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CASE STUDY  
**Mediclinic**

# Mediclinic

## *Local WebEx implementation leads to global adoption*

**Industry:**  
Healthcare

**Country:**  
South Africa, Namibia, Switzerland,  
United Arab Emirates

**Business challenge:**  
An international Request for Information (RFI) programme was required from the local operation, and required a more efficient system to be developed to manage the process.

**Solution:**  
An online collaboration tool, WebEx, to facilitate the question and answer the sessions.

**Results:**  
Reduction in costs and project timelines due to better organisational collaboration and a reduced carbon footprint due to reduced travel requirements.

## Mediclinic improves training and collaboration capabilities, up to executive level, while saving costs and improving efficiency with WebEx.

Mediclinic Southern Africa forms part of Mediclinic International, which operates 75 medical facilities in Southern Africa, Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates, making it the sixth largest private medical group in the world.

In 2008 the local operation was tasked with managing an international RFI programme and turned to the Mediclinic Southern Africa's ICT project team to facilitate the collaboration

and communication with international vendors that would be responding to the RFI. "The information sessions that were part of the RFI process required multiple parties to supply us with information, which in a normal RFI process, would require them to physically come in and present this information on one or more occasions at a physical location," explains Michael Reynders, ICT Project Office Manager, Mediclinic Southern Africa.

### Finding the right solution

"To streamline the process and accommodate the international parties participating in the RFI process we decided to investigate the possibility of using an online collaboration tool to facilitate the question and answer information sessions," he continues. "Our research soon directed us towards Cisco's WebEx, as it was the ideal tool to facilitate the information sessions due to its ability to conference call and share documents at the same time."

WebEx combines desktop sharing through a web browser with voice and video conferencing, so everyone sees and hears the same thing during the session. This offers users a unified conferencing and content sharing collaboration tool that allows a single user to communicate with anyone who has an internet connection, with participants able to utilise the service to connect to the host without the need for a license.

Mediclinic initially approached Cisco to set up and run trial WebEx meeting sessions, so that they could test the technology. "We conducted two sessions that worked very well and based on the success of the trial we decided to implement WebEx as a collaboration and conferencing tool throughout the entire local Mediclinic operation," says Reynders.

Having taken the decision to roll out WebEx within their organisation, Mediclinic approached local service provider and Cisco partner, Internet Solutions to roll out the solution. "Having trialled the solution and successfully run the RFI process using WebEx, the Mediclinic ICT project management team realised the benefit that this technology could have across

the entire organisation, which is when they contacted us," explains Hayden Lamberti, product manager at Internet Solutions.

Having assessed Mediclinic's organisational needs, Internet Solutions submitted a proposal to implement and license the WebEx Meeting Centre and Training Centre Online Classroom solutions, which was immediately accepted.

The WebEx Meeting Centre tool was chosen as it offers functionality such as the ability to host collaborative internal and external meeting sessions, be they pre-planned or on the fly, as well as product demos and sales presentations, all while sharing content, documents, applications, desktops, web browsers and web content. Additional capabilities include polling, chat, video sharing, integrated audio conferencing, free integrated Internet voice conferencing, full video, audio and collaboration recording, editing and playback functionality, file transfer and the ability to join and attend meetings using most mobile devices.

"The WebEx Training Centre Online Classroom was an important inclusion in the implementation, as we do a great deal of employee training at all our hospital sites in Southern Africa," explains Reynders. The WebEx Training Centre Online Classroom also enables users to conduct partner and customer training, if required, and offers all the capabilities of WebEx Meeting Centre, with the addition of registration and scheduling functionality, an automated attendance and assessment tracking and reporting tool and instant feedback tools, along with the ability to run breakout sessions and a hands-on lab. It also offers integrated eCommerce and integration with leading learning management systems.

"Mediclinic also added the Voice over IP (VoIP) component to the licenses, to bolster the audio conferencing capabilities of the solution," says Lamberti. "We are the only local service provider who can guarantee call quality all the way up to London, as we have integrated the WebEx bridge into our Voice over IS (VoIS) network. However, the solution can still integrate external teleconferencing into a session if the quality of the line is degraded."



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### Quick and easy implementation

With the solution parameters in place Internet Solutions quickly and easily rolled out the solution purchased by Mediclinic. "The WebEx implementation was a simple configuration on our side, as all we needed to do was get licenses allocated to the Mediclinic users and provision them on a Software-as-a-Service basis," continues Lamberti. "The whole installation was done remotely and the users simply got a link with their credentials, and were immediately able to access the server."

According to Lamberti, the Mediclinic infrastructure didn't require any upgrading and their network capacity enabled them to immediately enjoy the full benefit of the WebEx solution, such as video in high definition, an integrated VoIP component and all the collaboration functionality. "The capacity we have secured on the numerous undersea fibre optic cable systems also means that our WebEx users enjoy a fast, efficient and cost effective experience when they connect with the WebEx server in Europe to conduct meeting or training sessions."

"We found the implementation to be very smooth, as we got the necessary access to the admin server and were able to set things up as soon as we purchased the licenses," says Reynders. "We did have one or two technical challenges on our side, as we have a centralised terminal server architecture, where users use a thin client to connect to the server. However, part of the WebEx component required us to give rights access to the user, but we overcame this issue by setting up a separate WebEx terminal server and giving users remote access to that terminal."

With the implementation complete, Internet Solutions set up a remote training session, over WebEx, with Reynders and the Mediclinic ICT project office, who then rolled out the solution to the other offices and training departments.

### Putting the technology to work

Mediclinic Southern Africa staff were soon inviting colleagues and co-workers to WebEx meetings or conducting training sessions online. "Using WebEx is really easy, as the meeting organiser simply invites attendees to the WebEx session – all they need is a computer or mobile device and an internet connection," explains Reynders. "Once they are given credentials they can log in and join the session, while the meeting organiser controls the content and collaboration of the session."



WebEx made an immediate impact on the organisation, forever changing the way training sessions and meetings were held. "WebEx has been very successful at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our organisation, especially in terms of collaboration on projects and training. Trainers don't need to physically go to locations anymore, and the ability to record sessions means we can use them to train other employees, or go over what has been done by simply linking to or downloading the recording. Project managers can interact with their teams more regularly too, as they can now do it remotely," continues Reynders.

"Meetings are also more efficient, as documents were previously sent around beforehand and printed out ahead of time, and then everyone had to try and follow what was going on during the conference call on a hard copy. Now, the person presenting can control what everyone sees and can also give people access to the information and content in realtime, while also allowing them to make notes and annotate on the fly."

The other area where the WebEx was successfully used in the organisation, was to enable collaboration with the company's other international platforms in Dubai and Switzerland. "Mediclinic started using WebEx Meeting to conduct the monthly international ICT committee meetings, as well as certain executive committee meetings where presentations were required to be shared remotely among attendees. This was a great way to showcase the technology to the top rungs of the organisation," he explains.

This has led to widespread adoption within the organisation, as the ease of use and readily available access made it the de facto standard for coordinating and hosting meetings at Mediclinic. "The demand to host WebEx meetings quickly outstripped the 10 licenses we had purchased, so we have already doubled that number," says Reynders.

### Counting the benefits

*WebEx has really changed the way we operate. The ability to display and share information, and collaborate in real time has had a really positive impact on our business.*

Michael Reynders, ICT Project Office Manager, Mediclinic Southern Africa.

We have seen a reduction in the costs associated with travel and the more traditional avenues of corporate communication, and we are also seeing the speed at which projects move and training completed increase, due to better organisational collaboration.

"And Internet Solutions has supported these changes through their dedicated WebEx support centre. Not only were they competent implementers of the solution, but their experience with the technology and the support they offer through the call centre has ensured everything has continued to run smoothly," concludes Reynders.

According to Lamberti, the benefits of WebEx don't end there. "The reduced travel requirements also have a positive impact on the environment, as it reduces a company's carbon footprint. There are also a number of other modules that organisations can use if they want to expand the role WebEx plays in their organisation. These include WebEx Support Centre, which makes the normally arduous task of corporate IT and network maintenance a great deal easier, and Events Centre, which enables an organisation to drastically scale up the size of their meetings, as you can broadcast to large audiences. All of this makes WebEx an essential business tool for any company who wants to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their disparately located workforce," he concludes.