

A photograph of a woman in a yellow sleeveless top and glasses, and a man in a blue sweater with headphones around his neck, sitting at a desk and looking at a tablet together. The background shows a modern office with large windows and a blurred bokeh effect of light spots.

CureSeq finds its online meeting cure

Executive Summary

CureSeq’s mission is to “revolutionize next-generation sequencing in the oncology space.” To accomplish this, the company must reach as many researchers and clinical oncologists as possible to help them identify and treat cancer. CureSeq, whose work has been published in scientific journals, needed a reliable online meeting solution to communicate effectively with critical stakeholders around the world. After struggling with several other solutions, the company selected Cisco WebEx to take advantage of the platform’s presentation and document-sharing capabilities and audio quality.

“After all of the various platforms that I’ve interacted with, WebEx is definitely the most stable. That is really important when you’re trying to conduct a virtual meeting with critical clients and prospects around the world.”

– Vikki Friedman, Global Vice President of Sales and Marketing, CureSeq

For CureSeq, any miscommunication with customers can have significant consequences. The Brisbane, California-based company provides solutions that help identify cancer and other disease-causing mutations. CureSeq is committed to a three-day turnaround on test results for doctors so they can treat patients as quickly as possible.

With clients and prospects around the world, CureSeq relies heavily on online meetings. In its sales efforts, the company meets with C-level hospital executives to inform them of the services CureSeq offers and how those services can benefit the hospital's oncologists.

But the company can't afford to use meeting tools that compromise its trustworthiness and professionalism.

CureSeq needed a trustworthy online meeting platform

The company tried several online meeting tools and experienced audio glitches, making it difficult to understand their international clients and prospects in meetings, says Vikki Friedman, CureSeq Global Vice President of Sales and Marketing.

"When we first started, one of the online meetings was awful," Friedman recalls. "We had attendees from Korea, Italy, China, and two people from the U.S. on the phone. It was such a comedy of errors in terms of trying to decipher what each person was saying. We ultimately had to just table the meeting and communicate through email because it was so broken and garbled."

Plus, hiccups in the slide presentations threatened CureSeq's image as a professional, trustworthy organization.

That's when Friedman decided it was time for a change, telling her team that the online meeting tool they were using was not effective. "I said, 'It doesn't demonstrate that we're really in a powerful place of business by conducting meetings with this platform.'"

As a small company trying to reach a large, far-flung audience, CureSeq can't be successful without an online meeting platform that is stable and dependable, and allows for highly interactive meetings.

CureSeq Challenges

Ensure a stable, reliable platform to conduct online meetings with customers and prospects.

Facilitate conferencing for attendees located around the globe.

Maximize the reach of the company's limited staff and budget.

Dependable, robust features provide the right prescription for effective meetings

Friedman and one of her colleagues told CureSeq executives that the online meeting platforms they were using were not acceptable. They described the performance issues and how they were impacting the company's image and its ability to communicate effectively with clients. Friedman and her co-worker sold upper management on WebEx as the preferred meeting tool based on their past experience with the platform while working for a previous employer.

They described how WebEx provided the clear audio and document-sharing capabilities they needed to ensure flawless meetings. "It was a pretty easy sell especially after some of the flawed meetings that we had previously," Friedman says.

Since the implementation, the issues CureSeq experienced with previous online meeting tools have disappeared. Call quality has improved significantly, meeting set-up times are faster, and document sharing and review are seamless and glitch-free, she says.

"We've had a few instances where folks have said, 'I can hear you so well,'" Friedman adds. "It's the clarity. Calls are very clear and the fact that WebEx doesn't stutter has helped our international callers follow along fairly quickly."

CureSeq now easily shares research and test results with clients

Document sharing has become much less cumbersome, as well. Users can switch easily between different applications, such as PowerPoint or a PDF, to share information, Friedman says. They can select an individual document or presentation from a screen-sharing drop-down in WebEx rather than making the entire desktop visible. This feature allows Friedman and her colleagues to control what is viewed, ensuring privacy for company-confidential information. She also finds the annotation tools useful. "I like the features where you can draw on the slides," she says. "That's really handy to be able to call out different points."



CureSeq also uses WebEx for internal meetings. In some cases, a small group of three to five team members will use only the audio portion of WebEx. Other times, the meeting space is critical to share information. CureSeq team members may be presenting research findings or results of tests they're working on. In these cases, they can share an application or their desktops. It allows the team to have highly interactive meetings that are more engaging than a one-way presentation.

Friedman notes the flexibility and the tools available with the WebEx mobile app. She relates how she joined a meeting from her iPad: "I went to the calendar invite. It automatically opened the mobile app and asked if I wanted to call from my iPad." Participating from her tablet gave her the ability to access other devices while she was listening to the meeting. When key material was presented, she was able to take a snapshot of the slide being shown by holding down the home and power buttons simultaneously. The snapshots were then available in her photo library. She could also make notes about the slide, something that would not have been possible if she had been using her computer.



Online meetings help CureSeq grow its business strategically

As a start-up with fewer than 25 employees, CureSeq is always looking for ways to boost competitiveness.

When the company was launching its services, WebEx gave it the ability to reach numerous sites within a short timeframe. Using online meetings, CureSeq's team was able to gauge interest at various hospitals across a wide geography. From this information, it was able to determine strategically which face-to-face visits would be most productive and consolidate travel to have maximum impact with minimal cost and travel time.

As Friedman notes, "We were able to view the landscape and identify the leads with the most potential—and we didn't waste time on not-so-good leads."

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Reliable online meetings enable a healthier future for CureSeq and its patients

Today, WebEx helps CureSeq’s sales team reach out to health care provider executives around the world to make them aware of the CureSeq services that can help save the lives of cancer patients.

“Being able to schedule meetings on the fly and have it be easy to do is one of the biggest plusses,” says Friedman. “After all of the various platforms that I’ve interacted with, WebEx is definitely the most stable. That is really important when you’re trying to conduct a virtual meeting with critical clients and prospects around the world.”

To learn more about the Cisco solutions in this case study, visit www.webex.com.

Solutions:

WebEx

Interactive presentations

Results

Provides a productive meeting environment for internal and external meetings.

Supports seamless sharing of critical research findings and company capabilities.