TERACAI®

Insurance and risk management firm unlocks full potential of its UC and videoconferencing investments

> "TERACAI takes the time to understand our business problems… *so they can truly help us out—not only short-term, but long-term.*"
>
> **- Bob Nosik, Director of Business Support Operations, OneGroup**

CHALLENGES

Despite only being known as OneGroup since 2014, the company's roots go back more than 100 years. In 2015, OneGroup and its parent company, Oneida Financial Corp (ONFC), were acquired by Community Bank, N.A., expanding OneGroup's already substantial portfolio with complementary services, including wealth management, benefit administration, actuarial and pension services, retirement plan services and trust services.

Following the acquisition, OneGroup had more than a dozen offices throughout the Northeast, which now needed to regularly communicate and collaborate with one another. In an attempt to unify its phone and videoconferencing systems, the company purchased Cisco Unified Communications Manager (Unified CM) and Cisco TelePresence videoconferencing systems from a value-added reseller (VAR) along with a two-year service contract.

As time went on, however, OneGroup employees and IT staff became frustrated with the technology and lack of support, and they reached out to TERACAI for a second opinion. "The communications between video conferencing, keeping all the offices together, the phones, pretty much anything dealing with communications were issues that we were having," recalls Bob Nosik, director of business support operations at OneGroup.

After consulting with the client and assessing its technology landscape and business challenges, TERACAI uncovered three areas requiring immediate attention:

1. Training. "Although OneGroup had the latest Cisco phones and videoconferencing equipment, the previous VAR never provided any training on how to use the systems, so users were left to figure things out on their own," says David Hasfurter, senior systems engineer at TERACAI.

ORGANIZATION

Name:	**OneGroup**
Location:	**Syracuse, N.Y.**
Industry:	**Risk Management and Insurance**
Employees:	**170+**
Website:	**www.onegroup.com**

CHALLENGES

- OneGroup expanded its office locations throughout central and downstate New York and Pennsylvania over the past few years and the majority of its 17 locations were added within the past two years, following an acquisition by Community Bank, N.A.
- Despite purchasing Cisco Unified Communications Manager (Unified CM) and Cisco TelePresence videoconferencing systems, a lack of training and VAR support combined with poor technology configuration and an incomplete implementation led to user frustrations and underutilization of the technology.
- One of the primary frustrations was that the firm was unable to conduct video sessions with outside customers; it could only do internal site-to-site videoconferencing.

SOLUTION

- Cisco WebEx Cloud
- Videoconferencing codec replacement
- Updates to UC system internal naming convention
- Staff trained on TelePresence

OUTCOMES

- Able to conduct videoconferencing sessions with outside customers
- Increase in videoconferencing usage

2. Poor technology configuration. "The telepresence equipment was configured in such a way that it required several manual steps to set up a video session, making it difficult and frustrating to use and ultimately leading to its underutilization," says Hasfurter. "Plus, the previous VAR didn't add WebEx to the system, so OneGroup was restricted to only using the system for internal, branch-to-branch videoconferences."

3. Confusing system naming conventions. Although the previous VAR implemented the technology, basic troubleshooting tasks, such as system reboots, were OneGroup's responsibility. "Instead of using a meaningful naming convention for each conference room, such as 'Schenectady' office, the previous VAR used a generic 1 to 16 naming system," says Hasfurter. "When a OneGroup IT person received an alert that 'site 10' was down, it was a lengthy process to determine which location was actually having the issue."

≋ SOLUTION

Though still under contract with the previous VAR, OneGroup hired TERACAI to resolve its UC and videoconferencing problems. Several members of TERACAI's engineering team, led by Hasfurter, tackled the problems, starting with the TelePresence configuration. "We implemented a new codec that eliminated several manual steps from the setup process and simplified user training," Hasfurter says. "We also installed WebEx Cloud, which enabled OneGroup to conduct videoconferencing sessions with outside customers—even if the customers were using a different videoconferencing platform."

To make the client's phone and video systems easier to manage, TERACAI replaced the numeric naming system with a more intuitive one based on each branch's location. "We also implemented Cisco video phones for executives who did a lot of one-to-one video calls that didn't require the use of a conference room and large video screen," says Hasfurter.

> *"We found out really quickly that we could trust them," says Nosik. "They did a great job for us. We pretty much rely on them strictly now to help us out with our phones."*

"TERACAI has been able to come in and uncover some mysteries and things like that from the original install, and help us learn," says Dani Goss, business support and events manager at OneGroup. "They showed us how to train our people internally and get things rolling here."

≋ OUTCOMES

After completing the technology implementations, configuration updates and employee training, OneGroup saw an immediate improvement in its call and videoconferencing usage and user experience. "Technology is a great thing, but you've got to get people comfortable with it," says Nosik. "They've interviewed many of our employees to do that proactive approach to help us look at our issues. Some of those things are planned to be rolled out in the future, but they take the time to understand our problems so they can help us out, figure them out, not only short-term, but long-term."

This proactive approach has led TERACAI to be considered part of the team at OneGroup. "We definitely consider TERACAI to be more than a vendor—they're an extension of our team," says Goss. "That's made my job so much easier that I'm not struggling and I have a resource that I can ask questions to."

"Our ongoing work with TERACAI is going on today and will continue for a long time," says Nosik. "We envision this as a long-term relationship."