

## **eBook**

# Meeting Management Solution Buyer's Guide







# The meeting solution

Meeting management software takes the frustration out of the meeting booking and handling process, takes care of guests, and delivers analytics to improve overall meeting room utilization.

If you're thinking to yourself, this type of solution sounds like a big deal; it is. It will change the way your company handles meetings forever, and save an incredible amount of time and resources in short order.

While the process of finding and purchasing the right solution is a major decision with repercussions that resonate throughout the entire company, it doesn't have to be an overwhelming process.

Often, just getting started is the hardest part. This buyer's guide will help you make the important decisions needed in the process of investing in a meeting management solution in eight steps:

- Step 1: Understand what a Meeting Management Solution can do
- Step 2: Identify your meeting problems
- Step 3: Understand how a Meeting Management System will help
- Step 4: Know your users
- Step 5: Do your research
- Step 6: Determine a realistic cost of ownership
- Step 7: Consider the future
- Step 8: Provide the proper training





# Step 1

## Understand what a Meeting Management Solution Can Do

A robust platform will integrate seamlessly and be available within the tools you already use most for everyday planning, such as Outlook, Office 365, or Google Calendar. Users can search for and book rooms based on availability, number of meeting attendees, purpose of the meeting, and in-room resources.

Meeting management will allow for booking meeting rooms across multiple locations and time zones. Users will instantly know the availability of the room before they even try to book it.,

Meeting management technology also makes it easy to customize meetings, such as booking catering or requesting specific technology.

The front desk staff is automatically alerted of all activity, and visitor management, while activities such as security check in and printing nametags, are handled by the system.

# Step 2

## Identify your Meeting Problems

Piling pain points together can quickly become overwhelming, it is nevertheless critical to make an actual list of each problem employees face when planning for any type of meeting - from major board meetings to solo phone booth reservations. Dig into each inconsistency, tedious task, and redundancy and calculate how much time is wasted each day on these activities. This will reveal the financial and emotional toll on the company.

This list serves the dual purpose for evaluators who may need to convince company decision makers of the importance of a meeting management solution, as well as the first step in the roadmap towards solving them.

**Most common meeting management problems include:**

### ➤ Finding the right room

Employees lack an easy-to-access overview of every room, room occupancy, technology resources inside those rooms, and availability.



### ➤ Catering complications

Ordering food and coffee for longer meetings requires days of advanced planning, phone calls, and coordination. If the meeting is moved or cancelled, all catering plans must be adapted by the meeting coordinator.

### ➤ Visitor management

When visitors arrive, security must be alerted, nametags printed, directions given and meeting hosts tracked down. There are many opportunities for names to be left off guest lists, guests to get lost searching for the right meeting room or facilities, and inconveniences for all to abound.

### ➤ Room sharks

Room sharking is an unintentional yet common problem especially for businesses with open office concepts and a variety of private meeting rooms. Employees looking for an empty room settle in a currently vacant conference room. Soon, a group that had already booked the room walks in to find this 'room shark'. The person already inside must stop what they are doing, gather their things, and exit while the rightful room owners must wait to begin their meeting.

### ➤ Ghost meetings

Specific meeting rooms and technology resources are reserved in advance, but no one shows up and the room is wasted.

### ➤ Room under-utilization

Without a full overview, employees overlook certain rooms and spaces sit empty.

### ➤ Lack of technology resources

Meeting coordinators struggle to find a meeting space with the technology resources they need, such as video conference tools or projectors.



# Step 3

## Understand how a Meeting Management System Will Help

Knowing what you want to do will help you know what you want. Visualize what you would like the meeting process to look like. How would a tool streamline room booking or check in? Who will be using the solution? What will it look like and from where will it be accessed?

Here is how a meeting management solution will address the problems listed above:

### Finding the right room

Users search for and book rooms based on availability, number of meeting attendees, purpose of the meeting, and in-room resources.

### Catering complications

Book catering requests directly from within the software. Facilities, the canteen, and the front desk resources are alerted of the order, and the order automatically follows the meeting timing or location are changed without any extra direction from the meeting host.

### Visitor management

A visitor management tool will automatically print nametags for visitors or send email/SMS confirmation to guests with customized information. Registration, document signing, and printing are all handled automatically. Security and front desk resources are provided a full overview of all guests in the building at any given time, including unexpected guests.

### Room sharks

Employees looking for an empty meeting room can pull up all available rooms from their desktop platform or mobile device, or view a room's occupancy or upcoming reservations directly from the display screen outside of each conference room so meetings are never interrupted.

### Ghost meetings

If guests have not checked in to a reserved meeting room within a specific time frame, the room is automatically released for others to use.

### Room under-utilization

A robust meeting management solution will also provide analytics to users can gain insight and metrics into how office space and meeting rooms are actually used. Understanding key metrics such as types of meetings held, number of attendees, and rooms most commonly used help employees

### Lack of technology resources

Meeting coordinators can search for rooms based on the technology resources found in each room. Solution analytics display the types of technology most commonly requested so facilities management can improve offerings and ensure the right tools are always available to employees who need them.

**AskCody is offers seamless solutions to all of the above problems with comprehensive meeting solutions that fully integrate with Outlook, Exchange, Office 365, and Google Calendar. Here's what you get.**

### **Meeting Management**

Search for and book rooms based on availability, number of meeting attendees, purpose of the meeting, and in-room resources. Users have access to a full suite of tools for easy room booking, catering ordering, resource reservations, and guest communications and management. Search for meeting rooms across multiple locations and time zones. Instantly know the availability of the room before you try booking it. Do everything in just a few clicks from within the platforms users already know and use.

### **Meeting Room Displays**

Display the day's events and meeting room status both outside the meeting room and in the reception. Improve meeting room efficiency instantly by providing employees and visitors with a complete overview of daily meeting activities. Users can make a reservation, view if the room is free or occupied, confirm their reservation, claim the room, improve meeting room utilization, change the face of your office space, and create a premium environment from screens throughout the office. Meeting Room Displays eliminate the hassle of meeting no-shows and prevent meeting room crashers.

### **Catering Solutions**

Book catering, facilities, or invite external guests to your meeting and instantly let the canteen, facilities management, or reception know exactly what, when, and where you need it. If a meeting is moved or cancelled, AskCody automatically updated the catering order to follow the meeting so no additional action is required.

### **Indoor Wayfinding**

AskCody WayFinder ensures all users have easy access to maps and directions to their destination, whether it's people, rooms, or points of interest. Users can search for meetings, appointments, or events all from the intuitive interface on smartphones, kiosks, and touch screens. WayFinder improves security and guest safety by display-

ing the best route and appropriate staircases/elevator access on both mobile and kiosks upon guest arrival. Handicap accessibility mode is built-in and can be toggled to in a single click. In case of emergency, exits and emergency instructions are clearly displayed. Web based, instantly updated, and hardware independent, WayFinder is available for all platforms. Use it for smartphones or embed it into your signage CMS like Signage-live. You can even integrate AskCody WayFinder on your website, Facebook page, or in your own native app. Changes can be made instantly and easily across all platforms for room changes, hallway construction, or any other need. No need to wait for new releases, deployments, or reloads.

### **Visitor Management**

AskCody's intuitive visitor registration system automatically sends email and SMS notifications to the host upon visitor check in to ensure hosts are always aware of visitor location and visitors are never left waiting. Visitor Management delivers a full overview of all guests in the building at any given time, including unexpected guests to improve security. The platform also enhances the overall visitor experience by automatically printing nametags and Wi-Fi access for visitors or send email/SMS confirmation to guests with customized information. Registration, document signing, and printing are all handled automatically.

### **Insights & Analytics**

AskCody Insights deliver precise metrics and quantifiable data on what's happening in your meeting rooms. Users can dig deep into conference room activity with daily reporting of key metrics such as meetings, attendees, and occupancy to get the full story of how each individual office space performs. Insights are displayed in user-friendly dashboards that can be accessed anywhere, from any device, without the need for any on-prem installation. This makes it easy to control or regulate meeting room booking behavior, enhance productivity, optimize resources, and improve room utilization



## Step 4

# Know your Users

Like any enterprise software, it's important to first know who will be using your meeting management solution. This will give you a realistic understanding of the technical expertise of the audience, how they use tools now, and how they best consume information.

Talking to and understanding end-users will more clearly define exactly the type of solution that will work best for your company and have the highest chance of permeating company culture. Understanding how end-users would best interact with a new software indicates whether it would realistically fit into current workflows or if it would be considered just one more complicated system to learn and a hassle to use.

The right meeting management solution should be accessible from and communicate with the platforms employees are already using, such as Outlook, Office 365, or Google Calendar. High user adoption is one of the most important elements of any successful software integration. Without high user adoption, the ultimate end goals of a more streamlined and productive meeting strategy will never be realized.



## Step 5

# Do your Research

Read the reviews, talk to existing clients, and arm yourself with as much knowledge as possible to have realistic expectations for what a meeting management suite can do. The ability to talk the talk will give you the upper hand when interacting with sales teams. Not to mention, it will ultimately help you avoid information overload and give you the confidence you need to be an informed consumer.

Take multiple solutions for a test drive. Don't settle on the first comprehensive solution you find. Be your own advocate in the buying process. You may not find the magic elixir that solves every single pain point in precisely the way you had imagined, but that doesn't mean you need to throw out your list of ideal solutions and go with something "good enough."

It also doesn't mean you should build your own solution from scratch. We often see business decision makers wrestling with this choice when it comes to all or parts of a meeting management solution. It's often incredibly difficult to accurately estimate the long-term consequences of building over buying, which later leaves those on the front lines struggling to pick up the slack and deal with the choice that was ultimately made. Companies who choose the road of customized software creation must also maintain and upgrade it definitely going forward. This is an incredible suck of internal resources.

With the right amount of research, demoing, and trials, you should be able to find a pre-built solution that requires minimal technical upkeep from your end, and comes with a team of specialists who can answer questions, help you plan for the future, and serve as industry experts.



## Step 6

# Determine a Realistic Cost of Ownership

One of the most often-cited frustrations during and especially after the purchasing process of any type of enterprise software is the surprise total cost of ownership. Often, the initial estimate isn't even a speck in the rearview mirror of the final bill.

Many solutions providers bury hidden fees, implementation fees, licensing, maintenance, and training from the initial cost of the software itself. By the time you're through adding everything you need over time, the initial single price point now looks like a hockey stick stretching upward.

Be wary of those who suggest a build over buy solution. While a completely customized solution might initially sound attractive, this route is guaranteed to significantly slow time to implementation and raise the price.

Partner with a provider that is upfront and committed to keeping your total cost of ownership as low as possible and who has experience with end-to-end solutions for companies of every size. This ensures your needs will be met now and in the future.



# Step 7

## Consider the Future

Always have an eye towards the future when discussing your meeting management solution needs. Just as the modern office is ever-evolving, so will be your meeting room needs and expectations.

Unexpected needs may always arise down the road, but start by setting yourself up for success with a meeting management solution that scales easily, is user-friendly, and integrates seamlessly with other platforms, all of which are indicative of potentially limitless future growth.

Map out how easy it would be to add users in the future and what the terms should be. Understand the possibilities of expanding your office footprint in the future and what that means for the meeting management solution you have today.

Don't get stuck with an inflexible tool that could cost big bucks to adjust down the line.

# Step 8

## Provide the Proper Training

Training is an important piece of any enterprise-wide software implementation that must be considered at the time of purchase. Without the proper training, end-users won't have the knowledge they need to get the most out of the new tools at their fingertips. A tool that is sold as "user-friendly" doesn't necessarily mean every type of users will have the expertise needed to utilize its valuable features.

For all intents and purposes, an automobile is "user-friendly", but you would never give a car to someone who has never driven before without first providing the training they need to properly drive. The same logic applies to enterprise software solutions.

Offering customized training is the best way to ensure high user adoption and proper usage of your meeting management system. The right partner will be with you every step of the way of your onboarding process, offer personalized training, and help set you up for success right out of the gate.

Training should also be a consideration throughout the lifetime of your meeting management solution. As new versions are released with new features and capabilities, refresher courses and quick tutorials are an important step in ensuring that users are able to properly utilize the technology.

# The Benefits of the Right Meeting Management Solution

The benefits of the right meeting management solution are plentiful. Overall productivity increases because employees spend less time in the weeds coordinating the details of meetings such as searching for and booking rooms, planning catering, and handling visitors.

Meetings themselves get a productivity boost because interruptions are eliminated and time is more properly utilized.

A seamless meeting management process boosts efficiency and collaboration between employees who can easily find a space that is conducive to their needs - whether that be a large conference room with all the bells and whistles or a small huddle room for a few coworkers to gather to brainstorm.

Consider the face of your company as visitors enter your offices. First impressions matter. A meeting management and visitor management system delivers an elegant experience to employees and visitors.

Finally, the long term cost savings make it a smart investment. Important resources are utilized where they really matter, and employees stop wasting time dealing with meeting minutia.

A fully integrated meeting management solution is the key to creating and fostering a truly modern office environment. Give your employees the tools they need to succeed.



## About AskCody

The Modern Workplace Platform that eliminates Office Friction, improves productivity, work pleasure, and enhance workplace utilization.

The AskCody Platform accommodates all organizational aspects of meetings, reducing the organizational load while minimizing the number of hours spent per employee on organizing and scheduling meetings.

We help companies to simplify administrative tasks making daily life easier when managing the workplace, including meeting management, providing workplace visibility and connecting the work environment. AskCody gives you the frictionless office that increases operational efficiency and enables people to meet and achieve more effortlessly.

With AskCody, organizations get to see their workplace in full context and understand current and real-time utilization of how the office is being used.

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