

## CASE STUDY

# Enabling Dynamic Collaboration for a Fast-Growing Architecture Firm

JLG Architects IT Director Casey Hammer's ideal productivity tool lets employees get right to work the moment they sit down at their desks in the morning. As head of IT for one of the 50 most admired companies in the United States<sup>1</sup>, Hammer is always looking for ways that technology can help make the firm's 100-plus employees in 13 offices across Minnesota and the Dakotas as productive as possible.

"I have a singular vision of a one-stop shop," Hammer says. "You get in in the morning, you open up your computer, a single application pops up that encompasses everything you need to do for that day. Microsoft Teams is a great foundation to help realize that vision." Hammer's goal for JLG's technology stack is to centralize and simplify so employees can focus on getting work done rather than scaling tech learning curves.

### One Collaboration Solution for Many Work Styles

Hammer also wants to be sure he can accommodate the varying needs and work styles of the firm's architects and other staff, who now total more than 120 firmwide, having doubled in the last five years. He's energized by the highly visual and creative — yet also technical — field of architecture, and aims to make sure everyone at JLG has all the tools they need, and that those tools truly promote productivity and creativity.

When Hammer started looking to upgrade the company's email and productivity platform, he opted to roll out Microsoft Office 365 firmwide, which initially took care of the company's communication and collaboration needs.



**Industry:** Architecture and Engineering

**Challenge:** Implementing Microsoft Teams video meetings in conference rooms with existing hardware that wasn't interoperable.

**Solutions:** BlueJeans Gateway for Microsoft Teams enables room-system hardware to connect to Microsoft Teams video meetings.

Teams Gateway provides JLG team members the added benefit of one-touch join for an optimized meeting experience.

**Results:** Teams Gateway initially saved JLG \$100,000 by allowing them to keep their hardware, and is looking forward to achieving more ROI in time savings and more productive meetings.

<sup>1</sup> The Most Admired Company in Every State, Best Life magazine, January 2018.

BlueJeans is the reason we can offer a solution that lets clients and remote JLG meeting rooms connect to Microsoft Teams meetings. It allows us to use our legacy Cisco room-system hardware — without the need of a redundant phone system backing it. BlueJeans was the first and only option we found that fit that bill.

– CASEY HAMMER, IT DIRECTOR OF JLG ARCHITECTS

When Microsoft added Teams to the mix, Hammer and JLG Systems Administrator Kyle Swenson felt hopeful that it would allow them to simplify collaboration and replace their current WebEx video meeting solution — while providing a better experience for board members and other executives at the firm who were asking for an elegant, easy-to-use videoconferencing solution. “Our executive team wanted the ability to walk into a room, sit down, and quickly and start a meeting,” Hammer says. “But some team members were struggling” with their existing solution. In particular, there was confusion about how to join meetings depending on whether users were in a meeting room or other location.

### Enabling Flawless Video Meetings

Having an easy way to join meetings was a critical need, especially when external clients are involved. “Whether we’re hosting a consultant vendor or in a situation where we are bringing in a client with a multimillion-dollar project, all aspects of our client meetings need to go as smoothly as possible.” adds Swenson.

What’s more, JLG has 25 conference rooms in 13 locations that are already equipped with top-of-the-line video meeting hardware that Hammer didn’t want to replace — but it was not compatible with Teams’ videoconferencing hardware requirements. “In some of our larger conference rooms, we’re talking about \$100,000 systems we would have to replace,” Swenson says. “With BlueJeans we can keep this equipment.”

When Hammer met with BlueJeans at the Microsoft Ignite conference, he decided to join the Technology Adoption Program (TAP) that BlueJeans was administering, which allowed his team to beta test the soon-to-be-released BlueJeans Gateway for Microsoft Teams. He discovered that the Teams Gateway addressed some of his top priorities, allowing him to use his existing video room systems with Teams and providing a number of BlueJeans’ hallmark usability features, including one-touch join and integration with Teams and Outlook — all making the join experience seamless for those essential client and internal meetings. And, Teams Gateway works with all H.323 and SIP-based video conferencing room systems, displays

all scheduled room meetings for quick access and at-a-glance status checks, and is hosted in Microsoft Azure, Microsoft's enterprise-grade cloud computing platform.

### Thousands Saved by Making Hardware Work with Teams

Having removed the roadblock of hardware compatibility, Hammer was free to go ahead with his migration to Teams and move off of the legacy video meeting solution. It also allowed the team to simplify the in-room hardware requirements.

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JLG has just completed its firmwide rollout of the Teams Gateway and after Hammer tallied up the savings on meeting room equipment, he's looking forward to logging additional return on investment in time saved for JLG employees to initiate and join video meeting — along with the resulting improvements in productivity.

#### ABOUT JLG ARCHITECTS

JLG is a 100-percent employee-owned full-service architecture firm, founded in 1989 by Lonnie Laffen and Gary Johnson. Today, the firm has grown to thirteen offices in Minnesota, South Dakota, and North Dakota with over 120 employees, and has been named one of the 50 Most Admired Companies in America by MSN Money and Best Life, and a 50 Best Places to Work in the U.S. by Inc. magazine. For more information about JLG Architects, visit [www.jlgarchitects.com](http://www.jlgarchitects.com).