



# Airbus video conferencing takes off with Polycom and France Telecom EGT



*"Following analysis to justify the investments made, it became clear that the investment was paid off as soon as the first video conference involving ten people took place".*

Éric Pla, Airbus networks and telecommunications technician

## About Polycom

Polycom, Inc. is the worldwide leader in unified collaborative communications (UCC) that maximise the efficiency and productivity of people and organisations by integrating the broadest array of video, voice, data and Web solutions to deliver the ultimate communications experience. Polycom's high quality, standards-based conferencing and collaboration solutions are easy to deploy and manage, as well as intuitive to use. Supported by an open architecture, they integrate seamlessly with leading telephony and presence-based networks. With its market driving technologies, best-in-class products, alliance partnerships, and world-class service, Polycom is the smart choice for organisations seeking proven solutions and a competitive advantage in real-time communications and collaboration. Polycom EMEA HQ is based in Slough, Berkshire in the UK. Polycom EMEA operates in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. For additional information, call 00 800 00 33 44 55 or visit the Polycom web site at [www.polycom.com](http://www.polycom.com)

Airbus, an international consortium, has invented a unique industrial concept - to develop each part of its aircraft at various different sites across Europe before the final assembly takes place. This innovative concept, which has especially been used for the development of the A380, relies on a high level of coordination between departments and synchronisation at an international level. With this in mind, Airbus decided to use video conferencing, expanding its use of the facility thanks to the solutions offered by Polycom.

On 27 April 2005 at 10.29 am the A380, the latest aircraft made by Airbus, took off from Toulouse airport. It was an occasion for the whole of Europe to be proud of, since the world's largest commercial aircraft is in fact the result of millions of hours of deliberation, work, communication and collaboration, which all took place on an international scale.

Airbus is 80% owned by EADS and employs 55,000 people in Europe as well as in the United States, Japan and China (see box). The aircraft constructor charges each of its 16 Centres of Excellence, situated in France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom, with making a part of its aeroplanes. All the sections are then assembled in Toulouse or Hamburg.

## A worldwide collaboration

This industrial concept of international collaboration requires an almost daily proximity and perfect synchronisation between the teams, which are based all over the world. In order to achieve this, the Toulouse site of Airbus France set up a video conferencing department in 1992. "Until then we were using audio-conferencing systems, with specific lines across France", said Éric Pla, networks and telecommunications technician at Airbus.

The first video conferences between the Paris and Toulouse sites relied on dedicated lines set up by France Telecom as well as studios in each city. "Then we decided to deploy our own systems," explained Éric Pla. "After an invitation to tender, the integrator France Télécom EGT was the first to supply us with the right equipment, installation and network".

This is how in 1999, on the advice of its partner, Airbus decided to install Polycom video conferencing systems. "At that time, Polycom was already ahead of the game in distance administration technologies. Its solutions are easy to integrate and its tariffs are consistent with market rates", confirmed Arnaud Dejean, commercial engineer at France Télécom EGT.

## Video takes off

"Until 2001 we actually only owned about ten video conferencing systems," said Éric Pla. That year several "phenomena", which all took place at the same time, gave the definite drive towards using this service within Airbus. In fact, at the beginning of the new millennium, the Airbus Industrie Groupe d'Intérêt Economique (GIE or Economic Interest Group) was reorganized in order to aim for a single integrated company. The network installation and telecommunications department of Airbus France was therefore charged with updating the 25 video conferencing systems at the Airbus Central Equity headquarters. "With contractors present on the Toulouse sites, we are managing a total population of 20,000 users" explained Éric Pla.

As well as harmonising services on a transnational level, new projects have to be coordinated internationally. Airbus is therefore making full use of its video conferencing facility. In fact, driven by the developments of the A380, as well as the A350 and the A400M military transport aircraft, using this form of communication has become common practice. So much so that in December 2002, Airbus decided to set up its own video conferencing bridge platform so that it no longer had to rent one from an external provider. The networks and telecommunications department opted for Polycom's MGC-50 unified communications platform. "Our investment was paid off after just a month's use" Éric Pla was pleased to announce.



VIDEO VOICE DATA WEB

TOGETHER, GREAT THINGS HAPPEN.

# Airbus video conferencing takes off with Polycom and France Telecom EGT

## More autonomy

Aside from the initial financial considerations, this choice would rapidly go on to reveal numerous advantages for its users, one of which was autonomy. "It was no longer necessary to make reservations with a service provider. We are now completely autonomous," said Éric Pla. In fact, Polycom's multipoint conferencing bridge platform enables several conferences to be going on at the same time. From then on, the rate of video conferences accelerated between Toulouse and Airbus sites at Saint-Nazaire, Méaulte, Nantes, Filton (United Kingdom), Hamburg and Bremen (Germany), Madrid and Puerto Real (Spain), etc. And then there are all the necessary meetings between research departments, production units and other suppliers on other continents. "In order to cope with this increase in usage, we decided to acquire a second Polycom bridge," explained Éric Pla. In December 2004, another MGC-50 platform was therefore deployed.

Over the same period, the sporadic collaboration between Airbus and France Télécom EGT soon made way for a framework agreement between Polycom and EADS/Airbus on the supply of video conferencing solutions. The partner added all of its expertise to the performance of Polycom solutions. "The human involvement, especially the technical and commercial support before and after sales given by Jorge de Almeida from France Télécom EGT, was essential" said Éric Pla.

## Video conferencing. As simple as...

Today, 200 video conferencing systems are distributed across all of the Airbus sites, including 70 at Toulouse, 80% of which are Polycom solutions. The Toulouse site is therefore at the head of a fleet of systems that include the VSX 7000, VSX 8000, VSX 3000 and PVX. "We are making every effort to ensure that the equipment stock is coherent as well as ensuring the homogeneity of all of the solutions, from the user to access to the IP network" Éric Pla added. These systems are mostly in place for rooms of 6 to 8 people, but they also equip bigger spaces (20 to 30 people), a room for 50 people and a 200-seat auditorium. Finally, the managers at Airbus have the benefit of private rooms, or even systems installed in their own offices.

With the increase in the number of video conferences, new ways of using them are becoming clear, such as the need to transfer data. It is easy to see why the French employees working on the front and central sections of the fuselage would need to share their plans, reports and other documents with their British colleagues designing the wings of the aircraft. The networks and telecommunications department has therefore chosen to enrich the video conferencing system functions with the Polycom's People+Content data sharing service.

"The system is transparent and easy to use. Users don't even need to dial the numbers of their correspondents as this is all organized," explained Éric Pla. Moreover, from the perspective of simplifying long-distance meetings, some of the rooms are reserved exclusively for video conferences. "Accessible to all employees, these make the work process easier and widen access to video conferencing," Éric Pla continued.

## ... a telephone call

This innovative strategy has been hugely successful. Airbus employees have become used to organising conferences in these rooms. Each month, not less than 1200 meetings are held at distance, which represents a volume of 1500 to 1700 hours a month. "Video conferencing has become a means of communication that is as widespread as the telephone or email", said Éric Pla. From now on, for the teams involved in the design and development of Airbus aircraft, there is no longer any need to travel. Considerable savings have been made for the management of Airbus on settling expense accounts whilst the users themselves are happy to be able to avoid a long series of repeated journeys. "Following analysis to justify the investments made, it became clear that the investment was paid off as soon as the first video conference involving ten people took place. We are now working on the acoustics of the rooms and localisation - in other words on the fringe aspects of the service", the Airbus networks and telecommunications technician explained. Convinced of the economic and strategic benefits of such systems, Airbus is now working on the setting up of a video conferencing department in all of the French, German, British and Spanish sites. Soon reservations, requests for information, advice and other monitoring of service contracts will be managed in this way at a European level.



## Airbus, an international wingspan

When it was formed in 1970, GIE Airbus Industrie was a consortium of France's Aérospatiale and the German DASA. Spain's CASA joined the consortium in 1971, followed in 1979 by British Aerospace. The first Airbus aircraft, the A300B, took off from Toulouse on 28 October 1972. After that the companies Belairbus (Belgium) and Fokker (Netherlands) took part in some programs. Driven by the development of the A380 in 2000, Airbus changed its legal organization to become an integrated company in 2001.



The manufacturer now belongs to EADS, which holds 80 % of the shares. It is made up of five "NatCos" (National Companies) :

- Airbus Central Entity (Toulouse);
- Airbus France (Toulouse, Saint-Nazaire, Méaulte, Nantes);
- Airbus UK (Filton, Broughton);
- Airbus Deutschland (Hamburg, Bremen, Stade etc.);
- Airbus España (Getafe, Illescas, Puerto Real).

The manufacturer also has subsidiaries in the United States, China and Japan, spare parts warehouses in Hamburg, Frankfurt, Washington, Beijing and Singapore, training centres in Toulouse, Miami, Hamburg and Beijing and 130 sales offices in companies all over the world. In addition, Airbus relies on strong partnerships with large international companies as well as a network of 1500 suppliers present in around thirty countries.

## Solutions chosen by Airbus

### • The VSX range

The VSX family of products enables you to access the power of Polycom unified collaborative communications solutions. With the greatest breadth and depth of integrated video, voice, and Web solutions, only Polycom delivers the ultimate communications experience. Our market-leading conferencing and collaboration products, supported by world-class service, enable people and organisations to maximise their effectiveness and productivity. Add to that the most experience and proven best practices in the industry, and it's clear why Polycom has become the smart choice for organisations seeking a strategic advantage in a real-time world.



### • The PVX system

Advanced software application delivers Polycom's premium quality audio, video and content sharing to your PC and USB camera.



### • MGC bridge platforms

Polycom's MGC Unified Conferencing solutions, which include the MGC-25, MGC-50, and MGC-100, deliver reliable and secure multipoint and gateway conferencing with unique easy-to-use features - for any application, any endpoint, any network!



To find out more...

- [www.airbus.com](http://www.airbus.com)
- [www.ftegt.fr](http://www.ftegt.fr)
- [www.polycom.com](http://www.polycom.com)

If you would like more information, contact [karen.bretecher@polycom.com](mailto:karen.bretecher@polycom.com)

©2006 Polycom, Inc. All rights reserved.

Polycom and the Polycom logo design are registered trademarks and MGC, Click & View, Polycom PathNavigator, Polycom OneDial, Polycom Office, Global Management System, People+Content, Siren, Polycom StereoSurround and iPriority are trademarks of Polycom, Inc.

All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Information in this document is subject to change without notice.



**Polycom EMEA Headquarters:** 270 Bath Road, Slough, Berkshire SL1 4DX, United Kingdom, (T) +44 (0)1753 723000, (F) +44 (0)1753 723010

**Polycom (France) Sarl:** Tour Areva, 31st Floor, 1 place de la Coupole, 92084 la Defense, Paris, France, (T) +33 141 321 999, (F) +33 141 321 998

**Polycom (Germany) GmbH:** Am Söldnermoos 17, 85399 Hallbergmoos, Germany, (T) +49 (0)811-9994 - 100, (F) +49 (0)811-9994 - 200

**Polycom (Italy) S.r.l.** Via Rivoltana 2/d, 20090 Segrate, MI, Italy, (T) +39 02 753 99 210, (F) +39 02 75 39 92 49

**Polycom (Spain) S.A.** Lopez de Hoyos 35 - 1º, 28002 Madrid, Spain, (T) +34 91 7459973, (F) +34 91 7459999

**Polycom Headquarters:** 4750 Willow Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588 (T) 1.800.POLYCOM (765.9266) for North America only.

Part No. 002 Rev. 05/06