

**SMART Story**

# SMART's collaboration solutions enable O2 to work better, connected.



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**Alan Parkin**, programme manager, infrastructure design and delivery, O2

With 29,000 employees across the group servicing 45.8 million fixed and mobile customers across Europe, O2 combines sophisticated voice and data products that help people get more out of their lives. SMART's collaboration technology provides O2 with much the same benefit, translating into more time, less travel and reduced costs. Uniting disparate teams and enabling them to collaborate effectively regardless of location, SMART's technology wholly supports O2's ethos that "we're better, connected."

## The challenge

O2's business case is built around realising efficiencies, improving time to market and reducing costs for the business. The company has multiple offices throughout the UK and headquarters in Slough where it also has two other offices. With frequent travel between the Slough and Leeds locations, the company realised the setup had to change.

"We decided to amalgamate the three Slough offices into one location accommodating 2,200 people," explains Alan Parkin, programme manager, infrastructure design and delivery. "We recognised that uniting disparate teams and improving inter-departmental collaboration was central to delivering an outstanding customer experience. And the infrastructure to support this would be critical to success."

Previously, all meeting rooms contained a conference phone and flip chart, but projectors had to be booked through reception and a great deal of time was wasted simply 'setting up'. With only 47 meeting rooms - half the number previously available - the new Slough site demanded a more productive and collaborative working environment. A smooth and timely transition between meetings would be essential to ensure that the new office has the meeting room capacity to support operational needs.

## The solution

O2 decided to investigate interactive technologies. The decision was taken to trial SMART Technologies' collaboration solutions and five SMART Board™ interactive whiteboards were installed across the Leeds and Slough sites. The SMART Boards network using Bridgit™ conferencing software, allowing people in any location to join a data conference, use touch screen commands, write in digital ink over any application, generate and integrate data, share desktops and write and save notes immediately.

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The pilot was so successful that almost all of the 47 meeting rooms in the new Slough office will have a SMART Board and the boardroom will have two SMART Podiums (formerly the Sympodium interactive pen display). Every floor will also have one or more SMART Boards in 'Our Space' areas for impromptu meetings. Road shows are planned to demonstrate the capabilities of the technology and designated "shapers" from each directorate will cascade output from monthly meetings. Supported by user-guide booklets, a self-help intranet portal has also been developed to help users get the most from the new technology.



## The future

“The impact of SMART’s collaboration technology has been so significant that we plan to install SMART Boards in our Leeds, Bury, Preston Brook and Glasgow call centres, as well as rolling it out to offices across the UK,” concludes Alan. “Our training department also recognises the potential to train staff using the SMART Boards, reducing travel and costs whilst improving productivity. I have no doubt that embracing SMART’s technology to drive change in our meeting and training culture will prove transformational for the O2 business.”

## The results

It has been estimated that if 25% of O2 staff used SMART solutions to conduct meetings, the company could save up to £15,000 a week. The savings would be realised through reduced travel between their Leeds and Slough offices.

Alan’s own infrastructure design and delivery team of more than 30 people use the SMART technology to generate significant efficiencies from their monthly meetings. Previously, the meeting had to take place on two separate days - one in the North and one in the South - with presenters travelling to both meetings and team members to their respective areas. This meeting is now conducted on one day, involving the entire team simultaneously via the SMART Board.

“The reduction in travel, time and associated costs is quite staggering,” says Alan. “The senior team has gained a day a month in time and, as no one has to travel, the overall productivity of the team is greatly enhanced. It’s a win-win situation for everyone.”

Location is no longer a barrier to collaboration and a similar pattern is being adopted by teams across the O2 business. For three weeks, one project team of eight people had been trying to meet to approve a design spec but diaries simply would not coordinate. Using the SMART solutions to collaborate between Leeds and Slough, the work was completed within half an hour, not only saving time and money but also enabling the team to complete the project three months ahead of schedule.

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