

How to create Skype for Business meeting room solutions

How many times have you attempted to arrange a conference call, coordinating multiple calendars, time zones and other commitments, only to turn up at the meeting room for the technology to fail you, meaning you have to spend the first ten minutes trying to loop everyone in and trying not to press the wrong button and lose all connections.

This frustration and hesitation with technology is a key reason behind the slow uptake of AV conferencing by some; despite enterprises investing significant sums in solutions designed to make calls simpler, bad experiences in the past can still affect uptake today.

Investment in meeting room technology is often designed to support the new ways of working that have emerged in recent years – hot desking, huddle rooms and smaller collaborative spaces have all replaced the more formal office layout of the past, and employees are increasingly working across multiple locations as well as remotely.

As many organizations are yet to standardize on their conferencing setup, this can mean employees have to become familiar with multiple systems – many not as intuitive as the software they'll use in their personal life – depending on their location.

As the office environment continues to change and meetings become more interactive, the technology needed is changing too, and a simple, effective communication tool that is as intuitive as a consumer solution is central to achieving this.

So what should enterprises look for when it comes to conferencing technology and is it possible to keep end users happy while also ensuring IT teams are confident with any technology that sits on their network?



Ease and consistency of use

Any investment in a new or upgraded meeting space is likely to be a significant one. This being the case it is crucial that the technology is simple enough to be used by staff on a regular basis, and reliable enough to encourage repeated use.

An intuitive conferencing set up is much more likely to be utilized than one that involves convoluted logins and extensive setup for each use.



By opting for platforms that are familiar to users and that operate across multiple devices, end users need not be concerned about having to learn new systems. In addition, by opting for platforms that integrate with commonly used platforms such as Office 365, meetings can be booked directly and calls started at the touch of just one button.

High-quality audio and video

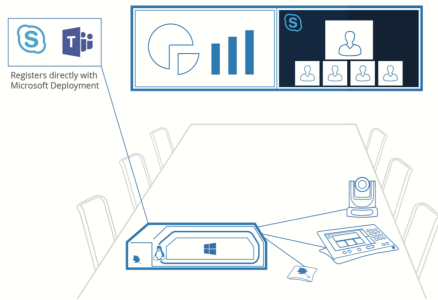
Once you have end user buy in it's important to maintain this by offering a high-quality audio and video experience. HD video will be expected, along with software that tracks movements, focusing on the talker and enabling natural interaction. While the video side of conferencing is often seen as the most important, it's worth remembering that audio is crucial to any meeting – without it a conversation simply cannot happen.

Poor audio quality can negatively impact productivity, making it difficult to reach decisions as well as potentially affecting client relationships if meetings break up, so ensuring the right hardware for your space is crucial – whether that's a headset for an open plan environment or a conference phone in a huddle room.

Intuitive tools

Simple touchscreen control, ease of setup and connection, and the ability to connect via any device are key requirements for end users. It is for these reasons that software solutions such as Skype for Business prove popular with users. The

vast majority of organizations will already have an extensive Microsoft deployment, providing a ready-made interface familiar to end users. By making better use of this it is possible to create an effective enterprise-wide collaboration and communication system.



For example, it is now possible to extend Skype for Business into meeting rooms and gain the ability for any standards-based video device to join Skype for Business meetings. Not only is this solution scalable, meaning it can be used in everything from desktops to huddle spaces to boardrooms, it also ensures a consistent user experience that will be both simple and familiar to end users.

In addition to audio and video calls, users can record meetings, share screens and annotate documents enabling the true real-time collaboration that makes meetings more productive. When paired with high-spec endpoints, such as control systems, displays and microphones, this makes a simple yet effective solution for any meeting space.

The future is now

Undoubtedly a big talking point in the world of unified communications the launch of Microsoft Teams, a digital workspace that is designed to respond to the way today's enterprises communicate. Fully customizable, it is possible to tailor the platform to each team's individual needs, while encouraging the sharing of information in multiple ways in a secure environment. What is perhaps most interesting about Teams, however, is Microsoft's Capabilities Roadmap, which shows the enterprise-grade developments and enhancements in the pipeline and when they are due to be delivered. This provides a clear pathway for when enterprises should consider migrating to Teams.

The transition to Teams could take time and it is important to determine whether it is the best solution for your organization. For many enterprises, running Skype and Teams will make

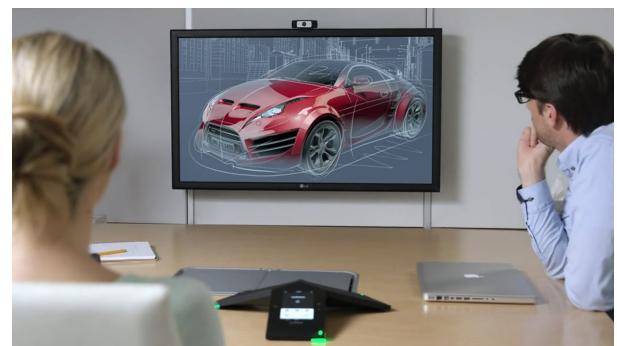
the most sense and create the most comprehensive and flexible solution. Over 55% of businesses are already using Skype for Business and Microsoft Teams has over 125,000 organizations on its books.

By investing in end points that deliver one meeting room environment that automatically works for both Skype for Business and Teams users, enterprises will continue to realise a return on their investment while also benefitting from the new features and functionality outlined by Microsoft, guaranteeing a future proofed investment.

Summary

A single vendor UC environment that enables effective communication across all areas of an enterprise, from desktop to boardroom, locally and globally, is undoubtedly a wise investment.

User adoption is key to the success of any installation and opting for a system that operates across familiar environments, works from any device and can be joined at the touch of a button, will ensure user confidence even for those who don't video call on a regular basis. If this can be combined with a high-quality, reliable and consistent in-call experience, there's no reason why video calling won't become as common as a voice call.



By creating a single meeting room environment that works for multiple platforms, such as Skype for Business and Microsoft Teams, enterprises will benefit from the new features and advancements laid out in the Microsoft Roadmap while enjoying a flexible and intuitive meeting room experience. Being able to monitor, manage and analyze room usage will also reduce any system downtime and ensure meeting room technology is adding value to the business for many years to come.

Please consult DEKOM about Skype for Business in your meeting room. DEKOM gathered vast experience, working with 3.000 international organisations in over 130 countries. Being the only European player certified for Microsoft Surface Hub, Skype for Business, Microsoft Teams, StarLeaf and Polycom.