

A background image showing a laptop, a tablet, and a smartphone, all displaying a video conferencing interface. The laptop screen shows a "Welcome to your room" message and a list of participants. The tablet shows a video call in progress with three participants. The smartphone shows a list of participants.

Increasing Productivity and Profit Through Videoconferencing

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Introduction

You may well be aware that over the last few years video communication technology has improved significantly. With much better performance and reliability, today's videoconferencing solutions are making it possible for video calling and meetings to become part of many companies' day-to-day routine.

One of the biggest reasons for the improvements in call quality and performance was the development of videoconferencing delivered through the cloud. Sometimes referred to as cloud videoconferencing-as-a-service (VCaaS), it enables professional, high-powered video meetings carried over a dedicated network, to be deployed and scaled almost instantly in any business, without needing large investments.

But videoconferencing isn't becoming more common just because the quality has improved. As the world of work expands further into the digital realm, many businesses are looking for ways to create robust communication frameworks that bridge the gap between the physical and digital, whilst still maintaining a personal, human element so critical to successful communications.

For many businesses videoconferencing offers the chance to speak and collaborate with anyone, anywhere in the world, as if in the same room. By using videoconferencing as a key component of their communication strategy, many organizations discover they're able to:

- ✓ drive better communication
- ✓ build stronger relationships with stakeholders
- ✓ reduce the need to travel
- ✓ host more frequent meetings between teams that would otherwise have to rely on email and telephone
- ✓ speed up decision making processes
- ✓ improve transfer of knowledge across the organization

With the latest developments in cloud technology, deploying video meetings is also highly cost-effective, saving businesses both time and money, since it can be implemented and scaled without a large upfront investment and doesn't require new hardware to get started.

Not only does video reduce the need to dedicate resources to travel, it also opens up the possibility of more agile, responsive communication between different parts of the organization, letting people make decisions and get answers right here, right now.



Case study:

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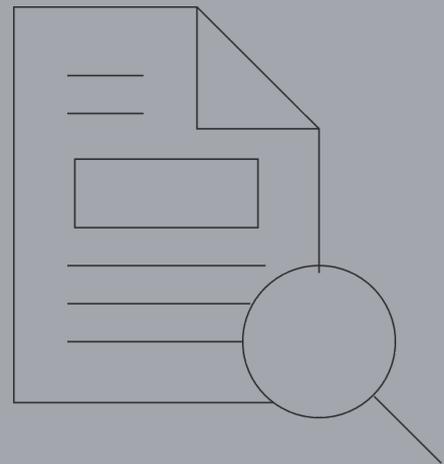
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In depth

We've taken a closer look at two organizations who've successfully implemented cloud videoconferencing as a key part of their communication strategies. We examine what kind of effects it's had on their day-to-day workflows, as well as the wider benefits for the organization. How have video meetings and calling helped them increase performance and make better use of their resources?



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Case study 1:

EIT Digital

Part of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, **EIT Digital** is a consultancy dedicated to driving digital innovation and economic growth, cooperating with 130 European corporations, SMEs, start-ups, universities and research institutes.

EIT brings together students, researchers, engineers, business developers and entrepreneurs to share knowledge and foster business skills. With a pan-European network the organization has a real need for multi-level communication, and so EIT has long been interested in the potential of videoconferencing.

After an initial project to introduce videoconferencing seven years ago, EIT began using Videxio in 2012.

- van der Heijden now uses videoconferencing for an average of six hours a day.
- Employees typically use it for 10 percent of their working time.
- The organization's demand has increased from 30 to 45 rooms.
- By 2016, the whole of EIT was videoconferencing for 17,000 minutes a day.

Background: Why cloud video?

“It started as we needed to videoconference with universities in different locations,” says the COO of EIT, Japp van der Heijden.

EIT used a free service for the first year, but demand soon outgrew the level of service it could support, both in terms of call quality and total time spent in-call. They began searching for a professional service, one that could provide high-performance video calls at a high enough volume to match their growing usage as an organization. They had found previous solutions often created difficult user experiences for their users. As a result, they specifically wanted a user-friendly, intuitive platform where users could set up calls themselves, without the need for support from an IT technician. Their video use was increasingly high volume in all departments, so it was vital that scheduling meeting was fast and simple for anyone inside the organization.

The decision process: Why Videxio?

“As we’re spending public money, we needed to make sure it was value for money,” says van der Heijden. Whilst the organization compared three proposals, Videxio was the first choice, partly because the nearest competitor stored its data in the US. EIT also selected Videxio because of its ease of use and unlimited minutes. Since then, van der Heijden says its benefit has been proven time and again over the years.

“Every couple of years we get offers from other video providers,” he says. “We take a look at what they offer, but have never found a service provider with better quality than Videxio.”

When choosing a videoconferencing solution, there was one important criterion for EIT:

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It’s important to us that’s Videxio is in Europe and stores their data in Europe, and that it’s easy to use and compatible with many devices, says van der Heiden.

No Proprietary Software

Another deciding factor was the reliance on proprietary software on other solutions in order to be able to use them. Whilst Videxio does offer a dedicated app, My Meeting Video, for users to join the service from desktop and mobile devices, they don’t require external guest users to have the software in order to join meetings.

This is an important consideration for EIT, who use videoconferencing to speak regularly to external stakeholders, mainly universities and other higher education institutions across Europe. Therefore they needed a platform that would be simple for invited guests to join a meeting or call, and would be compatible across the wide range of technologies and platforms.

“They all have their own infrastructure,” says van der Heiden.

Day-to-Day Uses:

EIT uses Videxio for both regular scheduled videoconference meetings, as well as ad-hoc calling between individual team members based in different locations. They hold weekly meetings and scheduled updates between partner organizations, as well as day-to-day calls whenever the need arises.

Weekly Meetings

As EIT's reliance on videoconferencing has grown it has significantly reduced its travel expenditure. "We try to take initial meetings face to face and so some travel is inevitable," says van der Heijden. "But after that, we say, 'Let's do it on video'. It's advantageous because the cost of videoconferencing for us is much lower than traveling."

Recruitment

EIT have also been able to use video to expand their recruitment process. As a pan-European organization, they attract candidates from across Europe. By holding interviews via video, it's been a great way to access a wider talent pool.

Now, as a measure of how important videoconferencing has become, van der Heijden uses it for an average of six hours a day. The organization's demand has increased from 30 to 45 rooms, and employees typically use it for 10 percent of their working time. By 2016, the whole of EIT was videoconferencing for 17,000 minutes a day.

Has EIT found it easy for clients and partners to use the technology?

"We've had very few issues," says van der Heiden. "While we haven't needed to train people, we did create a one-page 'explainer' on our intranet page to help our teams use the service successfully."

Customer support:

Has EIT found it easy for clients and partners to use the technology? “We’ve had very few issues,” says van der Heijden. “While We haven’t needed to train people, although we did create have a one-page ‘explainer’ on our intranet page to help our teams use the service successfully.”

But even when there were some minor issues with connectivity etc as EIT’s usage grew, they have been impressed with the response: “During meetings, issues have been addressed and either resolved or worked upon,” says van der Heijden, who has become a bit of a champion of Videxio.

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I’ve recommended it to several people, says van der Heijden.



Case study 2:

RMS Automotive (USA)

With its HQ in Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States, **RMS Automotive** is a company with offices across the US as well as in UK and India. RMS Automotive brings together all aspects of automobiles: from auctions to wholesale and financial services, media and software. Because of the geographically dispersed nature of their business, there's a constant need for videoconferencing to enable close collaboration between teams in their different offices.

- In 2016, RMS employees spent about 240,000 hours on video.
- It's not unusual for team members to spend four to six hours a day on video with teams in other offices.
- Within the company use, Videxio has become more habitual.

Background: Why cloud videoconferencing?

The thing RMS most wanted was efficiency, with an easy to use platform that helped their team host and join video meetings in a few seconds. Scott Liniado is the VP of Technology at RMS, and was responsible for leading the search for the right videoconferencing system. “We’ve found that even an extra 30 seconds can make a difference between wanting to use a tool or not,” says Liniado.

As the company relies on close cooperation between its different offices, team members had begun to use free video services aimed at consumers to try and connect. However, with individuals all having their own preferences for platforms and different devices, their video experiences was very fragmented. “We’ve often had to abandon meetings because the quality of service on these free platforms just wasn’t reliable enough,” says Liniado. “We can’t have one person always struggling to join the meeting.

RMS Automotive’s videoconferencing solution needed to be high-quality enough to adopt as part of its wider company culture. They had also started using Skype for Business for point-to-point calling between team members, but they needed a meeting solution which could easily support video meetings with multiple participants beyond individual team members calling one another.

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Videxio’s interoperability with Skype for Business was a big advantage, says Liniado.

The Decision Process: Why Videxio?

In drawing up the cost-benefit analysis of selecting a new tool, RMS were very conscious of understanding the particular value video meetings could offer them. “When we evaluated the various video solutions we specifically chose a paid solution over a free one,” says Liniado. A tool would only be valuable if it could perform the tasks they required efficiently and without disrupting their workflows, and they came to the conclusion that only a professional solution would offer the level consistency and video quality they expected. “Quite simply, we needed something that was reliable and could do everything we needed it to do.”

During procurement, RMS looked at seven proposals. “Most had fatal flaws in our eyes,” recalls Liniado, “it became very clear we were looking for a video-first solution. Above all else, we found that people wanted to be able to see each other clearly and consistently during a meeting.” During testing, it became clear that Videxio’s service, delivered over its own dedicated video network was the clear winner in offering premium quality of service with HD video.

Also, they found meetings were simple to arrange and manage. “With competitors, there were more steps to joining a meeting and therefore, more room to go wrong,” says Liniado. And while the others were good in terms of sharing content they fell down on video quality.

Day to day use:

“Low Friction”

The teams who use videoconferencing in the office do so for a huge number of tasks, with team members often spending half their working day on video with teams at other RMS offices.

Ease-of-use

Because the team spend such a large volume of time in video meetings and calls, and regularly invite external guests, the fact that users can join in just a few seconds with nothing more than a web browser (known as WebRTC, or web real-time communication) is a big plus. “Videxio is low friction, with easy options. And the robust WebRTC option means that you don’t need a dedicated app for guests who aren’t experienced in video meetings. People just need the room link, a web browser and camera, and they’re good to go. Once they have the URL, they don’t need to know anything else” explains Linaido.

And they’ve experienced that using the service a couple of times in smaller meetings is all it takes for people to get comfortable with the service.

Last Minute Scheduling

RMS offered up a true test of usability with the service when when they had to plan and execute a last minute video meeting for 30 participants across three global locations. The meeting was a success, with all 30 users able to join the event and start the meeting in just a few minutes.

Developing a video culture: growing user adoption

Whilst team members will still use their own personal devices on occasion, the introduction of specialist equipment really helped to drive a huge spike in usage throughout the company.

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The dedicated videoconferencing hardware was the tipping point as other users want the same experience, says Liniado.

“They can then see that it’s possible to have a great an experience on video. The purpose-built videoconferencing systems help as they’re so easy to use, with touchscreens to control the experience and an easy directory service. We don’t have to persuade users. In fact, they come to us saying that we need to increase the service by providing more videoconferencing systems in extra meeting rooms”.

Less travel

The return on investment has already been readily apparent, with staff traveling less but interacting more.

“I can’t send people all over the world all the time” says Liniado. “We have a global presence, but it would be impractical to send people to different offices every time they need to work closely together. The only time we send someone to travel to a different office now is if we actually want them to experience that office or team. We use video almost all the time now.”

Within the company use, Videxio has become more habitual. In 2016 RMS employees spent about 240,000 hours on video and it’s not unusual for team members to spend four to six hours a day on video with teams in other offices.



In summary

There are also longer-term reasons why videoconferencing is a good idea. It can help with HR activities like recruiting new staff - indeed, it allows firms to cast the talent net far wider. It allows personnel to expand their own and their companies' horizons, by connecting with overseas partners, clients, and collaborators, gaining all kinds of future benefits.

The use of video meetings also enables greater take-up of remote working (working at home rather than the office) which gives employees a better work-life balance and enhanced morale. It's been proven that **employees who work from home** give their employers 73 percent approval in contrast to just 65 percent of traditional office workers.

Video meetings allow relationships to be developed, guaranteeing better outcomes, and they make it easy to share knowledge and expertise across the globe, bringing a better end result, more satisfied customers and improved return on investment.

With the latest developments in cloud technology, videoconferencing really is becoming an integral part of the global workplace, no matter the size of your business. It's now increasingly common for employees or other stakeholders to be located around the world, and videoconferencing platforms make are a great option for facilitating better dialogue and collaboration between all these different elements. Videoconferencing is now changing company practice, increasing productivity and cutting costs as people travel less but connect more.



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