



Law Firm

Daily Use

- Inter-office collaboration
- Client contact
- Interviews
- Mergers & Acquisitions

Solution

- Polycom® HDX™ 7000 and HDX 9004 room telepresence solutions
- Riverbed Steelhead Appliance models: 250M, 250H, 550M, 550H, 20050H

Results and Benefits

- Improved communication during M&A process resulting in shortened timeline and smoother transition
- A savings of more than \$30,000 in annual travel expenses and productivity loss for a single attorney
- Ability to defer more than \$130,000 from reduced need for upgrades and additional services
- Significant energy cost savings due to server reduction
- More frequent communication resulting in improved client relations

Partner

- Riverbed
www.riverbed.com

Polycom Video with Riverbed QoS Boosts Productivity for Geographically Dispersed Law Firm Lathrop & Gage LLP

A full-service law firm, Lathrop & Gage LLP has 300 attorneys in offices across the country. As the oldest law firm west of the Mississippi River, it boasts a long tradition of success and remains firmly committed to its mission of helping its clients achieve their goals and solve their problems.

A Growing Organization

Lathrop & Gage was founded in 1873 in Kansas City and today comprises offices in 11 cities across the United States from Los Angeles to New York.

One of the firm's competitive differentiators is the integrated practice group model it has established across its 11 office locations. To further enable this model and provide clients with the best customer service, the Lathrop & Gage IT team was tasked with finding a way to facilitate seamless collaboration among the offices.

"Lathrop & Gage has grown over the years through mergers and acquisitions," explains Ben Weinberger, CIO of Lathrop & Gage. "That has positioned the firm well to address the needs of our clients on a very local level, but at the same time, it's created a communications challenge. We identified interactive video conferencing as one of the best ways to connect our geographically dispersed lawyers face-to-face and in real time."

Lathrop & Gage hosts over 300 meetings each month in their Kansas City conference center, and 25 percent of those meetings involve video conferencing. That volume of activity results in over 900 hours of video conferencing each year.

Weinberger and his IT team rolled out Polycom room telepresence solutions, including Polycom® HDX™ 7000 and HDX 9004 systems coupled with Riverbed Technology wide area network optimization devices at each of the firm's 11 offices; the systems are being used extensively for interoffice collaboration, client meetings, and remote interviewing. In addition, Weinberger sees the video conferencing network as key to facilitating the firm's mission moving forward.

Key to Lathrop & Gage's selection of Polycom was Polycom's reputation in the industry as an established leader in telepresence, video and voice technology. In addition, Lathrop & Gage chose Polycom because they

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offer a complete portfolio of HD solutions from endpoints to infrastructure and are known for their level of quality.

The Polycom and Riverbed Technology deployments were components of the revamping of the firm’s IT infrastructure to support the redesign of its conferencing center to increase its size and add video capability. The switch from ISDN to IP was also made at the same time.

“When we switched to IP, we wanted to ensure that bandwidth was guaranteed for our video conferencing applications in order to provide the highest quality conferences,” says Weinberger. “That was a key factor in our selection of Riverbed Technology for bandwidth optimization in support of our wide area network. And since Polycom solutions are open-standards-based, we had no problem integrating the two technologies and achieving our goal of delivering the highest quality video communications experience.”

Riverbed Technology is the IT infrastructure performance company for networks, applications, and storage. Its line of optimization solutions frees businesses from common IT constraints while giving them an order-of-magnitude increase in the performance and value of their existing infrastructure and mission-critical applications. For Lathrop & Gage, the Riverbed solution identifies network traffic and gives priority to video conferencing packets to provide adequate bandwidth and ensure high-quality picture and sound.

“By deploying the Riverbed devices, we freed-up bandwidth to enable video conferencing while also setting quality of service guarantees,” says Weinberger. “The combination of Polycom’s industry-leading video solutions and bandwidth optimization from Riverbed Technology has created an ideal solution and a seamless experience for our end users.”

Getting Results

The integration of the Polycom and Riverbed solutions is having an impact on the Lathrop & Gage bottom line. As expected, the firm has made significant progress in furthering the integration of its practice groups by introducing video conferencing as a collaboration tool. An unexpected but welcome benefit has been the travel cost savings the video solution has facilitated.

Lathrop and Gage estimates, the annual savings in travel expenses due to video conferencing, more than pays for the cost of the technology investment. For example, by utilizing video conferencing technology to conduct a meeting with a New York client, a Kansas City attorney can save over \$1500 in travel expenses and productivity loss. The use of video conferencing technology instead of monthly travel to clients could represent a savings of more than \$30,000 in annual travel expenses and productivity loss for a single attorney.

“The firm is always interested in serving our clients in as cost-effective a manner as possible, and video conferencing is a tool for that,” says Weinberger. “We’re seeing a much greater reliance on video conferencing to avoid travel when we can.”

In addition, client relations have been positively impacted as video allows for more frequent face-to-face contact.

The Riverbed solution has contributed significantly to both cost and efficiency savings for the firm. Not only has the firm saved money by reducing bandwidth requirements, but it has been able to reduce the number of both computers and servers required to run the network as well as save on software license and maintenance costs. “Annually, we have been able to defer \$60,000 in bandwidth upgrades and \$70,000 by being able to centralize our file and application servers,” explained Weinberger. “We are also saving on energy costs by reducing the amount of servers we are running at our offices by using the Riverbed Services Platform. We estimate we are saving \$4,800 annually. The ROI on our Riverbed Steelhead deployment was 12 months.”

Next Up on the Docket

“There is a significant and growing global aspect to our business and I see video conferencing becoming integral to servicing our clients and their interests in other countries in a timely and cost-effective manner,” says Weinberger. As Lathrop & Gage continues to grow in accordance with its strategic plan, video conferencing is expected to improve the firm’s agility during that growth.

Learn More

Visit www.polycom.com to find out more about how Polycom solutions can benefit your organization.

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