



Has the 'Age of Conferencing' really arrived?

Audio conferencing products and services have been around for some time. Video conferencing products have also been around but require expensive proprietary systems and cameras. There has however been much development in conferencing bridging and online services to respond to the significant demand for conferencing as businesses look to drive down their costs and increase efficiency.

Here are a few reasons why the age of conferencing has really arrived.

Trains, planes and automobiles

Transportation costs are rising and web conferencing is one way to conduct meetings without boarding any of these. Imagine how much money you could save if you were able to hold a staff meeting with your remote employees without paying the fuel, hotels and all the other costs associated with outside meetings.

Home sweet home

The cost of conducting a meeting outside a main office is much higher than you can calculate by only adding up the material costs. When you leave your office or home, you have to put everything aside and subject yourself to delays in traffic, airports, trains and taxis. Sure you can take your laptop with you but are you really as productive using a laptop in a busy airport as you are while back in your own office? Web conferencing allows you to get back to your other work as soon as the online conference ends.

Close to you

Web conferencing allows you to meet face to face with your colleagues no matter where they are. Business, educational and social organisations are now working in increasingly wider networks which are spread throughout the world. If you have clients, employees, representatives or students in distant locations, think how convenient it would be to turn on your computer and have a meeting with them. This is possible right now with existing conferencing technology and you do not have to undergo training to take advantage of the wide ranging services available.

Instant visits

Online conferencing allows you to give support and help clients without sending out a technician or a representative. If you are selling a product or service that must be supported, then think of the improvement in customer relationships and reduction in costs that you could achieve if you could effectively meet online with your clients. You could also give presentations to groups of employees and clients without the need to travel the country.

Easy on the pocket

Conferencing is now extremely affordable, easy to use and very functional. Gone are the days of proprietary systems and cameras. Today you can use standard PC's and inexpensive web cameras to conduct your meetings. If it is simply voice conferencing then there are many inexpensive ways of achieving this. Online meetings do not require equipment or software that is not already found in most offices.

The dreaded minutes

Of course someone might have to take notes of the meetings but now you can have conference recording. Upon completion of the conference the recording can be downloaded or delivered in CD format allowing people who could not attend the meeting to listen at a later time.

If you need to hold meetings or to meet with staff and colleagues who work in remote locations then you should consider online conferencing. **The spread of online meetings could significantly change the way we all work in the future, just as the widespread adoption of email did many years ago.**

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