



Oil and Gas Company Unifies Collaboration Technologies

Bellatrix Exploration Ltd. deploys TelePresence technology and Jabber solution at scale by building on solid network foundation from Cisco.

Challenges

- Upgrade legacy network to support rapid growth of business
- Pursue unified collaboration strategy for maximum interoperability across network
- Deploy new infrastructure capable of scaling to accommodate mergers and acquisitions

Headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, Bellatrix Exploration Ltd. is an oil and gas company operating in the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin. Publicly traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange and NYSE MKT under the symbol BXE, Bellatrix is actively developing core resources at the Cardium and Notikewin/Falher intervals in a venture valued at US\$122 million.

Bellatrix has nearly doubled in size over the last four years. With more growth on the horizon, the company's IT team recognized that its legacy network could not support a rapidly expanding footprint. This lack of scalability arose from two major factors. First, Bellatrix depended on multiple vendors to supply a heterogeneous array of hardware and software across its IT environment, often resulting in a lack of interoperability among key network components. At the same time, Bellatrix continued its aggressive acquisition strategy, leaving IT staff with the difficult task of integrating disparate personnel, processes, and technology into a cohesive environment for maximum efficiency and scale.

With many new users entering the network, the Bellatrix IT team saw the need for smarter collaboration tools to facilitate richer, more productive interactions among a rapidly expanding community of employees, vendors, and customers. These tools would be especially helpful for maintaining a stronger connection to the company's facilities in Drayton Valley, reachable by a three-and-a-half-hour drive into the Canadian Prairies. However, advanced collaboration tools would have placed even greater pressure upon Bellatrix's overstressed network, contributing to the ongoing problem of limited scale. "We needed an infrastructure that could grow alongside us," says Mark Wade, network analyst at Bellatrix. "That meant unifying the bulk of our technologies under a single vendor. And for that, Cisco was the obvious choice."

Case Study | Bellatrix Exploration Ltd.

Size: 150 employees

Location: Calgary, Alberta

Industry: Oil and gas





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- Mark Wade, Network Analyst, Bellatrix Exploration Ltd.

Solutions

- Cisco TelePresence technology enables high-performance videoconferencing for executives
- Cisco Jabber intuitive solution offers unified communications, both in the office and the field
- Cisco Business Edition 6000 delivers end-to-end collaboration for up to 1000 users on 2500 devices

A collaboration strategy is only as effective as the network on which it is built. Among the IT team at Bellatrix, a consensus soon emerged: Cisco was the sole vendor capable of providing a full suite of enterprise-class collaboration tools perfectly integrated with an advanced network. “I’ve worked with other major vendors on a number of occasions, but I just keep coming back to Cisco,” says Meherun Nesha, senior solutions architect at Bellatrix. “All the pieces fit together. The various system components add up to a unified, simplified, scalable infrastructure that enables total consistency across our network. For example, the Catalyst 3850 switch can help us streamline old processes by managing both wired and wireless traffic.”

With the right foundation in place, Bellatrix moved forward with the deployment of a sophisticated Cisco® TelePresence® infrastructure to enable high-performance videoconferencing for a rapidly growing business. “We began by deploying a TelePresence EX90 system on one of our executive’s desktops,” says Wade. “That went smoothly, so now we’re preparing to place EX90s on the desks of executives and directors across the company. Then we tie it all together with Cisco Business Edition 6000, which enables end-to-end collaboration for up to 1000 users on 2500 devices. That gives us plenty of room to grow.”

The Bellatrix team is also utilizing the Cisco Jabber® unified communications solution that enables access to a range of collaboration capabilities, including real-time presence information, instant messaging, voice, video, and desktop sharing. “Compared to the other unified solutions we’ve seen, Jabber offered the smoothest, most intuitive experience,” says Wade.

Throughout the company’s implementation and management of the Cisco collaboration solutions, Bellatrix has relied on the guidance and support of a trusted Cisco Gold Certified Partner. “Bell Canada worked with us to design a new communications infrastructure,” says Nesha. “They also helped us choose the right Cisco products and services to align with our objectives. For example, Bell suggested Cisco Smart Net Total Care, a service that automates inventory and contract management on our installed base. It’s a huge time-saver for us.”





Results

- Achieved greater consistency by choosing unified collaboration solution from a single vendor
- Increased productivity by integrating communication channels
- Implemented wireless technologies in remote areas to assist in disaster-recovery efforts

Of all the benefits associated with the deployment of Cisco collaboration technology at Bellatrix, consistency is the most valuable of all. “These days, we’re an all-Cisco shop and I love it,” says Wade. “It’s so much easier to be working with the same vendor across your whole network. And if you run into problems with any of your devices, Cisco provides fantastic end-to-end support.”

With advanced collaboration tools built upon a robust network foundation, Bellatrix employees have more opportunities to be reachable, flexible, and productive. “I love how Jabber integrates with our wireless infrastructure,” says Wade. “If someone calls my desk phone when I’m in a server room, Jabber will pick up the call. All of these different forms of communication converge into a nearly seamless stream.”

“If you remove barriers around communication, productivity will go up,” adds Nesha. “Desktop TelePresence will make it far less necessary for our executives to make regular trips up to Drayton Valley. Meanwhile, our colleagues up north will really appreciate the opportunity to communicate with headquarters in a way that feels more immediate and immersive.”

After Cisco technology has been fully deployed in even the most remote locations, Bellatrix will be able to respond more swiftly and effectively to outages and disasters. “It won’t be long before we’ll have wireless capabilities even in our most remote locations,” says Wade. “In the event of a crisis or outage, we may be able to notify support staff by connecting our iPhones to the wireless network. If the outage is severe, Cisco TAC [Technical Assistance Center] can apply its expertise to help minimize time to resolution. All of these new capabilities are hugely valuable for any company looking to maintain stability.”

Next Steps

The Bellatrix team has a lot of exciting ideas for expanding its deployment of Cisco technologies. One of their most innovative undertakings is the implementation of a supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) infrastructure to help ensure greater control of the company’s remote communications equipment. “Our design includes a Cisco switch, router, and access point in the field, which will serve as a major boost to productivity,” says Wade. “With flexible, scalable solutions like that at our disposal, we’ll be ready for just about anything.”



For More Information

- To find out more about Cisco collaboration solutions, visit www.cisco.com/go/collaboration.
- To find out more about Cisco wireless solutions, visit www.cisco.com/go/wireless.
- To find out more about Cisco Smart Net Total Care, visit www.cisco.com/go/smartnettotalcare.

Products & Services

Collaboration

- Cisco Jabber
- Cisco Business Edition 6000
- Cisco TelePresence System EX Series
- Cisco TelePresence Codec C90

Wireless

- Cisco Aironet® 3600 Series
- Cisco 5500 Series Wireless Controllers

Enterprise Network

- Cisco Catalyst® 2900 Series Switches
- Cisco Catalyst 3750 Series Switches
- Cisco Catalyst 3850 Series Switches
- Cisco Catalyst 4500 Series Switches with Virtual Switching System (VSS)
- Cisco Integrated Services Routers
- Cisco Unified Access™ CT5760 Controllers

Services

- Cisco Smart Net Total Care



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