CISCO

ITES

Persistent Systems
Collaborating for growth

Established in 1990, Persistent Systems is recognized as an award-winning technology company specializing in software product development services. With nearly 7000 employees, innovative busi-

Manjiri Ranade,
Associate VP, Persistent Systems Ltd.

ness models, and reusable assets and frameworks, Persistent has utilized their fine-tuned product engineering processes to develop best-in-class solutions for customers in technology, telecommunication, life science, healthcare, banking, and consumer products sectors across North America, Europe, and Asia.

With their rapid global growth, interacting across geographies and time zones for knowledge and expertise sharing was very critical for employees working at Persistent. Being a global organization it was also important that employees understand varied cultures that their peers belonged to in order to relate to each other and the organization in a much better way. Across its offices, employees at Persistent used the telephone, email and video-conferencing besides wikis and newsgroups for information exchange. The need of the hour was for a single collaboration platform, which could facilitate communication in multiple ways and enable continued conversations and follows-ups for knowledge sharing. Persistent was looking for a unified communication stack that could integrate with their systems and be available to all users both onsite, from home and while on travel.

The solution

While looking for a suitable solution to overcome the challenges mentioned above, the company evaluated competing platforms and chose Cisco Quad. Being an enterprise social Platform, Cisco Quad combines the power of social networking with unified communications, business information and content management systems. Cisco Quad sits at the nexus of three areas: Integration of Content, Communications Platform, and Social Capabilities. This enables to break down organizational silos and facilitate group communication. Seamlessly collaborating with their peers across geographies, employees at Persistent can now understand where expertise lies and how best to use that for business benefit. Manjiri Ranade, Associate VP, Persistent Systems Ltd, says, "Given the social appeal of Cisco Quad, virtual collaboration has a human feel to it. Not only our colleagues adopted the solution with ease, the activity level on the system has grown very fast. The benefits are for everyone to see as our team today is more integrated and hence delivering maximum value to our clients with minimum resource allocation."

CSC
Collaborating for Success

Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) is one of the world leaders in the IT and professional services industry. CSC helps its clients to use IT more efficiently to improve their operations and profitability, focus on core

Ashwini Tikoo,
CIO, CSC

competencies and achieve desired business results. With over 7 locations and a talent pool of 24,000 professionals, CSC's growth in India has been truly phenomenal. Today, it is recognized amongst the top 10 IT firms in India and serves several clients globally through its large delivery centers in India.

Growth and the challenges

The need to enter new markets and open up new audiences demanded a significant improvement in organizational effectiveness, accelerating decision-making time, enhanced productivity levels, and seamless mobility & collaboration. The company decided to take a technological leapfrog and switch to the best collaborative solutions.

Engaging Cisco

After going through multiple competitive offerings, CSC India decided to engage Cisco for developing a comprehensive collaboration eco-system within CSC. Initial interaction with the senior management of CSC outlined the following aspects of CSC's requirements. CSC India needed a complete, media-rich unified communications solution that would enable them to work more instantaneously, making it easier for customers to reach them. They were seeking a communications solution that would integrate with other line-of-business applications through an open platform so that CSC India could ensure service quality across multiple sites with multiple Unified Communications products. The company also needed a 'view-at-a-glance' system health for rapid issue identification and resolution.

The Solution

Cisco worked with CSC at its six Indian locations and implemented its advance communication and collaboration solutions. The deployment featured some of the world-class offerings by Cisco like Cisco IPCC, Cisco Call manager, Cisco Unity (Integrated Voice mail), Cisco Video IP Phones and Cisco Meeting Place amongst others. The comprehensive solution addressed all needs put forward by the CSC team.

The Benefits

Post implementation, CSC India has obtained measurable benefits in terms of cost savings, resource utilization and customer service. The implementation has increased mobility and easy access of the resources for employees. Right from increased levels of employee collaboration to effective knowledge transfer, Cisco's solutions have helped to improve CSC's productivity in India. Ashwani Tikoo, CIO, CSC says, "Optimization & effective utilization of resources is one of the biggest challenges that needs to be addressed by the industry as a whole. Cisco has helped us address this challenge effectively and we have already started to see the results unfold. We look forward to more advanced solutions going ahead."advanced solutions going ahead."

IT/ITES: The winds of change

Right from booking a movie ticket to deployment of advanced warheads, Information Technology has penetrated each aspect of human existence. Each day, advances in technology are changing the way we live and it wouldn't be far from the truth to say that it's the information technology companies that is driving this change. The last two decades have seen, innovative companies from California to Bangalore, assume global scale and importance. They have not only created tremendous wealth but also given a source of livelihood to millions across the globe. The growth stories of these companies are as inspirational as they are an illustration of effective management. But all this is undergoing a big change.

The global economic crisis continues to cast its shadow over economies the world over and IT being the pervasive enabler across industries is an obvious victim. Right from moderating demand across sectors and rising cost pressures to issues like professional visa allocation, IT industry is in the midst of several challenges. Many companies have already succumbed to this challenging macro environment. At the same time, there are several progressive organizations, small and big, that are not only fighting these challenges but also establishing global benchmarks of operational excellence in the industry. Here is an analysis of how new technological developments and astute business practices are making the IT/ITES industry thrive.

Optimization

Both common and business sense advocates optimum utilization of resources for a successful business enterprise. This is especially important for IT organizations that have globally dispersed cyber and human resources. The advances in collaboration and dynamic hardware & application provisioning solutions are helping modern organizations achieve new levels of resource optimization. Companies like Cisco are changing the way professionals collaborate with their portfolio of advanced mobility and collaboration solutions. Cisco's Jabber for example enables its users to access presence information, instant messaging, voice, video, desktop sharing, and conferencing on multiple mobile devices.

Optimization is also the buzzword in the IT infrastructure space as more and more companies are going in for virtualization of IT resources. Blocking a sizeable portion of expensive real estate for your servers with all its maintenance and operational issues cannot be termed efficient in its true sense. IT infrastructure providers like Cisco offer clients a comprehensive architecture driven approach that helps reduce costs, protect application performance, and secure the virtualized infrastructure in an efficient way. Manjiri Ranade, Associate VP, Persistent Systems Ltd, says, "IT professionals today are dynamic and move around the world, solutions such as desktop virtualization are critical for high efficiency and add a definitive edge to optimization initiatives of an organization."

Making customer's life easy

'If you can make a customer's life easy, you will certainly make money', this is the thought that defines management experience around the world and IT/ITES is no different. Gone are the days when IT was a new field and customers in different industries were pleased to get whatever they could see on their computer screens. Today, customers are demanding and want IT to be a trouble free and invisible enabler of their business.

Virtualization solutions discussed above are a great help in reducing the time and resource spend for customers. Technologies like cloud are also reshaping the operational model of IT/ITES. Service and Platform as a service have already gained tremendous industry acceptance and stimulating penetration of IT into medium and small enterprises around the world. This is an important development for IT/ITES companies who have significant dependence on the Fortune 500 for business. IT companies around the world are realizing that while the Fortune 500 may

Mr. Janesh Moorjani, President for Enterprise and Public Sector at Cisco India and Saarc outlining his views about the emerging issues in the IT/ITES industry.

Could you give an overview of how Cisco looks at the overall IT/ITES market? Please elaborate on some major challenges that the sector is facing and how Cisco is gearing up to solve these issues for its clients?

Being a traditionally significant adopter of leading edge technology solutions, the IT/ITES sector is one of the largest industry segments for Cisco in India.

This sector has evolved considerably over recent years, especially as tough economic conditions have compelled businesses to trim costs and improve efficiencies, to remain competitive. This has also prompted organisations to follow a non-linear model of expansion, where revenue growth is not tied to increase in head-count. These shifts have brought about closer alignment of technology and business strategies and positions Cisco strongly, as an enabler of business success, to organisations in this segment.

By adopting a 360o engagement model, Cisco works closely with companies in the sector, not just as customers, but also as partners with whom to jointly develop solutions and go-to-market strategies. Cisco's network – centric approach places us at the heart of the technology solution and helps organisations scale seamlessly, streamline internal processes and increase productivity, in addition to saving costs.

With large teams and pervasive global presence, how important is real time collaboration for your clients?

Today's global businesses require faster, more efficient ways to communicate and collaborate with their distributed workforce, worldwide customers, and remote offices. More and more companies rely on virtual teams that bring knowledge and expertise from around the world, without requiring the specialists to physically be in the same location. Organizations need technology that has the power to reach people, share information, and keep diverse teams connected, and the workplace now requires tools that are mobile, social, visual and virtual.

It is this need to connect anywhere and

Janesh Moorjani,
President for Enterprise and Public Sector at Cisco India and Saarc

anytime that has spurred the growth of real – time enterprise collaboration tools, such as Unified Communications, conferencing and business video solutions. The new business collaboration workspace is a platform of communications and collaboration capabilities that can be delivered to every user, regardless of their location or device.

How important is dynamic hardware and application provisioning in the present context and why?

The growth of virtual data centers and multiservice networks have brought tremendous value to customers, while at the same time increasing operational complexity. Although IT departments are constantly looking for new ways to free resources, the move to a fully automated data centre with dynamically allocated resources, self-service provisioning, and service-level chargeback is still a vision for the future.

The emergence of cloud services has increased the need to better coordinate processes within the infrastructure. Without effective management, adherence to SLAs, time to market, cost efficiencies, and compliance with government regulations are all at risk.

Cisco's UCS solution unites computing, networking, storage access, and virtualization into a cohesive system and decouples scale from complexity. It works to reduce TCO at the platform, site, and organizational levels as also to increase IT staff productivity and business agility through just-in-time provisioning and mobility support.

continue to be the major chunk of their business, new opportunities for revenue growth are well and truly placed in the small and medium sector. Solutions such as public clouds are letting IT/ITES companies open up a new revenue stream in these challenging times.

Innovation

Innovation and IT have the same meaning in practical parlance. IT industry has been at the forefront of some of the most intriguing innovations in modern history and that is where their success lies. Launching and selling new advanced solutions is a business imperative for IT/ITES companies around the world. To address the above discussed challenges, IT/ITES organizations are adopting transformational initiatives across the service delivery value chain. Being forerunners in adoption of technology to augment their service delivery, IT/ITES organizations are leveraging technologies like Unified Communications, Video, Virtualization, Cloud to bring in transformative changes in their business process and global delivery model for enhancing productivity, improving efficiency, drive cost containment and greener operations.

But churning out new solutions that are compatible to old ones (legacy) is still a big issue in IT/ITES industry today. Ashwani Tikoo, CIO, CSC says, "One of our major concerns as a cost sensitive and client driven company is legacy compatibility. New solutions being commissioned must work in sync with the old solutions and it's a critical determinant of the solutions we choose for ourselves and our clients." Addressing this issue, leading solution providers like Cisco are working hard towards ensuring that their advanced solutions can talk to the old ones installed in their customers' organisation.

Getting it right

While deciding on incorporating, innovative solutions is certainly a step ahead, it cannot guarantee success. A lot of promising initiatives end up failing because organizations don't embraces them at the core level of their business processes. Successful IT/ITES organizations today are reinventing their business processes to incorporate latest technologies. These companies work closely with thought leaders and technology giants like Cisco to built comprehensive and collaborative architectures that power compelling experiences both within and amongst organizations. Working together in a modular fashion, these capabilities allow these companies to develop an investment plan that helps ensure interoperability of their existing assets.

It is critical to not only choose the right technology but also the right partners. Companies need expert and comprehensive solution providers like Cisco to partner them in taking this leap forward. Cisco's solutions employ a business-centric, product-independent approach to define collaboration strategies and innovative service architectures for companies that are relevant in terms of technology and business goals. Cisco's holistic perspective on collaboration, architecture design and networking combined with a deep understanding of business, allows its clients to maximize the benefits of advanced networking and virtualization solutions.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly these are difficult times and from the looks of it, they are here to stay. To be dynamic and innovative is no longer an option; it's the new business imperative for IT/ITES industry.