



## Online Market Research Company Decreases Time Spent in Meetings by 60 Percent

### Overview

**Country or Region:** India

**Industry:** Business Process Outsourcing

#### Customer Profile

Since 1994, Greenfield Online has served as the premier Internet survey solution provider for research and consulting companies. It gathers consumer insights, using Internet-based research tools and top-notch industry expertise.

#### Business Situation

Greenfield Online has about 450 staff distributed across 30 offices in 12 countries and it is not easy to achieve efficiency in meetings, which Greenfield Online has often as a part of its day-to-day business activities.

#### Solution

Greenfield Online found its answer in Microsoft® Office Live Meeting, the new subscription-based, pay-as-you-use Web conferencing solution from Microsoft.

#### Benefits

- Increases employee productivity by cutting down on meeting time
- No software or hardware installation required
- Integrates with Microsoft Office documents

“With Live Meeting we have slashed our meeting times by over 60 percent. ...And that’s just the tip of the iceberg on what Live Meeting can do.”

Dr. C.K. Taneja, General Manager, Greenfield Online (P) Ltd.

Greenfield Online serves online data collection needs of research companies (in what industries) and helps these companies get closer to their consumers by gathering consumer feedback. It serves the needs of more than 300 marketing research firms and is considered one of the leading online panel companies.

Each working day, Greenfield Online has at least four meetings across multiple time zones, followed by weekly sales meetings and monthly company-wide meetings. These meetings are essential, but if the meetings could be handled more efficiently and be shorter, the staff could have more time for other work, and therefore be more productive.

After researching various options, Greenfield Online implemented a solution using Microsoft® Office Live Meeting, the new Microsoft Office System subscription-based, pay-as-you-use Web conferencing solution.



“[Live Meeting] helped us to increase productivity as well as profitability as our staff now serves our customers effectively in the same amount of work days.”

Dr. C.K. Taneja, General Manager, Greenfield Online (P) Ltd.

## Situation

Greenfield Online began in 1994 as a business unit of Greenfield Consulting Group, Inc. The company, a true pioneer in the online research industry, created Survey Wizard—a technology that automated the programming of online surveys—as well as FocusChat—the first online focus group technology in the industry. With these proprietary technologies in place and the creation of the Greenfield Online Panel, the company established itself as a leader in online research within the marketing research community.

Since 1994, Greenfield Online has been providing consumers the ability to voice their opinions by participating in online research surveys and focus groups. Greenfield has realized that the Internet is an ideal environment for consumers to speak out and be heard as they can participate at their leisure—rather than respond to ill-timed or intrusive telephone surveys.

Employees at Greenfield Online have daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly meetings and because its workforce is spread throughout the world, Greenfield has long relied on Web conferencing to streamline its communications and cut travel costs.

The meetings at Greenfield are an important part of its communication structure. However, with so many meetings to attend, the online market research company's executives spend a great deal of their time in meetings. These meetings are essential, but if the meeting could be handled more efficiently and be shorter in duration, the staff would have more time for other activities, and therefore be more productive.

When Greenfield realized that its employees were spending a great deal of time in meetings, the company wanted to find a way to improve the effectiveness of communication.

## Solution

After comparing several vendors, Greenfield Online opted for Microsoft® Office Live Meeting, part of the Microsoft Office System. Greenfield considered ease of use and reliability as the top factors in the decision.

Live Meeting is easy to use because its interface is closely tied to other Microsoft desktop productivity tools such as Microsoft Office. Employees can schedule a meeting directly from within Microsoft Outlook® 2003 messaging and collaboration client by using the Live Meeting add-in. Participants of the meeting receive a calendar invitation through e-mail, requesting their attendance at a meeting. When invitees are ready for the meeting, all participants simply click a URL from the meeting request that takes them to the Web conferencing area.

The company opted for a subscription model, where it pays per use. The services are hosted in the United States. Employees at all its offices can access meetings using their office PC or laptop. Many employees operate from home offices and can access the services from home as well. The meeting host usually uses the PC setup in the conference room as multiple people can access the meeting at one time.

Greenfield now takes advantage of Live Meeting for all its daily meetings thereby increasing efficiency.

## Benefits

### **Increases Productivity by Cutting Down on Meeting Time**

Dr. C.K. Taneja, General Manager of Greenfield Online's India office, says, “With Live Meeting we have slashed our meeting times by over 60 percent, just in our daily meetings alone. We have four meetings on each working day with about 15 to 20 employees across different time zones attending them. Each meeting used to take

two hours. Now it is down to 45 minutes each. Everyday, we are saving well over 24 hours..., simply by being more efficient during meetings. And that's just the tip of the iceberg on what Live Meeting can do."

The productivity numbers get even bigger when you include the weekly meetings, which are attended by about 40 employees, and the quarterly meetings where the CEO of the company addresses all the employees and investors of the company. The company has always been making use of Web conferencing for these meetings as it would be almost impossible for the executives from the different time zones to meet physically given the high frequency of their meetings. What Live Meeting did was to make these meetings more efficient.

#### **Reduces Travel, Improves Work-Life Balance**

Microsoft Office Live Meeting helped Greenfield improve communications by providing an interactive environment in which employees could meet and collaborate over the Internet.

For the company's annual strategic meeting of its top 100 executives this year, Greenfield decided to move away from the traditional face-to-face session to pure online Web conferencing. This was mainly because of the features in Live Meeting that make collaborating and sharing information and documents over Web conferencing so much simpler.

Every executive that makes the trip to this annual meeting would have to spend a sizeable amount of money on accommodation, airfare, meals, and transport. By making use of Live Meeting, Greenfield is making substantial savings on these expenses. "But money savings is not the issue here. Just for a five-hour meeting, our executives have to take four to five days to travel and attend the meeting. Two days are wasted just in traveling. That's a loss of

five productive days for each executive that makes the annual trip. But now with Live Meeting, we have the option of doing the meeting right from the comfort of our offices," explains Dr. Taneja.

#### **Share Information Conveniently**

Live Meeting provides an integrated presentation environment in which thousands of distributed meeting participants can view a common screen or application. Previously, the management team may have had different versions of the status document, which would add confusion on the conference call. However, today all employees are on the same page, working collaboratively on the same document.

In the past, executives had to prepare for the meetings in advance by collating the latest information about their individual departments and countries and sending them out using e-mail four hours before the meeting. In this Internet age, the status of many projects had changed.

#### **Integrates with Microsoft Office**

The biggest functional benefit to Greenfield must surely be its tight integration with Microsoft Office. Because Live Meeting permits application sharing to remote users, any executive can take over control of the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and make changes from his or her remote location. At the end of the meeting, there is only one master Excel spreadsheet for everyone to use. It may sound simple, but this feature alone is one of the most significant contributing factors to cutting Greenfield's meeting times.

#### **Requires No Software or Hardware Installation**

Because Live Meeting is a pay-as-you-use subscription service, the cost of entry for Greenfield was negligible. In addition, it is a hosted service, which means that users do not need to invest in expensive servers or

## For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at 1600 111100.

To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:

[www.microsoft.com/india/](http://www.microsoft.com/india/)

For more information about Greenfield Online call +91-124-5083861. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:

[www.greenfield.com/](http://www.greenfield.com/)

equipment. In fact, Live Meeting makes use of standard PC hardware and technology, so users can make use of its existing equipment.

"With the low barriers of entry, we could easily justify our ROI [return on investment] for using Live Meeting, which in turn helped us to increase productivity as well as profitability as our staff now serves our customers effectively in the same amount of work days," says Dr. Taneja.

From administration to meeting setup to meeting attendance, all Live Meeting features are either available through a Web browser interface or are integrated into Microsoft Office System.

## Future Plans

After improving the efficiency and productivity of Greenfield's regular meetings, it is looking at incorporating Live Meeting more effectively into the corporation. It will be extended to non-regular or ad hoc meeting requests to so as to best utilize employees' time.

It is also looking at implementing Live Communication Server in its own location, as an effective tool to communicate with customers. Customers use instant messaging solutions from various vendors. Therefore, our employees are logged into multiple messenger services leading to vulnerability for our network. With LCS, we will be on a secured network, have a unified messaging tool and will be able to retract information on any chat session when we need. This will help us gain efficiency and save resources.

## About Microsoft Office System

The Microsoft Office System is the business world's chosen environment for information work, providing the programs, servers, and services that help you succeed by transforming information into impact.

For more information about the Microsoft Office System, go to:

[www.microsoft.com/office](http://www.microsoft.com/office)

### Software and Services

#### Microsoft Office System

- Microsoft Office Live Meeting 2003
- Microsoft Office Outlook 2003

### Hardware

- Toshiba Laptops (Centrino processor, 512 MB RAM, 40 GB HDD)

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