

How the Spur Group Reached

NEW

HEIGHTS

With Chillibreeze's
PowerPoint Graphic Support

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Overview

The Need

The Spur group needs a lot of graphic support; or as they call them, strategic partners. They already have a few partners at their disposal, but the nature of how The Spur Group sent them unexpected work requests didn't work well for them.

The Solution

Chillibreeze provided them overnight graphic support. The time zone difference between Seattle and Shillong [India] proved to be a big win solution.

The Benefit

The Spur group consultants could send their projects over to Chillibreeze and they can sleep peacefully while we get their work done. They know that they will have their projects in their inbox by the morning.

Based in Redmond, Washington, founded in the year 2013, The Spur Group (TSG) is a management consultancy firm that helps a broad array of technology companies with their revenue acceleration goals.

Their Mission: *Transform client go-to-market efforts to deliver superior results.*

With a dynamic team of leaders coming from high-tech backgrounds, where they built transformative revenue acceleration programs, TSG continuously delivers world-class work for tech companies.

TSG is growing, and Chillibreeze has been growing right alongside it. In 2014 we started with supporting 8 Spur consultants sending 20 decks a month. Today Chillibreeze has served 71 consultants and we process about 95 decks a month.

Pain points galore in spite of engaging with multiple design partners

For majority of TSG's existence, they have had graphic support; or as they call them, strategic partners. They had gone through several different firms. They had a strategic partner that was just great. But the nature of how TSG sent them unexpected work requests didn't work well for them.

They then picked another graphics firm; which went great as well. However, TSG burnt them out because the work requests were always last minute. They also had a local strategic partner. And an additional capacity through one off vendors who don't have a lot of capacity but could fill in when needed.

In spite of all the support options, TSG's biggest pain point as a consulting firm was not being able to send last minute, rushed or unscheduled graphics requests and get it executed the following day.

"They largely were able to do it but it quickly became unsustainable with the majority of our work being sent at the end of our day and us needing it back the next morning. That demand just didn't work for our local partners."

- Todd Orwig
Senior Director of Operations

"The Spur Group is in the business of explaining very complicated concepts to our clients. We see Chillibreeze as an important part of our ability to do our job because they create visual presentations that are graphically very strong and easy to understand"

- Ray Rasmussen
Managing Principle

What lead TSG to zero in on Chillibreeze

The RFP process was of great help in selecting the right graphics partner. TSG illustrated the problem they wanted to solve. (see diagram below) Without clearly articulating the problem upfront. They spent a long time trying to outline:

- What the strategic partner should do
- What are the attributes that they must have
- What conditions to work – like on-demand requests
- Expectations as it relates to confidentiality

The solution

The time zone difference between Seattle and Shillong [India] proved to be a big win solution for TSG. They still use local partners, but it is for mostly for day work at Seattle.

For TSG, Chillibreeze effectively solved these key issues:

1. Helping with capacity: Before Chillibreeze, they had principally one graphics firm we did work with. They needed more capacity. Chillibreeze's growing team of PowerPoint designers were a perfect solution to the increasing needs of TSG's consultants.
2. Available after hours: Overnight turnaround of decks was a big plus. TSG could complete the core content of presentations during their day and send it to Chillibreeze. The Chillibreeze PowerPoint designers work on it and have the deck ready for the consultants the very next day.
3. Cost effective: TSG was paying a premium for after-hours work and Chillibreeze being in a different time zone allows us to avoid having some of those premium expenses incurred for those last-minute jobs. The time difference has been the biggest advantage but there is also the economic benefit with Chillibreeze pricing.

The bumpy ride

It has not always been smooth sailing. In the words of Todd "Yes, there are net benefits, like time zone and the ability to get presentations done while we were sleeping.

However, our 12.5 hour time zone difference also posed a huge communication challenge. TSG come up with creative ways, through Skype, cell phone, and through other means to minimize that time

"Whenever I've sent an email with an issue, you and your team are very responsive. If there is a screw-up, you and your team own up to it. I have never had the sense that Chillibreeze was reticent to ask a question, almost maybe to a fault. But they are erring on the side of "we want to do this right" if we have any questions we're going to ask. That's good training on your part or good instincts on theirs, but either way, we love it.

Last thing, the willingness to make it right. When we have had a deck that wasn't right, you have been quick to make it right and not charge us for what was done wrong."

-Todd Orwig

difference. In some cases, 12.5 hours can be impossible to connect people. TSG have been opened to being available in the evening. Then there are the monthly meetings to address operational or communication issues between Chillibreeze and TSG."

And yet, this is what holds TSG and Chillibreeze together

4. Trust: In this digital age of conference calls and Skype, it made a huge impact on Ray and Todd when Joanna (Director of Operations) was literally sitting at the table with us in our Seattle office, especially since we are a firm located in India. We had other options that we considered. We had started to partner with a company that was in many different time zones and could support us. We did all our meetings via Skype, and it never worked, it was missing that trust. When Tod and Ray met Joanna, being from the actual company in India, it made an impression on us.
5. Share same clients: We were already doing work with some of TSG clients at Microsoft. Therefore, there was some credibility there. The fact that Chillibreeze was good enough to be an approved supplier for a place like Microsoft that cherishes confidentiality, certainly helped in building their confidence in us.
6. Operational: Ray Rasmussen (TSG CEO), could tell right in that first meeting with Joanna that she is an operations person. He could tell there were clear structure and operations behind the scene. It came through in how Joanna described the work and spoke about the team.

Chillibreeze success story with TSG – It is more about the journey than the destination

Such stories happen daily at TSG. Typically, on jobs that are Bill of Materials (BoM) work where they may complete 18 deliverables in a 6-week time. Every day matters concerning progress against these deliverables. This is when Chillibreeze has repeatedly proven as a capable behind the scenes graphics partner and a reason TSG have won repeat business. They keep expanding their BoM work because TSG clients see the results they showcase. In TSG, it is not all about the final material; it is about the journey.

"We don't believe great thinking presented poorly is a good idea. Chillibreeze solves that problem by making us look good through visual presentations."

-Todd Orwig

As part of the journey, TSG needs to show measurable progress every single day and Chillibreeze is the backbone to that capability. They couldn't have done it themselves when managing 7 or 8 equally important projects simultaneously. They are able to 'throw things over the wall, still be working and knowing that some other people are working as well. So that, the next morning, even if it is a slide or two, TSG clients can go, "wow... You've actually moved this a mile from the meeting we had yesterday afternoon." This story plays out every single day. TSG customers think we are magical, and they are always quick to explain that they have a strong team behind them that gets them there.

Chillibreeze a 'household' name around TSG

Chillibreeze comes up in TSG conversations every single day, "Oh, just send it to Chillibreeze." We are a known and reliable entity.

"TSG has a lot of people singing your praises because often Chillibreeze comes up with creative ways to solve and visualize a very complicated matter in a way that makes a big difference to the clients we serve and to us" says Todd.