

## Meet Virtual Margaret

Key Cisco employee stays connected to corporate from Texas with Cisco TelePresence Solution.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### EMERGING MARKETS TECHNOLOGY GROUP, CISCO SYSTEMS

- Networking
- San Jose, CA
- 201 employees

#### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Retain valuable staff member who wanted to move out of the area.
- Enable remote employee to work efficiently despite geographical distance.
- Enhance face-to-face collaboration and provide effortless connectivity.

#### SOLUTION

- Deployed Cisco TelePresence 1000 solution to enable a remote worker to stay connected to her team.

#### BUSINESS RESULTS

- Increased productivity by providing access to critical team resources.
- Allowed employee to improve quality of life while maintaining her job.
- Enable company and key executives to maintain and benefit from established working relationship.

### Business Challenge

Margaret has lived in the Bay Area for 10 years and has worked at Cisco Systems® for the past 3 years. She loves her job, her supervisor, and the team that he has built in San Jose, California. But the cost of living, the cost of California housing, and the ability, as a single mom, to adequately raise her 9-year-old daughter in the Bay Area was getting harder to maintain as the years went by. Margaret began looking for alternative places to raise her daughter, and, in the spring of 2006, decided to relocate to Dallas, Texas.

When she informed her supervisor, Marthin De Beer, vice president and general manager of the Emerging Markets Technology Group (EMTG) at Cisco Systems, of her intention to relocate, he genuinely felt conflicted. Although he did not want to lose a valuable Cisco employee, he did want her to enjoy life, and feel comfortable about raising her daughter under good

circumstances. Over the past 3 years, Margaret and Marthin had built a solid, working relationship that was successful. He really did not want to lose her because of the move. They needed a solution that would allow Margaret to work in her new chosen state of Texas, but in another Cisco office location. However, due to the nature of her job as his executive administrator, whatever solution they chose had to provide the ability to communicate and collaborate effortlessly, despite her geographical location. In her position, face-to-face contact with team members is critical, as is immediate accessibility. As Marthin's executive assistant, she engages with all levels of employees in the San Jose office, and the need for her to maintain that constant interaction with anyone who approached her desk throughout the day was essential. Besides her own team members, she needed to remain a valuable resource to any employee needing help or direction, should they pass by her desk in San Jose. The solution used must allow for her to continue working as if she were still seated at her desk in San Jose—allowing her to perform her everyday duties as effortlessly as possible.

### Solution

At first, Marthin thought of alternatives to the move to Texas. One such alternative was for Margaret to consider moving further out of the Bay Area, where real estate was cheaper. Marthin offered for her to telecommute one day a week in order to ease the commute burden. However, this suggestion did not really allow her to improve her family's quality of life as she desired. Therefore,

it was decided that the best option for Margaret was to try the new Cisco TelePresence solution, which his team was planning to release shortly after Margaret's planned out-of-state move. The timing was right. The purpose was right. It was a win-win situation for everyone. The Cisco TelePresence Meeting solution combines life-size, ultra high-definition video images with spatial audio and interactive elements to create the feeling of being "in person" with participants in remote locations. The Cisco TelePresence Meeting Solution offers two different endpoints: the Cisco TelePresence 3000, for larger group meetings, and the Cisco TelePresence 1000, meant for smaller groups and individual offices.

**“Every morning that I dial in, I think to myself, is this really happening? I can live where I want, work at a company that I love, and still have a full-time presence. That’s amazing.”**

— Margaret, Executive Administrator, Cisco Systems

The Cisco TelePresence 1000 consists of a 65-inch high-definition plasma screen (720p and 1080p support), a camera, codec, microphone, speaker, and lighting array. When the product was ready for beta testing in June 2006, it was installed in Margaret's existing workspace in San Jose as well as her new office location in Richardson, Texas. This system can be used in small-footprint spaces, such as executive offices, general conference rooms, hotel lobbies, bank branches, or doctors' offices—anywhere that a one-on-one or small group conversation is desired. In addition to the system hardware, Cisco TelePresence includes a suite of software solutions, known as Cisco TelePresence Manager, which interfaces with enterprise groupware to enable scheduling directly from a calendar. Cisco TelePresence is also integrated with Cisco Unified CallManager, which enables one-button simplicity for call launch and control directly from a Cisco Unified IP Phone.



According to Margaret, the transition was easy after her move. She and Marthin were able to continue working together as a team. “Marthin and I read each other really well, which is very key to a successful relationship between administrator and supervisor,” she says. “I thought that we would lose that connection and interaction when I moved to Texas, but with the Cisco TelePresence solution, we are able to see each other in life-size proportions, look each other directly in the eye, and speak naturally without any audio delay. We can still read each other's body language—which is critical in our particular business relationship. We joke now that Marthin can still clearly see me smirk while raising my eyebrows in typical Margaret fashion—nothing has changed.”

This solution has worked so well that there are now two systems installed at the San Jose office. One is at Margaret's old, San Jose desk, and the other one is in Marthin's back conference room, which they use for one-on-one meetings, other weekly meetings that she must attend with Marthin, as well as for quick discussions and decisions that need to occur throughout the day. With one push of a button, Margaret vanishes from her location outside of Marthin's office, and then instantaneously reappears in his conference room—it is fast, reliable, and truly amazing. "I love the fact that I can still actively participate in any and all meetings required. If I was forced to dial in via audio only for such meetings, I would feel remote and disengaged—with this solution, I am virtually present, as if I were there with the team in person," says Margaret.

"In the beginning, there were a lot of people stopping by," she says. "Mouths would drop open when people saw me, as if in disbelief and amazement of what they were seeing. Now, as folks get used to seeing me day in and day out, it is business as usual. One interesting thing that I noted in the beginning was that I felt like I was on camera all the time, and it made me feel a little self-conscious. Now, I don't even remember that I'm on camera. It feels like I'm still in San Jose—for 8 hours a day, I'm fully engaged in the business at Cisco's headquarters. If it were not for the clock on my back wall here in Richardson indicating central time, I would completely forget that I'm in Texas!"

## Business Results

Both Marthin and Margaret are reaping the benefits of the TelePresence Solution. Marthin was able to keep a key member of his team, and Margaret was able to keep the job that she loves at the company that she loves, while living, raising, and providing for her daughter in a more affordable area. "It is the best of both worlds," says Margaret. "I am so lucky. Not many companies would take a chance like this."

### PRODUCT LIST

- Cisco TelePresence 1000
- Cisco TelePresence Manager
- Cisco Unified CallManager
- Cisco Unified IP Phone 7970G

Marthin's endorsement and use of the TelePresence solution make a statement to both internal and external markets about the direction of Cisco TelePresence technology and the effect that it will potentially have on the way that we live and work.

Professionals who use the Cisco TelePresence solution can stay intimately connected with team members and have a full-time presence, even if they live in other areas of the country. This enables enhanced collaboration and productivity with remote workers and gives corporations a better option for attracting as well as retaining valuable employees, even when they move out of the area.

The Cisco TelePresence solution helps remote workers connect to customers, partners, and coworkers with confidence, and builds trust and understanding despite distance. Travel time and expenses are reduced significantly. Additionally, the solution leads to faster time to market by facilitating more rapid decision making, since remote resources are more readily available. Most importantly, professionals can enjoy an improved quality of life.

"People are intrigued with the possibilities that the solution has to offer," says Margaret. "I cannot even begin to tell you how many new faces I have seen in both San Jose and Richardson over the past few months because they come by to see me and the TelePresence solution—employees and potential customers, with whom I probably would have never had the opportunity to interact with. As a result, I have been able to network better at Cisco, making it easier for me to reach out to folks in an administrative fashion, with faster results to better assist the EMTG team."

Margaret's use of the TelePresence solution also provides Cisco with a venue for thoroughly and continuously beta-testing the product. On a daily basis, Margaret logs in her progress and observations, and, when necessary, reports any bugs or issues that she may encounter.

"Every morning that I dial in, I think to myself, is this really happening? I can live where I want, work at a company that I love, and still have a full-time presence. That's amazing," she says.

The Cisco TelePresence 1000 is designed to be a flush-mounted plasma screen along a wall space for easier use in smaller footprint areas such as an individual office. It is a single panel plasma screen, designed to be installed in a variety of environments as a free-standing unit.

The Cisco TelePresence Manager is a separate application running on an MCS 7835 server, capable of supporting up to 1000 Cisco TelePresence endpoints. It collects information about Cisco TelePresence systems from Cisco Unified CallManager and associates those systems to their physical location or conference room, as defined in Active Directory and Microsoft Exchange (Lotus support will follow in 2007). This allows users to schedule Cisco TelePresence meetings from their calendars and have that schedule automatically sent to phones associated with each of the Cisco TelePresence systems involved in the call. As a result, the user can launch the Cisco TelePresence call with "one button to push" simplicity by merely selecting the meeting from the list of scheduled meetings on the display of the phone.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about the Cisco TelePresence solution, go to:

<http://www.cisco.com/go/telepresence>.



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