



O'Neill

“With GoToAssist, we are able to provide effective remote support across the company with minimum disruption to end-users. GoToMeeting has also proved invaluable in enabling us to share key information with area and store managers in a fast, simple and cost-effective way.”

Peter Maljaars
Global IT Services and
Infrastructure Manager
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GoToAssist and GoToMeeting deliver “user happiness” at sportswear specialist

Founded in 1952 in San Francisco, O'Neill's set of core values — innovation in style and technology — has seen the brand devote itself wholeheartedly to the evolution of action sports. From the first ever neoprene wetsuit and surf leash to the world's first stitchless boardshorts and range of groundbreaking wearable electronics, O'Neill's spirit of innovation will always drive the company forward. Today, O'Neill can be found the world over. In touch with its rich heritage and the universal stoke of board riding culture, O'Neill will always be committed to progressing that evolution and growing its reputation as one of the world's leading youth lifestyle brands.

The initial challenge: Provide remote communications and support for an expanding international business

Managing a supply chain that manufactures clothes and shoes in 140 factories all over the world was becoming an increasingly complex logistical task. A typical example: IT support. In managing remote systems by telephone, the IT help desk often had to deal with non-English-speaking employees while using a locally installed remote support application over Internet connections of varying quality. The results were inefficient.

After a thorough market review of remote support services, O'Neill Europe selected Citrix® GoToAssist®. Introduced in 2005, GoToAssist offered a hosted solution that required no premise-based hardware or software to be installed at the remote production sites. Simple to get up and running within just a few hours, GoToAssist remains at the heart of O'Neill Europe's supply chain helpdesk support today.

GoToAssist provides retail support

In more recent years the use of GoToAssist has expanded significantly in the company's retail operation. “From one central head office site our responsibility has expanded to include 66 locations across the UK and Europe, including regional offices and retail stores,” confirmed Maljaars.

“As part of this major expansion, we also needed to provide full remote support for a larger number of home-workers, as well as managers and other staff who were travelling as part of their role.”

For O'Neill, the key to the success of GoToAssist lies in the ability of Maljaars and his team to undertake remote diagnostic and repair work without the need to involve the individual operator. "With other solutions, you have to be there and watch us do our work, which is time consuming, disruptive and very frustrating," he said. "With GoToAssist, however, users can hand over their machine to us, and we can take the necessary corrective action while they go off and undertake other important tasks, making more effective use of time."

GoToMeeting drives down costs

O'Neill recently began using Citrix GoToMeeting® to enable more cost-effective and efficient communication between head office and retail stores. Previously, information that had to be verbally communicated and discussed with store managers with regard to merchandising plans, promotional pricing and new product introductions was done via conference calling — a very expensive medium.

With the introduction of GoToMeeting, the cost of passing on such information has fallen dramatically.

The simplicity of setting up or joining a meeting with just a couple clicks benefitted O'Neill in a number of ways. "The ability for everyone to participate with just a single click and without any specialist IT knowledge has meant that our staff have taken to the new system very quickly," said Maljaars.

"The fact that it is so intuitive, easy to use and reliable has also given managers the confidence that it will help them do their jobs in a more informed way. As a result, the quality of the participation has improved rapidly, with greater two-way discussion and interaction — and, thus, better ideas — in looking to get the best out of any new in-store initiative."

GoToMeeting with HDFaces – telepresence for everyone

Maljaars has also ushered in the latest Citrix upgrade — GoToMeeting with HDFaces™, which combines high-definition group video conferencing, web sharing and audio. "We are a strongly collaborative business, both internally and with our suppliers and customers," he confirms. "My early experience with the new HDFaces tool has proved very encouraging in helping us take this co-operative spirit to a new level."

Initially, Maljaars tested GoToMeeting with HDFaces in new product introductions, as suppliers can share key information with the O'Neill team without having to ship the products from far-flung parts of the globe. "For us, it is important to see people face to face in order to build confidence and trust," he said. "By effectively bringing telepresence into the business in this way, I believe that GoToMeeting with HDFaces will add a valuable new dimension in developing closer relationships both within our business and with third-party stakeholders."

Based on the success of the initial trial, possible future uses for the new conferencing solution include board and senior-level meetings and supporting local branch merchandising initiatives through enhanced product demonstrations and training.

Key benefits

- Major reduction in communications costs between head office and individual stores
- Closer, more effective links with suppliers in product development
- Minimal downtime for remote diagnostics
- More collaborative environment with suppliers and customers

Driving innovation

From its earliest days in designing surfing wetsuits, the company has maintained a reputation for leading-edge design, both in terms of the sportswear it sells and the way it promotes and features products in-store.

This commitment to using the latest communications techniques to establish closer relationships with its customers is as strong as ever. New concepts in development — such as the digital collection book replacing traditional catalogues and the virtual dressing room — are helping the business create designs that meet the aspirations of its demanding customer base.

“Collaboration tools such as GoToMeeting provide essential support here,” said Maljaars. “We have a young customer demographic profile that, like us, is always keen to try new things, both in terms of sportswear design and how they interact with us.

“Citrix will continue to play a key role in both our ongoing operations and our business development strategy.”

A practical approach

Looking ahead, O'Neill will consider the adoption of GoToWebinar® as the next stage in enabling stores to keep fully up to date with the latest product innovations and in-store promotional techniques.

However, for all the emphasis on innovation, O'Neill's feet are firmly on the ground when it comes to assessing the benefits of GoToAssist and GoToMeeting within the business. Virtual support tools have enabled the business to improve two-way communication at all levels and, crucially, at a much-reduced cost.

The fact that there has been universal adoption of the easy-to-use tools is vital, as staff have quickly taken to the new ways of working.

“With GoToAssist, staff have been very complimentary about how our department deals effectively with any IT problem with minimum disruption to their day-to-day jobs. And when they are happy, I am happy,” he concluded.

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About Citrix Online

Citrix Online solutions enable people to work from anywhere. Our products include GoToAssist® for remote support, GoToManage® for IT management, GoToMeeting® for online meetings, GoToMyPC® for remote access, GoToTraining® for interactive online training and GoToWebinar® for larger web events.

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