

# VIDEO MAXIMISES INTERPRETERLINE'S ABILITY, TIME AND WORTH



## Video Boosts InterpreterLine's Workforce Ability to Fulfill Growing Demand for Language Skills

### MAXIMISING THE WORKFORCE TO SERVE GROWING COMMUNITY NEEDS

InterpreterLine is an Australian interpreting service company which successfully provides telephone-based interpretation to a cross section of industries, including government, healthcare, education, justice, disability services and not-for-profit organisations. Over the past five years, the company has grown substantially and now employs over 2,000 interpreters and translators who provide services in more than 100 languages and dialects as well as Auslan support for the deaf community.

The company's telephone-based interpreting business has undergone steady growth. The sheer increase in demand for the organisation's services and the country's shortage of qualified interpreters has forced InterpreterLine to review how its service is delivered. The potential opportunity was to introduce new technology to maximise the time and skills of their workforce.

"Over time we noticed that while travel reduces the number of jobs an interpreter can be available for each day, last-minute bookings for high demand languages were increasingly difficult to assign owing to the number of jobs any one interpreter can handle in a typical eight hour day. Moreover, as interpreters' travel expenses are charged to the client, regardless of the job duration, the overall service costs for clients in rural and regional locations can rise exponentially with the distance incurred," says Ismail Akinci, Chief Executive Officer of InterpreterLine.

To solve its considerable business challenges, InterpreterLine turned to reliable high-quality video conferencing as an enabler for connecting the company's interpreters to any client, irrespective of time and location or network infrastructure.

The anticipated benefits included the company's ability to service more clients at a cheaper rate while providing a faster turnaround for the services offered. It also enabled the saving of precious time for interpreters due to lengthy travel trips to rural and regional areas.

"Following a comprehensive market review, we chose the TANDBERG solution for our video conferencing requirements. TANDBERG is a market leader and provides end-to-end management for video conferencing end points and infrastructure. It is also very intuitive,

### BUSINESS ISSUES

InterpreterLine wanted to introduce a video conferencing service to expand its business nationwide, make better use of their interpreter's time and reduce costs for clients on limited budgets by providing better and more efficient services. The challenge was to find an all-in-one system.

### SOLUTION

The company introduced 12 TANDBERG all-in-one video conferencing desk based systems, as well as the TANDBERG Management Suite to manage its entire video conferencing network. More recently, it has deployed TANDBERG PC high definition video conferencing for mobile workers and for remote clients.

### RESULTS

Through more efficient use of interpreters' skills due to decreased travel time, the company has boosted its daily job capacity in 2009 by 14%. Clients also enjoy reduced costs of up to 300% through the elimination of travel expenses from their bill.

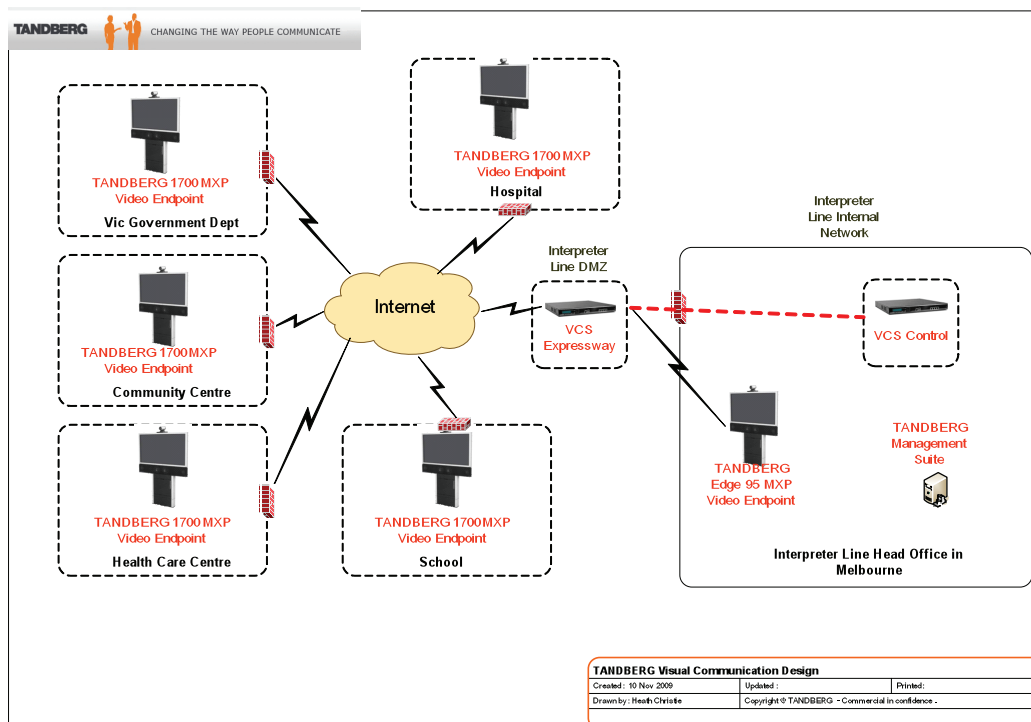
### FUTURE

The company anticipates increasing daily bookings from 400 to 600 by the end of 2010 with 10% of sessions conducted by video conferencing using new TANDBERG video solutions as well as enabling additional mobile users with PC video conferencing.



user friendly and includes both a management platform as well as quality hardware, including gateways, content servers and cameras," says Akinci.

TANDBERG Management Suite enables the company to centrally manage its entire video conferencing network and infrastructure from the organisation's Melbourne head office. This includes management of directories, bookings and software updates for onsite plus remote video systems through a web interface. The company has over 20 end points which operate over a range of Business DSL and SHDSL connections into a private network. The speeds range from 512/512 Kbps to business-grade ADSL2+ services which provide speeds of up to 20 Mbps/1Mbps.



## EDUCATION PUTS VIDEO CONFERENCING TO THE TEST

With the video conferencing technology deployed and in daily use with clients in Victoria and New South Wales, InterpreterLine was recently asked to participate in a four-month trial across six schools in regional Victoria. Sponsored by the Victorian Department of Education, the aim of the project was to demonstrate the application of video conferencing in the education sector. At the time, InterpreterLine was already servicing the needs of around 500 schools in the state with on site face-to-face interpreter's services and was confident that video would enhance communications for the specific needs of the education system while demonstrating great costs savings with greater flexibility.

The TANDBERG video IP phone was used as the basis for the trial because it was deemed user friendly, flexible for the department's requirements and operated utilising a handset that has the same intuition as a mobile phone. The system provides seamless and real-time face-to-face collaboration at the desktop and comes complete with a compact HD camera, an integrated 20" widescreen LCD and joins up to four video sites and three audio sites all at once.

"At the outset of the trial, both teachers and interpreters were hesitant as they didn't quite know what to expect. They thought it would provide the same quality as Skype and perceived it wouldn't work as the visualisation wouldn't be up to the standard needed for spoken conversation. However, once they saw the demonstration, they were blown away by how simple it was to use and how real the situation felt. Both our clients and the interpreters were surprised by the quality of the communication and felt like they were broadcast journalists on national television," says Akinci.



Within the education environment, video conferencing enables InterpreterLine to provide interpreters for parent teacher interviews throughout the course of the academic year. These occur at the school or adapt to the parent's ad hoc meeting requirements. Parents are therefore always able to attend meetings at pre-booked times.

"Once the technology was demonstrated the rest was easy. We were able to conduct interpreter sessions using the technology. The best thing was that we could establish pre-determined times for certain language meetings and schools could confirm exact times for the appropriate language interpreter. As our interpreters no longer needed to battle through traffic, parent appointments would always start on time pleasing teachers and families alike. A survey at the end of the four months suggested that if given the equipment on an ongoing basis, the schools would readily and frequently use it," says Akinci.

As a follow up to the six school trial, the Victorian Department of Education completed another trial in 2009. On this occasion, the organisation's head office in Melbourne was connected to a regional school location enabling departmental staff to use the equipment without the direct involvement of InterpreterLine's expertise.

"We took ten minutes to set up the TANDBERG equipment. The departmental staff were surprised at the sheer speed of deployment. The trial went well and the Department is now considering installing the technology around the state. After all, video conferencing provides all the benefits that go along with face-to-face interpretation without the huge costs and inefficiencies associated with travelling. In some cases, the travel time can be more than ten hours to perform a one hour interpreter service," says Akinci.

### AN EYE ON THE FUTURE

With the expected increase in immigration, InterpreterLine is gearing up to meet the needs of a changing community.

"We have commenced using high definition PC video conferencing for remote clients and interpreters as well as to support interpreters who are mobile and have been pleased with its performance. We have also ordered new TANDBERG video IP phones which we will roll out in 2010," says Akinci.

Moving forward, InterpreterLine anticipates that up to around ten per cent of its business will be conducted via video by the end of 2010.

"Mobile video conferencing will be the driving force here which will enable us to cost-effectively and rapidly deploy video conferencing in the field.

"Our experience shows us that using and connecting video technology is quick and easy. The systems are set up at client sites at a fraction of the time and cost of sending an interpreter in person. The video and sound is of such high quality that it doesn't compromise the way our interpreters work. In fact, all our clients and staff are amazed at the quality of the voice and image. It's like they are in the same room, interpreting face to face," says Akinci.

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