

BBK Worldwide Adopts the SmartDraw Visual Processor Company-Wide

Leading Global Patient Recruitment Agency Benefits from Improved Communications and Employee Efficiency



As a pioneer in the patient recruitment industry, BBK Worldwide provides medical device and pharmaceutical companies with the most advanced global study enrollment, notification and management services on the market. Always on the cutting edge of technology, the company recently deployed the SmartDraw visual processor across its entire enterprise network, putting the power and ability to create innovative, compelling visuals into the hands of every employee.

The results have been impressive—not just in terms of the visuals created, but also in terms of the overall impact on the agency. SmartDraw has enabled the company to communicate processes more clearly, convey concepts and ideas across multiple cultures, and create effective visuals with relative ease. Because all BBK employees have access to SmartDraw, they are empowered to create their own visuals for projects and presentations, and they no longer need to strictly rely on the agency’s creative department.

Visual at Heart

With its roots as a branding/advertising agency helping medical and pharmaceutical companies craft and communicate strategic messages to the right audiences, BBK Worldwide has evolved to fill a unique niche in the industry. By supporting recruitment efforts across multiple audiences and countries, effective visual communication is critical to the company’s success.

As a liaison between its clients—those conducting clinical trials—and the physicians and patients participating in them, BBK is often charged with distilling exceptionally complex data into concise and easy-to-understand information. This alone is difficult enough, but doing so on a global scale adds to the challenge. In many cases, English is not the primary language of those with whom BBK communicates with on a daily basis.

In addition to these challenges, the combination of BBK’s client work coupled with its business development and marketing efforts demand a significant effort from BBK’s creative staff. However, the adoption of SmartDraw company-wide has empowered more employees to create their own visuals, freeing up the creative department to focus on client projects.

“In all facets of our company, we were relying on the art department for everything, because we knew there was a strategic imperative to use visuals,” said Joan F. Bachenheimer, founding principal and CEO of BBK Worldwide. “Visual communications is a strategic issue for BBK Worldwide. There is no better way to convey the volume of information required than through process documents that incorporate visuals.”

Introducing SmartDraw

As an interior design hobbyist, Bachenheimer discovered SmartDraw through a direct e-mail marketing campaign from the company and began using it personally as an alternative to more complex CAD systems for rendering concepts into visual

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representations. After several weeks of using it successfully, she presented it to Vic Bradley, BBK leadership team member, Information Systems.

“I’m a dyed-in-the-wool, old school technology-type. It takes a lot to convince me that a product we became aware of through an e-mail can actually be deployed in an enterprise environment, so I did quite a bit of investigation on my own,” Bradley recalled.

Bradley put SmartDraw through its paces in an extensive personal evaluation to convince himself that it could be better than their minimally deployed current solution—Microsoft Visio®. At the same time, the company was in the process of preparing its operating budgets for the upcoming year and Bradley was willing to consider any feasible alternative to Visio. Concerned that most users didn’t have the skill set to realize the full benefits of Visio, Bradley was open to a simpler, more intuitive product.

After a brief, successful individual testing period, Bradley deployed SmartDraw in a small, 10-user trial, and provided no training or instruction to the trial participants.

“It was just an overwhelming success with our employees,” he said. “They loved it and found it easy to use. They didn’t need any additional training, and could already see how they could incorporate the expanded use of visuals into their daily business communications.”

SmartDraw: Now Part of the BBK Fabric

BBK has since integrated SmartDraw throughout the entire corporation—the software is installed on every single desktop and laptop company-wide. Bradley has been impressed with how quickly employees adopted SmartDraw and began using it, even before they were formally trained on how to use it.

“Many of our users have had Visio on their desktop for years, and they used it sporadically,” he said, adding that help desk call volume shot up when users endeavored to use the complex program. “Within days of deploying SmartDraw, they were incorporating visuals almost immediately without any additional assistance.”

Since deploying SmartDraw, the company has begun using it not only to produce sales presentations and client proposals, but also for internal strategic planning, brainstorming and idea mapping. Jaime Cohen, who heads strategic consultation, immediately saw the powerful potential of SmartDraw to aid strategic thinking. She now uses it every day to help organize her thoughts, devise strategies, and implement action plans.

Similarly, Bachenheimer feels that SmartDraw supports the creation of “diagrammatic views” to help her evaluate complex options and formulate ideas. “I use SmartDraw to help me to develop and refine strategies,” she said.

Preparing eye-catching client proposals is another area where SmartDraw has enabled BBK to shine. Aside from providing an engaging and interactive alternative to PowerPoint slides, SmartDraw visuals provide BBK with a competitive advantage in the marketplace. Clients are impressed by BBK’s advanced graphics and the sophisticated information they are able to convey through them.

“The introduction of the visual processor has increased the availability and understanding of visuals at the end-user level, as well as their ability to create a document that is universally understood.”

Vic Bradley
Leadership Team,
Information Systems

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“I don't really have a creative bone in my body,” Cohen modestly admits. “I'm all about words and thoughts and big things – to fit those together and be able to do it without having to involve our creative department, and have a product that really looks professional, is extremely powerful. We've been awarded projects because of the quality of the proposals and the visual elements that we were able to incorporate. I've actually had one or two prospective clients say, ‘Wow! That graphic really looks great! Can have a copy?’”

The company also employed SmartDraw for internal process documents—including its process for deploying SmartDraw. In doing so, the help desk team became familiar with the product and better equipped to handle support requests from users in other business units.

Visual Company Achieves Extraordinary Results

The results BBK has achieved with SmartDraw have exceeded expectation. Both internal communications and external communications have improved significantly.

Internal demand on the art department has declined—in fact, the team saw an immediate drop in the number of requests for visuals in just the first week SmartDraw was deployed. This shift has freed-up the creative team to focus its efforts on client work and more complex initiatives.

“The introduction of the visual processor to BBK has resulted in increased awareness and understanding of the value of effective visuals,” Bradley said.

In addition to improving communications, SmartDraw has proven to be exceptionally easy to use and employees have rapidly become proficient. When faced with the need to develop a new chart or graphic, employees instinctively turn to SmartDraw for their solution. With its intuitive graphical user interface, automated formatting and user-friendly controls, training time and cost were minimal.

“We actually saw results on two fronts: first, the help desk received fewer requests for assistance with complex operations in Excel, such as creating a pie chart; and second, increased capacity from our creative department as the number of daily requests were reduced,” Bradley said.

Editing and revising SmartDraw visuals is exceptionally easy, Cohen says. “When a document comes back with edits, it's so easy to just go back to the original SmartDraw visual and change it right there,” she said. “It just takes seconds to make an edit, whereas with any other product I've ever used, it's a complicated process to make edits or adjustments. Or, I would have to involve the creative department to correct it.”

For BBK Worldwide, SmartDraw has become a tremendous asset— from improving communications with clients, doctors and patients, to improving employees' strategic thinking, and overall competency- providing a long-term return on investment for the company.

“The end result is that BBK is taking a step forward into the future of visual communication through the adoption of the visual processor,” Bradley said. “No longer are we limited to those two or three tools that everyone in the world is using.”

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Bachenheimer added.

For more information about SmartDraw, visit www.SmartDraw.com.

About SmartDraw Software

SmartDraw helps businesses increase their bottom line by improving communication, refining operations, completing projects on time, and successfully implementing their plans through the everyday use of visual communication. SmartDraw Software enables business professionals to easily and automatically create more than 70 types of common business visuals, including flowcharts, project charts, mind maps, org charts, timelines and charts, to achieve presentation-quality visuals in just minutes to enhance understanding and knowledge retention. SmartDraw is used by more than half of the Fortune 500, and thousands of law firms, police departments, health systems and private enterprises of all sizes. For more information or to download a free trial of SmartDraw, please visit www.SmartDraw.com.

About BBK Worldwide

BBK Worldwide is globally renowned for accelerating time to market for new and improved medicines and treatments by using innovative strategies, programs, and technologies to streamline the clinical trial enrollment process. With offices in Boston, London, Los Angeles, and Osaka – as well as strategic alliance partners in every world region where clinical trials are conducted – BBK Worldwide has evolved into the internationally recognized leader in patient recruitment. BBK continues to reshape its industry by combining its visionary perspective with three decades of experience enrolling thousands of clinical studies in more than 70 countries. www.bbkworlwide.com