



Case Study

Global Witness: a remarkable video conferencing solution for a remarkable organisation

“As an NGO that depends on donated funds, our budgets are challenging and we are always looking for the most cost-effective solution, so we turned to our go-to audio visual expert for advice.”

Dave Lipsey, IT Director at Global Witness

Global Witness sits outside what might be considered the usual customer organisation for an audio visual company. The majority of Carillion Communications' customers are commercial companies seeking to improve productivity, collaboration and decision making – often to improve profits – and government organisations looking to improve processes.

A quick glance at their website will tell you that Global Witness's line of work is remarkable in its nature and scope. Since 1993, Global Witness has been exploring why regions exporting natural resources worth trillions of dollars are home to some of the poorest people, and has been campaigning to end the causes.

Global communication and activity development requires close collaboration and coordination between offices and among campaigners around the world. Clarity, an understanding of issues and decisiveness are critical to effective communication.

Carillion was asked to help Global Witness with its video conferencing in terms of both visual impact and accessibility.

When Skype was quite simply no longer an option

When Global Witness initially started their video conferencing requirements review, they were planning to introduce an integrated Skype solution. However, when Microsoft pulled its SDK (software developer's kit) in 2013 Skype integration was simply no longer an option.

Global Witness was forced to think more commercially and on a grander scale when their preferred solution wasn't possible, which is when they started discussions in earnest with Carillion.

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Dave Lipsey, IT Director at Global Witness

While the return on investment for video conferencing solutions is demonstrable, the initial outlay can be relatively steep.

As Carillion has a large customer base that is naturally in various stages of technology adoption and upgrade, they were able to look at their stock list and recommend a solution that perfectly matched Global Witness’s needs using the best of previous generation technology.

With a solution purchased and installed at what Dave Lipsey describes as a bargain price, Global Witness now enjoys clear, large screen video conferencing at their London office, in a boardroom that holds up to 40 people and four other meeting rooms.

How did we manage without it!

Global Witness arranges regular organisation-wide meetings to discuss campaigns, progress and ideas for the coming weeks. Global Witness also works closely with campaigning journalists and other organisations with similar aims.

The way Global Witness communicates with stakeholders has been transformed. Previously Global Witness was dependent on Skype meetings and variable internet access quality. Now that users have experienced the power and ease of video conferencing – even if it isn’t the very latest technology – Dave Lipsey says, *“the organisation has changed and all users agree we are miles ahead of where we were, and wonder how did we ever manage without it.”*

Global Witness has moved from occasional Skype calls to the ability to accommodate multiple users, including a weekly meeting that involves participants from the USA, Europe, Asia and Africa.

Cloud based conference access brings everyone together

Given the diverse nature of Global Witness’s stakeholder systems and end points, Carillion recommended Blue Jeans cloud-based video conferencing. As Blue Jeans is system agnostic, Global Witness can take an inclusive approach to its global communications, regardless of devices and services in use around the world.

With Blue Jeans you only need a device and someone to meet. Global Witness has embraced the new capability to involve dozens of people in different global regions in highly productive meetings by video.

The plethora of plug-ins and connections is gone and access is rapid. Dave Lipsey says Blue Jeans is *“a huge time saver.”*

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Easy administration, scheduling and connection via an intuitive interface, as well as the ability to share content on screen, are Blue Jeans features that have further enabled Global Witness to leap ahead from the functionality of the old Skype days.

The value of partnership over suppliership

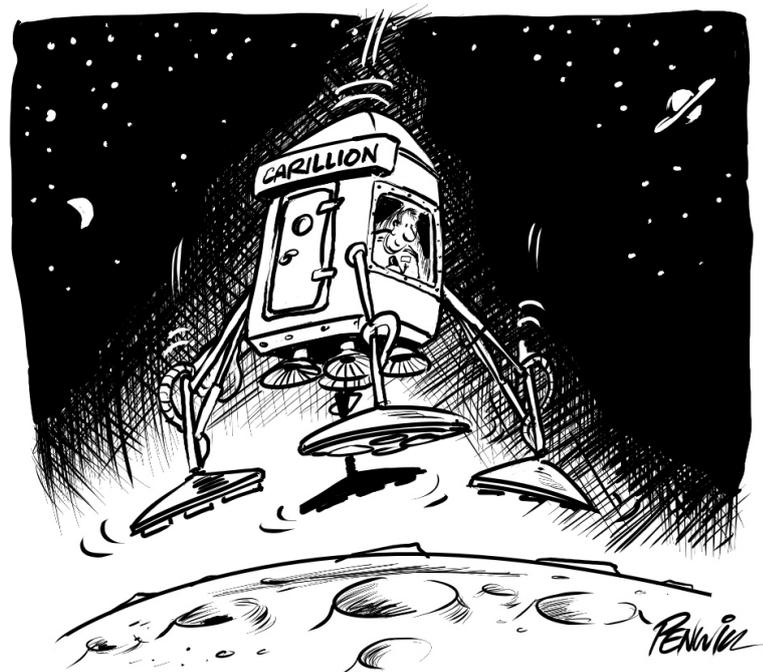
Many suppliers claim to act as partners without being able to provide evidence that bears out their true partner status. Carillion consistently wins the thanks of its clients for taking the time to understand their requirements in detail and giving them options to tackle their technology and operational challenges.

Dave Lipsey describes Carillion as *"efficient and helpful"* and acknowledges Carillion's valued empathy, which has translated into a good deal and a highly functional new conferencing system that Global Witness thought was beyond their budgets.

Carillion has since specified and sourced a comparable system for the Global Witness office in Washington DC.

The Carillion Difference

Dee Reed, Carillion Managing Director, said, *"The unusual nature of the Global Witness project sheds new light on Carillion's ability to think outside the box to specify just the right audio visual solutions for its customers. We're pleased to have played our part on behalf of a customer with an ambitious social mission."*



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