

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Region Gävleborg Increases Video Conferencing Usage by 50% in 12 months

The comprehensive use of video meetings has led to shorter waiting lists, faster response times and a streamlining of services.

Featured products

- Polycom® RealConnect™
- Polycom® RealPresence® Group Series

Benefits

- Shorter waiting times
- Faster response times
- Reduced travel expenses



When Region Gävleborg in Sweden held a major conference on osteoporosis in April 2018, over 300 of the region's retirees actively participated and asked questions via video. The conference was held in Gävle in the southern part of the region. Because Region Gävleborg is large and spans approximately 200 miles from north to south, citizens appreciated the convenience of virtually attending the conference. Additionally, for the citizens of the region's ten municipalities, the use of video conferencing technology is so extensive that a large and ever-growing part of communication between the citizens and their municipalities and hospitals takes place via video.

Public health and healthcare are two of the region's major areas of responsibility, and there are 200 fully equipped video conferencing rooms that are dedicated to different uses in strategic locations spread across the municipalities. For example, there are operating theaters equipped with remote-controlled cameras that allow specialists to help with difficult births. Some rooms are outfitted with large screens, a hospital bed and enough floor space for patients to do exercises in front of the camera. There are regular major video conferencing venues and at many of the smaller local health centers, there are special video conferencing rooms adapted for what the Swedes call "local treatment."

“Video meetings make healthcare more efficient. In addition to leading to shorter hospital queues and faster response times for citizens and patients, we can also provide our people with better service and quality, with easier access to relevant information from experts in meetings.”

Robert Wallner, Systems Manager, Region Gävleborg

Shorter waiting lists and reduced travel expenses

For many years, the main driving force behind video conferencing has been the long distances and savings in travel expenses. However, it has currently reached a stage where transport-related time and money savings are not considered to be the greatest advantage of video conferencing.

“A few years ago, we worked out how many millions of kronor and tons of CO2 we were saving through the use of video conferencing,” says Robert Wallner, Systems Manager at the county’s IT department. “And even if we were and still are talking about very large figures, we have stopped making these calculations. However, we still register the number of video conferences in the region and based on these figures, we can see that the number of video calls has increased by around 50 percent between 2016 and 2017.”

“We are now at such an advanced stage in our video setup that we are focusing on the advantages of video meetings within the region’s core competencies, namely providing optimal service for our citizens,” says Wallner.

Integration has increased video use

Region Gävleborg’s first video conferencing facilities were installed in 2003. Since then, various municipalities have developed their systems continuously, but in a haphazard and inconsistent way.



In 2016, Robert Wallner and his team implemented Polycom® RealConnect™ for two primary reasons. “First of all, we wanted to integrate the various video solutions within the regions into a coherent and seamless entity. Secondly, we wanted to include Microsoft’s Skype for Business in our main installation,” says Wallner.

“We chose Polycom RealConnect as it was the most technically advanced solution in many areas, and now we can see that we have got what we wanted and can provide our users with a flexible and consistent experience at both ends,” says Wallner. “Connecting to a Skype for Business client gives you a regular Skype for Business experience, and connecting via a video conferencing system gives you the quality you would expect from a video conferencing system.”

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Robert Wallner, Systems Manager, Region Gävleborg

“The implementation of Polycom RealConnect and the associated addition of Microsoft’s Skype for Business is a big step towards our long-term goals, and the use of video seems to have exploded since then,” adds Wallner.

The healthcare system and the municipalities have been using video conferences for many years to replace a variety of physical meetings. And in recent years, according to Wallner, there has been a rapid maturation in the use of video conferencing technology among healthcare professionals. “Many healthcare video meetings are conducted in our dedicated video conferencing facilities, but municipalities are increasingly making video calls from people’s homes,” says Wallner.

“In the future, our most important goal is to deliver healthcare via video directly into people’s homes. All the technological installations are in place, and we could easily do it today



if we wanted, but there are a lot of security and regulatory challenges to resolve before we take this step,” says Wallner.

This step is not far off, however, as he predicts that it won’t take more than a year to complete.

About Polycom

Polycom helps organizations unleash the power of human collaboration. More than 400,000 companies and institutions worldwide defy distance with video, voice and content solutions from Polycom. Polycom and its global partner ecosystem provide flexible collaboration solutions for any environment that deliver the best user experience and unmatched investment protection.

Polycom, Inc.
1.800.POLYCOM
www.polycom.com

Polycom Asia Pacific Pte Ltd
+65 6389 9200
www.polycom.com.sg

Polycom EMEA
+44 (0)1753 723282
www.polycom.co.uk

