



India | Public Sector

Strengthening collaboration and streamlining courtroom proceedings through robust, secure, and high-quality videoconferencing technologies

Client profile

Functioning under the Ministry of Law and Justice in India, the client's institution is the country's foremost judicial body. The institution serves as the final court of appeal for some of the most high-profile cases in the country. One of the distinct attributes of the institution is its ability to challenge the existing executive, legislative and administrative laws, acts, and actions and validate or invalidate them where needed. As India's the apex constitutional court, the client is also tasked with protecting the fundamental rights of the citizens of the country. Their office is located in New Delhi, India.

Summary

The COVID-19-induced pandemic struck India at a time when a lot of groundwork had been done in the technology enablement of justice and court administration. e-Governance initiatives were enhanced after the enactment of the Information Technology Act, 2000 (amended 2008). e-Courts were set up as a crucial part of the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) launched in 2006. On a related note, the client had released their own app with much success. The app was instrumental in updating information on pending and decided court cases, and it provided a personalized dashboard containing cause lists, case statuses, daily orders, judgments, the latest updates, office reports, circulars, and much more. However, the audio & video endpoints installed in courtrooms were still delivering poor-quality output. This was causing proceedings to be delayed, resulting in additions to the list of pending cases. The client partnered with NTT to deploy a cost-effective AV solution that enabled smarter room and device integrations. The solution, delivered jointly with a market-leading service provider, unlocked smarter outcomes for the client's meetings, presentations, hearings, and more.

Vision

The need to exercise COVID-appropriate behavior while staying connected

India's spiraling COVID-19 crisis hit the country's legal system in a major way. Many judicial officers and staff members tested positive for the virus, with several also succumbing to the disease. During the pandemic-induced lockdown, keeping in mind public health concerns, India's courts were able to hear only urgent matters. Many law firms implemented work-from-home policies, and judicial administrators embraced technology by conducting hearings through video conferencing. Since it was not practical to keep an apex entity like the client out of action, it was decided that a hybrid approach involving extensive audio-video enablement would be the way to go.

This included the following capabilities:

- Remote hearing (two-way communication) of lawyers on both sides, the complainant and complainee
- Recording and filing of all court proceedings for future reference
- Video streaming of call proceedings in a one-way, listen-only mode for media and other attendees

What technologies?

- Video collaboration

What services?

- Collaboration

What partners?

- Cisco
- Multi-OEM
- Reliance Jio

The transformation

Delivering seamless connectivity through a next-generation AV solution

NTT proposed a Cisco WebEx Room Kit Plus videoconferencing solution to cater to the client's needs. The rooms were equipped with multiple cameras to cover all attendees, including the judges, lawyers, staff, and participants.

NTT also proposed a futuristic audio-video (AV) solution that enabled seamless integration with the case rostering system and existing NIC-based recording solution. NTT proceeded with the POCs for the chief judge's room followed by 18 other courtrooms and registrar courtrooms, and successfully demonstrated a seamless conferencing experience.

Due to the sensitive nature of the cases that are brought to the court, security was one of the determining factors in arriving at the best-suited solution for the client.

Results

Enabling a hybrid collaboration model with outstanding results

The AV conferencing system addressed the client's requirement of a hybrid hearing model while avoiding the challenge of completely stalled judiciary proceedings.

The end results included:

- Uninterrupted and secure hearings and presentation of evidence delivered in hybrid form
- Clearer, high-quality audio-visual output that improves communication, and streamlines collaboration
- Enabling COVID-19 appropriate behavior, including social distancing, with no impact on routine court proceedings
- Accelerating the road to delivery of justice through reduced waiting time and easy accessibility
- Efficient documentation by enabling AV recording and sharing for later reference
- Significant cost savings through the reduced need for on-site security detail, courtroom set-up, logistics, and so on

The client appreciated the outstanding capabilities of the solution, which is now powering technology-enabled collaboration for their end-to-end courtroom proceedings.