



Unified communications helps Dr. Martens spot emerging trends to stay one step ahead!

Dr. Martens uses StarLeaf video conferencing and calling throughout its business operations and as part of a strategy to double revenue, while streamlining communications from the boardroom right through to the consumer.

Dr. Martens is an iconic brand that has steadfastly remained utterly cool for over 50 years. However, fashion is a fickle business, where fortunes can be made on the whim of celebrity patronage (remember Miley Cyrus in her Dr. Martens on her wrecking ball) and just as easily lost as tastes and trends change.

Predicting and setting trends requires more than historical data analysis, or clever product placement. Instead, today's fashion retailer needs razor sharp reflexes, and a team of people, which are so well connected to the market that they can foresee the seasonality of styles, spot a trend before it fully emerges and match supply to demand. It's an intricate business too. Especially when we consider that Dr. Martens maintains its prestigious 'Made in England' brand, but the bulk of its footwear and apparel is designed in London's trendy Camden Town, manufactured in the Far East and, distributed worldwide, to be sold directly from its retail and online outlets.

Video conferencing has been used in meeting rooms by Dr. Martens for around 10 years. However, there's a new spring in its step, as the company looks to embrace unified communications as part of a strategy to support plans to double revenue, from £200m to £400m, in the next four years. It has chosen StarLeaf as its UC environment, and it is systematically replacing aging video conferencing systems, in meeting rooms, as well as, deploying StarLeaf across its supply chain, out to partners, and most importantly, into each of its retail outlets.

"We've always believed in video conferencing as a mainstay for business communications," said Nigel Harris, Dr. Martens, IT and Operations manager. **"But it wasn't until I was introduced to StarLeaf, that I saw how an advanced cloud UC platform could play out across our entire business, and more specifically, how StarLeaf could help support our sales and grow our revenue."**

To this end, Dr. Martens has installed StarLeaf GT Mini room systems throughout its European offices and, as there's a firm belief in sweating assets, it has registered a number of existing H.323 systems to the StarLeaf Cloud. As part of the deployment, Dr. Martens also uses StarLeaf VMRs for scheduled meetings, makes heavy use of the ad hoc 'QuickMeet™' capability, which allows five people to meet instantly, and of course, as a StarLeaf user, anyone with a soft or hard endpoint can make unlimited point-to-point calls.



However, while swapping out the bulk of its old video meeting room systems has delivered gains, in terms of ease of use, quality, and a rich feature set – it's the StarLeaf Breeze software that is enabling companywide collaboration, which for Nigel Harris is proving to be the real game changer.

“Our sales team and managers are all really comfortable using Breeze, so much so that it is now a preferred communications tool, which they use from home or while travelling. We use the ‘guest invite’ feature to reach out and engage with our suppliers – particularly in China, and this is helping us to cut time to market.

“It’s in our retail stores that we are experiencing the full potential of video collaboration. So far we have equipped all 21 UK stores with a Breeze client running on a PC; this enables our retail manager, who is based in the North West of England, to hold weekly team meetings. This keeps all store managers up to date on retail direction, aware of surplus stocks and gives them the flexibility to react faster, identify emerging trends, change the product mix and move stock so that we have the right product in the right place at the right time. It’s this, time to information and fast decision-making, that is driving increased business. There’s no way that we could achieve such quality and understanding by phone alone.

“Having each store equipped with Breeze, also means that they are able to collaborate, whenever they need to, with each other and of course, they are fully engaged with the business no matter how regional or remote the location.”

StarLeaf is used across the board at Dr. Martens. It might not be able to predict the weather, or what Miley Cyrus is going to wear in her next video – but it does support the company's decision making from the board room, and from design right through to customer purchase, allowing teams to execute with razor sharp reflexes resulting in an improved ability to match supply to demand.

For more information, visit www.starleaf.com.