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IBM Broadens Collaborative Offering

IBM is adding more fuel to its collaboration fire and is mounting an ambitious campaign to unseat Microsoft in both the collaboration and the office productivity spaces. New is IBM Lotus Symphony, a collection of free programs for word processing, spreadsheets, and presentations - complemented by optional, fee-based phone support. The applications are versions of open-source software developed in a consortium called OpenOffice.org. The original code traces its origins to a German company, Star, that was acquired by Sun Microsystems in 1999 and led to StarOffice, an open-source competitor to Microsoft Office marketed by Sun, but not a product we believe had any significant success. Recently IBM formally joined the open source group and dedicated 35 programmers to the project - the OpenOffice.org specification that incorporates the Open Document Format.

Other collaborative offerings include Sametime V8, which we covered a few weeks ago in an extensive article by Brent, Lotus Sametime Unyte, based on the acquisition of WebDialogs, which we also covered, and new versions of Notes, Domino, Quickr, and Connections. IBM is now offering Notes as a service - a direct alternative to internal implementation and support, and a thrust likely to be much more appealing to SMB. This is part of a larger effort to provide software as a service, something that will definitely affect the larger collaboration space as well.

Google Gets Serious About Office

Speaking of software as a service and efforts to unseat Microsoft, Google Docs now supports documents, spreadsheets and presentations. The presentations part is new, and makes Google Docs a genuine office productivity solution. Google Docs is a subset of Google Apps which also includes Gmail, Google Calendar, and a few other bits and pieces. We haven't tried the presentation piece yet, but according to some reviewers the feature set is quite limited, though it does allow you to import PowerPoint files and use Google's web-based collaboration (web conferencing) functions. Presentations can be edited from anywhere, shared with specific individuals or an entire organization, and viewed in presentation mode simultaneously by distributed teams. You can also publish a presentation so colleagues can watch it later. And you can save all your slides as HTML so you can show them on any PC with a browser whether connected to the Internet or not.

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News in Brief

- Polycom has released VSX software V8.7 which adds new capabilities including simplified use in mixed networks (H.323 and SIP switching), quality of service (QoS) enhancements, support for gatekeeper redundancy for mission critical video applications, enhanced remote management, and additional language support. Other features include integration support for the Avaya Video Telephony Solution, Polycom Unified Collaboration for IBM Lotus Sametime and Lotus Notes, and Polycom Unified Collaboration for Microsoft LCS 2005.
- Chicago-based, collaboration-software company inSORS has changed the company name to IOCOM. IOCOM's basic application supports audio, video, and web conferencing.
- Forget Forgent. The company changed its name to Asure Software. Two days before that the company acquired iSarla Inc., a Delaware corporation doing business as iEmployee. iEmployee is a software company that provides on-demand human resources management software and services. The consideration for the Merger is \$10,700,000, at least \$5,600,000 of which is payable in cash and up to \$5,100,000 of which is payable in shares of Forgent common stock.
- Easynet is providing managed video conferencing services with Polycom RPX immersive telepresence suites and HDX video conferencing systems across 12 international operations and to 18 offices for the NDS Group, a leader in digital television technology, majority owned by News Corporation. Easynet will also deliver the solution between BSKyB's customer operations centers in Scotland, and to BSKyB's headquarters in London.
- The US Patent & Trademark Office granted Apple five new patents, one of which is for echo cancellation and is related to Apple's iChat AV video conferencing system. Three patents are iPod design wins which include the titles Dock insert, Electronic Device Holder, and Sleeve.
- Sony UK and videoconferencing distributors Imago and Teleportel announced the launch of the UK's first 3D telepresence solution based on Sony's LCD screens and PCS-HG90 high definition videoconferencing system and display technology from TelePresenceTech.

CSP Summit Set to Launch: 29 October in Boston



Now in its 5th year, the Wainhouse Research Collaboration Service Provider (CSP) Summit will explore how social networks, fixed mobile convergence, and initiatives for unified communications will drive new growth in collaboration & conferencing services. The [CSP Summit](#), which has become the premiere industry insider event for the CSP community, will bring together top industry analysts, carriers, specialty service providers, and technology partners in a one-day intimate and interactive session. Speakers at the conference include analysts from Wainhouse Research and representatives from Avaya, Agile Equity, ConferencePlus, Compunetix, IBM, Glance, Global Crossing, Pactolus, Radisys, ThinkEngine, WebDialogs, & VerizonBusiness. This year's session has been scheduled just one day prior to the Fall VON Boston conference so conference attendees can conveniently attend both conferences. For full details, agenda, and registration see www.wainhouse.com/cspsummit.

Wainhouse Research CSP Summit Logan Airport Hilton, Boston, MA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Keynote: Driving Value through Innovation - The Face of the New CSP ➤ Benefits of SIP Conference Platforms for CSPs ➤ Deploying Custom & Out-of-the-Box Voice Applications at an Extremely Competitive Prices ➤ Achieving Differentiation & Client Loyalty through New CSP Services ➤ Partnership for Innovation ➤ What's up with Collaboration & Conferencing at Google, Yahoo, AOL & Skype? ➤ Dancing with Elephants - How CSPs Can Work with Avaya, Cisco, Mitel, Nortel, IBM, and Microsoft ➤ Rapid Service Creation for Converged TDM/IP or SIP-enabled VoIP networks ➤ Innovation through Unified Communications & Collaboration ➤ Making the Workgroup Collaborative ➤ Service Provider Case Study ➤ Alternatives to WebEx & MS Live Meeting - Can You Go Your Own Way? ➤ Is now the time to sell? - Determining the Best Way & Time to Sell Your CSP ➤ Networking Cocktail Reception

One on One with Tandberg CEO Fredrik Halvorsen



WR recently caught up with Fredrik Halvorsen, TANDBERG's CEO, to chat about the company's recent initiatives to raise awareness of the ability to apply conferencing and collaboration tools to address environmental issues.

WRB: What prompted you to launch www.seegreennow.com?

FH: The biggest challenge in addressing the climate change issue is that individual contributions can seem insignificant in the face of the problem. At Tandberg we wanted to show that every little bit you do can help make an impact. To do this, we are joining the global conversation about the environment and providing tools that help companies see that they can make a difference. On the seegreennow.com site, you can measure your individual carbon footprint as well as your company's, and get tips for reducing it. We hope this site becomes a place for people to get inspired and share stories of their successes.

WRB: Tell us about your manifesto....

FH: The manifesto is a call to action for businesses around the world to do their part to impact climate change. It might be choosing to video instead of making that business trip, or staying home once a week and telecommuting. The important thing is to take personal responsibility and take some action. Nobody is perfect. We certainly aren't and we too are taking steps to become more environmentally friendly in our business operations.

WRB: The videoconferencing, collaboration, and unified communications industry already has tools and solutions that will enable companies to address CO2 emissions. What can the industry do to increase awareness?

FH: You don't need to be a provider of alternative energy or eco-friendly materials to be a green technology. Our industry can help build awareness through the media, business forums, and grants programs. I know many of our alliance partners and channel partners are also interested in this issue. This is not just a TANDBERG issue – this is a chance for the entire industry to bring awareness to a new audience.

We need to emphasize that being green no longer equals expensive. Video stands out among environmentally friendly technologies because it offers an eco-friendly proposition while also benefiting business and the bottom line. By demonstrating that type of ROI, we also raise awareness among the portion of the population that does not have the environment on the top of their agenda.

WRB: Would TANDBERG be interested in seeing an industry coalition formed with the mission to promote use of the existing tools via education and implementation programs for customers?

FH: We would be interested in exploring how this could work. It would make a greater impact than through individual efforts.

There are actually already a lot of incentives provided for telecommuting programs, and programs in place at the U.S. Federal and state and local government levels. I think what we can do is help organizations take advantage of those incentive programs and meet their quotas by making employees and managers feel more comfortable with a telecommuting situation that provides a visual connection.

WRB: Would you be in favor of political action, for example, lobbying for legislation to force the adoption of telecommuting programs? This would be analogous to the CAFE (auto mileage per gallon) laws that exist today. It seems to us that the conferencing industry is one of the few industries that does not have a political arm or lobbying organization. Given today's energy and climate change situation, and our dependence on foreign oil, this lack seems like a huge oversight.

FH: I am in favor of actions that raise the awareness of video’s application for CO2 reduction among the public, business and political decision-makers. As awareness grows, legislators should respond to the call from their constituents for more environmental action. For example, I believe that as awareness grows, videoconferencing should be included on the list of “green” technologies that are applicable for grant programs and additional government incentives in the U.S. and countries around the world.

WRB: What practical tips does TANDBERG offer users trying to understand how to apply conferencing to greenhouse gas reduction?

FH: In our Usage and Adoption program on our Web site we have a number of tools to help internal video champions. Make sure you are committed to the cause for the long term. Make sure your strategy is anchored with key decision makers within your company so that it gets the support and funding it needs. Build a cross-functional team (operations, R&D, facilities, HR, etc.) and a green champion to make sure programs get implemented. Be as consistent as possible or your employees and customers will see right through the “green wash.” Even small actions and practices that run counter to a stated green philosophy can be damaging.

Some practical ideas we’ve seen customers implement: If you have an online booking system for travel, build in the question, “can this meeting be conducted by video?” If you are looking at setting up teleworking arrangements, work with experts such as the Telework Exchange to base your program on best practices.

WRB: Traditionally, the argument that conferencing and collaboration reduces travel was never a sufficient driver to help the industry grow exponentially. What’s to prevent this new “argument,” that conferencing can be a part of a green program, from becoming just another marketing slogan that fails to translate into action? (In other words, what other actionable things can the industry do that aren’t just hype?)

FH: Most importantly, we as an industry should not promote green just to drive growth. Promoting green practices is a corporate social responsibility for all organizations, regardless of economic motive. Our industry has stumbled upon great solutions – in the form of videoconferencing, telepresence, and mobile solutions – to help organizations become greener while not hurting profitability. This does not, however, free our industry from taking a hard look in the mirror to make sure our internal practices and processes are as environmentally friendly as possible. To make sure ‘green’ becomes more than a marketing slogan is going to take time, persistence, and willingness to do what is right. Let’s start demonstrating by doing.

Conferencing & Collaboration <u>Event Calendar</u>	
WHEN & WHERE	WHAT & WHO
Sept 25-27, Hot Springs, AR (USA)	Arkansas Distance Learning Assoc. Annual Conf
October 14-17, Anaheim, CA	2007 PUG Annual Conference
October 29, Boston, MA USA	Wainhouse Research CSP Summit
October 29, Boston, MA USA	IMTC Forum at VON
8-10 April, 2008, Berlin, Germany	Wainhouse Research Collaboration Summit
July 16-18, 2008, Boston, MA	Wainhouse Research Collaboration Summit

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