



How Advocate Consulting Stays on Top with Top-Notch, All-in-One Virtual Collaboration Technology





HOW ADVOCATE CONSULTING EMBRACES ALL-IN-ONE VIRTUAL COLLABORATION TECHNOLOGY



For over 12 years, Advocate Consulting transformed the way companies use communications and technology to accelerate business. The IT consulting and managed services firm first gained rapid recognition as the go-to group of experts for solving technical, financial, and operational business challenges as networks for voice, data, and the Internet grew more complex and expensive.

Today, Advocate Consulting continues to drive innovation for their clients with cutting edge strategy and unparalleled execution—specifically in the areas of cloud and network connectivity solutions..

Key Takeaway

With the pace of change that characterizes technology and the marketplace today, it's never been more important for businesses to be nimble and re-strategize to seize critical opportunities on a moment's notice. Of course, this in turn necessitates a comprehensive strategy for enabling people, aligning process and leveraging an integrated suite of robust technology to connect and collaborate—from anywhere, at any time.



DID YOU KNOW:



- 2.1 billion people will have smart phones by 2017.
- 14 billion global devices will connect to networks in 2015.
- 35 billion terabytes of data will be stored in the cloud by 2020.

Source: Advocate Consulting

Advocate Consulting knew it was critical for its business to be ready to surf this tidal wave of changes over the next few years. Is yours?

But as Advocate Consulting can attest, staying on top can be challenging. With clients and employees dispersed across the U.S. and internationally, the team struggled to consistently drive business innovation and productivity. Collaboration suffered because it was unrealistic and cost-prohibitive to always travel and meet with clients and virtual teams face-to-face. Unfortunately, their web conferencing solution could not keep up with customer demands.

Building Mutual Trust

To be lucrative, virtual collaboration depends on mutual trust and effective communication. But Advocate Consulting struggled to overcome its communications challenges - hindering the firm from realizing maximum impact. Why? Because even when their undependable audio conferencing tool worked, the team was still limited to communicating without nonverbal cues—which comprise at least HALF of effective communication!

Source: UCLA Research

For starters, the technology wasn't browser-friendly, and costs were high and unpredictable. To make matters worse, the company frequently experienced a host of technical issues, such as bad audio quality.

So what does a group of people dedicated to transforming business with technology do when their own communications technology is insufficient? This is exactly the question that Advocate Consulting posed to PGI in 2011.

Today, the company uses two "all-in-one" PGI collaboration tools—iMeet® and GlobalMeet®—to connect with internal and external constituents around the globe. Here are the top five ways that these tools have helped Advocate Consulting transform its communication pain into dramatic gains for both itself and its clients.

1. A profitable, long-standing partnership based on trust

When Advocate Consulting engaged with PGI to discuss the possibility of a reliable, cost-effective, all-in-one virtual collaboration tool, it wasn't for the first time. In fact, PGI was and still is an Advocate customer. Furthermore, Advocate Consulting had used PGI's audio conferencing tools for over five years. So, when the company wanted to upgrade to one platform and provider for all of its audio, web and video conferencing needs, the firm was happy to approach a partner that it already trusted—for predictable costs, quality customer service and a reliable product promise.

2. One platform and provider for every audio, web, and video conferencing need

The company knew that staying on top requires exceptional virtual communication tools that augment



collaboration, not impair it. Whereas the web conferencing tool that Advocate Consulting had used before suffered poor audio connections, the quality of PGI's tools are always crystal clear. Advocate Consulting appreciates this enterprise quality audio, and cites their ability to instantly share documents and screens in such an intuitive interface as a strategic business booster—particularly because it's easy to invite guests (for free) and join meetings from their Outlook toolbar. The tools' Auto Connect features are also extremely easy to use.



"When it comes to technology I've always believed it should be about the work we do, not the tool we are using to get the work done," says Paul Shiman, Advocate Consulting's VP of Sales & Marketing. "GlobalMeet just works."

What's more, the company no longer has to use different tools from different providers—with different features, functionality, and user interfaces—for different kinds of virtual meetings. They now regard such an idea as unnecessarily complicated. Their internal teams use iMeet to host meetings like bi-weekly business reviews, and GlobalMeet to provide a rich customer experience to clients worldwide.

3. Rapid deployment, implementation, and training

Advocate Consulting knew they needed a new solution for virtual communication to save time and money, and improve productivity over the long term. Still, VP of Sales & Marketing, Paul Shiman recalls the company was hesitant to make a change without 100% confidence that the new tool would quickly deliver quantifiable ROI.

But Paul soon found that he didn't need to worry. PGI not only offered quick deployment and seamless implementation. It also provided personalized training and ongoing end user support. Both PC and Mac users enjoy the same high quality user experience because neither iMeet nor GlobalMeet require software downloads.

4. Lower costs for tools and travel

As mentioned, maintaining predictable costs was one of Advocate Consulting's chief priorities for its new collaboration tools. And in this area, says Paul, PGI has over-delivered—thanks to its license model that offers audio and softphone minutes for a reduced, predictable cost. Today, the company has significantly lowered its communications expenses and knows its conferencing bill in advance. It's also saved valuable time and money on travel.



Advocate Consulting's choice to enable virtual employees with quality communication tools shows its dedication to its team—and its cutting edge business acumen. Research shows that the average remote worker, when empowered with the right tools and management, is more engaged with and committed to work than in-house employees. These employees also rate their leaders higher.

Sources: Harvard Business Review, Bureau of Labor Statistics

5. More meaningful collaboration with customers and colleagues—from anywhere, any time

Creating and persuasively communicating ideas at any time is crucial to succeed in today's global marketplace.



For this reason, Paul praises GlobalMeet and iMeet for their ability to empower his team to host effective conversations that lead to rich collaboration with its global clientele and remote workers who don't punch in at the office.

Paul also appreciates the tools' Connect Me and Auto Connect mobile applications. He says they are crucial to Advocate's competitive success because they allow meeting participants to connect anywhere, any time from their mobile devices. This is especially critical, considering that Advocate's employees and clients access meetings on the go at least 50% of the time.

Sky-High and Soaring

While traditional best practice says companies must connect in person with prospects if they hope to close new business, Advocate Consulting can attest otherwise. Simply by using iMeet and GlobalMeet to meet face-to-face online, the company initiated and closed a sale with a major airline in Dallas.

Not one employee met with the client in-person until after the deal was complete. Now that's taking it to the next level!

Advocate Consulting's Success

Challenge

With clients and employees dispersed across the U.S. and internationally, Advocate Consulting needed to find a cost efficient and effective way to communicate with team members and customers.

Solution

Advocate Consulting turned to PGI's iMeet and GlobalMeet collaboration tools to connect with internal and external constituents around the globe and lower their collaboration and travel spend.

Results

Advocate Consulting has been able to make more meaningful connections with the help of iMeet and GlobalMeet. In fact, Advocate Consulting initiated and closed a deal with a major airline in Dallas – all without a physical meeting.

ABOUT PGI

PGi has been a global leader in virtual meetings for 20 years. PGI's cloud-based solutions deliver multi-point, real-time virtual collaboration using video, voice and file sharing technologies. PGI solutions are available via desktops, tablets or mobile devices, helping businesses worldwide be more productive, mobile and green. PGI has a global presence in 25 countries and an established base of more than 40,000 enterprise customers, including 75% of the Fortune 100. In the last five years, PGI has hosted nearly one billion people from 137 countries in over 200 million meetings. For more information, visit PGI at www.pgi.com.



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