German Savings Banks Association: Enabling real-time collaboration with LoopUp

The umbrella organization of one of the largest financial groups in the world switches to LoopUp to make meetings with colleagues and clients even more productive and profitable

The German Savings Banks Association (Deutscher Sparkassen- und Giroverband - DSGV) is the umbrella organization of the Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe. With 379 savings banks, almost 17,000 branch offices, and nearly 300,000 staff, the Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe is one of the world's largest financial groups. With 520 associated institutions and partner companies, it provides financial services to over 50 million customers throughout Germany. Effective communication across the organization is essential.

A basic dial-in experience

Dimitrios Kekes is a telecommunications, media technology, and infrastructural facility management consultant at the DSGV and is in charge of all telecommunications services. The association was initially using MeetingZone as its basic dial-in provider. Overall, employees were happy with the service as it was simple to use and provided reliable audio.

More functionality and control with LoopUp

When LoopUp acquired MeetingZone in 2018, the company offered Kekes the chance to try out their product. "A small group of IT professionals at our firm conducted a one-month trial of LoopUp", said Kekes. "Everyone really liked the product and it offered us a lot more functionality than the previous solution".

When hosts and guests join a LoopUp call by clicking on the meeting link, they have access to a range of meeting controls.

A simple interface allows them to see exactly who is on the call and who is speaking, and hosts can mute individuals or all guests. LoopUp also offers one-click screen sharing and video conferencing. Although users can still dial in to their LoopUp meetings, they will not be able to access any of these meeting-enhancing features. "Because MeetingZone only offered basic dial-in features, we couldn't see who was on our calls or who was speaking, and we couldn't share slides during a live meeting," said Kekes.

A seamless transition

The IT specialists trialling the product were won over by LoopUp's service and functionality and the organization decided to switch to LoopUp.

LoopUp offers Pay-As-You-Go pricing rather than user licenses and there are no upfront costs. "Another thing I really like about LoopUp is their invoicing", explained Kekes. "It breaks down monthly cost so you can see exactly who was making calls, what type of meeting it was, how often and what office. This means we can understand our company's usage better".

The product deployment was quick and seamless. LoopUp took full care of the transition process, from setting up new accounts for all of the DSGV's users to sending out activation emails and hosting quick training sessions. "I have never seen an easier process", explained Kekes.

> "LoopUp is so easy to use. I haven't needed to ask the customer service team for anything, and our employees can use it without any training."

Dimitrios Kekes, Telecommunications, Media Technology, and Infrastructural Facility Management Consultant at The German Savings Banks Association

Simple-to-use and no training needed

Within a few weeks, people across the company were using LoopUp for many of their calls. "Almost everyone is using LoopUp," said Kekes. "It's so easy to use, I haven't needed to ask the customer service team for anything, and our employees can use it without any training".

One popular LoopUp feature at the DSGV is the ability to join a call by clicking a link. Hosts and guests click the meeting link and are prompted to enter their name and number. LoopUp will then call out to them. The are no downloads or installs required to join a meeting. "Our users no longer have to remember dial in numbers and access codes", said Kekes. "No one has any problems getting onto a LoopUp conference call". On average, 95% of users at the DSGV are no longer dialing in to their meetings and are using the LoopUp meeting link instead.

Real-time collaboration

LoopUp's screen share feature allows users to share content in real-time, without the need to email slides out before a meeting. "We frequently host long calls which can last as long as four hours", said Kekes. "During these meetings, we discuss new laws that have come into place or showcase solutions and products that are currently under development in the Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe. The ability to screen share is critical to these meetings".

LoopUp allows users to share their screen with one click and content can be viewed on any device. Meetings can also be recorded and shared with colleagues who were unable to take part.

Supporting remote working during COVID-19

When the global COVID-19 pandemic forced businesses around the world to implement large-scale working from home in March 2020, the DSGV became even more reliant on LoopUp. "With LoopUp, we were able to keep all our employees productive", said Kekes. "It can take time to get a response to an email and audio-only phone calls are not as efficient as real-time screen sharing. LoopUp allowed our teams to collaborate instantly and kept us connected during the pandemic".

Keeping the financial group connected

LoopUp has become an invaluable asset for the DSGV, keeping the group connected across all its branches and helping the business operate effectively during a global pandemic. And it's not just the users that have taken to the product. "When partners get on a LoopUp call with our staff for the first time, they always want to know more about the product", said Kekes. "It's so easy to use, people are immediately impressed!"