

How Real-Time Remote Collaboration Is Transforming Business



Remote collaboration increases productivity and efficiency at work

The days of traditional meetings are rapidly coming to an end. Recent surveys have reported that 45 percent of employees feel tuned out during these “bored-room” events – which are, in any case, becoming increasingly impractical because [63 percent](#) of companies now employ remote staff. In addition to these staffers and freelancers located across the country and around the globe, many salaried employees now work from home at least one day a week.

All of these paradigm shifts demand an innovative approach to workplace collaboration. Many companies have responded with Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies, which have raised employee satisfaction and productivity across the board. And from small businesses to enterprise-level organizations, companies are phasing out traditional meeting spaces in favor of “huddle rooms” equipped with wireless touchscreen displays or projectors.

These collaborative displays, powered by collaboration software, function like smart, connected whiteboards – not only for people in the room but also for remote workers, who can make real-time changes to the display canvas as if they were right there at the table. These displays can transform into video-calling screens, or they can show web browser windows, text documents or graphical mock-ups. It's simple to shift between tasks as the meeting progresses and keep the whole team in the loop.

But remote collaboration tools aren't just essential for widely distributed workers: They're equally crucial for teams that share the same physical office. For example, [66 percent](#) of HR professionals say they've ditched traditional one-on-one interviews in favor of video interviews, which enable the whole management team to observe and provide input. And when innovators record their team brainstorming sessions, they say they're much better equipped to remember their big “aha!” moments and share their thought processes with other teams and departments.

Now that this level of real-time collaboration has proven its value for office employees and remote workers alike, it's no surprise that many companies are choosing to forgo the high costs of desks, cubicles, computer equipment and employee travel by moving meetings into the Cloud, where they belong. The future of work won't be in offices – it will be wherever information lives and is shared among coworkers.

In the fast-paced world of modern business, it's not always possible to get everyone in the same room at the same time. Most people already use social media and video-calling apps to connect with faraway friends and family, so it's no surprise that these technologies are now playing increasingly central roles in business collaboration, too.

According to recent surveys, 85 percent of workers collaborate in some way via remote teamwork, and 96 percent agree that interactive video optimizes productivity and increases attention spans during meetings. More than 89 percent of IT teams already have a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy, and that paradigm is rapidly spreading to other departments.

Many of today's younger workers have grown up with mobile touchscreen devices and are eager to use these technologies in the workplace. Remote collaboration is equally crucial for geographically distributed teams, multi-location meetings, and team projects.



Tools for remote collaboration enhance employee engagement and connectivity

Collaboration technology is no longer just a tool for improving work performance. It's now an essential aspect of the communication pipeline and a key platform for team members to share and develop their ideas. Today, any employee born in the 1990s or later has been using connected touchscreen devices for as long as they can remember, and these devices are their favorite tools for discovering new information, interacting with colleagues and preparing presentations.

For all these reasons, high-powered collaboration tools are cornerstones of any digital workplace. Wireless screens enable employees to share content with the whole team, instantly, from any device. These touchscreens can also serve as work surfaces, where groups of team members can assemble images and text – then create a shared presentation file, so they can keep working together from their own devices on the go.

As employees travel for offsite meetings and other assignments, video collaboration tools become even more essential, both in the office and outside of it. These tools empower team members to take a more active role in shaping communication with clients and collaborators, by annotating meeting recording and notes, and sharing PDFs, images and other resources with their fellow team members – all from the same familiar touchscreen interfaces they use in their own day-to-day lives.

And for the [43 percent](#) of employees who spend at least some time working remotely, digital collaboration tools enable managers to create unified workspaces and empower teams to work together in real time from their own devices. Video conferencing apps can bring clients into meeting spaces that exist only in the Cloud, while document-sharing tools let employees share notes on meetings – even if they're thousands of miles apart.

These benefits serve not only employees but also managers, who can use collaboration tools to track each team member's performance on calls and remote meetings, pinpoint areas in which that performance could be improved, and create targeted, data-driven strategies for helping their teams achieve their goals more efficiently and effectively. Collaboration software also makes it easy for managers and executives to add live annotations to meeting recordings, to create and update briefs in the Cloud, and to create shared folders of relevant PDFs and other resources.

From offices to remote workspaces, digital collaboration tools make it easy for work colleagues, managers, clients and other collaborators to share resources and ideas in real time, more seamlessly than ever before. The question is no longer whether these technologies are worth the investment but whether an organization that fails to adopt these tools will be able to keep up with the competition.

About the Author:

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