

# TANDBERG CUSTOMER PROFILE

## Alu Rehab AS



To communicate with its Chinese facility, the Norwegian wheelchair maker uses a powerful TANDBERG 6000

## ALU REHAB™ Thinking ahead - moving forward

- **CLIENT:** A leading producer of wheelchairs and other technical aids for disabled people, with a staff of 130 in Norway, China, Japan, Poland and Denmark
- **ACTION:** Linked all its sites visually by way of a TANDBERG 6000, a TANDBERG 1000 and three TANDBERG 880 videoconferencing systems
- **RESULT:** Better communications across cultural and language barriers, shorter time-to-market for new products, improved product quality and less travel

**"I've been able to cut my travel to China from six trips a year to two."**

LEIF EGIL LØNNE  
ALU REHAB AS

### SEEING THROUGH BARRIERS

China's vibrant economy looms large in the growth plans of many European companies. To succeed, however, vast distances and language barriers must be overcome. The best companies find new ways of communicating -- like videoconferencing.

It has worked for Alu Rehab, a Norway-based wheelchair manufacturer. When Alu Rehab moved the production of some components to booming Xiamen, China, three years ago, its labor costs fell immediately. But the full benefits of outsourcing were not realized until last year. That's when the company installed a compact TANDBERG 880 videoconferencing unit for its 25 employees in China and an ultrasleek TANDBERG 6000 boardroom model for its headquarters in Sandes, Norway.

"Since then our experience has been incredibly positive," says Leif Egil Lønne, Alu Rehab's technical and quality-control manager, who is based in Norway. He credits videoconferencing with helping to boost product quality, improve relations with suppliers and halve the time-to-market for new wheelchair parts and other technical aids for disabled people.

### "A GOOD VIEW" TO CHINA

"Before we got the video, I had to make quite a lot of trips to China, and we were constantly sending parts back and forth by DHL to see if they were right or not," Mr. Lønne recalls.

"Now I can sit in Norway and get a good view of what they're working on in Xiamen. They just put items on the document camera for me to approve. Even for simple conversations, video makes it easier to make sure we understand each other. I've been able to cut my travel to China from six trips a year to two."

Such video collaboration recently



Alu Rehab's Netti III Comfort chair

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culminated in an innovative new leg support system for Alu Rehab's "Netti" wheelchair series, which has become the leading brand in the comfort category across Europe as well as in Japan, Hong Kong and Australia.

Alu Rehab also has facilities in Denmark, Poland and Japan. All are now equipped with TANDBERG videoconferencing systems, which help meeting participants to elaborate on issues of design, assembly, quality-control and economic performance. When the five-member Alu Rehab Board of Directors meets in Norway, it frequently receives input by multipoint video from the company's foreign outposts.

## KEEPING RELATIONSHIPS WARM

Upon agreeing to direct Alu Rehab's operations in China, Geir Rune Larsen knew that he and his family were in for a whirlwind cultural adventure. But by holding frequent videoconferences across the company's virtual private network (VPN) he has been able to keep old relationships warm while expanding his personal and professional horizons. Sometimes he and his Norwegian colleagues in Japan simply open the video link between them and enjoy chatting over lunch.

"Now and then it's nice to speak a little Norwegian and see the faces of your friends," he says.

With two more years to go on their adventure in Xiamen, Mr. Larsen's wife and daughters, aged seven and two, have also taken to using the set-top TANDBERG 880 system, which they find no harder to operate than a mobile telephone.

"My seven-year-old even used the document camera to show her grandparents the teeth she'd lost," Mr. Larsen recalls.



*In China, Alu Rehab runs the TANDBERG 880*

## ABOUT TANDBERG

TANDBERG is a leading global provider of visual communication products and services. The Company has dual headquarters in New York and Norway. TANDBERG designs, develops and markets systems and software for video, voice and data. The Company provides sales, support and value-added services in more than 90 countries worldwide. TANDBERG trades publicly on the Oslo Stock Exchange under the ticker TAA.OL. Please visit [www.tandberg.net](http://www.tandberg.net) for more information.

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