Streamlined Videoconferencing Strategy Drives Business Results
Boost Productivity By Combining Consistent User Interface With Interoperability Of Platform
Streamlined Videoconferencing Strategy Drives Business Results

Videoconferencing Complexity Hinders Rapid Collaboration

The need for rapid connectivity is more critical than ever for effective collaboration. As a result, videoconferencing has exploded — the number of video calls and videoconferencing vendors continues to grow. With more vendors entering the market, companies have increasingly diversified deployments. In doing so, they’ve created a mixed environment that confuses users. Companies need to simplify and manage increasing complexity to improve user experience and increase productivity.

In August 2018, Polycom commissioned Forrester Consulting to evaluate videoconferencing applications and endpoints. We found that while companies value a consistent user interface (UI) across devices and the flexibility of users to choose their preferred cloud video application, current deployments often fall short.

**Country**
- United States: 34%
- Germany: 33%
- Australia: 33%

**Company size (number of employees)**
- 250 to 999: 26%
- 1,000 to 2,499: 43%
- 2,500 to 9,999: 19%
- 10,000 or more: 12%

**Position**
- C-level: 13%
- VP: 20%
- Director: 29%
- Manager: 38%

**Role**
- IT: 60%
- Operations: 40%
Videoconferencing Speeds Time-To-Market

The business value of videoconferencing is clear: Teams that collaborate using video share knowledge faster, decrease time-to-market, and beat their competition.¹ This is because face-to-face videoconferences allow participants to integrate nonverbal cues like facial expressions and gestures into their discussions, which can lead to faster and more effective collaboration.² The addition of screensharing augments the virtual meetings even more. The value of videoconferencing has led the number of video calls at companies to grow rapidly. Today, half of companies make more than 2,000 video calls each month. Forty-two percent of larger companies — those with 2,500 or more employees — report making more than 5,000 video calls each month.

Base: 159 enterprise and SMB videoconferencing decision makers in North America, Germany, and Australia
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Polycom, October 2018

Videoconferences decrease time-to-market. As a result, 31% of firms make more than 5,000 video calls each month.
Remote access to videoconferences drives greater complexity: 68% of firms say the number of applications in use has grown in two years.

Demand For Videoconferencing Leads To Mixed Deployments

The growth in demand for videoconferencing has caused companies to adopt solutions rapidly, leading to mixed environments of videoconference endpoints and cloud-based videoconferencing applications. In fact, most firms use multiple vendors for both endpoints and cloud video applications. This is because video call participants are far from homogenous — both conference rooms endpoints and bring-your-own-devices with cloud video connect regularly. Companies are discovering that flexibility of connection is key to videoconferencing success.

Base: 159 enterprise and SMB videoconferencing decision makers in North America, Germany, and Australia
Note: Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding.
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Polycom, October 2018
Today’s Approaches Cause Costly Delays

Videoconferencing environments are not only a mix of in-room endpoints and cloud-based applications, but also a mix of multiple vendors for each. This complexity of videoconferencing causes lengthy connection times at the start of meetings, and these delays cost real money — an estimated $1 million in lost productivity at each company annually. For the 15% of companies in our study making more than 10,000 video calls each month, the figure is likely to be closer to $2 million annually.

The complexity of current approaches also frustrates users: Today’s deployments have led to poor user experience in the form of difficulty connecting to calls and poor call quality.

96% of companies face challenges when managing videoconferencing solutions.

“What challenges do you experience when managing/using cloud-based videoconference solutions (the combination of endpoints and applications)?”

- Difficulty connecting from conference rooms to the call: 27%
- Lengthy connection time at the start of a meeting: 27%
- Poor call quality: 26%
- High cost: 25%
- Lack of flexibility to use multiple solutions: 21%
- Confusing or inconsistent user experience: 21%
- Growing complexity: 21%
- Use of nonauthorized solutions: 16%
- Nonintegrated voice conference options: 15%
- Inability to support scale: 14%

Base: 159 enterprise and SMB videoconferencing decision makers in North America, Germany, and Australia
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Polycom, October 2018
Current Approaches Lack The Consistency And Flexibility Critical For Success

To combat delays and improve user experience, most companies require a consistent videoconferencing user interface across workspaces and devices. They also require employees and partners to use any video application they prefer regardless of workspace (e.g., interoperation). The need for consistency and flexibility is not surprising, particularly given how room sizes vary. For example, consistency and flexibility enable large conference spaces to connect effortlessly with small, regional office spaces, as well as with any remote workers on their personal devices. However, current videoconferencing solutions — the combination of applications and endpoints — are often only partially supportive of consistency and flexibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“How important to overall productivity are consistency and flexibility?”</th>
<th>“To what extent do your current videoconference solutions support consistency and flexibility?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consistent videoconference user interface</strong></td>
<td><strong>Consistent videoconference user interface</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critically important or important</td>
<td>Partially or not at all supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flexibility to use any video application</strong></td>
<td><strong>Flexibility to use any video application</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critically important or important</td>
<td>Partially or not at all supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: 159 enterprise and SMB videoconferencing decision makers in North America, Germany, and Australia
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Polycom, October 2018
Dedicated Endpoints, Consistency, And Flexibility Relieve Challenges

More than anything, companies see ready-to-use dedicated room endpoints as key to relieving or solving top videoconferencing challenges. Our study also found that companies will struggle to cut down on costly productivity delays and improve user experience without greater consistency and flexibility of their deployments (the second and third most valuable capabilities overall). Employee training, integrations with calendaring, and the ability to bring your own device are also valuable for streamlining the user experience at most companies.

Endpoints that support both consistency of user interface and flexibility of application (e.g., interoperation) would check the boxes on the all three of the most valuable capabilities.

*Ready-to-use room endpoints, combined with consistent UI and interoperability, are very valuable to companies.*

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capability</th>
<th>Valuable (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ready-to-use, dedicated room endpoints for high-quality group video calls</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent user interface of videoconferencing across workspaces/devices</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility to use any cloud video application regardless of workspace/device</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased employee training</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-touch-to-join integrations with calendaring capabilities</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to explore new options that may emerge in the future while still having interoperability</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to eliminate shadow IT deployments</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to bring your own device, with cloud video and smart endpoints that seamlessly connect</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

Base: 159 enterprise and SMB videoconferencing decision makers in North America, Germany, and Australia

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Polycom, October 2018
Unified Videoconferencing Endpoints Create Business Benefits

A unified videoconferencing endpoint and room system is designed to offer a consistent user experience across devices and support interoperation across multiple applications and providers. Our study found that this type of unified system is what’s next for companies: 32% are in the process of implementing, and another 28% have it on the road map.

By adopting dedicated, unified endpoints, companies anticipate big business benefits, including better ease of use, increased flexibility, and more consistency of user experience — improvements in those areas of greatest challenge today.

![Chart showing survey results](chart.png)

Companies agree that unified endpoint room systems combine the benefits of consistency and flexibility with ease of use and increased productivity.

---

"Where is your organization in the process of implementing a unified videoconferencing endpoint and room system?"

- Currently implemented but seeking a replacement: 3%
- Currently implemented and expanding: 23%
- Currently implemented but not expanding: 13%
- Currently implementing: 32%
- Not currently implemented but plan to in the next 12 months: 17%
- Not currently implemented but plan to in the future (beyond 12 months): 11%
- Not currently implemented and no plans to implement: 1%

"What are the perceived/realized business benefits of a unified videoconferencing endpoint and room system experience?"

- Ease of use: 46%
- Increased flexibility: 44%
- Consistent user experience: 42%
- Cost savings: 38%
- Increased productivity: 37%

Base: 159 enterprise and SMB videoconferencing decision makers in North America, Germany, and Australia

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Polycom, October 2018
Conclusion

Companies increasingly rely on videoconferencing to innovate products and services as quickly as their customers demand. This has led to the rapid adoption of a range of cloud video applications, as users prefer to connect on their platforms of choice. However, the crowded mix of vendors has resulted in poor user experience and costly delays in productivity. To ensure companies can improve user experience and increase productivity, while still maintaining flexible in the future, firms turn to unified conference room endpoints. Designed to support both a consistent user interface and the flexibility for users to utilize the application they prefer, these endpoints improve user experience and cut costs.

Endnotes


4 Source: Ibid.