

Ten things to consider before you invest in video conferencing



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Video Conferencing for Everyone!

(Yes, we really mean everyone.)

Video conferencing has long been thought of as the technology for the other half, something to be used by the Fortune 500 companies and executives in corner offices, the ones handling mergers and acquisitions and the like—not something that the average business could afford or make use of. In the last few years, however, a series of technological advances have changed that notion, **making video conferencing not only a viable technology for businesses of all sizes but a necessity.**

It is interesting to see how a technology such as the fax machine changed business, and not simply by saving money. After all, no one ever bought a fax machine to save on postage! What changed was the speed of business. **The goal of any business should be to speed up, to transact, to relate and ultimately to sell ideas faster and more efficiently.**

Video conferencing is simply the next logical extension of a constant speeding up of business since the modern business office was born over 100 years ago. So if you're any type of business with an idea to sell, customers to service, partners to communicate with or on-the-go employees to manage, you'll want to investigate how video conferencing will work for you to make all of that a lot easier and more human too.

This document is designed to help you understand the things you should consider before making an investment in video conferencing. It will help you think of how video conferencing could affect your business processes, why compatibility matters, the steps you should take to ensure its adoption and more.



1. Business Processes

How could your business benefit from video conferencing?



- Consider today's work flow and how video can expedite decision making, help you to communicate with more people, maintain employee engagement, facilitate training with disparate teams and more.
- Do you have remote or mobile users who need to communicate with others in meeting rooms?
- Think, "Who outside of my organization can use this?" The answer is, anyone with whom you interact with. HD video collaboration replicates in-person meetings, so you can extend the technology to anyone, such as your supply chain, customers, partners and suppliers, just to name a few.
- Would your organization benefit from the recording and streaming of meetings?

2. Compatibility

Be one with everyone.

- Be Agnostic. Look for a video conferencing solution that is standards-based, not a walled-garden solution.
- Communicate Everywhere. Think outside the walls of the meeting room. You'll want to be able to talk to the broadest range of devices as possible, including desktops, laptops, tablets and any other mobile devices.
- Start Simple. Maybe you can't outfit the whole organization with video conferencing on every device, so think about what matters most and start there. Keep the costs of your initial investment in video conferencing low so that you can scale your video environment as you grow.



3. Costs

Remember to leave room to grow.

- Invest in technology that doesn't become obsolete as your needs change or your organization grows.
- The cost of a dedicated Internet connection can be very high and is rarely justified. Basic Internet is often good enough.
- Think of the opportunity cost in waiting to have those meetings. Video allows face-to-face communications instantly.
- Travel costs. Yes, it matters, but it is not of primary importance. Don't look to justify your spend on technology this way. Invest in it because you believe in it.





4. Your IT Department

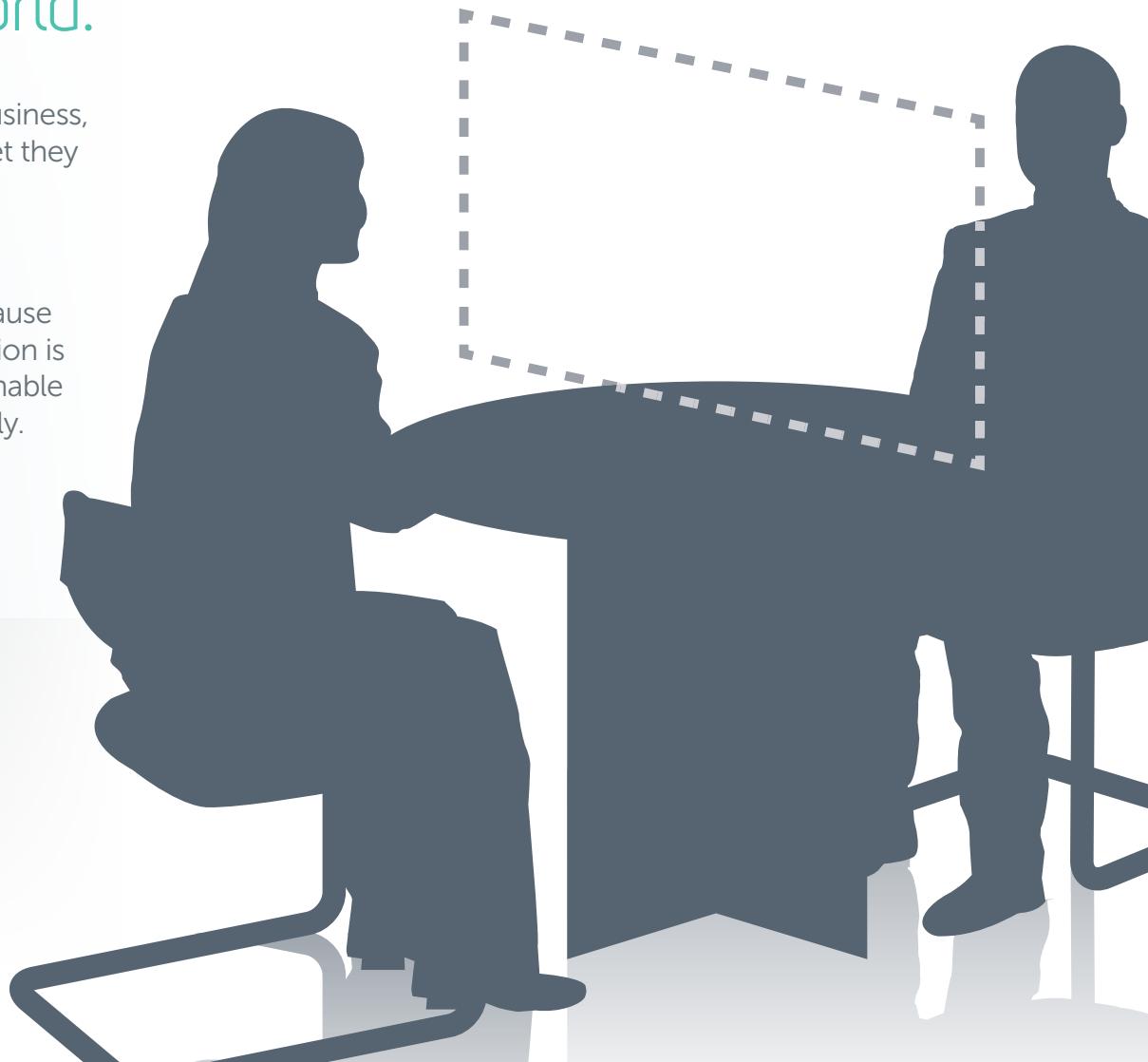
Make them video conferencing champions.

- Consider how video technology will affect their processes, business continuity issues and the effect of running video traffic on the network.
- Vet existing providers on video conferencing experience. You may want to consult subject matter experts.
- Discuss with them how many smaller video-equipped rooms would be more effective than a smaller number of expensive board rooms.
- Trial the technology before purchasing. Get them comfortable with it if they aren't already. [Start with a free trial of Lifesize Cloud](#).
- Install technology that the IT department understands and is committed to deploying.
- IT involvement is vital for a successful implementation. Work on building a partnership between the business users and IT.

5. Quality of Experience

Your window into another world.

- For video conferencing to be successful within your business, it needs to be of such high quality that your users forget they are using it.
- The best video conferencing is invisible to users.
- Remember, video won't replace travel completely because there will still be instances where an in-person interaction is needed. But when travel is not a necessity, video will enable you to see the person on the other side more frequently.
- Bottom line, don't skimp on the quality of experience.



6. Video Conferencing versus Web Conferencing

It's not an apples to apples comparison.

The difference? In one word, **quality!** Read the blog post below or watch the video explanation to learn more about the key differences between web and video conferencing.

Everything You Need to Know About Web Conferencing vs. Video Conferencing

May 13, 2015 by Julian Fields in Features, Lifesize, Products, Technology, Trends, Unified Communications

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Look at the two opposing conferencing solutions in the title of this blog post, and then try to answer the following questions about them. Are web conferencing and video conferencing the same thing? If not, what are the differences? Is one better than the other for use in business meetings?

Chances are good that, unless you're very familiar with both products, you might not be able to succinctly answer these questions. But chances are also good that if you're visiting this blog because you're thinking about adopting one over the other at your company, you're interested in learning a little about what distinguishes the two and a bit about the comparative advantages of each.

Everything You Need to Know About Web Conferencing vs. Video Conferencing



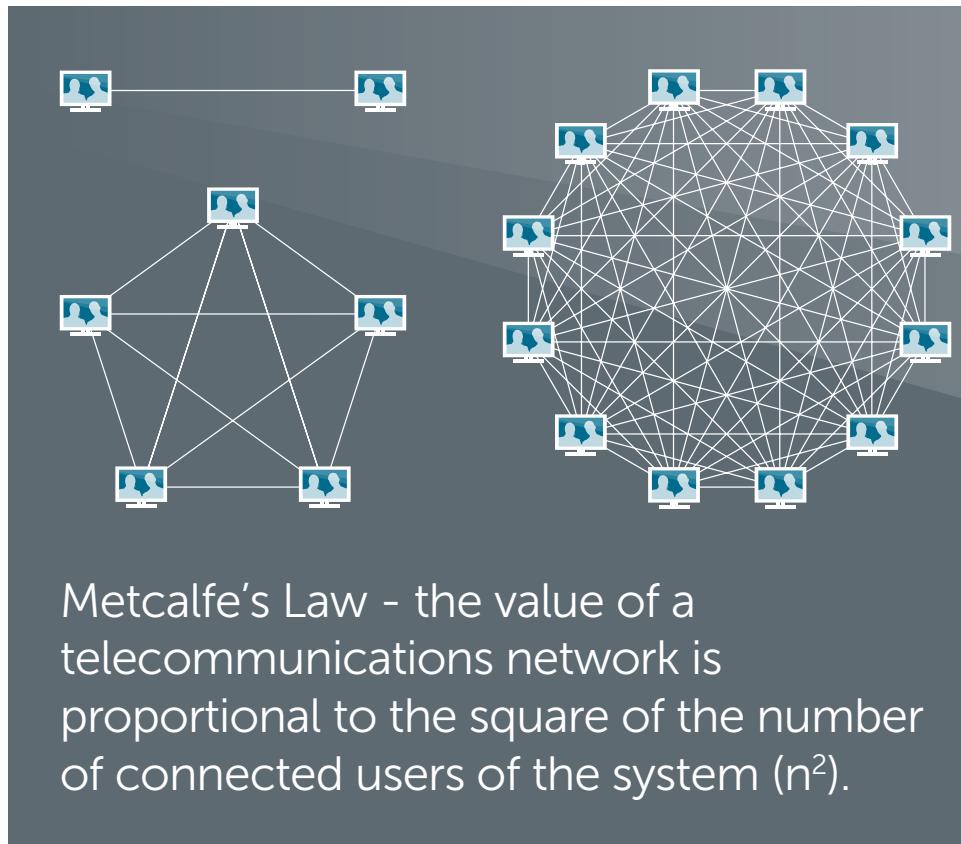
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7. Emerging Technologies

What's happening now? WebRTC.

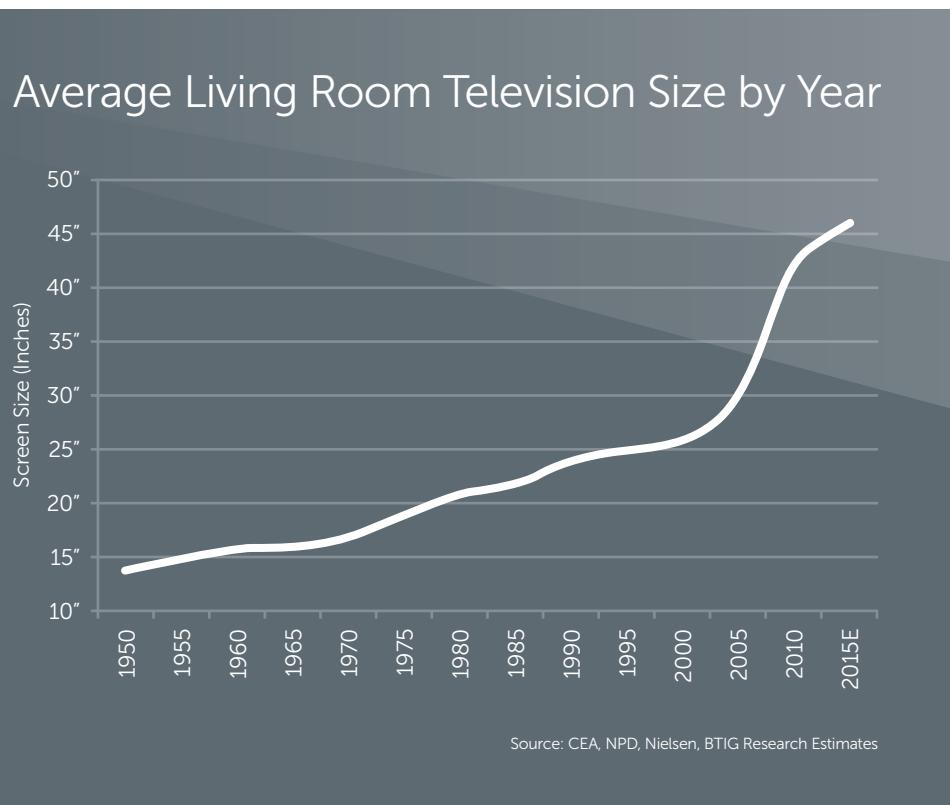
- WebRTC extends the video communications world to anyone with a suitable web browser.
- This technology dramatically increases the number of possible video participants to further fulfill the promise of ubiquitous video communications adoption.
- It creates new possibilities for environments where large numbers of occasional users are involved.
- However, infrastructure technology will be required to support this, meaning WebRTC will augment video communications rather than replace it.



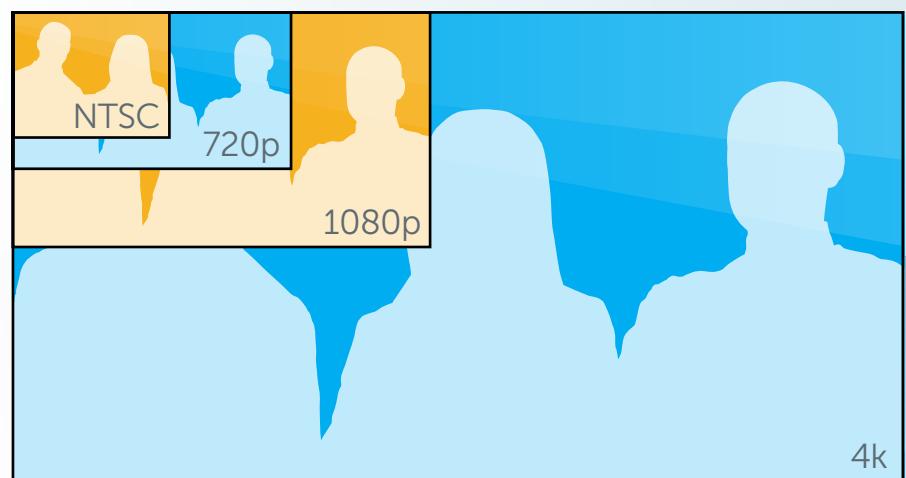
of connected users of the system (n^2):

7. Emerging Technologies

What's next for video conferencing?



- **4K displays** will make the quality of experience even higher than is currently achievable. However, for the overwhelming majority of applications, high definition produces stunning, “look through a window quality” at Internet bandwidth levels available to the vast majority of businesses today.
- **H.265** and other emerging video compression standards will improve the efficiency of video calling. However, they will also require an increase in computing power that will, in the short term, restrict their adoption in the average video conferencing environment.



8. Evangelizing Video Conferencing

Shout it from the rooftops, or at least the executive floor.

Installing video conferencing into a business and expecting the organization to adopt it and change its behavior overnight is simply not realistic. For truly successful implementation, a number of strategies can be employed to help fuel adoption.

1. Let potential users know it exists.
2. Conduct training (live or on-demand) showing how easy it is to use.
3. Understand that people will be afraid to use it, even if they don't tell you they are.
4. Find corporate business sponsors. (We suggest you start with the executive floor.)
5. Investigate to find out who in your supply chain has video; use it with them.
6. Incentivize your team with "video miles" or other cool swag for adopting the technology.



9. Linking Video Conferencing to Other Technology

Create a real unified communications environment.

Video conferencing can be, and often is, used as a stand-alone solution. However, there are a variety of advantages to linking your video environment to other technologies. Consider, for example, linking to other technology such as:

- Your IP telephony environment
- Microsoft® Lync®
- Whiteboarding (Smart Board, etc.)
- Room control environments such as AMX®, Crestron® and Harmony®

We recommend starting off slowly. Prove that the video conferencing technology works, understand the effect on your business process and then decide on how or what to link together. For mass adoption, simplicity and ubiquity are vital. Keep initial costs down by not integrating

everything together right away, and instead spend your budget on more locations to communicate with and keep the whole solution simple.





10. Find a Trusted Advisor

Not just a 'supplier' but a helping hand to guide you.

- Pick a supplier who understands your business. They should be a trusted advisor who already understands and manages other IT functions.
- Look for manufacturers who have proven themselves to be innovators and who are committed to the market. You don't want to invest in the overnight sensation that will be gone tomorrow.
- Interview potential advisors thoroughly; check that they know what they are talking about. Video conferencing is NOT an AV product. In the modern era, the network and infrastructure issues require expertise in more than lighting or room decoration.
- Research advisors accordingly. Small businesses typically buy from small businesses, medium from medium and large from large. This is primarily because the cultures mesh and they understand each other's business processes. If you are a Fortune 500 company, you are often served best by another Fortune 500

company. Look for partners and manufacturers who you are able to understand and who will understand you.

Explore Video Conferencing

Seeing is believing

Video conferencing has moved beyond the Fortune 500 boardroom into businesses of all sizes. Increasingly, it is becoming part of the supply chain, allowing businesses to have closer, more human, connected relationships with clients, suppliers, partners and employees. No longer a technology for the "other guys," **video conferencing is expanding our reach and helping us build a more connected world.**

We hope that you found our list of ten things to consider before you invest in video conferencing helpful and, because we know that seeing is believing, we would be delighted to arrange an opportunity for you to **experience the power of video for yourself.** For more information or to request your personal demonstration, visit us at: www.lifesize.com/demo

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Video Collaboration: Why Your Company Needs It Today ➤

Seen enough? Book a demo ➤



“ Lifesize is pushing video closer to ubiquitous adoption by making it easily accessible to anyone, anywhere. ”

Roopam Jain, Industry Director for Unified Communications and Collaboration, Frost & Sullivan