



Why Modern Collaboration Is Essential to Stay Competitive

Teamwork is essential to maintain a business's efficient processes, drive innovation, and achieve business growth. The right collaboration solution can reduce frustration, simplify sharing, and enhance security.

In today's business environment, innovation, agility, and speed are essential capabilities for businesses of all sizes. To achieve these goals, forward-thinking organizations have invested in technologies that enhance collaboration. Yet despite these investments, there's one area where businesses' technology capabilities often fall short: meetings, whether they occur in meeting rooms, small huddles, one on one, or virtually.

According to Forrester Analytics, at least 65% of SMB and enterprise employees regularly attend meetings during the workday.¹ In fact, Forrester reports 41% of SMB employees and 45% of enterprise employees spend an average of two to four hours per day in meetings.² Time is money—and when so much time is devoted to meetings, inefficient meetings have significant costs. Making matters worse, higher-paid senior employees are twice as likely as lower-paid employees to be involved in long meetings, a Doodle study reports.³

At the same time, effective collaboration with employees, partners, and customers is key to delivering successfully on customer expectations. Companies that promote collaboration are 5.5 times as likely to be high-performing organizations, according to a joint study from the Institute for Corporate Productivity and Rob Cross, the Edward A. Madden Professor of Global Business at Babson College.⁴

Physical and virtual meeting room collaboration challenges hinder communication and innovation

Business collaboration takes place in a variety of settings, from meeting rooms, to open-plan workspaces, to homes. Collaboration technology must be simple for employees to use to be effective. But in a mobile environment where team members use a wide range of devices and may be meeting from various locations, some business collaboration tools may fall short of the easy, fruitful teamwork the modern business demands. The shortcomings of conferencing and collaboration solutions rooted in the pre-cloud and pre-wireless age cause complications for both participants and IT teams.

Participant problems

The average meeting is about an hour long, according to Doodle.⁵ But if much of that hour is devoted to technical issues rather than productive conversation, time and productivity are wasted. Recognize any of these scenarios?

- **Rather than beginning on time, participants search for the correct cables and dongles to connect computers or screens.**
- **Additional time is wasted as remote participants search for passcodes to log in to the meeting or struggle to enable their audio and video.**
- **Each time a new presenter takes the stage, employees may have to pause to disconnect and reconnect devices, switch seats, or troubleshoot connectivity problems.**
- **It's a struggle to transition efficiently from one presenter to the next, share presenter duties, or share multiple screens at once.**
- **It's difficult to find the features, such as mute/unmute, needed to run the meeting efficiently because the interface isn't intuitive.**



Even just one of these types of delays can stall the meeting's momentum. Cumulatively, these hindrances frustrate users, drain energy, destroy focus, and impede productivity and collaboration.

The plethora of devices, operating systems, and peripherals used in the typical business meeting presents more obstacles to seamless, efficient collaboration. Especially in organizations with far-flung offices or BYOD policies, meetings may include participants using iPads, Android tablets, PCs, Macs, and a variety of mobile phone platforms. Each device and platform may work differently with traditional collaboration technologies, creating an inconsistent user experience. Remote employees who have technical difficulties may disengage and stop contributing to the discussion or miss the sharing of important information.

Non-intuitive collaboration apps and connection difficulties can thwart communication rather than enable it. When employees can't fully participate in meetings, businesses lose valuable insights.

Behind-the-scenes challenges for IT and AV

The increasing complexity of locations, technology, and security issues is creating a challenging environment for the IT and AV professionals tasked with managing collaboration technology. Effective collaboration often requires revealing sensitive data that could harm the business if exposed, such as information about intellectual property, strategic initiatives, or product launch plans. Collaboration solutions that lack reliable security protections put such data at risk of cyberattacks.

Today's increasingly mobile workforce creates additional security risks. When team members outside the physical meeting space, such as remote or traveling employees, participate digitally in a meeting using unsecured connections, it can increase the risk of data leaks.

Inviting external partners to meetings can pose risks as well. Collaboration with partners, customers, and suppliers can help a business streamline processes and develop new strategies to compete more effectively. But external partners may be reluctant to share information with your team unless your chosen collaboration solution meets their security standards. Such concerns can hamper meetings' effectiveness and limit the potential of collaboration.

Adding to this complexity are the many different types of room configurations that must be accommodated. Locations may run the gamut from large conference auditoriums and

meeting rooms to shared open-plan work areas and small "huddle" rooms. Implementing and scaling traditional collaboration and conferencing technology across such a wide range of settings can be difficult.

The variety of devices and operating systems used in the typical meeting can cause problems for IT teams if products from various vendors don't work well together. Organizations using both on-premise and cloud-based solutions face additional challenges as mixed technology environments pose operability and management issues. Users' attempts to troubleshoot or customize technology themselves—for example, by changing settings—can cause ongoing IT headaches, too.

Whether IT staff is assisting via phone or text or physically going to the meeting room to help with cables and connections, troubleshooting technical difficulties eats up time that could be better spent on higher-value work. Multiply this by the number of meetings in the average business every day, and the cost to the business in terms of IT professionals' time is clear.

A new age requires a new approach to collaboration

Whether team members are sitting across the table from each other in a meeting room, spread across the globe in multiple offices, or joining the discussion remotely from home or on the road, robust digital collaboration solutions can enable them to create, innovate, and succeed.

If you've already made significant investments in collaboration technology, enhancing the effectiveness of team collaboration doesn't require starting from scratch. A solution that builds on tools your organization already has helps to minimize the need for additional investments, while multiplying the effectiveness of existing hardware and software.

The Intel Unite® solution offers an open and extensible platform that works with your business's existing conference room and collaboration technology, including Microsoft Skype for Business or Zoom. Using the Intel Unite solution, IT and AV teams can unify and leverage the complex inventory of devices, operating systems, and applications already in use to create a seamless experience for all users.

Easy setup, remote management, and built-in security features⁶ save IT and AV teams time and give them peace of mind. This is how it works:

- **An Intel® vPro® platform-based small form factor computer in the meeting space serves as a hub.**
- **Businesses can deploy the Intel Unite solution on-premise or opt for Intel Unite Cloud Service, which uses a cloud-hosted PIN service to reduce overhead costs and give companies of any size an affordable collaboration solution.**
- **The Intel vPro Platform includes hardware-level security features supported by Intel Hardware Shield and application layer encryption between the hub and client devices to safeguard data, content, and file sharing.**
- **Configurable PINs and guest access allow participants to join meetings instantly and let remote users join more securely without accessing the business's network.**
- **Remote administration supported by AMT (active management technology) and EMA (endpoint management assistant) enables IT to manage and troubleshoot software from any location, saving time and effort.**

The Intel Unite solution offers speed and simplicity for users, too. Employees can easily schedule, join, and start meetings and simultaneously share content to the hub and up to 100 devices without worrying about dongles, adapters, or cables. The intuitive interface, consistent across devices and operating systems, lets teams quickly get up to speed and down to business. Robust collaboration features include the ability to share multiple screens at one time, share multimedia content, and annotate to highlight key information.

In addition to streamlining meetings, Intel Unite also helps businesses maximize ROI from their meeting settings. The solution's open architecture supports a wide range of plugins that can improve every aspect of the meeting experience, from room A/V, lighting, and temperature controls to unified communications and digital whiteboarding. Telemetry data on hardware, software, and conference room utilization can guide facilities teams in space planning decisions.

A study of Intel Unite customers conducted by Forrester Research found that over a three-year period, the solution:

- **Reduced meeting downtime up to 15%, resulting in an average \$507,117 in savings;**
- **Made meetings up to 5% more productive, resulting in an average \$169,039 in efficiency gains; and**
- **Reduced the need to install and maintain cables and adaptors, resulting in an average \$66,790 in savings.⁷**

Collaboration at the speed of business

Today's businesses face many challenges: increasing competition, shrinking budgets, faster turnaround times, and an increase in remote work. In this environment, teamwork is essential to maintain efficient processes, drive innovation, and achieve business growth. Yet the current patchwork of collaboration solutions most businesses rely on lacks the capabilities needed for seamless collaboration, both inside and outside the business.

Businesses need solutions that modernize collaboration by reducing frustration, simplifying sharing, and enhancing security. Collaboration tools, such as Intel Unite, that are easy to manage and scale while building on existing solutions can help improve business ROI, enhance competitiveness, and enable a truly connected workforce.

Visit [Intel.com/Unite](https://www.intel.com/Unite) for more information, or [contact us](#) to ask specific questions and discuss your business's needs.

Intel technologies may require enabled hardware, software or service activation.

No product or component can be absolutely secure.

Your costs and results may vary.

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¹ Forrester, *Forrester Analytics Global Business Technographics Workforce Benchmark Recontact Survey, 2019*. This online survey was fielded in July and August 2019 and included 7,388 respondents in Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, the UK, and the US from companies with two or more employees who had already participated in Forrester's Global Workforce Benchmark Survey, 2019.

² Ibid.

³ Doodle, *The State of Meetings Report 2019*. The *State of Meetings Report* comprises data from three sources: an in-depth Nielsen study of 1,000 professionals (conducted August 2018), a survey of 5,528 professionals from the UK, Switzerland, Germany, and the USA (conducted October - December 2018), and analysis of over 19 million meeting responses shared via the Doodle platform in 2018.

⁴ Institute for Corporate Productivity, "*Top Employers Are 5.5X More Likely to Reward Collaboration*," June 22, 2017.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ No product or component can be absolutely secure.

⁷ Forrester, *The Total Economic Impact™ of the Intel Unite® Solution*. The *Forrester Total Economic Impact™ Study* was commissioned by Intel in February 2019. Total Economic Impact is a methodology developed by Forrester Research that enhances a company's technology decision-making processes and assists vendors in communicating the value proposition of their products and services to clients. The TEI methodology helps companies demonstrate, justify, and realize the tangible value of IT initiatives to both senior management and other key business stakeholders. For this report, Forrester 1) interviewed Intel stakeholders and Forrester analysts to gather data relative to the Intel Unite solution 2) interviewed four organizations using the Intel Unite solution to obtain data with respect to costs, benefits, and risks 3) designed a composite organization based on characteristics of the interviewed organizations 4) constructed a financial model representative of the interviews using the TEI methodology and risk-adjusted the financial model based on issues and concerns of the interviewed organizations. Forrester employed four fundamental elements of TEI in modeling the Intel Unite solution's impact: benefits, costs, flexibility, and risks.