



# **STEPPING UP** **COLLABORATION** **WITH SPARK**

**"Skype for Business is improving the way we work within Westpac - it's amazing to see how collaboration and teamwork has skyrocketed with the ability to share and create digitally."**

Richard Jarrett, Head of IT Foundation  
& Frontline Experience, Westpac

**Behind the Business**



# RAPID ROLL-OUT OF SKYPE FOR BUSINESS

## Accelerating Westpac NZ's digital transformation.

**To be recognised as one of the world's great service companies, Westpac NZ has been looking at ways to cut down process and speed up the time it takes to make decisions for its customers.**

Over the last few years, Westpac has focused on leveraging digital technology to do this. Partnering with Spark for a Skype for Business deployment is its latest move that's helping the bank to find new and smarter ways of doing business.

"Skype for Business is going to equip our people with the latest unified communication and video conferencing tools," says Head of IT Foundation & Frontline Experience at Westpac, Richard Jarrett.



"It will mean we can collaborate more effectively, be more productive and offer more to our customers."

"With almost 5,000 staff spread across offices and branches throughout New Zealand, it's a large project and one that is supporting a cultural shift in the way Westpac works."

### Benefiting from rapid deployment

Keen to roll out Skype for Business as quickly as possible and with minimal risk, Westpac turned to long-standing technology partners and Microsoft experts, Spark, to do this.

A key, multi-disciplinary team of Westpac and Spark representatives was set up to lead the deployment using agile methodology. Along with IBM representatives and other technical suppliers as needed, the team were able to deploy a Minimum Viable Product across the business – rolling out Skype using a staged approach.

"A huge amount of value is gained from the weekly tasks and learning loop that agile development promotes," says Richard. "No context is lost and technical problems are discovered early on."

"In the first three months of the project alone, we were able to establish capability that saved over 12 weeks of time over a conventional waterfall approach."

### About Westpac NZ

- Founded in 1861
- 4,900 employees
- 620 ATMs
- 1.35 million customers

**"Collaborating will be a much more natural part of everyday work, rather than a planned activity."**

Richard Jarrett, Head of IT Foundation  
& Frontline Experience, Westpac

Westpac staff are also enjoying the staged release that agile development allows. "It's allowed our people to come up to speed with the new ways of working without being overwhelmed. Incident calls were at less than one percent in the week following the first release and have been even lower as we deploy more Skype features across the bank."

## Banking on a better experience

Just seven months into the project, all of Westpac's corporate staff have the ability to view each other's availability status using online presence, as well as the use of instant messaging for rapid and direct communication. Almost 70 percent are using the more advanced services of Skype, such as video conferencing, voice calling, desktop sharing and Outlook meeting bookings.

Richard says it's benefiting many Westpac teams based right throughout the country. Its Agribusiness unit are realising the value as they collectively strategise about better ways to help rural customers using instant message, desktop sharing and video.

"Significant benefits are also being noted by our technology teams based out of Auckland and Wellington – it's showing up via faster release cycles for new digital banking solutions. They were among the first in the business to receive Skype and say it's much easier to share work and progress ideas as a team."

## Accelerating the shift to digital

While the focus is now on deploying Skype for Business across its nationwide business centres and retail branches, the agile team is also rolling out more advanced Skype services to its corporate office-based people. This includes a range of Microsoft Surface Hubs and smaller room systems from Polycom and Logitech.

Richard says using Skype's 'room system' features, the bank now has Skype on its large meeting-room screens and this is proving ideal for team huddles and other internal collaboration meetings.

'Call answering rules' is another advanced Skype feature that is in use and allowing Account Executives to direct callers to relevant support teams when they are not available. While 'response groups' is being used to

**Choosing Skype for Business from Spark means choosing a customer-centred solution that is connected, flexible, secure and supported.**

## Skype for Business

- Built by Microsoft – implemented, hosted and managed by Spark
- Meet, message and call with anyone, anywhere, on any device
- Powerful productivity with Office

automatically distribute callers across relevant support teams within the bank.

Richard says with Spark's help, deploying advanced Skype features like this has been easy and will make impactful improvements to the service customers receive.

## Spark – the value add

As a managed solution, Spark look after all of the necessary Skype for Business patching and updates. Westpac no longer need to invest in upgrading in-house technology or worry about ongoing maintenance.

**"Agile development and its fast feedback loops from users has helped us capture feedback as close to deployment as possible, resulting in significant time savings."**

Richard Jarrett, Head of IT Foundation  
& Frontline Experience, Westpac



The bank has also moved its traditional voice lines over to SIP using Spark's Voice Connect platform. Richard says SIP voice supports a better Skype user experience, and will also assist in better quality conferencing for another video solution Westpac has deployed to cater to larger group meetings, Spark's ReadyCloud Video.

"Together, they offer a range of video options for our staff to connect internally or externally. Someone based in Whanganui can easily use Skype video to join a large ReadyCloud Video team meeting based out of an Auckland meeting room."

"The move to both Skype for Business and ReadyCloud Video is presenting us with new options for the way we work internally, as well as with our customers, suppliers and partners. It's reducing the need for our staff to travel and at the same time helping meet our corporate commitment to reduce emissions," finishes Richard.

**If you're ready to create better customer connections, speak to your Client Manager or call us on:**



**0800 694 364**