



Business Wire



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Laura Sturaitis
Senior Vice President,
Media Services and
Product Strategy
Business Wire

Key benefits

- Facilitates responsive client service
- Enhances corporate reputation for technological innovation
- Permits global training of employees without travel

Business Wire hosts award-winning events for client education with GoToWebinar

Business Wire, a wholly owned subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway, is the global market leader in commercial news distribution. Thousands of member companies and organizations depend on Business Wire to transmit their full-text news releases, regulatory filings, photos and other multimedia content to journalists, financial professionals, investor services, regulatory authorities and the public. Founded in 1961, Business Wire has dual headquarters in San Francisco and New York, with 30 bureaus worldwide.

The challenge: using technology to help clients communicate effectively

As a leader in the news industry, Business Wire takes pride in using the latest technologies to help clients communicate with high impact. With the advent of social networking, blogs and other non-traditional outlets for news, Business Wire has expanded its offerings to include new options, such as embedding video, inserting social media tags and adding search engine optimization features. Unfortunately, clients haven't always fully understood these services, or how they compared to competitors'.

“Although Business Wire has always focused on using technology, the pace of change sometimes left our clients with a lack of understanding of our offerings. We identified a need to demonstrate the many possibilities for enhancing news releases and other content,” said Laura Sturaitis, senior vice president, Media Services and Product Strategy.

Business Wire wanted a solution that would demonstrate the company's adoption of new technologies and enable staff to educate clients on these offerings — many of which involve multimedia.

Implementing GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar

In 2007, Business Wire selected the Citrix® GoToMeeting® tool to remotely train its international workforce. “We got the hang of it right away and really liked it,” Sturaitis said. “The interface is user friendly and the customer service is rapid response. Being able to attend a meeting or make a presentation from your desk is a huge plus. Online meetings also save on travel, while ensuring clients and employees receive regular updates on new offerings.”

Providing the personal touch through virtual meetings and Webinars

Soon, Business Wire expanded its use of GoToMeeting to engage with clients. “Many clients still think of news releases as text only,” said Sturaitis. “By conducting a GoToMeeting session, we can really strut our stuff, demonstrating live how photos, video and social media tools can help tell client stories in vivid and memorable ways.”

Business Wire also finds online meetings an ideal way to provide responsive, personal service. “We treasure our relationships with clients. The personal touch is a point of pride and GoToMeeting really enhances that. If we can’t get in front of a client on a given day, we use GoToMeeting to be together virtually. It lets us support clients whenever they need us, and that builds loyalty.”

It wasn’t long before Business Wire adopted Citrix® GoToWebinar® as a tool for education and outreach. The online service makes it easy to present to and train audiences of up to 1,000 attendees.

“Because we felt really comfortable with online meetings, we created Business Wire University to provide education to employees worldwide,” Sturaitis noted. “Every other week, we feature a product champion or department head from a particular area and invite anyone interested to join the Webinar.” Topics have ranged from a primer on XBRL (extensible business reporting language) to an overview of video annual reports.

“After we presented a few GoToWebinar events, we enhanced the program in two ways: we recorded the presentations and posted the videos to our intranet; and we collected feedback on future topics from attendees. From there, we recruit speakers from across the organization.”

Delivering added value to clients with award-winning educational Webinars

Based on the success of Business Wire University, Sturaitis and her team took the next step — hosting free educational Webinars for clients and prospects using GoToWebinar. This series, targeting professional communicators and covering such topics as Web 2.0, search engine optimization and best practices for press releases, attracted nearly 5,000 attendees in 2008.

The Webinar series won a 2008 Commendation of Merit from the Society for New Communications Research (SNCR). According to Mike Manuel, SNCR Best Practices & Awards committee chairman, “Business Wire’s Webinar series is a great example of the successful and innovative use of new communications solutions and social media practices to enhance communications and relationships.”

“Our Webinar program has become a cornerstone of marketing efforts and serves double duty as employee training and education around the world,” said Sturaitis. “We get a bonus by circulating attendee reports to our account team, resulting in scores of ‘upsells,’ add-ons and new business.” Another benefit is that Webinars take a load off account teams by educating clients directly. “Clients love it too, because they can tune in live or listen to the archived recordings at a more convenient time.”

Today, Business Wire makes constant use of online meetings and Webinars; in just one month in 2008, for example, there were 183 GoToMeeting sessions and 17 GoToWebinar events. Since GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar offer unlimited usage for a flat monthly or annual subscription, the company has no worries about additional fees or overage charges.

The Webinars also provide great news fodder for the company, according to Sturaitis. “They give us something to promote and discuss in news releases and ad campaigns, as well as on Twitter and Facebook. We’ve even reduced the need to hold luncheons and breakfasts — again, lowering hard costs while sustaining steady contact and rapport with clients and prospects.”

Web-based meetings and events have enhanced Business Wire’s reputation as a technology leader. “Not only do we recommend new technology to our clients, we use it ourselves. GoToWebinar was an integral part of winning the award from SNCR last year, which continues to pay dividends for us today.”

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