

Seeing is believing

Why cloud video conferencing is becoming a must-have technology



Across a range of industries, ‘going’ to work is becoming a thing of the past. And the old model of recruiting talent locally, or paying to move highly-skilled workers from elsewhere, is no longer the norm.

Instead, people are working smarter. They’re getting together from all sorts of different places. They’re talking to each other and customers through phone calls and new communications technologies – including video conferencing. Gallup’s most recent Work and

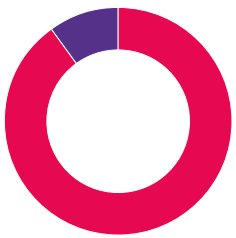
Education poll¹ found that 37 per cent of US workers say they have telecommuted. And that figure is only likely to grow. Another research group predicts 60 per cent of today’s office-based employees will work remotely by 2022².





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– Gallup Annual Work and Education poll



Up to 90 percent of human communication relies on non-verbal cues.

– Frost & Sullivan

According to James Ware, Executive Director of the Future of Work Institute – a research and advisory firm that helps companies create flexible workplaces – we are witnessing “a basic transformation in what matters and how value is created.” Knowledge and talent are highly prized, much more so than where people are based. And businesses are realizing the benefits of linking groups of specialists together. Helping this talent to collaborate securely and effectively, across town or across the globe, is one of the biggest challenges facing today’s CIOs.

There’s also a change in the way businesses sell their products and services. In an increasingly tech-driven world, many are looking to build more personal customer relationships, but also want to avoid spending too much time and money on travel.

Email and conference calls certainly play their part in holding remote workforces together. But they’re never quite the same as a face-to-face meeting. Some studies have found that up to 90 percent of human communication relies on non-verbal cues.³ It’s clear that ‘reading the room’ is extremely important.

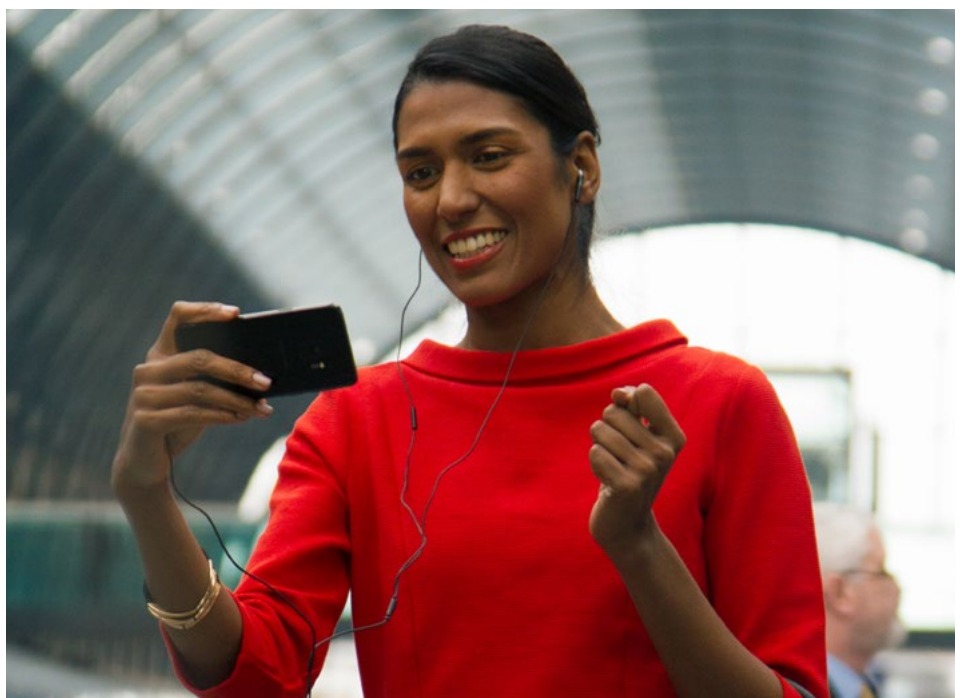
Newer technologies like telepresence have also generated quite a bit of excitement. But these premises-based systems also have their own

weaknesses. They can be expensive, complex, don’t always work well together, and aren’t really set up to include mobile workers.

Enter the cloud. The quality of cloud video conferencing is up there with telepresence systems, but it’s cheaper and more flexible. Plus, cloud-based systems are typically plug and play, so all a business needs is an internet connection and they’re ready to go. The ease and speed of the cloud fits the wish-list of today’s IT leaders, giving them a cost-effective yet clever way to help their teams reach peak performance.

Put all these things together and it’s no wonder that video is becoming so popular. It’s the same story across a whole range of sectors, including manufacturing, banking, healthcare, education, energy, retail, and hospitality.

And it’s not just about meetings. Combine video conferencing with business apps and there’s a whole new range of possibilities, ready to help take a business in a new direction. Examples include digital classrooms, remote medical diagnosis, remote customer support, and remote monitoring and troubleshooting of industrial systems, such as refineries or oil production platforms.



Video conferencing: a better way to communicate

All this explains why IT leaders, and the C-suite, are beginning to view video communications as a necessity. According to Frost & Sullivan, the total cloud video conferencing market is growing rapidly. And it shows no sign of slowing – it's forecast to reach \$890 million by 2020.

This white paper explains how a cloud communications system can bring greater flexibility and add real value to a business. Plus, it can lead to other benefits, such as improved productivity, better sales results, stronger teams, and faster decision making.

A happier team is a more productive team

In previous years, people focused on the obvious benefit of video conferencing – lower travel costs. Some sales people even offered calculators to show customers how much they could save by switching to virtual meetings.

But now companies recognise that reducing travel costs isn't the only major benefit. IDC (International Data Corporation) has pointed out that it also helps with the impact of travel on employees themselves. Things like fatigue, stress, and poor health. By staying local, employees were said to be more productive and happier. And they were able to spend more time adding value to the business by doing things like following up on new leads. It's a win-win.

It's easier to take a business around the world

There's another benefit that isn't as easy to calculate – better collaboration and an easier way to become multi-national. Today, many companies work with partners in far-flung locations. And it's often more cost-effective than working locally. Strong relationships with global experts mean businesses can seize opportunities faster, wherever they happen in the world. And when it comes to cross-cultural collaboration, using video makes it easier to communicate. That's because those important non-verbal cues can help to break down language and cultural barriers.

It will help people get more done

Conferencing keeps everyone on the same page. By helping people to see everything from body language to computer screens, it all becomes much easier to understand. A recent study by the Baylor College of Medicine⁴ showed that visual cues help people understand what's being said six times better than speech alone. And that's why video conferencing can be even more effective than in-person meetings. People can work on documents in real time, share screens, files and apps easily, and still see everyone in the meeting. Better communication helps everyone get more done.

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– Baylor College of Medicine study

It can boost the bottom line

Success relies on the right technology. It can help sales and marketing teams reach the right customers across the globe and follow leads more effectively. It can help them build strong relationships by talking to customers regularly – without blowing the budget on travel.

Video conferencing ticks all the boxes. Mixing web meetings with video conferencing makes it easier to create targeted campaigns, qualify leads and work with sales teams across the business.

It also cuts time spent on site visits. So sales people can check in with customers more frequently, while still seeing the context and visual cues that can help them sell more effectively. And they can also improve results by solving customer issues fast, without ever leaving the office.

Use it to hire a dream team

Job applicants no longer need to travel. It's easy to see their reactions on-screen, making interviews just as personal as they would be in the flesh. Plus, it's much more convenient for everyone.

If businesses are hiring remote workers, video conferencing is a friendlier way to bring them into team meetings, wherever they're based. And because they aren't just voices on the end of phones, it helps people bond. Out go the distractions and awkwardness of phone conferencing; in come the benefits of shared screens and whiteboards. It gets teams working together more easily, reaching better decisions, faster.

Why you need cloud-based video conferencing

It's all the benefits of face-to-face communication when it's not possible to be in the same place – without paying an arm and a leg for the service.

Lower costs, higher returns

Video conferencing gives people the power to hold face-to-face meetings in high definition and share screens or documents securely. Anytime, anywhere, with anyone. Connecting with clients, and each other, as if they're all in the same room. When everyone has fast access to the same information, decisions get made quickly. Things get done. And all in a very budget-friendly way.

Easy set-up

It can be quick and easy to set up video conferences that rival even the more expensive telepresence services. Because it's cloud technology, off-the-shelf hardware is perfectly fine and it's possible to mix and match equipment. No fumbling with cables. No worrying about compatibility. And people can bring other attendees into the virtual meeting room without any trouble at all.



A wider reach

For effective online training, video conferencing is a must. It's easy to connect with large audiences across the country or around the world, without having to fork out travel costs. Content can be shared securely with attendees, even as it's presented. And it's all there, across any device they want to use.

As webinar host, it's easy to manage online events, from registration to post-event follow-up and analysis. Answer questions from the audience using a threaded Q&A. Chat privately or publicly with panellists and attendees during an event. And record the whole thing to use at a later date.

Video conferencing: a better way to connect and collaborate

- Hold unlimited HD video conferences from any location. Anywhere in the world.
- Collaborate with hundreds of people in a single meeting.
- Share presentations, whiteboards, websites, and files from local and cloud storage – things like Box, Dropbox™, Google Drive™, and OneDrive.
- Engage with thousands of attendees at online events. This can include registration, emails, polls, and Q&A tools. And all done securely, so everyone's data is perfectly protected.
- Hold training and group discussions, including breakout sessions.
- Record meetings, then play back and share recordings.
- Reach global customers to grow sales. And it's easy to turn these sales calls into demos, presenting customers with working products and prototypes.

Final word: you'll see big benefits with cloud video conferencing

Cloud is changing things. It's doing away with expensive and complex on-premise video conferencing. Instead, it's ushering in an era of affordable, high-quality connections. No complicated equipment, no hidden costs. Just a better way to connect in person, even when it's not possible to be there.

Cloud video conferencing has been designed with today's workers in mind. As people are no longer tied to their desks, it's quick and easy to join a video meeting from a mobile device. And there's no compromise on the features – they're exactly the same as those on a fixed device.

So forget constant travel. And the costs that go with it. Now people don't have to be in the room to have really effective meetings with their customers. Remote teams can get to know each other face-to-face, even when they're miles apart. It's possible to recruit the best talent, and bring them into a team easily, no matter where they're based. It all helps boost productivity – and that can impact the bottom line.

Here at BT, we've worked on video conferencing for years. And now we've teamed up with best-in-class partners to bring you cloud-based services that are perfectly suited to your business. Our video conferencing can help you deliver faster results through better teamwork. It can make it easier for you provide your best service to customers. And we'll be there for you once it's all up and running, for whatever you need afterwards.



¹Gallup, Gallup's annual Work and Education poll, September 2015

²PSFK Labs

³Frost & Sullivan, Growth Opportunities in the Video Conferencing Market

⁴Baylor College of Medicine, Visual Cues Help People Understand Spoken Words

Offices worldwide

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