

Dimension Data offices support effective collaboration

Field

Information and Communication Technologies (Digital Workplace)

Country

Czech Republic

Project objective

Dimension Data Czech Republic is continuing to grow and new office space was needed. One of the main motivations for the new premises was also an effort to maximise the efficiency and ease of communication within the company, including employees working in the field, from home or from a branch in another country. An important requirement was also to make cooperation in shared areas more efficient.

The solution

Dimension Data's new offices are located in the modern administrative building Main Point Pankrác. The premises have a total area of 2,000 square metres, with 18 conference rooms equipped with state-of-the-art technology based on Cisco technologies, 40 separate offices, 165 meeting rooms and 125 shared workplaces covering the needs of teams of various sizes and focus. The technology was part of the architectural design, so the size, acoustics and colour of rooms was tailored to the needs of communication tools. One of the advantages of this is the clean lines of the rooms, with no visible cables, for instance.

Results

- Attractive office space supporting modern work methods
- 2,000 square metres in total
- 18 conference rooms
- Cutting-edge technologies for effective communication and collaboration
- Adaptation to meet the needs of small work teams
- Intuitive operation from touch panels and screens
- Unification of previously diverse means of communication
- Support of shared workplaces and lockers for personal belongings
- High mobility, the ability to move around the building with constant wireless connectivity
- Perfect layout, including acoustics that adapt to the needs of a specific space
- Close links to the company's information architecture

Summary

In 2016, Dimension Data Czech Republic ordered a complete tailored design for new office space to improve existing internal and external communication capabilities, thus supporting modern work methods. Architectural design was created by Studio Perspektiv s.r.o., resulting in 2,000 square metres of office space, jam-packed with state-of-the-art technology, especially communications and videoconferencing.

Client profile

Dimension Data is a technology integrator and managed services provider. It helps its clients achieve new horizons by adapting and using innovative technologies. It is a global leader in the design, optimisation and management of modern technological environments. It enables the effective use of data in the digital age, converting it into information that helps businesses grow. The company was founded in 1983 and its annual turnover is \$US 8 billion.

Dimension Data is based in Johannesburg, South Africa, and employs 28,000 people in 46 countries around the world. The company brings together cutting-edge technology from market leaders and specialised innovators. It is a member of the NTT Group.

Project background

One of the most fundamental reasons for the change of office space was the effort to significantly improve internal communication capabilities and make cooperation within and outside the branch more effective. The new premises should also serve as a showroom for potential clients who are thinking about implementing modern office technology.

The first considerations about new offices began in 2014, when a wide range of communication technologies was used within Dimension Data, quite literally according to the specific needs of each

individual. An important aspect of the entire project was, therefore, to unify the means of communication and associated habits. Naturally, with an emphasis on effective teamwork, both locally and as part of international projects.

One of the project objectives was to improve the use of shared workplaces and offer employees sufficient flexibility in the form of high mobility and diverse ways to work and collaborate through a wide choice of workrooms that vary in equipment and size.

The customer's requirements and expectations

Right from the start, the task of building new office space took place in collaboration with regular employees.

The main objectives were:

- Attractive office space supporting modern work methods
- Cutting-edge technologies for effective communication and collaboration both within and outside the company
- Adaptation to meet the needs of small work teams
- Simple control/operation and connection using standard tools
- The unification of previously diverse means of communication
- Support of shared workplaces with lockers for personal belongings (charger, mouse, documents, etc.)
- High-speed wireless connectivity with the ability to automatically select the best access point depending on signal quality
- An example of the links (synergies) between architecture and technology for potential customers
- Options for further expansion, including an advanced booking system for meeting rooms
- A mid-term return on investment

“Internal and external communications, including videoconferencing, form a major part of our day-to-day work, and a qualitative shift forward has had positive impacts on all our colleagues and the company as a whole. The technology in the new office space has significantly streamlined communications, many processes are now largely automated and videoconferencing is a matter of moments. Compared to the past, it’s also much easier to involve colleagues in the field - a web browser is all we need. Another added value is that we have been able to unify communication habits. But it’s not just about communication, an important part is sharing work places, making work with meeting rooms more effective and so on. The cherry on the cake is that we can show our clients everything we can do and how their organisations could work too.”

Petr Hübl, CEO, Dimension Data Czech Republic

The solution

In terms of communication, Dimension Data’s new offices at Main Point Pankrác rely on Cisco technology, especially WebEx Board LCD screens with a capacitive touchscreen. These devices can be used as a video conferencing solution or as whiteboards for presentations, or for working with content, including drawing, sharing, etc. Wireless connectivity is a huge benefit, as the meeting room is clean and completely free of wires and has absolutely everything that employees need for seamless communication at their disposal. A total of 11 of these boards were delivered, of which 10 are in the new premises, the other is located at the Brno branch.

The new premises have 18 meeting rooms of varying sizes, which are adapted for a specific type of cooperation. Phone booths in the open office space are perfectly soundproofed, so that colleagues are not disturbed when an employee makes calls. In turn, Webex rooms, with a screen and camera, allow effective video-calls or webinars. However, Dimension Data does not lack spacious meeting rooms for large meetings that are attended by people from the branch as well as employees in the field using connections from different locations and various end devices. The floor plan, colour and acoustics of all rooms were designed to best fit the communication technology used and the room’s intended purpose. All this with an emphasis on design, where for example, acoustics are dealt with in the form of special pictures that do not disturb the room’s natural appearance.

High-quality sound, a microphone that only picks up the speaker’s voice without background noise, an excellent auto zoom camera and screen ensure that

a video conference call is very close to a personal meeting. Cisco’s Speaker Track and Presenter Track technology for videoconferencing detects and tracks the speaker when they sit, but also when they stand up to present charts on the board behind them. Similar to a cameraman, it focuses on the speaker during large conferences. The same method is used during discussion groups, where the camera intelligently zooms in on the speaker, or pans out to take in the whole group.

Of course, collaboration in the workplace also takes place in the spirit of automation and ease of use. Conference rooms can be booked using the LCD screen in front of each meeting room. At the same time, the screen shows whether the room is already booked and for how long. The room can also be booked in Outlook or using a mobile phone. Prior to booking, the room automatically adjusts the lighting, draws the blinds and sets the temperature to a comfortable level.

Part of the project was the delivery of a welcome zone with an LED wall showing corporate videos and other information about the company. The wall is made of 200 LED modules, which can be used to create virtually any shape within the framework of the installation. Thanks to its high luminance, the image is clearly legible even in bright daylight.

All the new office technology is connected to the cloud, which, among other things, increasingly allows new technologies to be used in the field or by employees working from home and fundamentally simplifies the connection of new clients. Individual elements are linked to the internal elements of Dimension Data’s information architecture as required.

Lockers with PINs or chip cards for employees’ personal belongings were part of the project. Individual workplaces were tailored to allow effective sharing and migration. High-quality wireless connections with roaming were a matter of course; Wi-Fi is even available on the roof.

Overall, the new premises have been adapted to the various forms of day-to-day activities and cooperation. Regardless of their current needs - not just communication - employees can always find the ideal office or open space and get on with their work or private matters in as much comfort as possible. All of this with an emphasis on promoting individual creativity.

Implementation took 8 months, and part of the project’s success was involving IT employees familiar with the technologies - from the very beginning, they could direct requirements, so that the resulting solution took the most effective form.

The value of the solution

Dimension Data’s new offices are based on state-of-the-art technologies that provide both high efficiency and added value in the form of support for modern communications and new work methods, thus enabling future development. This includes for example an advanced booking solution for meeting rooms. The initial phase was about communication and cooperation, but the goals are far greater, one of them being a Work Life Balance.