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4 things to look for when selecting a video conferencing solution



MAKING THE INVESTMENT

Much speculation has emerged around “the new normal” and what businesses should be preparing for. PwC’s CEO Panel Survey reports [86% of UK CEOs](#) believe the

shift towards remote working will live on. That means businesses should be looking to engage and enable their remote workforces over the long term.



With **59% of UK CEOs** making the digital transformation of their core business operations a [top priority](#), employees are set to reap the benefits of a more flexible, more well-being focused, and more mobile working environment than ever before.

Thankfully, collaboration tools, cloud communications platforms, and video conferencing are in plentiful supply. Improvements in the quality and pricing of video

conferencing mean businesses of all sizes and budgets can benefit from the accessibility of these platforms at a time when they really need them.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLATFORM

With so many options available, where do you even start with choosing the right platform?

The number one principle should be to opt for a platform that works for your employees, rather than the other way around. Choosing a platform that enables you to integrate software, store documents, and collaborate in real time helps keep workflows efficient. The key is identifying the features you need that help you improve productivity across the board.

Business messaging, high-quality audio, and crisp, reliable video meetings, along with screen sharing and document

collaboration functionality, have become a priority for businesses. But you need to consider other key aspects in how a communications platform can help you future-proof your business operations in the new landscape.

Among new video meeting technologies, prices vary, and capabilities and functions can be hugely disparate. In navigating the decision, bear in mind these four key principles when you start your search for a new, unified video conferencing solution.

1. SECURITY

In the weeks after the UK's national lockdown was imposed, cases where video conferencing calls [went wrong](#) became more prominent. Cyber incidents interrupting your video events, whether public or internal,

can cause significant harm to your brand. With the rate of cyber-attacks having increased [since the outbreak of COVID-19](#), it's now more important to choose a provider that takes security as seriously as you do.

Take the following aspects into account when choosing your video conferencing solution:



Physical security

Where your data is held and whether your provider's data centers benefit from physical security, environmental controls, and facility operations are factors worth examining. Ask questions about potential providers' data centers. A security-focused cloud solution should host data in a secure enterprise-class Tier 4 data center.



Infrastructure security

Ask potential providers about their infrastructure safeguards. Have they implemented firewalls and session border controls? Are threat detection and mitigation baked into the software architecture? It's crucial your video conferencing system has secure foundations in place to support your business in the long term and protect you and your stakeholders from malicious activity.



Access security

Choosing a provider whose approach to security is to work in tandem with you to mitigate cyber threats can add an extra layer of security and peace of mind. Allowing pre-set, clearly defined admin roles and permissions for your platform can help you establish responsibilities internally within your teams and enforce your security measures and protocols.



Compliance

When looking for a reliable and secure provider, it's important to research their credentials when it comes to compliance. Service providers that regularly seek out independent and unbiased verification can benefit you through compliance with specific industry regulations and privacy laws such as GDPR, HITRUST, and McAfee's CloudTrust Program.

2. RELIABILITY

Businesses need to support employees in staying productive from anywhere. This means investing in reliable tools that don't misbehave at peak hours or are susceptible to single points of failure.

When making the investment, shop around for a provider that prides itself on its reliability credentials. Asking about the business continuity measures a potential vendor has in place, or researching their service level agreement (SLA), goes some way to establishing this.

Other key aspects to consider are:



Credentials

Research the specific industry credentials of your chosen provider. Industry awards can be a great indication of quality of service, and it's worth investigating unbiased, established industry bodies and their connection with your chosen platform. The Gartner [Magic Quadrant](#), for example, gives an indication of providers whose quality of service is impartially and rigorously verified.



Business continuity

Businesses usually see an average downtime of [14 hours per year](#). Reports suggest that lost productivity as a result of IT downtime might cost UK businesses [£3.6 million per year](#). Avoid unnecessarily stretching your own IT resources. Choose a well-established provider with more than four nines (that's over 99.99%) of financially backed SLA, and research your provider's contingency plans and disaster recovery when it comes to failover conditions and outages.



Research and development

Select a supplier that's serious about the development of its software. Look for a vendor with frequent product releases to make sure you're always getting the best level of service available.

3. FLEXIBILITY

According to HR News, [48% of managers](#) believe flexibility generates a more productive workforce. An [Airtasker study](#) revealed remote and home workers worked 1.4 days more per month than their office-based counterparts. Studies have even shown that [31% of employees would rather benefit from flexible working](#) arrangements than take a pay rise.

Not only can offering flexible working improve your business efficiency, it can also enhance your employee satisfaction, helping to boost morale and even attract new talent. Choosing the software that supports and empowers your employees is a key driver for success in a post-pandemic environment.

One of the key aspects when choosing a flexible solution is enabling maximum mobility, so you may want to keep an eye out for the following key capabilities:



Mobility

Flexibility in terms of your video conferencing solution should equate to accessibility and agility to ease decision-making and doing business on the move. Check your chosen provider's mobile app features and functions and examine its mobile user reviews. Your chosen solution should be device-agnostic, working just as well regardless of whether your employees are using a mobile device, a Mac or a Windows desktop.



Agility

The ability to flip between devices mid-call can also be useful for employees on the move or who are multi-tasking. Ensuring your platform is available as a native app or on a browser means users don't have to download software if they need to quickly connect to a meeting. Click-to-join is pretty much a prerequisite in the user interface of any video conferencing software.



Collaboration and file storage

Look for a platform that empowers your employees from wherever and whenever they choose to work, with baked-in cloud storage for shared files and documents. Allowing your employees to always have key work materials at their fingertips is one of the essentials in creating efficient workflows to enable high productivity.

4. INTEGRATION

Reducing organisational friction via your video conferencing solution also means ensuring it can help to streamline your business workflows. Choosing a platform that enables you to

link into your business applications makes a huge difference in terms of your teams' productivity.

Finding a solution that offers the following integration capabilities might just help you to fine tune your time management as you navigate this new landscape.



Mastering the basics

G Suite and Microsoft are business essentials in the modern workplace, so ensuring your communications system integrates with these will make a huge difference to your employees. Enabling simple processes such as sending a quick video meeting invite from your Google or Microsoft calendar, sharing Zendesk entries, or editing files directly within your communications app can help users save time jumping from platform to platform.



Sales and customer contact

A well-established platform should integrate with key business applications such as Salesforce, ServiceNow, or Bullhorn, enabling agents to operate efficiently. With video set to reportedly shape the future of customer service, and an increasing number of contact centres using video calls for customer enquiries, businesses will want to put processes in place to future-proof their sales and customer service call handling.



Storage and file sharing

While some cloud platforms have document storage and file-sharing capabilities built in, it's important to combine this with your communications capabilities for a more streamlined approach to team collaboration. If you use Dropbox for file storage, for example, choose a video tool that integrates easily so your teams can share and store files, collaborate on documents, and then simply click to initiate video meetings to troubleshoot issues in real time.



Personalisation

Being able to customise your own integrations should be a key consideration to help you tailor a communications environment that is bespoke to your business. Look for platforms with open APIs and software development kits to support you in creating integrations to help your business processes flow as smoothly as possible.

CONCLUSION

As we navigate life in “the new normal” amid anticipation of a second wave, businesses are beyond the point of choosing freemium and quick-fix options. Enabling remote work and rising to meet the demands of the post-pandemic landscape means investing in reliable long-term solutions that complement your business strategy. As you create the

new world of work through the enablement of technology, take the time to find the right investment for you, according to your priorities.

For more information about RingCentral's enterprise-grade communications, go to the [website](#) or find us on [Twitter](#).

For more information, please contact one of our solution experts. Visit ringcentral.co.uk or call 0800 098 8136.

RingCentral, Inc. (NYSE: RNG) is a leading provider of unified communications (message, video, phone), customer engagement, and contact centre solutions for businesses worldwide. More flexible and cost-effective than legacy on-premises PBX and video conferencing systems that it replaces, RingCentral empowers modern mobile and distributed workforces to communicate, collaborate, and connect via any mode, any device, and any location. RingCentral's open platform integrates with leading third-party business applications and enables customers to easily customise business workflows. RingCentral is headquartered in Belmont, California, and has offices around the world.