

Chocolate Maker Sees Sweet Spot in Improved Collaboration



Cisco technologies help Ferrero improve teamwork and productivity while cutting costs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Ferrero

Industry: Food

Location: Germany

Number of Employees: 22,850

Challenge

- Improve internal and external collaboration
- Reduce travel costs
- Support mobility

Solution

- Cisco Collaboration applications, including Cisco Jabber and Cisco WebEx
- Cisco network foundation
- Cisco FlexPod data center infrastructure
- Cisco Design Services
- Cisco Capital financing

Results

- Decreased IT system deployment times significantly
- Increased staff productivity while cutting operational expenditures
- Reduced capital expenditure

Challenge

Ferrero is known the world over for its luxury chocolates, which include renowned brands such as Ferrero Rocher, Raffaello, and Mon Chéri. The Italian company, which has operations across 46 countries, including 21 production sites, also commercializes a number of other top-selling confectionary and chocolate products through brands such as Kinder, Nutella, and Tic Tac. It's success is closely linked to its focus on quality. For example, it suspended praline product shipments in the height of summer to safeguard their freshness. A core challenge is to achieve sustainable growth without compromising its focus on quality.

From an IT perspective, this means delivering a flexible, scalable infrastructure to give the greatest possible support to the worldwide Ferrero workforce, which is expanding to include manufacturing centers in locations such as Brazil and India. Perhaps nowhere is this infrastructure support more important than in Germany, which, in addition to being a major market for the company, is the site of its largest manufacturing facility and home to around 3600 employees spread across two main locations and 20 remote offices.

As the German business has grown, Ferrero management has increasingly seen IT collaboration tools as a way to improve worker efficiency, offset travel costs, and support moves toward a more mobile workforce.

Solution

Ferrero has been rolling out a number of infrastructure developments to support collaboration in Germany and worldwide since 2008, when it implemented a Cisco® network serving around 2000 users in Germany and 60,000 globally. The architecture incorporates Cisco Catalyst® 6509, 3750-X, and 2960 Series Switches plus Cisco 8500 and 5500 Series Wireless Controllers, along with Cisco Aironet® 2600, 1200, and 1140 Series Access Points.



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Dr. Hans Altmann
Manager IT Infrastructure
Ferrero

Regarding the choice of vendor, Martin Flegenheimer, IT director for Middle and Eastern Europe at Ferrero, says: “Cisco is a market leader, and we always adopt industry-standard technologies. It was product reliability that led us to choose Cisco. The network is the basis for all our IT business.” After improving its infrastructure, the company began introducing Cisco WebEx® to enable web conferencing and desktop sharing among its employees globally.

The German IT team also introduced FlexPod, a predesigned and prevalidated base data center configuration built on Cisco Unified Computing System™ (Cisco UCS®), Cisco Nexus® data center switches, and NetApp FAS storage components. Specifically, FlexPod uses Cisco Nexus 5000 Series Switches and Nexus 2000 Series Fabric Extenders, along with Cisco UCS B440 M2 High-Performance Blade Servers, which Ferrero uses in addition to a limited number of Cisco UCS C220 M3 Rack Servers. The company also has a Citrix XenServer management suite and uses VMware for virtualization.

The data center is the foundation for the Ferrero SAP-based enterprise resource planning software suite, which, along with Cisco Collaboration technologies and a range of Microsoft applications, is delivered network-wide via Citrix.

In Germany, Ferrero also deployed Cisco Unified Communications Manager version 9.1, an on-premises IP telephony call processing platform, to fall into line with other company locations that had begun to use the technology. That was augmented with the addition of 35 Cisco TelePresence® EX90, C60, and C40 endpoints and Cisco Jabber™, which lets workers access presence, instant messaging, voice, video, voice messaging, desktop sharing, and conferencing. The Jabber deployment includes 2000 laptops and desktop PCs. In the current phase mobility features are mainly used in two cases: for home office use and for international travel, mainly in other Ferrero locations. Jabber on Apple iPads and iPhones is currently under evaluation.

“As we already had Cisco Unified Communications Manager and WebEx in place, we chose Cisco TelePresence and Jabber because of their perfect integration with our existing landscape,” says Hans Altmann, manager IT Infrastructure at Ferrero. Finally, for customer call handling, Ferrero uses a Cisco Unified Contact Center Enterprise version 8.5 system.

In the design and pre-sales phase Cisco provided services for designing and sizing the different solutions. This was followed by proof of concept, which gave Ferrero the opportunity to efficiently define an optimized architecture.

Most of the acquisitions have been funded with Cisco Capital® financing, which helped create an attractive on-demand, flat-rate package, including a server capacity buffer. “The on-demand model was very compelling,” Flegenheimer says. “We pay a fixed price for the Cisco UCS servers we use and can take advantage of the buffer to very quickly add new blades and capacity whenever required.”

Cisco Capital also helped simplify contract administration by incorporating NetApp storage components within one single master lease agreement. “We got attractive lease rates, which suited us because we want to spend our money on our core business and international growth,” adds Flegenheimer.

Results

Ferrero is very happy with its Cisco Collaboration platform. Cisco Unified Communications Manager serves as a robust foundation for IP telephony. WebEx, meanwhile, is used widely around the business and is even favored by the HR department to carry out remote interviews for interns and potential staff members.

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As well as its instant messaging and presence features, Cisco Jabber provides a unified workspace that is fully integrated with technologies such as Microsoft Outlook and Cisco TelePresence video conferencing.

“When it comes to video on Jabber,” says Altmann, “the main advantage is flexibility and speed. The possibility for users, ad hoc, to initiate a video communication either from Jabber to Jabber or from Jabber to Cisco TelePresence systems is really a big advantage, because people avoid the need to book a room or schedule a videoconference in advance.”

This flexibility is of particular importance to the international teams powering the company’s growth, for whom regular cross-border communication and information sharing is essential. Decision makers requiring a higher-quality meeting experience, meanwhile, have the option of using Cisco TelePresence. All of this is underpinned by a virtualized data center, courtesy of FlexPod, offering ease of management and the ability to scale server capacity up and down quickly.

The German IT department has been able to grow its server estate four-fold in the last five years without having to take on new full-time employees.

Next Steps

A consequence of the overall value of Cisco technologies for Ferrero is that implementation is now built into the company’s expansion plans. “The first thing we do in a new site is implement network connectivity and videoconferencing systems,” says Flegenheimer, “and we’re hoping to extend the use of Cisco collaboration tools worldwide while building a FlexPod-based private cloud.”



For More Information

To learn more about the Cisco architectures and solutions featured in this case study, go to:

www.cisco.com/go/collaboration

www.cisco.com/go/flexpod

www.cisco.com/go/borderless

www.cisco.com/go/services

www.ciscocapital.com/emea



Product List

Collaboration

- Cisco Unified Communications Manager version 9.1
- Cisco Unified Contact Center Enterprise version 8.5
- Cisco WebEx
- Cisco Jabber for Windows, iPad, and iPhone
- Cisco TelePresence System EX90
- Cisco TelePresence Codec C60
- Cisco TelePresence Codec C40

Borderless Networks

- Cisco Catalyst 2960, 3750-X, and 2960 Series Switches
- Cisco 5500 and 8500 Series Wireless Controllers
- Cisco Aironet 1140, 1200, and 2600 Series Access Points

Data Center Solutions

- FlexPod
 - Cisco UCS B440 M2 Blade Servers
 - VMware, Citrix XenServer
 - NetApp FAS Series storage
- Cisco UCS C220 M3 Rack Servers

Routing and Switching

- Cisco Nexus 5000 Series Switches
- Cisco Nexus 2000 Series Fabric Extenders

Applications

- SAP
- Microsoft Outlook
- Microsoft Exchange

Cisco Services

- Pre-sales
- Architectural design
- Proof of Concept

Cisco Capital Finance Solution



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