

# Six steps to building the foundations for better meetings

Business Together with Zoom



**Video meetings are a critical part of remote working, yet too many are still disrupted by easily fixed problems. This guide looks at the equipment, the training and the support businesses should be providing their employees if they want to deliver optimal video conferencing.**

Collaboration tools, and in particular video-conferencing, have proliferated in business. Sixty-two percent of organizations use three or more video conferencing solutions<sup>1</sup>. That's before one considers all the other systems used to foster collaboration.

For businesses, it can be a minefield. They increasingly have to manage a mix of freemium, consumer-grade solutions and legacy, hardware-focused services, license duplication, a lack of central oversight, and poor integration.

In short, at a time when being able to collaborate easily and quickly is critical, many businesses are struggling to bring together the variety of systems in their organization to enable a cohesive remote collaboration environment.

That is the business issue. But what about the users themselves, thrust into a confusing, disrupted world, which has suddenly demanded that they work from home? While remote working was on the rise pre-pandemic, overall numbers remained low – just 9% of employed people in the European Union<sup>2</sup> and 16% of US employees<sup>3</sup> worked from home at least part of the time in 2019.

According to a recent survey, CIOs expect 34% of their workforce to be permanently working from home after the pandemic.<sup>4</sup>

In many instances, users have to cope with whatever personal technology they had at home, while having to use it in new ways of working. While some workers may have had dedicated home office space with appropriate soundproofing, the majority have had to improvise. Headphones that come free with a mobile, kitchen tables, blurred backgrounds hiding piles of washing up – the circumstances can hardly have been conducive to creating an ideal conferencing environment, whether audio or video.

But it is vital businesses give their employees an optimal experience. One study found that “when the video was difficult to hear, viewers thought the talk was worse, the speaker less intelligent and less likable.”<sup>5</sup>



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## Plan for a virtual meeting future

There is an opportunity to put in place the processes and technology that support rapidly changing working circumstances. So, whether a company has an entirely remote workforce or deploys a hybrid arrangement incorporating both home and office, they need to start considering how they put the necessary infrastructure in place to support better virtual meetings.

Corporate IT needs to be supporting business units and their employees by provisioning the appropriate personal technology and ensuring the right training is accessible. Otherwise they could well be faced with a burgeoning shadow IT crisis, as lines of business deploy their own budgets to equip their teams as they see fit, with minimal regard for central governance and other concerns.

There are any number of tips and tricks on having better meetings available online, but the majority focus on how to act in video meetings. Yet there is a significant amount of work and planning that goes on behind the scenes that IT needs to deliver. What are the foundations that businesses need to have in place for effective and successful remote collaboration?





# Six steps to building the foundations for better meetings

## 1 Identify the right hardware and equipment for your teams

Not only should you be thinking about the sort of hardware (such as headsets, microphones, and webcams) you should be providing, but in what situation they are going to be used. Certain providers, such as DTEN, are developing home solutions that deliver the capabilities of their office equipment (such as whiteboard functionality) in a remote working setting. The question you need to answer is in what situations are your teams going to be using videoconferencing and equip them accordingly. A salesforce that delivers demos will need a more sophisticated set-up than an internal team that only uses videoconferencing for catch-ups, but it can even be as simple as ensuring that users are aware of the need for a work-appropriate background, with the option to deploy virtual backgrounds, such as the ones Zoom offers.

## 2 Keep it simple

With so many different solutions available, businesses need to be consolidating the services they use. This should take into account the needs and preferences of users and whatever corporate IT has mandated. Where you can bring together different solutions that integrate effectively into existing workflows, such as Zoom, or use third-party APIs into collaboration systems like Genesys, that should be the priority. Plus, by bringing together multiple solutions, you can enjoy simpler contract and licensing arrangements. If you work directly with a managed service provider like Orange, you could even have just one point of administrative contact, covering all solutions.

## 3 Have a network that can deliver

Despite disparate workforces, corporate networks are still under pressure as newly decentralized employees attempt to connect at the same time. Network capacity challenges should not be why pitches are lost, or customer tensions exacerbated, so make sure your provider can deliver the support you need. This is also another reason why consolidating the services you use into a single platform is essential. If you address all users' needs, you reduce the demand for shadow IT, which eats up bandwidth outside of centralized oversight.

## 4 Plan your migration with a competent partner

Tools like Zoom have enjoyed immense popularity because they are simple to use. That does not mean they are easy to migrate to or integrate. Working with a managed services partner, such as Orange, that has established relationships with collaboration and conferencing vendors such as Zoom, can take the headaches out of migration and integration challenges and provide full service-desk and end-user support. You should look for hardware synergies as well. For instance, many of our global partners, such as DTEN, Poly, and AudioCodes, make Zoom-approved devices.

## 5 Clearly define roles and responsibility

Too often investment in any sort of system struggles to realize true return because there has been a lack of clearly defined ownership. When implementing any new technology, it is vital to decide on roles and responsibilities and that the individuals concerned are fully briefed and clear on what they need to do. Roles such as administrators, account owners and members, should all be aware of what they can and cannot do.

## 6 Never assume employees know what to do

We might have had months of practice, yet some people are still struggling with virtual meetings. It might be an etiquette issue; it might be the array of different solutions on offer. Whatever the issue, there are two things you need to do. Firstly, develop official policies on virtual meeting behavior and include everything from how to conduct yourself on camera to making sure you have an appropriate background. Secondly, make sure you train your users so that you get the most out of your newly consolidated systems. That goes for administrators and account owners as much as it does for participants or hosts. Zoom Meetings are ideal for large scale training sessions and also offer the opportunity for smaller break out areas for more focused work, but even making sure that employees have access to the right user guides is important if you are to realize its full potential.



Virtual meetings are no longer the novelty – they are the reality of working life today. As people become used to the realities of video meetings, their expectations are going to increase. More sound and limited functionality will become less acceptable, whether the participants are employees having an internal catch-up or external prospects in the midst of a demonstration. That is why enterprises must create the infrastructure to support more effective virtual meetings.

Zoom has rapidly become one of the world's most popular video conferencing and collaboration applications, thanks to its ease-of-use. But to get the most out of it, integrate it effectively with your existing systems and workflows, and make it genuinely enterprise-ready, businesses should consider Business Together with Zoom. Working with Orange takes the challenges out of migration and integration and provides a full-service desk and end-user support. On top of that, it also offers the opportunity to simplify billing and licensing with a single point of contact.

## In the title we said 6 steps, right?

There is one more. You need to contact our experts at [go.zoom@orange.com](mailto:go.zoom@orange.com) to show you solutions that best suit your needs.

### Sources:

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