



## Pohjolan Voima has transferred its meetings to the Web

Pohjolan Voima, a group of companies operating in the energy sector, has decided to cap its travel costs and hold as many internal meetings as possible virtually in its information network. The solution, provided by Microsoft, has been in use for about one year now and has been deemed effective, and it has saved money too.

Pohjolan Voima operates in 17 cities in Finland and has approximately 1,500 employees. The various groups making up the organisation are often geographically scattered, too, and previously it was difficult to arrange meetings and they often involved travelling. The company set out to find an effective Web meeting solution that would be easy to implement and chose Microsoft's Office Communications Server solution, Microsoft Live Meeting, provided by Atea.

'It was easy to combine Microsoft's Live Meeting service with the Microsoft products we were already using. Atea had experience of a similar production environment, the project plan was at a professional level, and the offer was competitive,' says Pekka Törmänen, the chief information officer of Pohjolan Voima. 'Now some of the group's internal meetings can be arranged easily from workstations, and desk views, speech, and live images can be shared through them. Live Meeting is integrated with the e-mail program Outlook, and it is easy to start a meeting,' Törmänen continues.

In addition to Live Meeting, the company implemented Microsoft Office Communications Server, OCS, a communication solution that enables genuinely real-time communications and shows presence information to other users.

### Concrete savings

Microsoft's Live Meeting and Office Communicator have been installed for about 500 people at Pohjolan Voima, who have been using them for almost one year now. The meeting solution is in active use, but Törmänen estimates that so far only about one third of the people in the organisation are active users of the instant messenger. He says: 'We have studied the issue and found that people between 20 and 30 years old are the most active users, while those over 50 use the new technology least of all.'

Törmänen says that Office Communicator has significantly reduced the number of e-mail messages among the active users. He explains: 'This medium is very handy and quick, and one can also see whether the person one is trying to reach is present and can respond, which is not the case when one is sending e-mail.'

The company has calculated that a team with four members will save the equivalent of approximately 15,000 euros per year during the trial period, thanks to being able to hold meetings via the Web. In addition to financial savings, there is less strain on the environment, because people travel less.

The company aims to expand use of the solution: 'Once we learn this new communication method and culture properly in our own organisation, we intend to start using Web negotiations with some external parties who use the same technology.'

## Integration of communication methods – removing boundaries between channels

Sales Manager Jouni Turunen, who is responsible for communication solutions at Atea, says that there is now strong interest in modern communication solutions. He explains: 'The methods of working have changed, and work is no longer bound to time or place. This poses challenges for communications and for communication media. Modern solutions can be used to send and receive messages effectively and when it is most suitable. Web meetings are a fact of life nowadays, not a thing of the future anymore. They bring huge cost savings, particularly in organisations that are geographically dispersed.'

'Communication solutions must be seen as a larger entity that is closely connected to other information technology services. Cost-effective solutions in the long term cannot be achieved through improvement of just one communication solution; they require integration of all methods of communication, be they images, sounds, or distribution of information in electronic form. The key is to remove the obstacles between different communications channels and to get access to information, regardless of the channel,' he continues.

**Microsoft®**  
**GOLD CERTIFIED**

*Partner*

### Microsoft products utilised

Windows Server 2003  
Active Directory  
Exchange 2003  
Office Communication Server 2007  
Communicator 2007  
Outlook 2003/2007  
Live Meeting as a part of the  
Communication Server solution

## Pohjolan Voima

Pohjolan Voima is a privately owned group of companies in the energy sector that produces and supplies both electricity and heat for its shareholders in Finland. The company's core objective is to supply its shareholders with competitively priced energy that has been produced by environmentally acceptable means. Over the last decade, Pohjolan Voima has grown to become the largest investor in power plants in the Nordic region. In Finland, Pohjolan Voima produces and purchases approximately 25 per cent of all electricity consumed. The energy is obtained from water, uranium, timber, peat, carbon, gas, wind, and field biomass.