

The Top Five Benefits of Video Conferencing

Based on conversations with customers, analysts, and value-added resellers, listed below are the top benefits video conferencing delivers to most organizations.

Reduced Travel Costs

In today's globalized economy, travel is often a prerequisite for leveraging new market opportunities. Journeying to distant locales to engage in face-to-face interactions with customers, partners, and colleagues is a time-honored business ritual, and nothing will ever replace the immediacy and impact of live interactions. But a large percentage of routine or regular business trips—with all their attendant expense—can be eliminated by communicating over video. With vast improvements in quality, availability, and ease of use, and with the ability to interact and share content in high definition, today's video conferencing is as close to "being there" as one can get without actually making the trip. Travel reduction is the easiest expense to calculate when determining ROI of a video conferencing investment. Fundamentally, video ROI calculates the number of trips taken annually, multiplied by the cost (transport to and from the airport, flight, per diem expenses, salary of time lost in traveling) versus the investment in the video conferencing solution (equipment, service, training, network). The majority of organizations will see a single outlay of annual travel expenses far outweighing the entire video conferencing investment, easily justifying the implementation.

Increased Productivity across Dispersed Workforces and Teams

Dispersed work forces and project teams present many challenges, none more misunderstood than lost, slow, or simply nonexistent communication between individuals residing in different locations. Most teams interact using phone, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), or workflow applications. However, with 80 percent of communication consisting of non-verbal visual cues, the ability of teams to understand, process, and collaborate over distance using these methods is at best halting, and at worst, severely impeded. Wherever video is added to a meeting, participants are more likely to stay focused, because they can be seen as well as heard. Expressions of satisfaction, concern, confusion, understanding and so on, can easily be seen and addressed, speeding and informing the group more effectively than myriad e-mails, voicemails, and IMs. The result: decisions are made faster, projects completed sooner, and productivity increased across the organization.

Improved Hiring and Retention of Top Talent

Hiring processes can be very lengthy and costly, especially when candidates are located in other cities or when multiple people are involved in the interview process. Organizations with video conferencing systems in their offices can reduce expenses and time by bringing candidates into the nearest facility and allowing interviews to be conducted both in person and over video. Video interviews can also be recorded, enabling persons unable to be part of the live interview process to see and evaluate the candidate over video. Video communication impacts employee retention just as positively. Examples include improved cooperation by allowing remote employees to become closer faster with other team members; helping employees retain work/life balance by mitigating travel so they can spend more time with their families; allowing employees to work partially or full time from home, to alleviate the impact of commuting; or simply engaging in real-time face-to-face interactions that are richer and more fulfilling than any alternative short of a live in-person meeting.

Sustained Competitive Advantage

Video communication offers multiple paths for creating and maintaining competitive advantage. Teams communicating over video share knowledge more widely, resulting in faster and more informed decisions that reduce the time to market for new products and services. Support teams leverage video to create more personal, one-to-one relationships with their customers, encouraging a loyalty far beyond the capabilities of a traditional call center agent. Manufacturing organizations use video conferencing and content sharing to verify product quality, make revisions, and ensure accuracy throughout the supply chain, while their competitors continue to rely on next-day delivery of services. Video enables sales executives to clearly and immediately appreciate the status of the pipeline, beyond the rows on a spreadsheet. Public relations and human resources departments can promote the organization's use of video as proof of corporate efforts to protect the environment, helping to ensure they end up on the short list of preferred vendors for environmentally friendliness in competitive governmental or commercial bids.

Support for Environmental Initiatives

Video conferencing is an obvious “green” technology, allowing organizations to mitigate energy use by dramatically reducing the need to travel. (See the [Polycom ROI Calculator](#) as an example.) By communicating over video, organizations can also substantially reduce their carbon footprint and help ensure a basis for regulatory compliance. With tools that provide a powerful way to enable conferences and other video content to be streamed live or on demand around the world, employees, customers, partners, and students can use video to communicate, engage and interact with others across distance at any time, from wherever they are.

Learn More

For more information about how your organization can benefit from video conferencing, visit us at:

<http://www.polycom.com/telepresence>

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