(intel®)

A Flash of Innovation

Acano brings groundbreaking collaboration solution to marketplace, optimized for Intel® technology-based hardware

CHALLENGES

- **Enable collaboration.** Create a single platform that can be used for voice and video communications and Web collaboration
- **User friendly.** Ensure that the new offering is easy for companies and end users to adopt

SOLUTIONS

- **Embedded performance.** Acano software runs optimally on their hardware platform powered by the Intel® Core™ i7-3612QE processor
- **Powerful efficiency.** The Intel® technology-based platform enables complex computing while keeping power usage low
- **Flexible compatibility.** The solution runs on multiple devices and operating systems, integrating with many common collaboration tools

IMPACT

- **Reduced costs.** The integrated solution is expected to enable Acano's customers to cut the total cost of ownership (TCO) of their collaboration resources
- **Clear roadmap.** Acano can accurately plan software developments to take advantage of upcoming Intel technology performance enhancements

acano

"Intel® technology is a key element of our solution. We love the clear roadmap and the ability to deliver regular performance increases at a reliable and predictable pace. It enables us to architect our own platform to take advantage of performance gains that we know are coming and at the same time work on standard x86 platforms."

OJ Winge,
Chief Executive Officer, Acano

The future of collaboration

With the rise of bring-your-own-device, we started on the road towards a much more immediate working culture. The workplace now features a raft of real-time collaboration technologies from conference calling to online document sharing. While we may look back with nostalgia at the old ways and congratulate ourselves on how far we've come, we should remember that the journey is not over.

This is the view held by the team that founded Acano, a telecommunications equipment and software provider based in the UK. After a number of years working with collaboration technologies, the team had developed an ambitious vision for the future of the industry, and they knew what they needed to do to make it happen.

"People use a range of technologies to collaborate every day, including phone calls, video conferencing and online workspaces," explains Acano chief scientist, Simon Evans. "They have a lot of choice, but there's not much integration between the disparate channels.

We've tasked ourselves to deliver a truly innovative solution to the marketplace that enables all these channels to interact seamlessly, regardless of device or operating system."

It's an ambitious goal, and something that Acano feels could mark a turning point in collaboration technology. "We used to use different devices for listening to music, surfing the Internet and calling our friends," Evans points out. "It was inconvenient, but until the first smartphone came out that could do all three, most of us accepted it because there was no alternative. We believe an integrated collaboration platform could offer this kind of transformative advantage."

While Acano is committed to disrupting the collaborative technology marketplace, it does not want to create inconvenience for the enterprises and their end users, which make up its target customer base. "The team knew the solution they developed would have to integrate seamlessly with an organization's existing devices and working environments," says OJ Winge, chief executive officer, Acano. "It isn't realistic to expect customers to rip and replace."
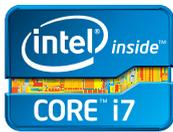
Ambitious start-up builds transformative collaboration solution optimized for Intel® technology

Flexible power

The Acano team has developed an application which combines conference call, video conferencing and online collaboration features. Designed for the x86 architecture, it runs on their optimized hardware, standard servers, as well as in virtualized environments. The strong focus on openness enables interoperability between a number of common collaboration solutions such as those from Microsoft and Cisco. It offers users a level of integration that Acano believes has not been possible before – for example enabling one caller to dial into a conference using Cisco video while another connects using Microsoft Lync. "You can join a conference call with a single click," explains Evans, "simply by selecting the entry in your calendar."

To ensure users get the most benefit from the efficiency improvements enabled by the software, Acano wanted to build an optimized hardware platform to support it. "The application carries out a lot of complex tasks whilst processing and managing such a diverse range of media, video and audio," says Evans. "We needed a platform that would provide the computing power needed to keep it running smoothly at a new benchmark for scale, while also reducing power consumption as much as possible."

He continues: "We were already familiar with the Intel® architecture, and had previously been impressed by the balance it offered between general-purpose compute capabilities and dedicated functionality for graphics and media processing. We also believed that a hardware platform powered by the Intel Core i7-3612QE processor would provide five times the performance-per-Watt of other state-of-the-art solutions. The performance increase enabled by having Intel technology embedded in our platform will be instrumental in forming the future of collaborative service delivery." In addition to the Intel Core i7 processors, the Acano solution includes two Intel® Ethernet Converged Network Adapters X540 and an enterprise-grade Intel® Solid-State Drive DC S3700 Series.

A reliable roadmap

Although the application will work in any x86 environment, this Intel technology-based platform is Acano's hardware of choice. It plans to base its solutions on Intel architecture as it continues to bring innovations to the marketplace. "Intel is a key element of our solution," explains Winge. "We love the clear roadmap and the ability to deliver regular performance increases at a reliable and predictable pace. It enables us to architect our own platform to take advantage of performance gains that we know are coming and at the same time work on standard x86 platforms."

Evans adds: "It's also great that we could start building our software on Intel architecture so quickly. The comprehensive set of development tools and open source video drivers enabled us to optimize the entire solution for our specific workload requirements."

At the same time, the team expects that the performance and energy efficiency advantages of the recommended Intel technology-based hardware platform will significantly reduce organizations' TCO for collaboration.

"By working closely with Intel throughout this project, we have succeeded in redefining integration in the context of business collaboration," concludes Evans. "Intel enables us to offer an unprecedented level of performance to our customers, as well as the flexibility to deliver it across a wide range of devices. This is exactly the transformational impact that we've been planning to make."

Lessons Learned

For a start-up wanting to offer the industry something transformational, getting it right the first time is important. By making sure it understood the technology options available and taking the time to develop a hardware platform optimized for its software, Acano created a solution capable of driving industry change. Working closely with Intel to optimize its current product and determine a roadmap for future development meant that Acano could ensure it was well placed to play an important role in the collaboration industry for a long time to come.

Visit Intel's Technology Provider website at **www.inteltechnologyprovider.com**.

Find the solution that's right for your organization. Contact your Intel representative, visit Intel's Business Success Stories for IT Managers (**www.intel.co.uk/Itcasestudies**) or explore the Intel.co.uk IT Center (**www.intel.co.uk/itcenter**).