The following documents are included:

Part 1
Key factors for selecting a video-conferencing solution

Part 2
2019 video-conferencing solution benchmark test

Part 3
Hardware comparison for each manufacturer (Individual comparison)

DEKOM

KEY FACTORS FOR SELECTING A

VIDEO-CONFERENCING SOLUTION

It is already three years since our last test report. Three years is an eternity in the field of unified conferencing. The market is constantly in motion. Technology is developing at an ever-increasing speed, the performance of solutions is constantly improving and the influence of the consumer world adds to ergonomics of business solutions.

This is the first of a series of documents to help in the selection of the right video-conference system and/or the most suitable platform for you.

WHICH FACTORS ARE IMPORTANT?

In the following overview, we will provide you with a quick insight into which factors currently need to be considered when selecting a video-conference system and will explain them one by one.

Key factors/focus areas when selecting a video-conference system:

1. **Multipoint conferences**
2. **Calendar integration**
3. **Directory linkage**
4. **Firewalling**

5. **Interoperability**
6. **Look & feel**
7. **Automatic updates**
8. **S4B Compatibility**

We will now go into detail for each focus area.

1. Multipoint conferences

Multipoint conferences are when multiple participants are connected within one virtual conference room. This used to be solved by means of cost-intensive local infrastructure. Nowadays, multipoint conferences are a key component of a cloud connection. This means that multipoint conferences are held on the servers of cloud suppliers. This significantly reduces the required costs and dramatically increases the number of virtual conference rooms and participants. Cloud-based multipoint conferences are standard nowadays.

2. Calendar integration

When booking a video-conference, you can simply book the relevant resources (video-conference systems). You can view real-time info about room availability at a glance, avoid scheduling conflicts and simplify the planning of conferences and calls. Virtual meeting rooms can be booked using the respective supplier app and video-conference meetings can be created in Outlook, for example.

3. Directory linkage

Selecting cryptic numbers, IP and SIP addresses used to be the norm. Addresses were saved in local telephone books and updated by hand. Nowadays, central telephone books, always up-to-date across all systems, fed by LDAP connections – just like in the world of telephony – come as standard. Selecting favourites, embedding video-conference systems that are already in place and direct user-management are no longer a problem and require minimal configuration effort.

4. Firewalling

In the past, configuring firewalls for the use of video-conference systems was a complex issue. Ports? Rules? Gateways? Water under the bridge. Nowadays, cloud-linked video-conference systems and the associated cloud services handle the connection parameters autonomously, safely, and with very little effort required on the side of the user.

5. Interoperability

There are many different suppliers of professional video-conference solutions. Older video-conference systems clearly highlighted the problem that it was not possible to link all systems with each other seamlessly. Today, interoperability comes as standard with professional video-conference suppliers, since the solutions available on the market have been unified based on their cloud connection. The exceptions here are Microsoft and consumer solutions.

6. Look & feel

Earlier video-conference systems were complicated to operate – it was simply no fun to make a video call. The current look & feel of the latest systems has greatly improved. The user experience is the same everywhere and has been made easy thanks to simplified and ergonomic user-interfaces on room systems, desktops and mobile devices. Today, it is possible to operate many systems using a touch panel without the need for a remote control. It is now possible to start meetings, select favourites and join meetings that have already started with a swipe of your finger - with no prior training or technical support.

7. Automatic updates

Just a few years ago, every video-conference system and any associated local infrastructure had to be kept up-to-date separately (software version). This required great effort in terms of personnel and time. Cloud-connected systems are the standard in 2019, and are kept up-to-date automatically via the cloud infrastructure. This secures your investment thanks to continuous feature updates, saves significant resources and ensures quick support from the manufacturer.
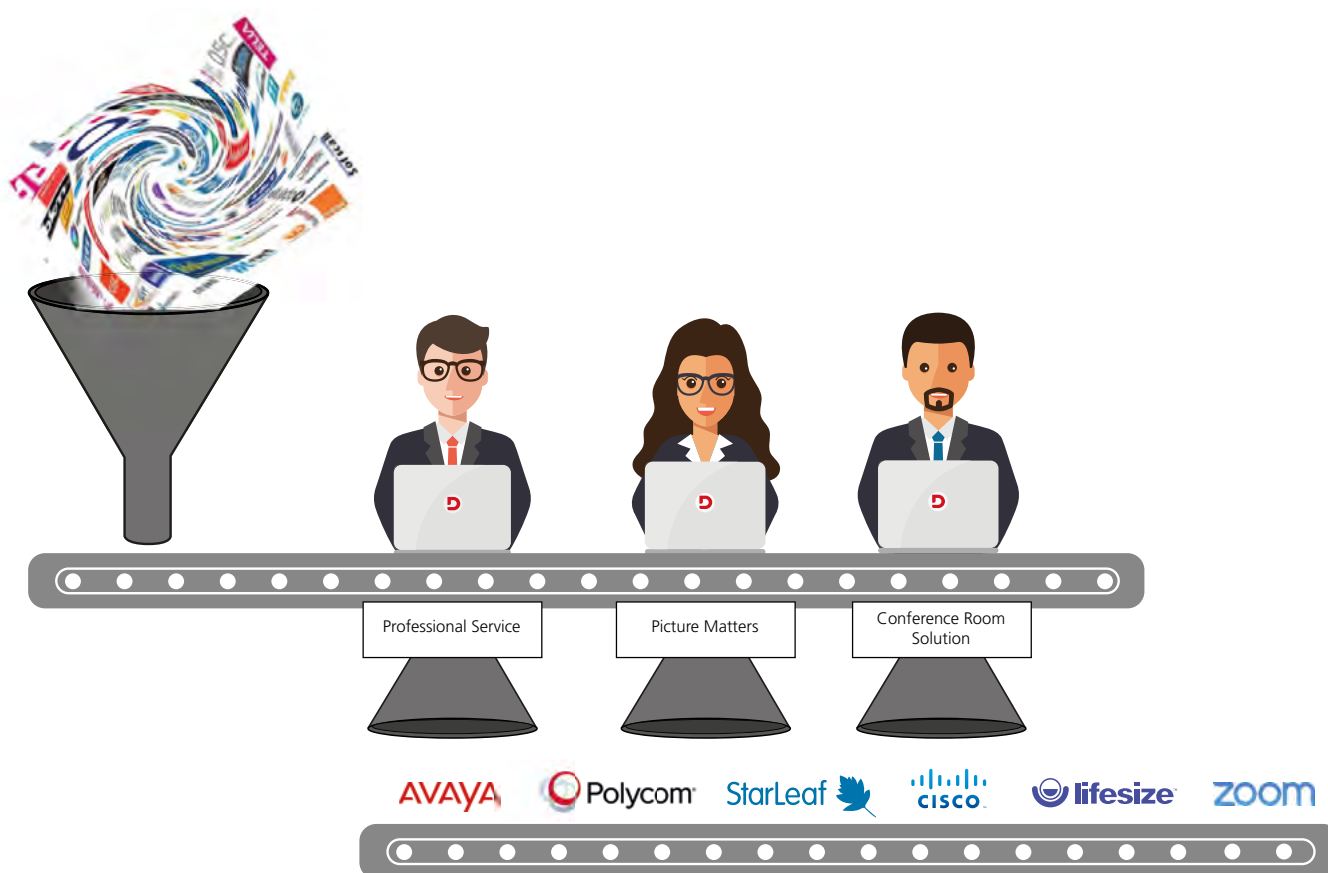
8. S4B compatibility

The video/audio/data conferences from Microsoft are not usually compatible with standard H.323/SIP video-conference systems. A small amount of technology is required in each case – a 'man in the middle' - who establishes compatibility between the two worlds. This piece of technology either takes the shape of a server infrastructure in the company network or is realised through a cloud connection from the video-conference systems – a solution which has become very popular and commonly practiced. This means S4B compatibility has simply become a feature of the cloud and can thus be established with no complications.

DEKOM – Your experts for video-conferencing and media technology
We advise you independently of any manufacturers, and we are comprehensively certified and represented throughout Europe.

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WHICH MANUFACTURERS ARE ELIGIBLE?

There are several hundred UC, web-conferencing, video-conference, collaboration platforms, apps, solutions and ideas from manufacturers around the world, all of which have similar functions and similar-sounding features, which makes selecting a unified conferencing platform a major task with many reefs and shallows. Manufacturer-independent DEKOM has been specialised in helping clients find the right solution for 35 years.

We have already taken care of one significant task for you with our portfolio: Our manufacturers are all suitable for corporate use, are secure, reliable, place value on simple operation and high-quality sound and image transfer. We can proudly say that decision-makers and users can do no wrong with our manufacturers. But with us, you

are also spoilt for choice: Whether on-premise, cloud, boardroom, huddle or desktop system – meeting-room centred or ad-hoc discussions – we advise you on the basis of your communication behaviour and tell you which manufacturer is the crème de la crème for your requirements.

We will present our best selection in more detail in part two of our three-part documentation. Which features are offered? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the solution? Which philosophy and which concept are behind the solution?