

How to build a collaboration experience fit for the hybrid workforce



Organisations can no longer force their employees to come back into the office. Instead, we are seeing our customers try to build an office experience that entices their employees to come back in.

There is a lot of talk around the technology you can implement to support your hybrid work strategy but one of the most important aspects of planning for any kind of video collaboration project is to define what you are trying to achieve and how this services the needs of your workforce.

Outside of all the great perks you can offer, you should prioritise looking at how your employees collaborate with each other in the office, remotely and across the globe.

Let's start by looking at what users expect from the Video Collaboration experience when in the office

- The office needs to be as appealing and productive as working from home. If an employee can be more productive and efficient at home, then that is where they will choose to stay. Simple as that.
- They have grown to expect seamless collaboration and will expect seamless connectivity to their workspaces and meeting spaces as well as access to the same technology they are using at home.
- Users want to walk into the office, head to their workspace and get going without connectivity issues or additional security barriers that delay starting work.
- They want instant access to breakout spaces and collaboration hubs with the opportunity of bringing in people from all different locations.



Equity of experience

We hear this word a lot, but what do we mean by this? Getting everyone together in one space virtually is just the first step. Essentially you need to offer the right space and the right technology for everyone to be able to have the same opportunity to collaborate and participate no matter where they are located.

How does the hybrid workforce expect to collaborate?

Employees will want to be able to plan meetings in modern and flexible spaces, from huddle rooms to breakout spaces in 'open plan' offices.

They want the opportunity to collaborate spontaneously with colleagues who might be in the office, at home or the other side of the world, bringing them together in one 'space' often across multiple platforms.

They want to walk into a room and easily connect with colleagues and customers with the ability to share and interact with content.

When it comes to planning for content sharing you should consider

- This content will often be from their laptop so you need to consider wireless content delivery when you are planning for your collaboration spaces and rooms.
- Also, for open spaces such as town hall communal areas, you need to think about how to deliver things like Q&A while capturing this on live streaming.
- How are you planning for private and public conversations? This has been a big consideration for our customers, especially those who have moved to open planned/hot desk spaces.
- How can your employees 'source' collaboration and meeting spaces offering privacy for private conversations on the fly?



How can you achieve the best experience, while keeping it simple for users?

You need to empower them to focus on the day-to-day rather than the tech impacting this.
Over complicated boardrooms are no more.



How do you provide the best in class service?

In our experience, one of the biggest challenges our customers face is how they manage and monitor their video collaboration estate to minimise end users experiencing problems.

- What tools do you have to give remote visibility of your video collaboration estate?
- How do you manage a complex mixed vendor estate?
- How do you transition your organisation to a standardised approach in stages, whilst guaranteeing business continuity?
- When a fault is detected, how can you resolve it remotely without the need to second a technician to resolve?
- If no technician is available, does that meeting space remain 'down' until resource is available?

What happens if something goes wrong?

Implementing a utopian collaboration environment is the first step but you also need to think about what happens post deployment, including;

- How are you supporting your rooms, including the kit?
- Who is the first point of call when something goes wrong?
- How do you identify the issue across a portfolio of vendor technology? Who owns this internally; Facilities, Operations, IT?
- Is there access to self-service or instant live support?



If issues cannot be resolved quickly then your employees will lose patience and will not follow all those workflows, you have tried hard to put in place.

Often, they will find their own solution which could open you up to security vulnerabilities and make fault detection more difficult.

Therefore, it isn't just important, it is essential that you have a robust support process in place that allows individuals to get support in real-time and resolve issues quickly.

You need to make sure people feel supported and know that they can get help if they need it.

Summary

This whitepaper highlights that there is so much more to building the right video collaboration experience for your employees and organisation. The technology choice should be driven by what you are trying to achieve for your employee experience, and you should gain a thorough understanding of how your workforce want and expect to collaborate to ensure that your investment is successful.

