



The number one reason we chose WebEx services was simplicity. After about five minutes worth of training, our people are ready to use it. There's no software installation for our customers. The one time WebEx plug-in is a very small footprint creating a simple technology for customer use.

— Tom Thomas, Manager of Customer Support

Smart decisions at Cognos result in better response times and higher customer satisfaction.



INDUSTRY

High Technology

WEBEX APPLICATIONS

Support Center and Meeting Center

SUMMARY

With WebEx, Cognos has slashed call resolution times, improving response times and reducing travel costs.

ABOUT COGNOS

Line of Business

Business intelligence solutions

Headquarters

Ottawa, Ontario

Number of Employees

2900

WebEx Customer Since 2000

Cognos is the leading global provider of enterprise business intelligence solutions that optimize the performance of the world's largest and most successful organizations. Business intelligence is a category of applications and technologies for gathering, storing, analyzing, reporting on, and providing access to data to help enterprise users make better business decisions.

The Challenge

Given today's complex technologies, problems can arise on the road to running an application. That's when a Cognos customer calls the support center for assistance. Guided by a specialist, customers can identify and remove barriers, and walk through a series of practices that normally resolves the issue. Still, at times it's impossible to reproduce the exact situation the customer describes over the phone. Tom Thomas, Manager of Customer Support at Cognos notes, "It can be a very simple environmental variable that's to blame. Even a spelling mistake can prevent an application from running. Unless you can physically stand behind the customer and watch what he or she is doing, or be the driver, it can be very difficult to analyze these kinds of problems." And, if the issue can't be resolved over the phone, the specialist might have to travel to the client's site. To improve response time to customer problems, Cognos needed a solution that would allow the specialists to remotely deliver the same high quality services they could provide on site.

The Solution

The increased capabilities of WebEx Support Center—including the ability to run applications, perform tasks, and verify configurations on remote computers—fit the bill. Support specialists at the Cognos call center have counted on WebEx Support Center to enhance response conditions for their clients—meeting the requirements for both the busy front line specialist and the customer waiting at the other end of the line—since April 2000. For example, one customer had difficulty with an installation configuration process. The Cognos specialist spent quite a bit of time on the phone with the client, trying to view the procedure through the customer's eyes. Each time the customer tried to duplicate the procedure, it failed. Every time the specialist tried it, it worked. This was a difficult situation, because the customer knew that if the problem couldn't be reproduced, it couldn't be fixed. To solve the problem, Cognos used a WebEx Support Center session. After watching the customer's procedures in real-time, the specialist discovered that the client was using a button on the tool bar, while the Cognos specialist was using the drop down list—the only difference. It only took minutes to resolve the issue through WebEx Support Center.



“WebEx services offer not only a good product, but also excellent service and support.”

— Tom Thomas, Manager of Customer Support

The Benefit

This improvement in “time to resolution” for Cognos customers is the main reason for using WebEx Support Center, but there are additional cost savings benefits for both Cognos and its customers, including minimized travel time. Cognos call center specialists handle thousands of calls each month, with WebEx Support Center used in about 150 of those cases—calls that previously would have resulted in travel expense. When customers cannot perform tasks with Cognos applications, it costs them money as well. Customers and specialists alike are pleased with the experience they’ve had with WebEx Support Center.

Cognos cites the simplicity of the services as its number one reason for choosing WebEx. Training typically takes no more than five minutes—and users are up and running, and there’s no software installation for customers. Cognos considers

the one-time WebEx plug-in a very small footprint resulting in a simple technology for customer use.

Additionally, as security is on everybody’s mind these days, Cognos needs to reassure its customers that WebEx Support Center is secure. To assist, WebEx supplied the company with a white paper audit on security risk that Cognos made available to its customers. Consequently Tom Thomas adds, “I can’t think of a time when a customer said, ‘I don’t want to use Support Center because of the risk.’ WebEx Services offer not only a good product, but also excellent service and support. In settling the issues, WebEx services always came through for us.”

While Cognos originally launched with WebEx Support Center, they also deployed WebEx Meeting Center. And while they originally anticipated using Meeting Center for education while

Support Center would be strictly for support usage, they discovered an innovative use of the WebEx Meeting Center Record and Playback feature for problem solving. Support specialists now use it to analyze support problems by recording sessions and making them available for future use. In addition, Cognos has used Meeting Center to conduct some 200 advanced educational sessions since April 2000, delivering presentations and demonstrating product features. Meeting Center enables Cognos to change the focus of conversation during sessions, pull up new products, and fire through demonstrations. It’s the kind of flexibility that Cognos feels makes WebEx Meeting Center extremely useful.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Cognos chose WebEx Support Center as a way to provide support to remote customers as if their call center specialists were on site.
- With WebEx Support Center, Cognos call center specialists now view remote customers’ procedures in real-time—as if they were there in person—saving hours of time and thousands in travel costs.
- Cognos takes advantage of WebEx Meeting Center to record support sessions for later analysis, aiding in improving specialists’ problem solving abilities.