



THE STATE OF MODERN COLLABORATION SPACES

New research on AI adoption, reliability, and what IT leaders are doing next.

Executive Summary

AI-enabled collaboration is now embedded across modern meeting rooms, but reliability has not kept pace with adoption.

In new research from FORTÉ, IT leaders report that meetings continue to be disrupted by connection failures, audio and video issues, and reactive IT support.

The findings expose a widening gap between the presence of advanced collaboration technology and the operational performance organizations expect from it.

Based on responses from more than 500 IT decision-makers, this study examines:

- **How meeting room and collaboration space technology is used today**
- **Where adoption falls short, and**
- **How leaders are prioritizing future investment**

As collaboration budgets rise and technology refresh/upgrade cycles become more frequent, the findings show a clear shift away from feature expansion and toward reliability, execution, and measurable outcomes.

Key Findings At-A-Glance

Finding 01

Reliability friction is the top barrier to productive meetings.

Finding 02

Core collaboration capabilities are now baseline expectations.

Finding 03

IT leaders are focusing future AI investments on environment-aware, operational capabilities.

Finding 04

AI that mitigates meeting room issues can free up major IT work hours.

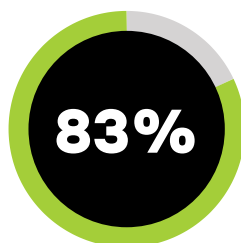
Finding 05

Productivity, employee experience, and cost savings are the primary drivers of investment in collaboration.

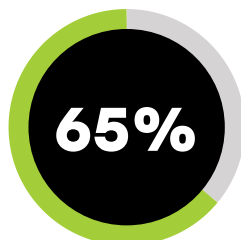
Finding 06

Collaboration technology solution budgets are increasing alongside expectations for measurable outcomes.

Together, these findings indicate that while collaboration technology adoption is widespread, execution has become the defining challenge. IT leaders are increasingly focused on investments that deliver reliable performance, reduce operational burden, and support how work actually gets done.



of respondents are the primary decision makers for meeting room and collaboration space technology.



of respondents self-identified their organization as early adopters.

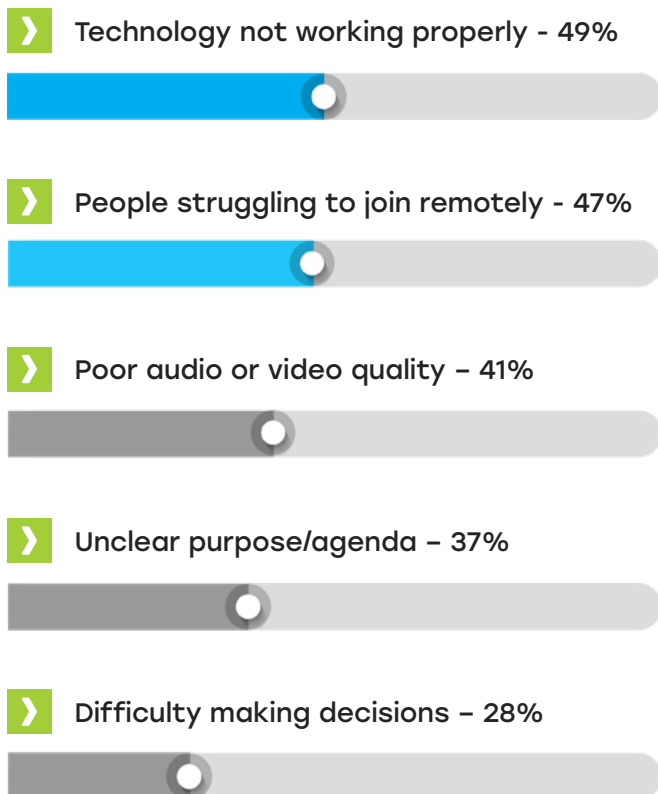
Key Finding 01:

Reliability Friction Is the Top Barrier to Productive Meetings

Despite widespread investment in collaboration technology, meetings continue to break down for one basic reason: the technology does not work reliably.

Survey results show productivity is most often lost before collaboration begins, driven by connection failures, join friction, and inconsistent audio and video performance.

For IT leaders, this elevates meeting room reliability from a technical detail to a core productivity issue that directly affects how work gets done.



Respondents could select up to three responses.

Implications For IT Leaders

- Meeting room failures should be treated as a strategic productivity risk, not a minor technical nuisance.
- Reducing reliability friction is one of the fastest ways IT teams can improve collaboration outcomes without adding new tools.
- Investments that strengthen standards, simplify joining, and eliminate common failure points are likely to deliver the quickest returns.
- Reliability is the foundation of modern collaboration. Without it, advanced features cannot deliver value.



FORTÉ Point of View:

Keith Yandell, Executive Vice President of Innovation

“Most meeting failures don’t come from bad technology choices; they come from environments that were designed without an understanding of workflow.

“We see organizations invest in powerful collaboration tools, but without capturing business goals and user requirements, their investment can fail in predictable ways.

“When workflow optimization is a baseline requirement, not an afterthought, meetings stop being an IT fire drill and start becoming a dependable part of daily work. The fastest path to better outcomes isn’t adding more features, but eliminating the failure points that employees encounter before a meeting even begins.”

Key Finding 02:

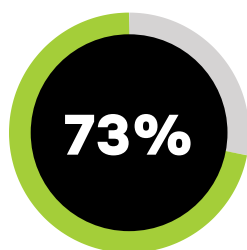
Core Collaboration Capabilities Are Now Baseline Expectations

AI-related collaboration capabilities are no longer treated as emerging or experimental. Their value is now judged based on how reliably core meeting experiences perform.

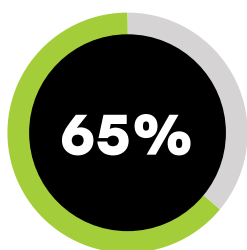
Survey results show organizations have converged around a small set of foundational collaboration capabilities that are expected to work seamlessly in every meeting.

For IT leaders, this marks a shift from experimenting with new features to ensuring consistent, reliable delivery of the core experience employees rely on daily.

98% of organizations use at least one modern or AI-enabled meeting room feature.



Touch-to-Join Adoption (73%)



Real-Time Transcription Use (65%)



FORTÉ Point of View:

Jason Roberts, VP of Workplace Strategy

“Collaboration technology has reached a point where reliability is no longer a differentiator, it is the expectation. Employees now judge the workplace by whether meetings simply work every time. When the core experience like joining, audio, video, and transcription is inconsistent, every advanced capability including AI loses credibility.

“Organizations do not need more features first, they need a dependable foundation that is intuitive, standardized, and universally available. Innovation only creates value once the basics are trusted.”

Implications For IT Leaders

- Consistency and ease of use matter more than continual feature expansion.
- Foundational capabilities should be reinforced and standardized before introducing more advanced, AI-driven enhancements.
- When baseline experiences fail or are inconsistently deployed, the value of AI-assisted tools is undermined.
- Success depends on making the baseline experience intuitive, dependable, and universally available.

The Platform Landscape

48.6% – Microsoft
29.5% – Zoom
12.7% – Google
5.3% – Multiple UC platforms
3.7% – Cisco
0.2% – Other

Note: Smaller companies (fewer than 1,000 employees) are slightly less likely to use Microsoft (43%) and instead split between Zoom (33%) and Google (15%).

Key Finding 03:

IT Leaders Are Focusing Future AI Investment on Environment-Aware, Operational Capabilities That Reduce Friction

As AI-assisted features such as transcription, translation, and intelligent cameras become standard, IT leaders are becoming more selective about where they plan to invest next.

Rather than prioritizing additional in-meeting features, leaders are signaling interest in AI-enabled capabilities that interpret and respond to the meeting environment itself, operating in the background to improve reliability, reduce user error, and lower the need for manual IT intervention.

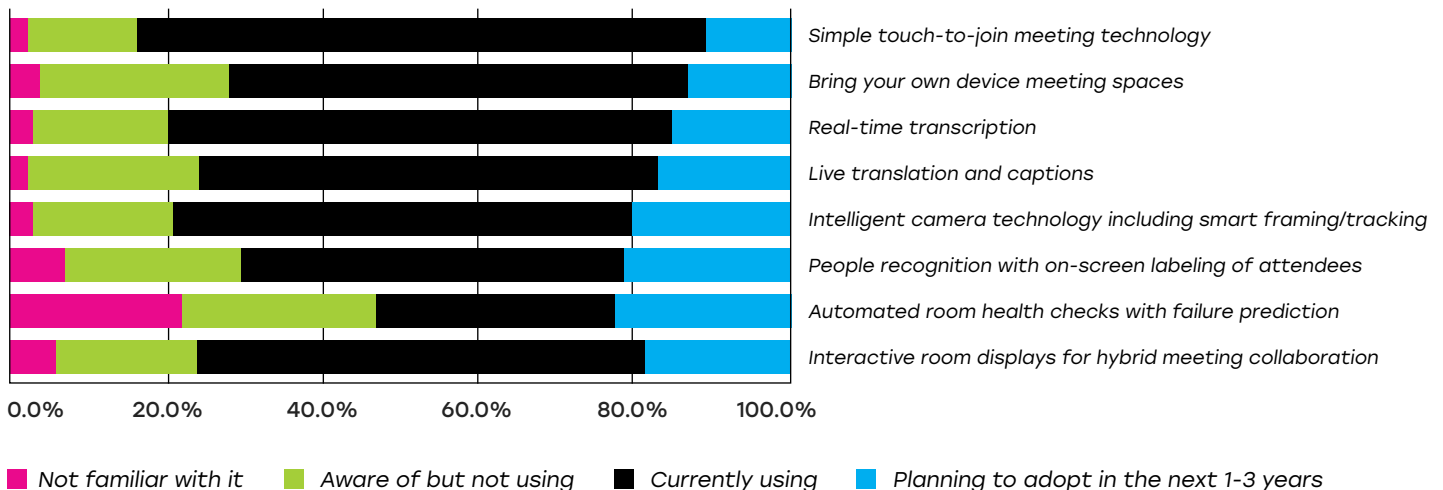


FORTÉ Point of View:

**Jason Moulden, Vice President
of Intelligent Workplace**

“IT leaders are no longer asking what AI can add to a meeting – they’re asking what it can quietly take away. We see growing interest in AI that operates behind the scenes to monitor room readiness, help prevent failures, and reduce the need for IT intervention. At the same time, leaders are cautious. They’re not rushing to deploy advanced capabilities without confidence in governance, reliability, and scale. Those making the most progress know that AI is operational infrastructure – tested deliberately, integrated thoughtfully, and designed to simplify the experience rather than add another layer of complexity.”

Environment-Aware AI Capabilities Lead Future Investment Plans



The data indicates that organizations are beginning to look beyond convenience features and toward AI that more actively manages the collaboration environment.

Top Barriers to AI Adoption

When asked about the biggest barriers to integrating AI into meetings, security concerns, systems compatibility, and cost topped the list across organizations of all sizes.

1. SECURITY/PRIVACY CONCERNS
2. INTEGRATION WITH EXISTING SYSTEMS
3. COST/BUDGET CONSTRAINTS
4. EMPLOYEE UNDERSTANDING OF HOW/WHEN TO USE
5. EMPLOYEE RESISTANCE
6. PROOF OF ROI
7. LACK OF TRAINING RESOURCES

Respondents could select up to three. Results consistent across organization sizes.

Implications For IT Leaders

- Future AI investment is shifting toward capabilities that proactively manage meeting performance, not tools that require active user engagement.
- These capabilities introduce new requirements around governance, trust, and operational readiness, making phased evaluation essential.
- Strategic value will increasingly come from partners that can deploy and support environment-aware AI reliably at scale, without adding complexity or new failure points.



Key Finding 04:

AI That Mitigates Meeting Room Issues Can Free Up Major IT Work Hours

Meeting technology failures quietly consume significant IT time. Survey results show that troubleshooting meeting room issues has become a recurring operational burden, pulling IT teams into reactive support cycles that limit their ability to focus on higher-value work. For IT leaders, meeting reliability is now a core IT efficiency issue.

- Leaders estimate IT teams would save an average of 52 hours per month if meeting-related technology issues were eliminated.
- Smaller organizations prioritize seamless system integration as a key driver of IT time savings.
- For larger organizations (more than 1,000 employees), automatically identifying and addressing A/V and connection issues earlier is identified as the top opportunity to reduce IT workload.



Implications For IT Leaders

- Time spent on troubleshooting meetings should be treated as a preventable operational cost.
- Earlier visibility into issues can significantly reduce emergency support and manual intervention.
- AI investments should be evaluated by their ability to reduce ongoing IT workload, not just improve user experience.
- Identifying issues before meetings begin is more impactful than faster response after failures occur.

Reclaimed IT time represents a strategic asset. Hours no longer spent troubleshooting meetings can be redirected toward innovation, security, and higher-value initiatives that better support the organization's broader goals.

From the Field: Reclaiming IT Time Through Proactive Prevention

At a Fortune 1000 company with hundreds of conference rooms across multiple locations, meeting-related support tickets were a daily drain on IT resources. Technology problems like video display outages and connectivity routinely pulled IT staff into meetings to fix recurring issues.

After implementing proactive monitoring and automated issue detection across its meeting environments, the organization began identifying and resolving problems before meetings

started. Within months, meeting room health dramatically improved, and IT tickets dropped significantly.

The result was not only fewer disruptions for employees, but also dozens of IT hours reclaimed each month – time they redirected to higher-value initiatives such as security improvements, platform optimization, and long-term collaboration strategy.

Key Finding 05:

Productivity, Employee Experience & Cost Savings Are Primary Drivers of Collaboration Investment

IT leaders are clear that collaboration investments are not driven by novelty or feature expansion. Survey results show that decisions are primarily guided by the ability to improve productivity and employee experience, with cost efficiency following as a downstream benefit of reduced friction and better performance.

Implications For IT Leaders

- Collaboration investments should be tied to measurable productivity outcomes.
- Employee experience is a practical driver of engagement and effective collaboration, not a secondary benefit.
- Reducing user effort enables employees to focus on discussion and decision-making.
- Solutions that improve meeting flow and clarity deliver more value than added complexity.
- Cost savings are most often realized through improved productivity and reliability, not feature consolidation.

All Respondents	Bigger Companies	Smaller Companies
1. Improved productivity 2. Enhanced employee experience 3. Cost savings 4. More equitable participation in meetings (in-room vs remote) 5. Reduced IT workload 6. Recognition as an innovative organization	1. Improved productivity 2. Enhanced employee experience 3. Cost savings 4. More equitable participation in meetings (in-room vs remote) 5. Reduced IT workload 6. Recognition as an innovative organization	1. Improved productivity 2. Enhanced employee experience 3. Cost savings 4. Reduced IT workload 5. More equitable participation in meetings (in-room vs remote) 6. Recognition as an innovative organization

As shown in the chart above, at larger organizations “More equitable participation,” ranks higher than “reduced IT workload.” For smaller companies, “reduced IT workload” ranks higher.

From the Field: When Meetings “Just Work”

At one large enterprise with a highly distributed workforce, IT leaders noticed that meeting inefficiencies resulted in productivity drag rather than formal support tickets. Employees routinely spent the first several minutes of meetings troubleshooting audio, tinkering with the technology, or rebooking the meeting into a different collaboration space.

After standardizing their meeting room configurations and prioritizing reliability-focused capabilities such as consistent touch-to-join and

dependable transcription, meetings began starting on time and running more smoothly. Participants reported spending less time managing technology and more time focused on discussion and decision-making.

For the organization, the impact was fewer interruptions, clearer meeting outcomes, and improved hybrid participation. This delivered productivity gains and a better employee experience without adding complexity or increasing support burden.

Key Finding 06:

Collaboration Budgets Are Increasing Alongside Expectations of Measurable Outcomes

Collaboration technology is no longer discretionary. Survey results show budgets are increasing, and most organizations now upgrade at least part of their technology every year.

This reflects a broader shift: collaboration environments are now considered mission-critical infrastructure, with rising expectations for performance and outcomes.



FORTÉ Point of View:

Keith Yandell, Executive Vice President of Innovation

“As collaboration budgets grow, the conversation is shifting from what’s possible to what actually performs.

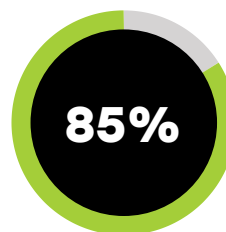
“CIOs are under more pressure than ever to show that collaboration investments deliver reliable, repeatable outcomes, not just new capabilities.

“What we see is fewer experimental bets and a stronger focus on technologies that operate consistently at scale, reduce operational drag, and stand up to real-world use.

“In this environment, success isn’t defined by how often you upgrade, but by how confidently those environments support work every day.”

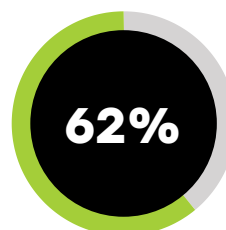
Implications For IT Leaders

- Increased spend brings increased accountability for measurable outcomes.
- Investments are expected to improve reliability, productivity and IT efficiency.
- Annual refresh cycles require disciplined prioritization, not experimentation.
- The focus should shift from spending more on AI to spending more intentionally on technologies that deliver repeatable value.



of leaders expect collaboration and meeting room budgets to increase during the next 1 to 3 years.

Smaller companies (fewer than 1,000 employees) are more likely to expect significant increases.



of organizations upgrade meeting room technologies on an annual basis.

Why This Research Matters

The survey findings reveal a clear gap between widespread adoption of collaboration technologies, including AI-assisted features, and consistent operational results.

While many organizations have deployed AI-enabled collaboration tools, fewer have clear guidance on how to prioritize investments that deliver reliable, measurable outcomes.

This prioritization framework is designed to help IT leaders move from feature adoption to reliable, measurable execution as collaboration budgets rise and upgrade cycles become more frequent.

What's Next: From Adoption to Outcomes

This research highlights a clear opportunity for IT leaders to move from AI-enabled feature adoption to outcome-driven execution. While AI-enabled collaboration tools are already widespread, the greatest gains now come from improving how reliably those environments perform day to day.

By prioritizing reliability, preventing meeting failures before they occur, and reclaiming IT time lost to reactive support, organizations can convert collaboration and meeting room technology investments into measurable productivity improvements.

The result is not just better meetings, but fewer disruptions, reduced IT workload, and collaboration environments that consistently support how work actually gets done.

The Prioritization Lens

FORTÉ recommends evaluating collaboration investments across three dimensions:

1. Reliability First

- Does this capability reduce meeting failures, join friction, or inconsistent performance?
- Does it reduce failures or detect issues rather than introduce new support burdens?

2. Operational Impact

- Will this reduce manual intervention, emergency troubleshooting, or ongoing IT workload?
- Can it be deployed and managed consistently across environments?

3. Outcome Alignment

- Does this measurably improve productivity or employee experience?
- Is success clearly defined, measurable and observable after deployment?





Research Methodology

FORTÉ commissioned a proprietary digital survey to understand the current state and future direction of meeting room and collaboration space technology, including AI-enabled solutions.

The study was completed in November 2025 by 512 U.S.-based C-level and IT/AV leaders who contribute to decisions about meeting room and collaboration space technology within their organizations.

Participants were sourced through a paid online research panel and screened to ensure relevance, including employment at organizations with more than 100 employees, with at least half representing companies with more than 1,000 employees.

All results are reported at a 95% confidence level with a $\pm 5\%$ margin of error, providing a statistically reliable snapshot of enterprise collaboration trends.