



Technology Guide:

HOW TO SELECT THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY FOR YOUR CONFERENCE ROOMS





INTRODUCTION

When the term “work collaboration” comes up, most people will picture the classic large conference room. Though many office spaces are now trending smaller and cozier, the conference room is transitioning to play a vital role as a multi-purpose space.



The future of conference rooms, according to ZK Research, is flexibility so that meeting participants know the room will contain all the capabilities they might need.ⁱ There are so many high-tech collaboration options on the market right now, that no one wants to miss out.

Fast Company agrees that multi-purpose conference rooms are a trend, but points out that users want decluttered spaces—without wires or too many gadgets sitting around.ⁱⁱ

With 41 percent of Wainhouse survey respondents at large companies saying they plan to deploy more large conference rooms in the near future, the conference space is certainly not dead.ⁱⁱⁱ It just needs a technology refresh. You can start by getting rid of legacy equipment that has wires and lacks the any-to-any connection capabilities of newer solutions. Once you’ve evaluated your company and employee needs, you can design modern conference spaces that will do more with less clutter.

41% of respondents from enterprises with more than 10,000 employees plan to deploy more large conference rooms.





HOW TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING THE TRADITIONAL CONFERENCE ROOM

Gallup reports that telecommuting in the U.S. has increased to affect 37 percent of workers.^v This growth in remote work comes at a time when more than half of employees say they have to attend dramatically more meetings than they used to.^{vi} Modern conference room design needs to take into account mobile and remote workers who collaborate with those in office. These rooms also need to accommodate in-house workers who want to collaborate and share content with their own laptops, tablets, and smart phones.

Fortunately, many technologies exist to enhance collaboration and allow workers the flexibility they want. The challenge is in selecting the right technologies as they may include projectors, cameras, conferencing systems, interactive displays and whiteboards, as well as remote and stationery room control systems.



A typical large conference room will likely include an interactive display, audiovisual conferencing system, cameras, content presentation solution, and room control systems

DESIGN THE SPACE TO FIT YOUR USE REQUIREMENTS

There are three primary ways that huddle spaces are used in the modern office. Here's a look at the most common uses for huddle spaces and the types of activities these huddle spaces need to be able to facilitate:

BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS

Conference rooms are large enough to accommodate teams for spontaneous meetings. More than a third of all meetings are impromptu and that number is expected to grow.^{vii} Spaces need to be well equipped and flexible enough to accommodate whatever work you need to accomplish, no matter where your ideas may take you. These rooms also need to be easily accessible and available to employees on an as-needed basis. The use of room scheduling software that allows employees to see what



Real-World Collaboration: Freedom of Movement

When you're anxious about a big meeting, the last thing you want to worry about is whether everyone will be in sight of the cameras or whether you're positioned near the microphone. The Cisco TelePresence MX700 and MX800 offers a dual camera option with tracking that follows you around the room. Meeting attendees enjoy hi-fi audio with the option to add up to 8 mics for full room coverage.

rooms are open in real time is particularly effective in allowing employees to quickly find a place to conduct their impromptu meetings.

MEETINGS WITH LOCAL PARTICIPANTS

Whether meetings are impromptu or scheduled, employees need the ability to easily find and schedule a room, share content from their own devices, brainstorm and annotate, and save their work and share it with the group. Many conference rooms are equipped with legacy devices that hinder collaboration, don't integrate with each other, or work with workers' mobile devices. Employees also often have difficulty using outdated equipment. In fact, in one study, 67 percent of employees said more than half of their meetings are a waste of time because meetings start late or a struggle to get through because of difficulties using traditional web conferencing tools.^{viii}

MEETINGS WITH REMOTE PARTICIPANTS

Dispersed teams, a more mobile workforce, and an increase in remote workers makes remote collaboration a common occurrence. Almost a third of all meetings are virtual, and younger workers (age 26-35) report that even more (38 percent) of their meetings are held virtually.^{ix} And many workers are connecting to these remote meetings using a variety of devices—smartphones, tablets, laptops, or desktop. Cloud-based video conferencing solutions allow local and remote participants to connect via any device, and a content-sharing platform enables participants to present, share, and annotate content remotely.

Real-World Collaboration: Experiences Real as Life

With Polycom® RealPresence Video Conferencing Solutions, users can create collaboration experiences that feel like in-person meetings. With features like Polycom 3D Voice™ Technology, the sound seems to come out speakers' mouths, contributing to an immersive meeting experience. Workers can forget that other participants may be anywhere in the world.



ASSESSING YOUR CONFERENCE ROOM NEEDS

To design a modern and useful conference room, there are several important requirements you should consider. The chart below includes a comprehensive list of user activities and the associated technology solution you will need. Use the chart to assess and score how important each of these requirements/technology will be to your own environment and working needs:

Need	Technology	Importance (Scale 1-10)
Ability to easily schedule and find an open room	Room scheduling/reservation solution	<input type="text"/>
Ability to see if the technology participants need their meeting is available in a given room	Room scheduling/reservation solution that tracks devices in the room	<input type="text"/>
Ability to conduct conference calls with high-quality sound	Audio collaboration system	<input type="text"/>
Ability to share content locally from any device (phone, tablet, laptop)	Local presentation/content sharing solution	<input type="text"/>
Ability to share content wirelessly	Local wireless presentation/content sharing solution	<input type="text"/>
Ability to brainstorm and conduct group work on a project	Interactive display	<input type="text"/>
Ability to connect remote participants via audio and video to the meeting from any device	Cloud-based video collaboration solution	<input type="text"/>
Ability to share content locally and to/from remote participants	Cloud-based video collaboration solution	<input type="text"/>
Ability for both local and remote participants to participate in group work such as brainstorming and annotating	Cloud-based collaboration software	<input type="text"/>
Ability to save work and send to participants	Software application	<input type="text"/>
Ability for cameras to cover large rooms and moving presenters	Cameras	<input type="text"/>



FINDING THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR CONFERENCE ROOM

There are many different kinds of solutions on the market for conference rooms, which makes finding the right combination of solutions challenging. To help, we've highlighted a variety of technology solutions that can help you meet your end users' needs for a streamlined interactive collaboration experience.

SOLUTIONS

Below is a brief description of various enterprise technology solutions you may want to deploy in your conference rooms as well as a comparison chart of what features each solution offers. It is by no means comprehensive but highlights quality options that address the range of conference room needs and is representative of a variety of solution categories.

CRESTRON AIRMEDIA®

Designed for large meeting spaces, this solution allows up to 32 participants to connect



simultaneously in the same room. Four

presenters can share content wirelessly at the same time. A Remote View feature allows up to 40 individuals to log in and view the presentation from their mobile devices. It does come with a moderator feature to prevent disorder, and it integrates with other Crestron management solutions.

POLYCOM® REALPRESENCE

Polycom RealPresence is a line of collaboration tools including packages like the Medialign



solution. That features

capabilities like virtual

whiteboarding and a simple

touch interface. Hands-free cameras and large high-definition displays add to the ease of use.

CISCO TELEPRESENCE MX700 AND MX800 SERIES

This solution is designed to be an all-in-one solution for medium to large boardrooms and



conference rooms. It includes

powerful cameras, single

or dual-screen options, and

PresenterTrack technology

that follows the presenter as they move (when used with the Cisco TelePresence Precision 60 Camera). And with the right software, participants can share content wirelessly and to mobile devices.

CHRISTIE® BRIO

This wireless collaboration and presentation system enables easy content sharing, even



across various

locations. It supports

BYOD, features automatic content layouts, manages sessions, connects to the room's sound system, and includes whiteboarding and annotation features.



MERSIVE SOLSTICE

Multiple users can connect simultaneously to the display using any of a number of devices (including Windows, Apple and Android) over an existing Wi-Fi or Ethernet network. Users can easily connect and share content. Running on a standard Windows platform, this solution integrates with existing in-room AV control systems and runs in parallel with unified communication solutions such as Skype for Business, WebEx, GoToMeeting, etc. Users can live stream desktop, apps, documents, videos, and more and see changes on display in real-time.



NEWLINE INTERACTIVE TRUTOUCHX

This solution features a display that enables team interaction using voice, video, data, and annotation. Users can collaborate with anyone, anywhere no matter what device or system they use while enjoying clear sound quality, and two wide angle cameras let participants be seen wherever they are in the room. It stores files and information locally, and users can annotate with their fingers.





Requirements	Crestron AirMedia	Polycom RealPresence Medialign	Christie Brio	Cisco MX	Mersive Solstice	Newline Interactive TRU TOUCH
Integrates with calendar scheduling software		X			X	
Conduct audio conferences		X	X		X	X
Share content locally from laptops and/or mobile devices	X		X	X	X	
Share content wirelessly from any device	X	X	X	X	X	X
Connect to remote participants via audio and video	X	X	X	X	X	X
Collaborate locally and remotely	X	X	X	X	X	X
Annotation capabilities		X	X			X
Save work and send to participants		X				
Security options to clear content after sessions or password protect sessions		X	X			X

CONCLUSION

With so many options on the market, it can be difficult to decide which solutions best meet all your conference room needs. A qualified AV integrator, such as AVI Systems, can help determine which solutions will provide the best experience for your users, meet your business goals, and be most cost-effective.

To learn more, contact AVI Systems at 855-521-0050
or www.avisystems.com.



ABOUT AVI SYSTEMS

Founded in 1974, AVI Systems is currently the nation's fourth-largest AV solutions provider, and the only 100% employee-owned one.

Our success owes in great part to having the most highly credentialed, capable and motivated work force in the AV industry. The strength of our process, the unparalleled support we offer, and our conviction that technology should liberate, not impede, are also foundational to our success.

By working together, we remove communication barriers instead of creating them, freeing our customers to seize opportunity, and imagine new possibilities. This is our definition of Communication Liberation, and it's reflected in the incredible diversity of AV solutions we provide for business, commercial, educational and government clients across America.

ABOUT CISCO



Cisco is the worldwide leader in IT that helps companies seize the opportunities of tomorrow by proving that amazing things can happen when you connect the previously unconnected. At Cisco customers come first and an integral part of our DNA is creating long-lasting customer partnerships and working with them to identify their needs and provide solutions that support their success.

ABOUT POLYCOM



Polycom helps organizations unleash the power of human collaboration. More than 400,000 companies and institutions worldwide defy distance with secure video, voice and content solutions from Polycom to increase productivity, speed time to market, provide better customer service, expand education and save lives. Polycom and its global partner ecosystem provide flexible collaboration solutions for any environment that deliver the best user experience, the broadest multi-vendor interoperability and unmatched investment protection.



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