

Case Study Northumbrian Water Group



Northumbrian Water Group drives success with StarLeaf, avsnet and Skype for Business

A sense of community is deeply rooted in the values of Northumbrian Water Group (NWG), an organisation that supplies excellent quality tap water to 4.5 million people. It's a vast organisation, which operates from a high number of locations across the UK. Locations can be as diverse as a remote office, a water pumping station, or a fantastic reservoir and leisure site that is used by many as a family holiday destination. It's this diversity, and the sheer number of people involved in serving NWG's customers in the North East and South East of England, which presents the business with a communications challenge.

So, how does such a widely distributed business keep its people fully connected and in touch? NWG has mostly addressed part of this challenge by choosing Microsoft Skype for Business as its unified communications platform. At the very least, employees can message, call and video each other from their desktops. But there was a gap connecting to legacy video conferencing systems. They needed to also easily offer remote workers a straight forward and effective way to communicate with their colleagues via video in key meeting rooms.

Here at NWG we believe that involving our people is vital to our success and video conferencing is a productive form of communication. Therefore, it's key that our people remain connected and that no one is isolated from a communications point of view.

Christopher Wrightson
IS Service and Support Manager
Northumbrian Water Group

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As an organisation with a commitment to video communications and collaboration, it is no surprise that NWG is a long time user of video conferencing meeting room systems.

“Fortunately, Skype for Business was a welcome catalyst for change. The fact that our existing meeting room systems couldn’t connect to Skype desktops gave us the opportunity to review our requirements and plan for a new, simple video solution.

We were in the early stages of our research into this area when we were introduced to StarLeaf and avsnet. StarLeaf’s product fits the bill as it works directly with Skype for Business. StarLeaf has one user interface, regardless of platform. This removes a lot of the frustration and complexities we had previously been dealing with.



It soon became clear that StarLeaf had much more to offer. Its OpenCloud, cloud optimised meeting room systems and software, together with conferencing, calling and endpoint subscription services appeared to solve all of our video communications needs. It also gave us the ability to deploy StarLeaf Breeze, the desktop version, to much of our laptop estate,” said Christopher Wrightson, IS Service and Support Manager at Northumbrian Water Group.

NWG employs more than 3,200 people, and according to Wrightson, a large proportion of the workforce have access to video communication, either with Skype for Business or via StarLeaf, from desktops, mobile devices or while in meeting rooms.

“We use the right tool at the right time and our people can easily switch between Skype at the desktop and StarLeaf’s software client Breeze, when they need to.

It’s remarkable how much we use StarLeaf’s cloud for scheduled team meetings, and ad-hoc video calling. At the moment we spend 30,000 minutes a month in StarLeaf video calls and I can only see this usage growing. Also, I can’t emphasise enough how beneficial it is to have one easy consistent experience – which is what StarLeaf delivers across all of its systems.”

To enable interoperable video conferencing and calling between Skype for Business desktops, and remote workers and meeting rooms, NWG has deployed over 30 StarLeaf GT Minis and has widely distributed the StarLeaf Breeze software client with avsnet’s support.

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About avsnet

Established in 2005, avsnet is a communication and collaboration solutions provider unlike any other. It has an outstanding track record of delivering immediate, sustainable business improvement to organisations of every size and sector.

Its extensive technical knowledge underpins a broad portfolio. This includes visual communications, unified communications, collaboration solutions and an unrivalled understanding of the corporate network. avsnet only recommends best-in-class technology to deliver the benefits you expect.

From managed services and implementation services, to flexible consumption models and usage and adoption programmes, its expert team will identify the optimal solution for your business.



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