Top 5 Challenges in
Modernizing Collaboration Technology

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The business meeting is not what it used to be. The scene of a group of company executives sitting around a table in a conference room while munching on sandwiches and brainstorming ideas is more like a take from *Mad Men* than a description of how businesses operate today. Even if you update the scene and fill the room with advanced technology such as telepresence or high-end video conferencing systems, it's still pretty clear that there's something wrong with this picture.

The business meeting of today is a reflection of the myriad ways in which technology has transformed the workplace in the last few years through increased mobility, "always on" business environments, smartphones and tablets, and near-ubiquitous Internet connectivity. To adapt to this new reality, business and IT leaders must provide workers with the platforms and tools they need to meet and collaborate successfully.

In this article we look at five of the most significant challenges in modernizing collaboration technology and obtaining all the tools necessary—including high-quality audio and video—to meet the needs of today's workplace and workforce. We also

zoom

examine how cloud-based services can help organizations deploy cost-effective and easy-to-use technology that is transforming the nature of the business meeting for today and tomorrow.

Challenge No. 1: Ease of Use

Today's meetings need to accommodate workers using any device from any location, while providing video conferencing capabilities that ensure a high-quality experience for the user, delivering clear audio and video with no latency, dropped calls, or other glitches. In addition, today's meetings need to be delivered with enterprise-grade security, so that remote workers are not subjecting the organization to additional risk of data loss.

Importantly, the technology enabling today's meetings must also be easy to install and intuitive, and it must "just work" without any hassle, supporting the different ways that users want to interact with one another. If the solution for corporate meetings is not simple to use and does not deliver a satisfying user experience, the organization will be exposed to additional risk, including:

- **Lack of user adoption:** The most sophisticated and elaborate conference room is of little value if employees are not using it. Workers will avoid unwelcoming conference room systems that don't fit their needs, so the organization will not reap the benefits of its investment. In addition, productivity will suffer if users aren't easily accessing the tools they need to collaborate.

- **Use of insecure solutions:** If the company doesn't provide a solution as easy to use and intuitive as the consumer platforms they're used to, workers may turn to actual consumer solutions, which lack the security features needed to protect the organization. Collaboration will be limited because these solutions don't provide the levels of quality (in audio and video) or reliability that business meetings require, nor do they provide a comprehensive complement of collaboration tools such as co-annotation of shared documents and remote screen control.

By using a cloud-based model for video conferencing and meetings, organizations can successfully address the ease-of-use challenge. Users can quickly and easily participate in cloud video conferencing, simple online meetings, and group messaging all within a single interface that has a minimal learning curve. Importantly, they can participate in any type of meeting using any device from any location, accessing a full set of collaboration tools.

Challenge No. 2: Ease of Deployment

Legacy conference rooms present an ongoing challenge for the IT organization. Not only are they expensive, they are complex to manage, requiring trained personnel and often maintenance contracts with providers. In addition, the equipment has a limited lifecycle, so there are ongoing challenges involved in upgrades, scaling, and procurement.

Another deployment challenge with legacy video conferencing solutions is that they don't easily support mobile and remote workers using smartphones and tablets. Letting workers use consumer-grade solutions is not an answer because that would mean the IT department would be giving up control, thereby creating more security risks.

A cloud service is easy to deploy for the IT organization. Once your organization signs up for the service, there is no equipment to install and no maintenance. With the right cloud service, you can leverage both on-premises and hybrid cloud solutions. For example, Zoom's on-premise Meeting Connector solution enables you to use the public cloud for administrative tasks, while using a private cloud for meeting traffic, including video, voice, and content sharing. With the right solution, you can also leverage existing legacy conference room systems or build new cloud-based conference rooms.

Challenge No. 3: Lowering Total Cost of Ownership

IT departments are being asked to do more while spending less. Companies moving to a cloud model for videoconferencing and collaboration have experienced overall cost reductions of 80% or more, through lower capital expenditures (Capex) and lower operating expenditures (Opex).

With a cloud model, you are paying for a subscription based on the number of account holders. You can leverage endpoints that users are already deploying so they can access meetings from corporate-issued devices or options they own, such as smartphones or tablets. The user-based model can be much less expensive than any on-premises or per-minute-based solution. For example, customers of Zoom can pay $14.99 for a monthly subscription that allows up to 50 people to meet with unlimited minutes. For $40 a month, the number of participants rises to up to 100 per meeting.

In addition to the Capex and Opex savings from using a cloud system, the organization will achieve other TCO benefits, including reduced travel expenses because workers will be able to easily participate in meetings from any location, improved productivity through increased and more effective collaboration, and investment protection if the cloud service can easily support legacy H.323/SIP conference rooms.

Challenge No. 4: Supporting Mobility and a Broad Mix of Devices

Most legacy video conferencing rooms were designed prior to the mobile era, and legacy vendors have been slow to adjust to the changing needs of the workplace. It has been the province of newer suppliers, with Zoom as the pioneer, to build cloud-based video conferencing and online meeting services with mobility in mind. Mobility is simpler to deliver and support in the cloud environment, and cloud-based solutions offer the broadest range of mobile features on the widest range of devices for the highest quality mobile user experience.

For example, participants can use Mac, Windows, iOS, Android, or Blackberry to access Zoom video conferencing and meetings services, with a similar experience across desktop, tablet, and mobile devices. In addition, with Zoom, users can take advantage of mobile applications that offer screen sharing, remote control, group messaging, co-annotation, and tablet whiteboarding. Users can even screen share iOS apps—a unique feature.

Challenge No. 5: Upgrading the Quality of Meetings

With video and audio, the quality of the meeting is key. If users have a bad experience, they are likely to stop using the technology or to turn to less secure consumer-grade solutions. In looking at cloud solutions, it is important to work with a vendor that offers features and functionality that support a secure, high-quality user experience. This is another area where Zoom has been an innovator in upgrading the quality of audio and video for cloud-based meetings. For example, Zoom is able to offer higher-quality video than other solutions through the use of an advanced video codec with an optimized quality-of-service algorithm.

Conclusion

Innovations in technology over the past few years have had a dramatic impact on the way we work. Employees are no longer tethered to desks or offices and can be even more productive when they are remote or mobile. Yet they still need to collaborate, still need to see fellow workers and business partners, and still need to conduct productive business meetings that move the company forward.

Cloud-based services offer a cost-effective, easy-to-use, and simple-to-deploy model for empowering the modern business meeting with video, mobility, and a comprehensive palette of advanced collaboration tools. For more information on how you can leverage the cloud to modernize your meetings and collaboration initiatives, request a **live demo** from Zoom.

Zoom unifies cloud video conferencing, simple online meetings, group messaging, and a software-based conference room solution into one easy-to-use platform.
Our solution offers the best video, audio, and screen-sharing experience across Windows, Mac, iOS, Android, Blackberry, Zoom Rooms, and H.323/SIP room systems.
Start Zooming today at **https://zoom.us**.