MIND THE GAP!
THREE WAYS TO BRING SCATTERED TEAMS TOGETHER
The image of the modern office has changed drastically during the past decade. From the internet and cloud architecture to smartphones and telecommuting — it’s easy to see that change is happening quickly and constantly, requiring us to find different ways to collaborate and work together.

As the digital revolution improves the work life of employees, IT departments are left with difficult technology implementations and urgent deadlines, all while trying to ensure the organization remains secure from outside threats. While these advances in technology and efficiency help end users, the list of problems to solve, programs to manage and devices to integrate only seems to get longer. It’s inevitable that the demands of IT get more complicated as technology gets more advanced and the workforce becomes more remote, so it’s now more important than ever for IT departments to have the right resources to operate efficiently and effectively.

In this guide, we will look at some of the best ways to “mind the gap” between IT and end users to enhance connectivity in today’s scattered workforce.

The importance of connectivity in the modern workplace

In addition to wanting a superior product or competitive service, when we look at technology vendors, we look for companies that can adapt quickly to changes in the market. The drive for mobility is one example. Everyone has a connected device in their pocket, so they expect to be able to work from anywhere. But that doesn’t mean they want to work alone. The rise of the remote workforce has placed huge challenges on team connectivity.

Having the right communication tool becomes a key factor in making the workplace great — internally and externally. Through a single sign-on, cloud-based application, you can make connecting your organization simpler, quicker and smoother for easy collaboration and communication.
So how do you unify a scattered workforce? Here are three ways.

1. **Adopt tools that work in the natural world**
   The ability to connect and collaborate with colleagues is a major part of any workday, and not having the right tools internally will lead to resourceful employees’ finding their own solutions. The increase in the consumerization of IT, which refers to the creep of apps from the consumer market into business and government organizations, shows the importance of the user interface and overall usability.

   For end users, finding a collaboration tool that fits within the IT department’s tech stack isn’t the main goal — they want a solution that just works. And while this doesn’t sound like a lot to ask for, it gets complicated when multiple departments start installing completely different programs to meet all of their different needs. To combat this, be sure to balance your management, security and reliability requirements with user-requested features while prioritizing ease of use.

   In a recent survey we conducted with IT pros in the Spiceworks community, we found that IT managers are laser-focused on the challenges they’ve experienced with usability. When it comes to evaluating specific solutions, 74 percent said a simple, intuitive user interface is the most critical feature to consider when shopping around.

2. **Reduce the number of tools being used**
   There’s a fine line between not meeting the needs of end users and spending too much time fulfilling their requests. While employees might complain that there aren’t enough tools to meet their collaboration needs, having too many tools can be just as detrimental. Employees may bring in all these different communication technologies with good intentions, but at some point, IT is going to have to get their hands on it to deal with the management side of things, troubleshoot or just verify security concerns. And before you know it, IT has to manage all these different tools from different companies with different standards, and you lose the effectiveness and centralized directory of a business-wide collaboration solution.

   So instead of playing catch up, it’s important to find a unified solution before the problem snowballs. Having a multifaceted collaboration solution that supports audio, web and video conferencing, chat and the ability to record and share meetings is mission-critical for the modern workplace, so the quicker you start looking, the better. The headache factor of dealing with the repercussions of too many tools is so much worse than setting standards and finding a tool that works ahead of time.

3. **Take back control and increase security**
   IT has two modes: 1) growth mode, which revolves around keeping up with the organization and its changes; and 2) consolidation mode, which revolves around assessing what you have and deciding what you need. And as collaboration has become a pillar of productivity in the modern workplace, being able to take charge of your technology stack is an important step in protecting your company.

   The sooner you start the evaluation process for a communication platform that has not only the end-user features you need but also the security and manageability you require, the better and easier it is to roll out an adoption plan for new technology. Collaboration technology needs to work in the real world, not just in the corporate bubble. Good communication is about allowing anyone, anywhere to connect without compromising security. And as the IT manager of your organization, you shouldn’t feel hesitant to find the best and most secure collaboration stack for your company, corporate or not.

“We might be a technical company, but we needed a solution to suit everyone. All users have to do now is enter a username and password and click on a name or a meeting room. Each employee can access or host a meeting from their own computer or phone, at any time—it’s that simple.” – Evolution Gaming
Cloud-based video and web conferencing that just works

Cloud-based video conferencing is trending for a reason. In fact, it has become such an important method of communication that some modern companies are becoming video-first organizations and retiring their old desk phones. Not only does video conferencing provide a lightweight method of connectivity across your entire organization, it also makes meetings more effective — no more missed verbal cues or multitasking team members.

Cloud-based video and web conferencing is a great start in closing the gap between IT and end-users as it solves the challenge of collaboration and connectivity within the organization. In a recent survey we conducted, 76% of individuals use video collaboration to work remotely, and 75% of those remote workers experienced increased productivity and an enhanced work-life balance. From your phone to your personal computer, huddle rooms and even large conference rooms around the office, video conferencing makes communication and collaboration easy and available at all times. By enhancing productivity and efficiency in the office, cloud-based video conferencing gives people the ability to connect face to face for a better conversation.

“Collaboration is now possible anywhere, anytime and on any device — laptop, mobile phone, desktop or meeting room. Whether participants are stuck on the road and need to connect via phone or are late to the office and need to switch between devices, video communication can happen without interruption.”

~ GEVERS Group
Mind The Gap!
Three Ways to Bring Scattered Teams Together

Lifesize Makes Any Meeting Better

Lifesize is built with IT in mind, and we have over a decade of experience designing and developing HD cameras and touchscreen conference phones to provide a complete conferencing solution. The intuitive interface and shared directory of the Lifesize App gives users everything they need to collaborate more effectively through one IT-approved application — combining audio, video and web conferencing, chat and the ability to record and share meetings. Lifesize communication streams support 128-bit AES and TLS (Transport Layer Security) encryption for all signaling by default, and we operate on a private 2,000 Gbps fiber network through IBM Cloud. To top it all off, we stand behind our award-winning service with a financially backed service-level agreement (SLA) with 24x7x365 support.

As the modern workplace scatters and more people depend on meeting virtually rather than meeting physically, the importance of bringing employees together through consistent communication and collaboration becomes a must in making the workplace great. Check out the interactive product demo and download a free 14-day trial to see Lifesize in action.

Take the tour
Try it free

Related Resources:

Mind the Gap: Five Ways to Enhance Connectivity in a Scattered Workforce
Cloud video conferencing plays a crucial role when communicating with a remote workforce. We expand on the topic of the remote workforce and the ways to enhance workplace connectivity in this on-demand webinar.

The Remote Worker Revolution
Companies like Amazon, Salesforce and Apple have embraced remote working, so we decided to dig deeper and learn more about how this trend is changing the way companies do business. Check out this infographic on who the average teleworker is and how teleworking impacts productivity.

“Eight Challenges Solved by Cloud Video Conferencing”
With cloud video conferencing, you can collaborate at any time in any place with anyone. Check out our guide to see how cloud video conferencing solves common business challenges and changes your organization for the better.

The Lifesize Icon Series Guide
Lifesize knows that a one-size-fits-all system could never be the right fit for all the different meeting spaces in your office. From software to hardware, our products are built to serve you. We have more than a decade of experience designing HD cameras and touchscreen conferencing phones, so find what product fits best for your company by checking out our guide.

Five Must-Haves for Any Great Huddle Room
Huddle rooms, or small meeting spaces, have taken the modern office by storm for a reason. Not only do they promote collaboration, they’re also agile and cost-effective. See what else your huddle rooms need to be as productive as they can be.