SMART®

SMART Solutions Support Global Engineering At TE Connectivity
Tyco Electronics AMP GmbH, Bensheim/Germany

Several teams in different global locations can now work simultaneously on the same document.

A global company with nearly 100,000 employees, TE Connectivity designs and manufactures a vast number of products that enable the flow of data and power for industries spanning consumer electronics, energy, healthcare, automotives, communications and aerospace. The company develops products through what it calls *global engineering* – the development of new products through the international cooperation of engineers, using processes to which innovative, interactive and collaborative solutions like those from SMART are highly important.

SMART solutions are helping TE Connectivity develop its infrastructure to improve networking and communication between its global locations.

Benchmark
"The renovation of the facilities in Bensheim brought up the question of meeting-room media equipment. As the current project manager, I arranged a benchmark," says Bart Van Sebroeck, Engineering Manager Strategic Initiative, Hybrid & Electric Mobility Solutions. "Previously, we had the time-consuming task of arranging to get a projector from the office and set it up. So we looked specifically for a solution that stood out in terms of time, cost savings and usability." Besides SMART solutions, TE tested products from other interactive technology manufacturers. At the same time, the company's location in Belgium was going through a similar process.

"The ease-of-use and the multifaceted possibilities offered by SMART convinced both us and our Belgian colleagues," says Van Sebroeck, and the first SMART Board interactive whiteboards were installed immediately. "To ensure the use of the systems, a demonstration was organized by our authorized SMART reseller. That day, about 100 colleagues came to the foyer for an introduction on how to

Challenge
Find a communication technology that fosters global engineering and simplifies the performance of daily ad hoc meetings and brainstorming.

Solution
TE Connectivity first implemented one mobile and two fixed SMART Board® 885 interactive whiteboards, with infrastructure in place for installations in an additional seven meeting rooms. The GoWire™ auto-launch cable allows people to work with SMART solutions in restricted IT locations without administrator rights, and Bridgit® conferencing software from SMART improves communication across locations.

Result
Easy and intuitive communication in meetings and the illustration of technical circuit diagrams are now fostered.

use the SMART Boards. Thanks to their intuitiveness, the initial barrier was low. Now it's all about 'one touch and go.'"

Maximum return on investment

The investment quickly paid off, according to Dr. Thomas Stange, Manager, Engineering & Knowledge Collaboration. "For an international company that operates in more than 150 countries, finding savings at the right point plays an important role. The new systems allow us to reduce travel costs and increase productivity. Where we would plan a transnational meeting with a lot of lead time, we now have the flexibility to set up a meeting via Bridgit conferencing software from SMART and work together on the same digital information and documents. Less travel means not only lower costs for the company in travel, accommodation and expenses, it mainly means higher productivity and faster decision-making."

Global engineering

Says Van Sebroeck, "Even small design changes may lead to exceeded budget, when they become necessary late in the product-development process. But by communicating early we stay within the budget. That's why we focus on global engineering." Thanks to innovative communication technologies, the networking of the engineering team's expertise in the various locations can be improved. All meeting participants can write notes directly in a shared document, paint 3D graphic models and detect and exclude errors early in product development. Products can also be improved by the ability to implement corrections more quickly and easily.

Team feedback

A staff survey after a SMART training session showed that the systems are very suitable for ad hoc team meetings and for brainstorming in product development and marketing. "While discussing a presentation, an Excel spreadsheet or a product drawing, we can finally write notes directly in the document and save it," says Stange. "Thoughts can now easily be recorded, including drawings. Finally, we don't have to take pictures of the flipchart or whiteboard anymore."

The future with SMART

A global approach to engineering is growing more and more important at TE. While provisions are already in place in Bensheim for the rapid integration of more SMART solutions, other company locations will be apprised of the possibilities they afford. "We're working increasingly more closely with China and India. A huge knowledge transfer is needed there. The solution could greatly simplify the communication process, regardless of location," says Stange. "In addition, the locations in Germany should be better connected. The processes of tool manufacturers and product developers need to be coordinated clearly, so that errors and unnecessary costs can be avoided. The SMART solution offers a new and higher quality of interaction."

Small product changes can be implemented more quickly and easily, thanks to global engineering.

"SMART solutions act as a new interface. Several teams can now work together from various locations on the same document and develop a product – a major step toward global engineering!"
Dr. Thomas Stange, Manager Engineering Knowledge & Collaboration, TE Connectivity

About SMART

SMART Technologies is a leading provider of collaboration solutions that transform the way the world works and learns. We believe that collaboration and interaction should be easy. As the global leader in interactive whiteboards, we bring more than two decades of collaboration research and development to a broad range of easy-to-use, integrated solutions that free people from their desks and computer screens, so collaborating and learning with digital resources are more natural.

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