

AT&T AND WILLIAMS F1

# AT&T Telepresence Solution<sup>®</sup> connects AT&T Williams on and off the racetrack.

In the competitive, global world of Formula 1, AT&T Williams continues to embrace cutting-edge high-definition video and audio teleconferencing in the 2011 season.

Williams F1 installed two AT&T Telepresence Solution<sup>®</sup> endpoints in 2010—one in its team headquarters in Oxford and the other, a mobile unit, as part of the vital equipment that travels with the AT&T Williams team to certain circuits.

AT&T Telepresence Solution enables Williams F1 to communicate in real-time as if in person. Through AT&T Telepresence Solution, the team's engineers can connect with its trackside

operations at a number of global locations, as well as with key suppliers and partners, throughout the racing season.

“As well as potentially reducing the future need for air travel, the AT&T Telepresence Solution is also expected to help AT&T Williams to reduce its carbon emissions, potentially with positive environmental impact.”

AT&T Telepresence Solution was put to the test throughout 2010 and especially when the volcanic ash cloud in Europe delayed part of the team travelling to Europe from China following the Shanghai Grand Prix.

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## Keeping up to speed with the demands of Williams F1

To better meet the time pressures and challenges of an industry as fast-paced as Formula 1, the AT&T Williams team needed to be able to collaborate “face-to-face” quickly at short notice so travel was not a viable option for team members scattered around the globe. In these interactions, quick decisions needed to be made and data transferred rapidly from each of the European race circuits that host Formula 1 races. In order to transform how the team communicated, AT&T Williams needed a reliable, high-quality videoconferencing system that could stand up to the demands of Formula 1 racing and give the team the competitive edge.

Williams F1 did have a legacy videoconferencing solution, but it was rarely used due to issues with the quality of picture and sound. It had also never been connected to the track, which limited its usefulness. In addition, changes to Formula 1 regulations meant the number of staff allowed to attend Grand Prix had been reduced, as Alex Burns, CEO, Williams F1, explains: “In 2010, all the Formula 1 teams have agreed to cap the number of technical staff attending races. This means that several of our engineers who would normally have travelled to races now stay in the UK—putting even more emphasis on the need for effective communications tools.

To meet Williams F1’s requirement for a more reliable communications method and also comply with Formula 1’s new agreement to reduce the number of staff travelling to race circuits, the AT&T Telepresence Solution was installed in the team’s headquarters in Grove, Oxford in April 2010.

The implementation of the AT&T Telepresence Solution was accelerated to support the request from Williams F1 to have the service implemented in time for the European race season. The system relies on enterprise calendaring (Microsoft Outlook or Lotus Notes) for easy scheduling and has a telephone interface to launch calls at the push of a button.

AT&T provided a turn-key solution, including the room remediation, implementation and calibration of the system, prior to handing it over for management. AT&T continues to offer Williams F1 proactive monitoring and management of the application, co-ordinated network provisioning, remote help desk service and on-site equipment maintenance and repair. The solution runs on AT&T’s Enhanced Virtual Private Network which is also fully managed for Williams F1 by AT&T.

“Video communications are improving and becoming a mainstream area of interest among enterprises seeking to enhance their collaboration capabilities, but they don’t want the hassle of operating the system themselves,” says Julie Smith-Rose, the AT&T Global Service Manager for the AT&T Williams team. “Williams F1 needed a flexible and highly-efficient videoconferencing system enabling team members to interact and collaborate with one another in virtual business meetings, and for AT&T to manage the whole system for them. With the AT&T Telepresence Solution, the team feels like they are really meeting face-to-face, wherever their geographical location, without worrying about the video technology or the challenges of travel.”



*The AT&T Telepresence Solution<sup>SM</sup> is available in a variety of screen options.*

## Securing video meetings

Security of data transfer is crucial to Williams F1's business and the AT&T Telepresence Solution integrates securely into the Williams F1's network infrastructure, whilst ensuring the team receives high-quality bandwidth at all times. The system was easy to install, as Chris Taylor, IT Manager, Williams F1, testifies: "The room where the telepresence suite was installed had to be remediated but once done there was little configuration involved. The system continues to be intelligent, secure and the highly-scalable multi-point solution is built on an always-available IP network, using the existing LAN infrastructure in Williams F1's headquarters."

By being able to see each other in real-time in such high-definition video, engineers can easily solve complex problems and work to tight deadlines. "The images they're seeing are 'life-size' high-definition video images, meaning the user actually feels as if they're in the same room as the person they're speaking to," says Smith-Rose.

"The main benefit is that we can connect with people who we would otherwise be communicating with via phone and email," says Burns. "As well as enabling us to fundamentally change the way we operate, the AT&T Telepresence Solution makes you feel like you're really having a face-to-face-meeting—this improves relationships and gives a greater sense of collaboration."

"The bigger challenge was installing the travelling telepresence unit, which is made operational for the five days the Formula 1 team is at a European race. This unit is then disassembled and moved on to the next location. As far as I know, this is a unique aspect of the installation for AT&T Williams," says Burns. This telepresence unit travels inside one of the meeting rooms in the AT&T Williams motor home. It travelled to all the European races in the 2010 Formula 1 season, and will continue to be present in 2011. The next objective is to make the AT&T Telepresence Solution available to the team at all the races including those outside of Europe.

## Technology put to the test

The AT&T Telepresence Solution proved particularly beneficial just after the 2010 Shanghai Grand Prix, when some of AT&T Williams' Marketing department were delayed in China when many of the UK's airports were closed due to the volcanic ash cloud. Fortunately, the AT&T Telepresence Solution is available in 75 countries and territories around the world, including China.

Members of the Marketing department delayed in China could access the AT&T Telepresence Solution suite in AT&T's Hong Kong office and were able to participate in regular meetings with colleagues at the factory back in the UK. This helped minimise the effect of travel disruption on the department's daily meetings during the busy race season.

"Formula 1 runs to a tightly choreographed schedule," says Burns. "The delay to our travel plans was a serious problem, but this was where the AT&T Telepresence Solution really came into play. The incredible simplicity and flexibility of the system's visual and audio connections meant that the team didn't experience too much downtime as a result of the volcanic eruption in Iceland."

"We had a number of vital decisions to make, including the approval of branding and collateral items for use in Barcelona," said Matt Jones, Head of Marketing Services at Williams F1. "The great virtue of the





AT&T Telepresence Solution is the amazing fidelity and quality of both the visual and audio connections, which allowed me to share a very high level of specific detail with my colleagues on the other side of the world. They were immediately fully briefed and able to action our requirements for the next race with no additional downtime. Although some of us were stuck in Hong Kong, we were effectively able to neutralise any business interruption through the use of the AT&T Telepresence Solution.”

In the early days, AT&T Telepresence Solution was being used for several hours per week to talk to staff and partners but the volcanic disruption meant it was called upon even more than usual, ensuring those delayed in China were in constant contact with the team’s headquarters in the UK. Williams F1 expect the use of the service will increase as more and more employees become aware of the immense benefits of using telepresence both on and off the race track.

“As far as we’re aware, none of the other Formula 1 teams is using videoconferencing like this, so we do expect to gain a small competitive advantage from the enhanced ability to connect to our technical staff across the globe,” explains Burns.

Alex Burns had to attend the 2010 Monaco Grand Prix but he did not want to miss his usual monthly financial review meeting with his team. He therefore set up a telepresence session from the track in Monte Carlo and held the meeting with the team in the UK as usual.

## Telepresence brings greener benefits

With a number of telepresence suites around the world, AT&T has effectively placed touch-points where an organisation such as Williams F1 can extend relationships with its business partners, wherever they may be located in the world. Across the AT&T Business Exchange, AT&T’s unique, network-based, inter- and intra-company collaboration feature, companies can communicate with each other in a highly-flexible manner. A company such as Williams F1 can reduce costs while at the same time improving its efficiency—vital in an industry such as Formula 1, where time is precious.

In the long term, for Williams F1, the telepresence facilities in its UK headquarters will make a significant contribution to reducing the need for air travel for face-to-face meetings, as part of the organisation’s wider commitment to reducing its carbon footprint.

Through accelerated decision-making as well as a greener business model, Williams F1 has fully embraced the innovation of AT&T Telepresence Solution to give it the winning edge in Formula 1.

For more information contact your AT&T Representative or visit [att.com/attwilliams](http://att.com/attwilliams)

According to a study, *The Telepresence Revolution*,<sup>1</sup> commissioned by the Carbon Disclosure Project, US and UK businesses that substitute some business travel with telepresence can cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by nearly 5.5 million metric tons in total—the greenhouse gas equivalent of removing more than one million passenger vehicles from the road for one year—and achieve total economy-wide financial benefits of almost \$19 billion, by 2020.

<sup>1</sup>For more information on “The Telepresence Revolution”, commissioned by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) and sponsored by AT&T, visit [att.com/telepresencerevolution](http://att.com/telepresencerevolution).

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