value across the board**

With regards to qualitative and quantitative know-how transfers, the videoconference system is used on a regular basis throughout the entire Group and is also utilized for training purposes. The exchange of information with various automobile manufacturers also pays off and provides some decisive advantages: meetings can be arranged within an extremely short period of time and decisions can be reached more quickly and efficiently. Hüttenmoser has noticed that “the end results of meetings have improved noticeably”. The videoconference solution has proven especially beneficial in the area of development and technology, where many specialist terms are used, as it helps improve understanding and bridge language barriers. The facial expressions and gestures of the participants show whether something has been understood or not. This helps eliminate any ambiguities once and for all.

### **Shorter time to market**

EFTEC’s goal for the future is clear: additional companies are to be equipped with a videoconference solution and connected to the headquarters in Romanshorn. Hüttenmoser adds: “The technology cannot replace business trips, it can however reduce the number required considerably. This helps improve CO2 emissions and makes an active contribution towards environmental protection. Polycom’s videoconference solution has proven to be a mature and practical solution that fulfils everyday requirements and all of our expectations. It has become an integral part of our information policy.”





The EFTEC Group is a leading supplier of bonding, sealing and coating materials, including application facilities and systems, for the automobile industry. Around 750 employees at 23 locations in 18 countries guarantee the highest levels of quality and precision. The entire EFTEC product range is subjected to the highest demands with regard to reliability and manufacturing precision, and is geared towards making automobile engineering more efficient and increasing a vehicle's use value. When implementing new information technologies, EFTEC chooses solutions that facilitate employee work processes, enable quick reactions to changes and support the company's course of expansion in selected markets. EFTEC has belonged to the "Polymer Materials" division of the global EMS Group since 1985.

## **EFTEC**

Sector: Automotive supplier

Customer: EFTEC

Challenges: Speed up communication within the Group, reduce pressure on restricted employee resources, reduce costs and make a contribution towards protecting the environment.

Solutions: Romanshorn (CH): Polycom HDX7002 XLP with a multipoint license on an SMS rolling stand with two 50-inch plasma screens.  
Genk (B), Shanghai (CHN), Troy (USA): one Polycom HDX7002 XL on an SMS rolling stand with one 42-inch plasma screen at each location.

### **Business advantages:**

- The communication and decision-making process is speeded up
- Results can be achieved more quickly, especially with regard to projects and subject-specific meetings
- Reduction in the number of business trips and, therefore, enormous cost and time savings
- Language barriers can be bridged easily
- More efficient use of employee resources
- Employees can focus on their core competences and do not lose valuable work time as a result of traveling
- Positive connection to customers and project partners
- Competitive advantages can be secured