

QUALCOMM Continues to Benefit from an iLinc Web Conferencing Initiative that Began in 1999



Founded in 1985, QUALCOMM Incorporated is a leader in developing and delivering innovative digital wireless communications products and services based on CDMA and other advanced technologies. Headquartered in San Diego, California, Qualcomm is included in the S&P 500 Index and is a 2006 FORTUNE 500® company traded on The Nasdaq Stock Market® under the ticker symbol QCOM.

Challenge:

Evolve a LearnLinc implementation that began in 1999 into an enterprise-focused iLinc suite that continues to reduce travel expenses, while increasing communication and training effectiveness internally and with customers.

Solution:

Make the complete iLinc suite available to various departments and user types, in order to extend iLinc usage, practically eliminate travel costs for select departments, and improve overall communications.

QUALCOMM's Wireless Business Solutions has provided integrated wireless systems and services to businesses around the world since 1988. QWBS delivers the actionable information businesses seek in order to operate at peak performance and improve the quality of life for its customers, their employees and the entire value chain. QUALCOMM's world-class technology infrastructure, customer care and professional services enable QWBS to meet the increasingly complex needs of many industries, such as mobile enterprise, transportation and logistics, construction equipment and healthcare. QWBS' customer focus is based on the knowledge that leveraging technology is critical to creating business insight that helps clients achieve their vision.

QUALCOMM Launches Its First eLearning Solution, LearnLinc

Prior to implementing iLinc in 1999, QWBS had five regional offices located across the United States. Each time the company introduced a new software product or upgrade, trainers needed to travel (usually by air) to each location to deliver live training. Company leadership quickly identified the financial ineffectiveness of requiring trainers to travel with limited productivity for one to two days simply to deliver an hour-long training session.

After analyzing the leading Web conferencing vendors, QWBS chose to launch its first virtual training program using LearnLinc software. At a meeting of the division's customer-service group, iLinc was presented live to the first group of users. At that time, just after the advent of Web-based technology, users had to install iLinc from CD onto their laptops, many of which were barely Internet-capable (i.e. equipped with low-speed, dial-up modems). And, some of the users traveled three to four days a week and even with powerful laptops, often couldn't get broadband Internet access from hotel rooms.

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Traci Schaible, Senior Manager of Product Training, QUALCOMM

Because of these challenges and the frustrations with technical limitations, many of the QWBS staff resisted Web conferencing at first. As more powerful equipment was dispersed and the learning curve was climbed, QWBS' LearnLinc users began to embrace online training. Adoption grew again when QWBS offered its first recorded sessions. Users who had juggled schedules to attend live, online classes learned that iLinc made it possible to meet training requirements on their own time.

“The biggest thing that’s kept us with iLinc since 1999 is customer support. iLinc was our first eLearning tool and since then we’ve implemented others (such as learning management systems), but have never experienced the level of customer support that we get from iLinc.”

Traci Schaible, Senior Manager of Product Training, QUALCOMM

According to Traci Schaible, Senior Manager of Product Training for QWBS, “It took some time to get everyone high-quality laptops and stable connectivity, but as time and technology progressed, our iLinc users began to see the benefits of training online. Especially with asynchronous courses, they appreciated the freedom to set their own training schedules.”

Experiencing the Cumulative Benefits of iLinc Use

Since the original LearnLinc launch, QWBS has tripled its number of iLinc users and expanded usage to other groups within the division. Customer service groups are taking advantage of LearnLinc to train customers on service upgrades. Among the most popular features with this group are application sharing and the ability to set up individual meeting rooms from which to launch on-the-fly training sessions.

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QWBS’ sales teams have recently begun using MeetingLinc, a product optimized for use in meeting format, rather than that of a class, to perform product demonstrations. MeetingLinc represents a striking change from the team’s former demo process, which included walking prospects through a demo website via phone.

“Our sales teams are now able to present uploaded content in MeetingLinc sessions, as well as to use interactive tools such as highlighting and pointers to help keep people engaged,” stated Schaible. “It’s a much more effective sales tool than our former one.”

In addition to QWBS, two other divisions at QUALCOMM have begun using iLinc based on internal recommendations.

QUALCOMM also broadened its utilization of Web conferencing to include educational customer Webinars. These sessions have been very well received because they conveyed compelling content in an easy-to-use online setting.

“We received great feedback from our customers about our Webinars,” said Schaible. “We didn’t encounter any problems with disconnection, complex client download processes, or firewall issues.”

The company is enjoying the cumulative cost-savings and efficiency benefits of using iLinc, but cites customer service as the primary reason for remaining loyal to iLinc over the years.

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