

Blue Bottle Managing Growth and Remote Locations with UberConference



Blue Bottle

Case Study



Blue Bottle Coffee is coffee for coffee purists, the people who look beyond grande eggnog lattes and clamour for the actual taste of freshly roasted coffee. The company was founded ten years ago by James Freeman, a part-time musician and self-described “coffee lunatic” in Oakland, CA. The scruffy but lively twin city to San Francisco across the bay is the ideal setting for Blue Bottle.

Blue Bottle: Staying Authentic While Growing Quickly

Starting out with just a six-pound batch roaster, Freeman made an historic vow: “I will only sell coffee less than 48 hours out of the roaster to my customers, so they may enjoy coffee at its peak of flavor. I will only use the finest, most delicious, and responsibly sourced beans.” Blue Bottle has grown into a network of cafes, wholesale partners, an espresso cart, and some vintage German coffee roasters. With more than 300 employees and locations in The Bay Area, Los Angeles, New York City and now, Tokyo, the growing business needed a seamless way to stay connected.

Blue Bottle’s CFO, David Bowman discovered UberConference when he dialed into his first call without a PIN number—he’s been a loyal user ever since. Bowman not only handles the company’s finances, but also has some responsibility for IT (what software the company invests in and services it) as well as managing the company’s eCommerce site.

“I love using UberConference with Google Hangouts—the controls in the sidebar are useful when monitoring large calls.”

—David Bowman, CFO

UberConference Makes Acquisitions Easier

UberConference made things especially easy for the Blue Bottle team during the acquisitions of both Tonx and Handsome Coffee in Los Angeles. Bowman was constantly on the phone with lawyers on the other side going back and forth with paperwork. He found these calls were effective and specific features of UberConference had a strong advantage over his previous service, freeconferencecall.com. There were two features of UberConference that Bowman clearly preferred up front.

First, was that UberConference gave a much more professional impression. “Tactically, I hated hearing, ‘Thank you for

calling freeconferencecall.com,” he said. “Secondly, I like the ease of dialing in with UberConference—no long PIN code to remember. The annoyance of dialing in was eliminated, and that’s actually a huge deal for us.”

UberConference Helps Connect a Spread Out Team

With a geographically spread out staff, much of David’s week involves checking in over conference calls. Each major Blue Bottle department has an UberConference line, and UberConference provides a quick way for everyone to dial into meetings. Keeping connected from The Bay Area to Tokyo can be a challenge, but UberConference has eliminated that communication barrier.

“I love using UberConference with Google

Hangouts—the controls in the sidebar are useful when monitoring large calls. There have been a couple of times where our founder has led a call to announce something, and in that case there are 50-80 people joining. When that happens, I’m able to look over everyone and mute those who need to be muted to keep the call running smoothly.”

Other factors Bowman cited were UberConference’s reasonable pricing, the integrations with Google Apps, and the thoughtfulness behind its user experience. “It’s a really solid product,” he concluded.



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David Bowman , CFO