white paper

Pillars of Content Collaboration

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Pillars of Content Collaboration

From University to the working world, there are only a few lessons that remain consistent across our adult lives. Among these rare lessons are the skills of complex communication, through voice, expression, and various visual aids that convey relevant information to others. As individuals progress through life, the ways in which we interact with family, cohorts, and clients become more nuanced. Still, the basic tenants of communication remain the same because the framework in which they happened remained the same. That was, until the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the rise of hybrid work over the last few years, everyone has had to learn ways of communicating effectively when not in the same room.

The pandemic brought a global focus on making both school and the workplace more equitable and easier to access. While the goal of equity is admirable, it quickly becomes a challenge when remotely learning and adopting new methods of communication.

To meet the stated goal of equity, three experiences must be satisfied. The first is the connection experience, or how a participant can connect to the group and share content in-room and with virtual attendees. The second is the in-room meeting experience, which is defined by interacting or leveraging in-room solutions to communicate and complete tasks. The third is the newest entrant, the remote-participant experience, which has quickly become an equal consideration through the pandemic. If these three experiences are well thought out, the team will achieve meeting-access equity, but when ignored, it can bring even the most important presentations to a standstill.

As hybrid work continues to find its equilibrium, the focus cannot be on learning how to interact with technology. Instead, the focus must be on accomplishing the task at hand; otherwise, why come into a shared space at all?

Organizations require solutions that meet participants where they are, enabling the use of hybrid solutions without the learning curve.

Connectivity Challenges

If meeting or lecture participants struggle to come together with classmates and colleagues working remotely, it results in lost productivity and compromised experiences. While many shared spaces have means of connecting a personal device to a display, they've traditionally lacked connectivity to audio and video devices in the room. The resulting experience may be great for the in-room participants and feature a simple connecting process but still leave the remote participants with a compromised perspective.

When transitioning from remote to hybrid settings, there are several areas of friction that require thoughtful solutions. The most notable of these pain points is the feedback loop that most have encountered; a device joins the meeting to share content inside a room that's already connected to the meeting. The resulting sounds of echo and feedback quickly halt productivity, in addition to causing a headache for anyone involved.

Alternatively, participants may avoid feedback by accessing applications and documents from a room-based collaboration display (devices like the Microsoft Surface Hub 2). Shared spaces leveraging collaboration displays are great at providing access but can be arduous when used in a daily workflow. Collaboration displays often require participants to authenticate their identity to a service or application for access, requiring a change of credentials when going between various documents or assets, resulting in lost productivity. This workflow also omits a key element of any meeting that already carries an authenticated identity, a personal device. Delaying authentication between a laptop or tablet and a collaboration display introduces extra steps and increases friction when starting or joining a meeting.

The consistent theme across all these approaches is a reliance on proprietary workflows to enable hybrid experiences. This approach is inherently flawed in its assumption that participants will all have the time and space to learn the workflow before a meeting. To solve this friction, solutions need to meet the participants where they are through flexible interactions that leverage tools and protocols familiar to them.

Creating Seamless Transitions

Since 2020, most classes and meetings have been based around the personal workstation experience. Regardless of the form factor (desktop, laptop, or tablet), the primary way to communicate and collaborate has been to share a screen. This translates to a Bring-Your-Own (BYO-) approach where a single participant leverages cables or wireless protocols (MiraCast, ChromeCast) to connect and share content and video from a personal device. While this approach is adequate for small spaces with a few in-room participants, it lacks the scale needed in larger hi-flex spaces with multiple presenters, sources, and in-room displays.

To create a seamless sharing experience for teammates, instructors, and in-room workflow can't be limited to a single path. The flexibility of a Bring-Your-Own-Meeting (BYOM) approach has many benefits but lacks the traditional end-point functionality of a phone or video conferencing device. Alternatively, room-based systems (Microsoft Teams Room, Zoom Room, etc.) include full end-point functionality but lack flexibility around what and how content is shared.

While a 'perfect world' usually doesn't exist, ScreenBeam recently introduced a solution that solves the workflow challenges that enterprises and higher education face. The 1100P is outfitted with the optional USB-Pro Switch (with Conferencing enabled) for wireless sharing and collaboration, allowing the participants to join and share content through the workflows most familiar to them. Instead of proprietary training or passing a cable, the ScreenBeam 1100P with the USB-Pro Switch will seamlessly support room systems and BYOD/BYOM workflows.

For those that prefer a BYOM approach, a USB-Pro Switched enabled room shares content to the room display while control of the in-room camera, microphone, and speakers are passed to the presenter's device. In addition to sharing the content within the room, touchback control allows presenters to drive the shared content from a touch-enabled display. For participants and presenters that are more familiar with room systems, a ScreenBeam-enabled space leverages the meetings vendor of choice for the default lobby screen and connectivity.

In a perfect world, the two approaches would be combined to offer a "path of least resistance" for hybrid sharing and collaboration in meeting rooms and lecture halls alike.

The ScreenBeam experience satisfies all types of participants by providing the path of least resistance for in-room and hybrid sharing.

The two-pronged approach of the 1100P with optional USB-Pro Switch (conferencing enabled) reduces training without increasing the time for deployment or management – a rare win/win for IT management and end-users. In addition, the ScreenBeam 1100P can act as the stop-gap solution while organizations create a long-term strategy around room systems, as many will leverage both BYOM and room systems support in the coming years.

The benefits of the ScreenBeam solution go beyond the few key features outlined. Please check out our recent blog to learn more about Hybrid Meeting solutions. To better understand what sets ScreenBeam apart from other solutions, we'll be exploring three recent deployments to detail specific considerations and examples of hybrid at scale. To learn more about hybrid meeting spaces, please subscribe below for notifications around our case studies.

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ScreenBeam Inc., is a leading wireless display and conferencing innovator delivering an OS-native screen sharing experience on any modern device with agnostic support for all major video conferencing platforms. ScreenBeam solutions power seamless hybrid collaboration in any meeting or learning space, and only ScreenBeam is Microsoft's co-engineering partner for wireless display.

ScreenBeam solutions are used as the validation platform for wireless display functionality by companies like Microsoft and leading PC OEM and device companies. Headquartered in San Jose, CA, ScreenBeam has offices across the United States, Europe and Asia.

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