



Case Study

NZTE Takes ‘Me Mahi Tahī Tātou’ to Heart with Global Communication and Zoom

The New Zealand Trade & Enterprise (NZTE) Digital Operations department is far from what you’d imagine a government department is like.

“When we advertise a role we’re usually overwhelmed with responses,” says Aaron Evans, Director Digital Operations at New Zealand Trade and Enterprise. “We have the best job in the country. We work for a cause: New Zealand.”

NZTE is tasked with growing the country’s economy and reputation by connecting international investors and exporters with local high-growth opportunities with technology playing a key role.

Digitally broken

“It wasn’t always that way,” recalls Aaron, who describes the organisation as “digitally broken” when he joined five years ago. While there had been efforts to digitise processes throughout 53 offices in 30 locations around the globe, nothing really worked as it should. “Digital was a dirty word,” he remembers.

Employees found that they needed 15 minutes to boot up their legacy video conferencing solution and get it working at the start of every meeting, creating friction in the user experience and impeding their mission to help New Zealand succeed.

“We are on the hook for delivering something in the order of billions back to the New Zealand economy,” Evans points out. “There’s no room for inefficiency with targets of this size.”

Because the organization is geographically dispersed in 53 offices across 30 global locations, video communications often replace face-to-face meetings as a critical means of communication

“You can’t get the same nuances from a phone call than from seeing each other on screen,” Evans explains. “It seems small, but video makes it



New Zealand Trade and Enterprise

Founded: 2003

Location: Auckland, New Zealand

Industry: International Trade & Development

Challenges: Unreliable video conferencing solution, friction in the user experience, communicating effectively with other global offices

Solutions: Zoom Meetings, Zoom Rooms

Benefits: Reliable video communications, seamless user experience, improved communication and collaboration with international offices

“With Zoom, we have proven we can connect securely from anywhere, on any device. In other words, we have built a rock-solid, cloud-first strategy that allows us to meet the future no matter what form it takes.”

- Aaron Evans

Director Digital Operations at New Zealand Trade and Enterprise

possible for a BDM (Business Development Manager) in China to have an efficient conversation with someone here in New Zealand.”

Me Mahi Tahi Tātou

“Me Mahi Tahi Tatou” means working together in Maori, and it’s exactly what CEO Peter Chrisp decided must happen when he brought Aaron on board to digitally unite the organisation under the CIO.

“Our CEO welcomed me to the team and then promptly whispered to one side; ‘For goodness sake, please sort out the user experience for video conferencing!’ I was clear on my role from the start.”

NZTE went to market with a request for proposal with two key criteria in mind: it had to work well, and it absolutely had to be easy to use. “When we came across Zoom we thought ‘it can’t be this easy,” says Evans.

Zoom’s unrelenting focus on usability made Zoom Rooms a clear winner for Evans who immediately settled on deploying it in three main conference rooms in Wellington, Auckland, and Singapore.

Zoom proved to be far more reliable than the organisation’s legacy video conferencing platform and Evans received the go-ahead for additional Zoom Rooms deployments in each office. Although Evans initially budgeted for 43 Zoom Rooms, his coworkers’ enthusiasm for Zoom resulted in a much larger deployment. “We have 129 Zoom Rooms so far!” says Evans.

Zero to hero

NZTE’s decision to implement Zoom was the beginning of a video communications model that has transformed virtually every aspect of the organisation, propelling the Digital Operations department from zero to hero in less than a year. NZTE also integrated Zoom with Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Teams applications,

allowing employees to launch meetings without leaving core business tools.

NZTE was empowered to revamp its Pounamu awards, which is an annual internal conference that celebrates the previous year and sets the direction for the year ahead. During past years, the awards have been plagued by poor audio and pixelating video, but last year’s event was completely different.

Evans’ team planned and executed a full green screen studio production with New Zealand-themed backgrounds, animated PowerPoints, and video snippet recaps from earlier sessions played throughout the event, all centrally controlled from Zoom.

“It was fully immersive,” Evans says. “The year’s largest cultural event on Zoom from end to end.”

Favourite features

As a government organisation, NZTE’s employees enjoy Zoom’s security features such as end-to-end encryption, password-protected meetings and recordings, and waiting rooms for preserving the integrity of each conversation. Most of all, however, they like that it’s fun to use.

“People get incredibly creative when it comes to choosing backgrounds,” says Evans.

In-meeting polls and Breakout Rooms have been critical to NZTE’s virtual meetings, bringing the feel of conference room meetings to the digital space.

“Breakout groups are especially productive for brainstorming and fast decision-making,” notes Evans.

Zoom’s newest features are immediately implemented; the latest being the live transcription and interpretation options which are proving to be a crowd favorite.

More than productivity

NZTE is also noticing the benefits of greater diversity in meeting contributions.

“Face-to-face meetings tend to be dominated by a few



attendees, whereas Zoom meetings give quieter personalities the confidence and opportunity to digitally raise their hand and put forward ideas,” Evans said.

Additionally, Zoom is cutting NZTE’s travel down significantly, providing a very welcome cost-saving measure and a tangible step towards its efforts to achieve a zero-carbon footprint by 2050.

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Zoom helps businesses and organizations bring their teams together in a frictionless cloud environment to get more done. Our easy, reliable, video- first unified communications platform for video, voice, content sharing, and chat runs across mobile devices, desktops, telephones, and room systems. Founded in 2011, Zoom is a publicly traded company on Nasdaq (ticker: ZM) and headquartered in San Jose, California.

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