



JACKSON | SPALDING

▶ **Industry**

Marketing - Small to Medium Sized Business

▶ **Daily Use**

- Staff meetings
- Project management
- Multi-site collaboration
- Client communications

▶ **Solution**

- Polycom® HDX® telepresence solutions connect staff in Jackson Spalding's Atlanta headquarters with employees in Athens, Ga., and Dallas
- Consultants in New York and San Diego use Polycom video conferencing software on Webcam-equipped PCs to engage face-to-face with other team members

▶ **Results and Benefits**

- Remote employees stay engaged with the Atlanta office
- Creative professionals in all offices save time collaborating on projects distributed across multiple offices
- Team members don't have to be in the same location to brainstorm face-to-face, or to communicate complex or visually oriented ideas
- Brainstorming is more productive, resulting in better work that's completed more quickly
- Company events and social gatherings held via telepresence extend the agency's high-energy culture to every office, which keeps remote staff from feeling disconnected

Jackson Spalding Keeps Creative Collaboration Flowing with Polycom® Telepresence

Overview

Jackson Spalding knows a thing or two about collaboration. One of the largest independent marketing communications firms in the country, the Atlanta-based firm employs a team of 80 creative professionals who develop advertising, media and public relations campaigns for such clients as Orkin Pest Control, Delta Air Lines, Chick-fil-A, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Wells Fargo Insurance, and Primrose Schools.

With offices in Athens, Georgia, and Dallas, Texas and remote employees on the U.S. coasts, team members from throughout the country are called upon every day to contribute to client projects. When traditional voice conference calls weren't enabling employees in remote offices to engage fully with the core team in Atlanta, Jackson Spalding invested in high-definition (HD) room telepresence solutions from Polycom. Now, Polycom telepresence plays a role in the Jackson Spalding creative process, powering everything from brainstorming sessions and project management meetings to client communications and agency "all hands" social hours. With Polycom, Jackson Spalding's satellite offices can realize the efficiencies that come from "location liberation"—staying engaged with the Atlanta headquarters and its culture, saving time collaborating on projects distributed across multiple offices, and brainstorming face-to-face with team members and clients.

A Crucial Need to Collaborate

Before the summer of 2010, staff meetings at Jackson Spalding could be a logistical headache. The monthly conferences involved dozens of agency employees in Atlanta trying to communicate by phone with their counterparts in Athens and Dallas. In New York and San Diego, telecommuting agency employees also phoned in. "Each month, we bring all our folks together for a large staff meeting," explains Gene Crosby, chief operating officer at Jackson Spalding. "Handling it all by phone left the remote employees feeling disconnected. So we tried streaming video, but that's one-way communication—not at all interactive. And Skype just didn't have the quality to make it worth the effort."

Crosby says the need for quality collaboration was essential. "There's something about seeing the person you're working with that a voice alone can't provide," Crosby says. "We needed to be able to communicate face-to-face, even if we weren't in the same place."

The answer was a network of room telepresence systems: a Polycom® HDX® 8000 system in Atlanta, and mobile cart-based Polycom® HDX® 6000 systems in Athens and Dallas. Two employees telecommuting from New York and San Diego downloaded Polycom personal video conferencing software for use with camera-equipped PCs.

"Polycom improves the work we do. It's easier to get great work when people feel engaged."

Gene Crosby, Chief Operating Officer, Jackson Spalding

► *“We’re not a huge company, so from a sheer numbers perspective, some might wonder why we made the investment. But what we’ve gotten from Polycom telepresence has been immeasurable. Hands down, people say Polycom was the best purchase we made last year.”*

Gene Crosby, Chief Operating Officer, Jackson Spalding

For Jackson Spalding, adopting Polycom telepresence has been transformative. “The quality of Polycom telepresence is extraordinary, so we can communicate ideas much more quickly. Even if you brainstorm on a whiteboard, the other party can see it.”

Teams are more cohesive, as well. “It’s easier to bring people onto a project, because they don’t feel disconnected,” says Crosby. “And working face-to-face, they contribute more. One of our owners told me he’s now more likely to agree to participate in a brainstorm, because he won’t have to just sit and listen to people talking on a phone for an hour or two.”

Engaging Everyone, Everywhere

Because Polycom systems are based on industry standards, Jackson Spalding also can meet and brainstorm with clients via telepresence. “Polycom improves the work we do,” he says. “It’s easier to get great work when people feel engaged.”

That, says Crosby, is a big part of the popularity of telepresence at Jackson Spalding. It’s one thing to keep its carefully cultivated work/life culture bubbling in Atlanta, but extending that experience to remote offices was more difficult before telepresence came along. Now all employees enjoy virtual happy hours and other social gatherings. And a recent annual gathering included people from every office acting together in a skit—all performed via telepresence. “Polycom telepresence is a huge hit,” he says. “We like it a lot in Atlanta, but they love it in the other offices.”

It helps, too, that launching a meeting via telepresence is as simple as entering a speed-dial code. “Polycom is so easy to use,” says Crosby. “You turn it on, dial the office you want to reach, and you’re done. It’s like picking up a phone and expecting it to work.”

Deploying a Game Changer

Crosby also has high praise for Providea Conferencing, a Polycom Telepresence Certified Plus partner that assessed Jackson Spalding’s needs and recommended the ideal Polycom solutions. “In terms of overall functionality and value, Polycom was the best fit for Jackson Spalding,” says Mark Stouffer, account manager at Providea, whose Atlanta office is just blocks from the agency. “It’s been a big success. They had some experience with video conferencing, but nothing like what’s available with Polycom HDX systems. Polycom has really been a game changer for them.”

But Polycom is a hit with more than just the employees who work in Athens, Dallas and beyond. Even the agency’s accountants are sold on it. “We’re not a huge company, so from a sheer numbers perspective, some might wonder why we made the investment,” he says. “But what we’ve gotten from Polycom telepresence has been immeasurable. Hands down, people say Polycom was the best purchase we made last year.”

Learn More

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Providea Conferencing

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Real-Time Communication and Collaboration

- One Polycom® HDX® 8000 room telepresence systems
- Two cart-based Polycom® HDX® 6000 room telepresence systems
- Polycom® video conferencing software for PCs

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