



Excellence in Enterprise Video Awards

Profiles in Success: AVIA — a Division of American Sporting Goods Corporation



Produced by:

InterActive
Media Strategies

Nominated by:





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BACKGROUND

This Excellence in Enterprise Video Award profile highlights the innovative way AVIA, one of the foremost leaders in endurance sports racing footwear, has been using high-quality video to reduce costs, speed up the product development, and review process and reduce travel costs.

AVIA is a division of American Sporting Goods Corporation of Aliso Viejo, California. The company has a proud history of creating footwear for the runner, triathlete, weekend warrior and endurance enthusiast. AVIA sponsors some of the most iconic names in endurance racing, including the AVIA Wildflower Triathons and Vineman.

NOMINATION FOR THE EXCELLENCE IN ENTERPRISE VIDEO AWARD

AVIA has been nominated for the Excellence in Enterprise Video Award by VBrick. AVIA received the award for its innovative use of video technology for conducting Global Line Reviews (GLR), enhancing communications with key constituents and speeding up the manufacturing process to bring shoes to the marketplace more quickly.

Interactive Media Strategies had the opportunity to interview David Hoffman, Network Manager for American Sporting Goods and the AVIA Shoe Division, to discuss the company's enterprise video initiatives, solutions deployed, best practices used and benefits achieved.

"Our team members located in our manufacturing plant in China can talk live with our brand managers in California and actually see the laces, stitching and gluing up close and in full color."

— David Hoffman
Network Manager
American Sporting Goods Corporation



Exhibit 1 – Video discussion of shoe

Source: AVIA. © American Sporting Goods Corporation™ 2009



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Hoffman shared some of his thoughts and insights regarding the importance of using video in their day-to-day operations. He described how the technology used enhances communications with employees and partners on a global basis. One of the innovative ways the company has been using video is to enhance the effectiveness of its global line reviews (GLR). A GLR is a review and analysis meeting that in the past has typically involved one or more representatives of AVIA traveling to a customer site or a manufacturing location. The company has also used IP video to present a virtual “Show Emporium” to interested customers and prospects over the web.

One of the most important aspects of the video technology the company has deployed, according to Hoffman, is the ability to conduct real-time reviews and discussions among many different people located in different locations all around the world. “Our team members located in our manufacturing plant in China can talk live with our brand managers in California and actually see the laces, stitching and gluing up close and in full color,” says Hoffman. *(See Exhibit 1, page 1)*

BUSINESS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR USING VIDEO

AVIA had established several goals for deploying video technology to enhance its operations and design-review process. These included:

1. Speeding up the process of presenting new shoe designs to its various stakeholders located in offices around the world.
2. Reducing costs associated with brand managers traveling to locations around the world.
3. Minimizing opportunities for errors or defects in the design and production process of its shoes.
4. Allowing all constituents in the shoe design and manufacturing process to view the shoes in different stages of development to ensure the highest of standards.
5. Provide immediate and rich feedback to manufacturers on specific issues that might be of concern regarding a particular shoe.

(See Exhibit 2)



Exhibit 2 – Fit test of ryka shoe as viewed from an online video stream.

Source: AVIA. © American Sporting Goods Corporation™ 2009



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The company believes it holds a unique place in the shoe world since they make their own shoes, unlike most competitors in the marketplace today. This process can help provide a competitive advantage to the company, particularly if they are able to leverage the speed of the manufacturing process by ensuring all the people in the value chain of product concept, design, development, manufacture, review, fit testing, modification and final assembly can all communicate quickly and effectively. This is what their video initiatives have enabled them to do.

IMPORTANT EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR VIDEO TECHNOLOGY

AVIA uses a wide range of video technology for content capture, publishing, management and distribution. First and foremost in the list of important criteria was the need for high-quality video that could accurately represent the colors of a shoe, with the ability to show in fine detail attributes such as gluing and stitching.

The company also required a solution that could record high-quality video for archiving purposes as well as for providing on-demand presentations, training sessions and company meetings.

THE SOLUTION DEPLOYED

AVIA has deployed several VBrick appliances in key locations on the company's campus to connect high-quality cameras for close visual inspection of shoes by customers, prospects and partners. (See Exhibit 3)



Exhibit 3 – VBrick IP-Video Appliance

Source: VBrick Systems, Inc. © 2009.

In addition to the VBrick appliances, the company uses high-quality video cameras from Tandberg. To ensure the color correctness of the shoe videos being reviewed and discussed in the meetings, the company also uses a high-

“One of the great things about having a VBrick is that we’ve been able to stream a high-quality video stream out to 400 people at a single time, very quickly and easily.”



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end spectrophotometer to set the proper color of each shoe. This can vary based on the room's ambient lighting and the types of lights (fluorescent, halogen, incandescent) that illuminate the shoe.

The company also uses WolfVision document cameras to show various shoes from different angles and positions. This camera is connected to the video system so people logging in from around the world can see the shoes or other items being placed on the document camera's platform. (See Exhibit 4)

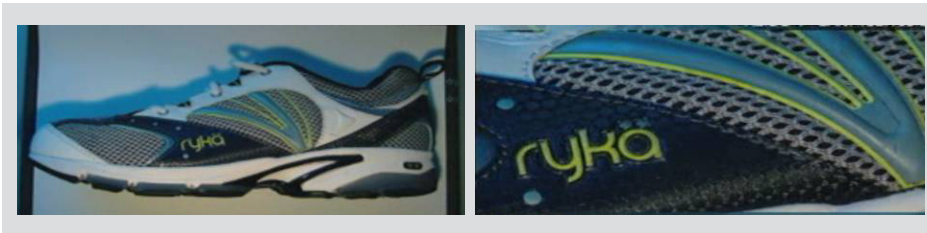


Exhibit 4 – Video screenshot of running shoe with zoom close up of logo (Not color corrected)

Source: AVIA. © American Sporting Goods Corporation™ 2009

BENEFITS ACHIEVED

AVIA has achieved a number of benefits as a result of their video initiatives. Some of the benefits were not even contemplated as part of the initial deployment, but have arisen as a result of smart thinking on ways to further leverage the firm's investment in video technology.

■ Saving Money on Travel Costs

AVIA has between 80 and 100 people in sales teams located in hubs around the world who meet with customers, prospects, brand managers and others in the sales, design and manufacturing process. The video system deployed has helped the firm drastically reduce the amount of time spent traveling from site to site, as well as cut associated travel costs. "By conducting streaming video conference calls between our corporate office, brand managers, designers and manufacturers, we have reduced our travel costs by 50%," according to Hoffman.

■ Helping to Save Money for Clients

"With our video technology, we save our clients money by being able to show them many different samples of shoes in a variety of styles and colors, without them spending money to have lots of different samples shipped to their locations," says Hoffman. "As soon as a shoe comes off the production line, any one of our customers or prospects can see what it looks like, up close and in high definition."

■ Using Video Systems for Other Purposes

Other benefits the company has seen by deploying the VBrick solution

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include greater opportunities to share company information with all employees, regardless of location or what type of device they may be using. An example of the multi-purpose use of the VBrick technology and Tandberg video conferencing systems is the training program the company provided to employees on SSL VPN.

■ Speeding up the Feedback Process to Enhance Manufacturing

Providing almost immediate feedback to manufacturing on initial design models that have come off the line has proven to be very important to AVIA in being able to design, develop and manufacture shoes in less time. This savings is estimated to range between 40% -50% less than what many other shoe manufacturers experience in the industry. The ability to make design changes quickly—and accurately—with high resolution video is a key benefit AVIA achieves with its video technology.

EEVA WINNING STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS WITH VIDEO

Accurate Color Representation — AVIA has a somewhat unique challenge when doing streaming video conference calls compared with the average users of such technology. In most conference calls, even in HD, the colors of the content being shown, whether it's the clothing being worn or the charts in a presentation don't have to be perfect. In AVIA's case however, ensuring the proper color of a product, or of a stitch or a logo, is exactly the reason for conducting a high-quality video conference.

Increasing ROI — Additional benefits have been achieved by leveraging the firm's investment in video technology across other applications and departments such as for IT meetings and Human Resource training programs.

Enhancing Global Communications — AVIA and its parent company American Sporting Goods Corporation, have demonstrated thought leadership and innovation in the use of enterprise video to enhance global communications and to drive tangible results to the firm's bottom line.

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For more information about the Excellence in Enterprise Video Awards program, contact:

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To view the Thought Leaders Webcast featuring AVIA, you can visit
www.EEVAThoughtLeaders.com or www.VBrick.com