



PEOPLE, PROCESSES & SCHEDULES...OPTIMIZED.

You Can't Schedule a Wildfire or a Hurricane – Or Can You?



They can now schedule several meetings at a time with a lot of advance notice. The SCD uses a common Meeting Maker calendar as well as banners (also called "timeless events") to schedule all of their vacations, sick leave and weekend/holiday coverage so that everyone can make sure that SCD and the groups maintaining the network for the entire organization is never without coverage.

Background

The University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR) Office of Programs supplies real-time weather data to colleges and universities for use in the classroom, trains weather forecasters in the latest research results and technologies, and helps organize international experiments in remote areas of the world, among other services.

Challenge

UCAR must coordinate meetings and events with administrators, network personnel and scientists from many different divisions across the organization. Just a few years ago, in order to do this, administrative assistants had to call and/or email everyone involved on a project in order to set up meetings. This meant that they had to manually keep track of details such as: "52 people are available on September 4th while 36 people have a conflict on that day." Moving a meeting from one day to another was extremely time-intensive. Pulling together large meetings with all of the different time commitments and travel schedules was a slow and tortuous process.





Easily create new meeting invitations and activities

Multiple calendar views

Simple calendar navigation

Create recurring and private activities

Color-coded meeting categories

Accept/decline meeting proposals instantly

called with only a few hours warning notice and "burn through" alerts warn of an incoming invitation. However, the SCD also schedules meeting rooms up to one year in advance. Setting up recurring meetings is very important to them so that they can block out planning time for busy people from many groups and different locations. They can now schedule several meetings at a time with a lot of advance notice. The SCD uses a common Meeting Maker calendar as well as banners (also called "timeless events") to schedule all of their vacations, sick leave and weekend/holiday coverage so that everyone can make sure that SCD and the groups maintaining the network for the entire organization is never without coverage.

UCAR Now Schedules Meetings Instantly

As a group, UCAR decided that they needed a cross-platform calendaring and scheduling solution that everyone could use. Many people were using UNIX, Windows and the Mac and a variety of different email packages. The solution would need to be used by individual workgroups and across the enterprise. It had to be easy to learn and easy to use. The most important feature that UCAR wanted was the ability to make sure Directors across divisions could schedule meetings as much as one year out. Because UCAR has a lot of folks who travel, work remotely, and use a variety of different computer systems, it's very important to make sure that when meetings are scheduled, everyone knows about them in advance.

Solution

In 1999, UCAR held a "shoot-out" with three different calendaring and scheduling products. They set up a network of 24 computers that was representative of

the machines that UCAR end users would be using. They brought in several administrative assistants, system administrators and support personnel from UCAR to rate the individual products in several different areas. After very careful consideration, they had made their choice. Because of its cross-platform capabilities and its ease-of-use both for the administrator and user, Meeting Maker won the shoot-out.

What began as a group of 100 users who began using Meeting Maker many years ago to schedule meetings within their workgroup has now grown to nearly 1000 users at UCAR. In addition to using native clients for Windows, Mac and UNIX operating systems, UCAR is also using the Java™ client and Palm™ synchronization for the users of handheld devices.

One of the biggest users of Meeting Maker at UCAR is the Scientific Computing Division (SCD) because they needed a cross-divisional scheduling solution. They use Meeting Maker to plan and schedule network enhancements and switch upgrades. Emergency meetings are often

Institutional Profile

(UCAR) is a nonprofit corporation formed in 1959 by research institutions with doctoral programs in the atmospheric and related sciences. Representatives from UCAR's 66 Member and 20 Academic Affiliate institutions govern UCAR research and service activities through the Board of Trustees, member committees and a number of advisory committees.

Interested in Learning About UCAR?

For all sorts of information about the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research and their work with hurricanes, wildfires, meteorology, and extreme weather, go to www.ucar.edu.