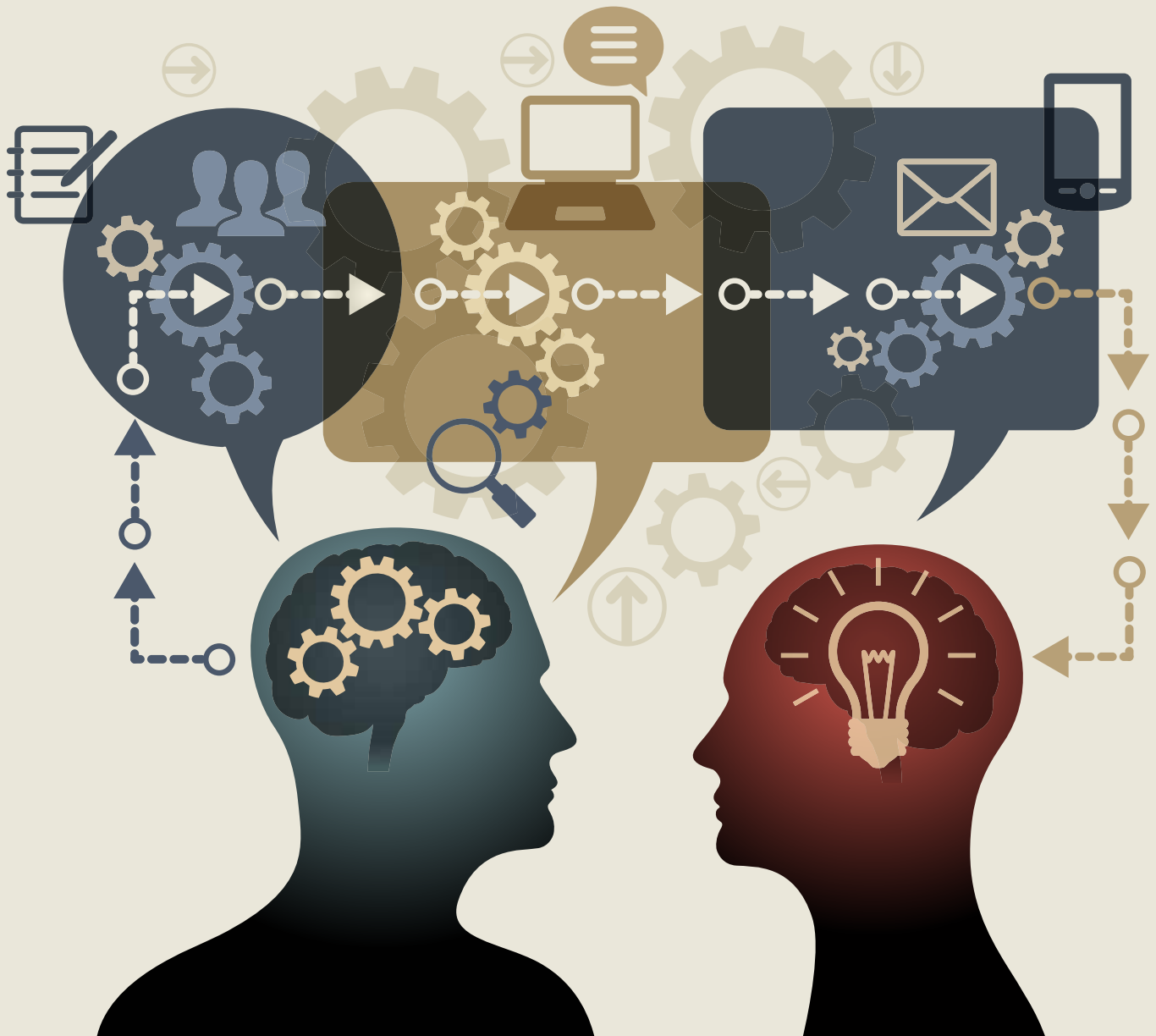


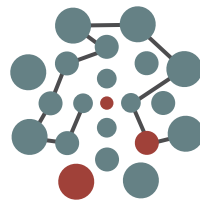
TOOLING UP FOR COLLABORATION

VIRTUAL MEETINGS THAT DRIVE BUSINESS RESULTS



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FOREWORD

Collaboration is key. To most organizations, in fact, it is a significant source of comparative advantage. As such, the number of meetings—opportunities to share concerns, plan strategies, prioritize focuses, coordinate responses and track progress toward goals—is on the rise.

But just how effective are these meetings? In particular, given challenges that are increasingly multifunctional alongside a far more dispersed and mobile workforce, what can companies do to improve the effectiveness of their virtual meetings and hence communication and coordination across the enterprise?

At **join.me** by LogMeIn, we've been conducting extensive research into what it is that results in virtual meetings that matter. And what we're learning gives cause for concern. For example, late meeting starts, connection problems and substandard audio quality are oft-cited complaints that drain productivity. So are issues of difficulty in implementation as well as user-training for basic functionality. Overall, amid the tools currently in hand, two-thirds of executives are saying that fewer than half of the meetings they attend are worth the time.

By corollary, we're also learning what companies value in collaboration solutions. This includes easy-to-use, intuitive tools such as online screen sharing with high quality, and unlimited audio in an environment that requires little-to-no intervention and worry from the IT department.

Companies—by all means—should embrace collaboration. But they must remember that collaboration is no longer limited to an oak table in a big boardroom. They need not invest in complex solutions requiring extensive integration to enhance collaborative capabilities. In many if not most cases, the simplest, most intuitive, easiest-to-implement and use solutions are by far the most effective. In the end, a tool is only useful if it is easy to implement and then embraced by the organization.

The following report combines quantitative research sponsored by **join.me** by LogMeIn and a range of other prominent research firms with qualitative analysis conducted by Forbes Insights. We hope it delivers an array of useful insights you are able to apply to your organization's collaboration practices.

—**Craig Daniel**, VP of Collaboration Products, LogMeIn



INTRODUCTION

Leading businesses are learning how to collaborate more effectively to drive business results. The evolution of the modern workforce is driven by necessity (fast-paced, global competition and change) and opportunity (enabling technologies). Today's workplace features fluid, cross-functional teaming amid globally dispersed and decidedly mobile employees. Correspondingly, the ability to collaborate is becoming a key driver of value creation.

The following report is based on conversations with forward-thinking analysts and business executives. Some of its core findings include:

- **Complexity is on the rise.** “Interactions in society and business today are already incredibly complex—and they're becoming even more so,” says Alan Lepofsky, vice president and principal analyst at Constellation Research. And as the world becomes more complex, the need for teaming increases—as does the complexity of these teams.
- **The need to manage complexity drives the value of collaboration.** As teams grow in complexity—multifunctional, geographically diverse, perhaps involving customers or even competitors, the “need to collaborate and the value of collaboration dramatically increase,” says Deb Cohen, Ph.D., senior vice president of knowledge development at the Society for Human Resource Management. Collaboration, says Cohen, “is at once more challenging, but at the same time, there's more incentive to figure out how to collaborate more effectively.”
- **Properly deployed, today's technologies deliver exponential improvements in the ability to collaborate.** Jaclyn Kostner, Ph.D., is a consultant in virtual meeting management and the founder and CEO of Bridge the Distance, Inc. “Companies today have remarkable tools at their disposal,” says Kostner. She insists that businesses have arrived at an era where virtual collaboration, capably harnessed, “is now significantly more effective than what can be achieved face-to-face.”
- **Advancements in the ability to collaborate are driving extraordinary improvements in overall business performance.** Cohen believes that efforts to improve collaboration “are having a significant impact” on both individuals and organizations. As Cohen explains, “Advances are making it easier for individuals to collaborate—and that drives business performance.” For example, says Cohen, “new tools are enabling companies to gain access to and benefit from talent that wasn't available before because of geographic challenges.” Organizations that can adapt, embracing tools that enable greater collaboration, says Cohen, can gain significant competitive advantage.
- **Collaboration drives business results. Simplicity in tools drives collaboration.** “It's not enough to throw tools at workers. Rather, companies need the right tools in the right places. And by “right,” says Lepofsky, “you need tools that are easy to use and to implement.” Moreover, tools should be chosen “because they can improve processes.” The last thing you want to do is increase what Lepofsky calls “yet-another-tool syndrome.”



SO WHAT IS COLLABORATION?

According to Vala Afshar, chief marketing officer at Extreme Networks, “Collaboration means engagement and cooperation.” As a corollary, if teams or individuals are not both engaged and cooperative, collaboration doesn’t happen. Afshar points to a study from Gallup that says that only 13% of workers consider themselves to be engaged in the workplace. To Afshar, this means “seven out of 10 are not sufficiently engaged. They have no commitment; they have no expectation that what they do or say will matter.”

Accordingly, says Afshar, Extreme Networks works hard to foster “a collaboration mindset that allows us to better connect with our employees.” Collabora-

tion is not only reinforced in the company culture but is highly visible in workflows and processes. The workforce is not only shown the right tools, but it also receives appropriate training and incentives.

Similarly, Kostner believes “that true collaboration is when people’s collective hearts and minds are able to work together to define objectives, overcome obstacles and cooperate to create amazing results.” And the sorts of exceptional results that are possible today, says Kostner, are “something people could not achieve without harnessing today’s collaborative technologies.”

ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

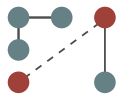
The accompanying report was executed by Forbes Insights with sponsorship from **join.me**, an instant online meeting application from LogMeIn. It is driven by interviews with executives and consultants including:

- Vala Afshar, Chief Marketing Officer, Extreme Networks
- Deb Cohen, Ph.D., Senior Vice President of Knowledge Development, Society for Human Resource Management
- Jaclyn Kostner, Ph.D., Founder and CEO, Bridge the Distance, Inc.
- Alan Lepofsky, Vice President and Principal Analyst, Constellation Research
- Keela Robison, CEO, Urbanspoon

The above interviews are supplemented with findings from “Collaboration 2.0: Death of the Web Conference (As We Know It),” a global study of 3,926 full-time employees across 22 different countries. This study from Ovum and **join.me** by LogMeIn is the largest of its kind undertaken on the evolution of physical and virtual collaboration behaviors.

The report also draws on research from McKinsey, Chess Media and Cognizant.

Forbes Insights and LogMeIn are thankful to all who contributed.



COMPLEXITY— AND THE VALUE OF COLLABORATION

Companies today must call upon a wide range of resources and capabilities to deliver increasingly complex products and services amid fast-moving, highly competitive, global markets. Complexity requires tradeoffs—cooperative, informed, conscious and dynamic choices delivering maximization, minimization or optimization of factors such as risk, cost, quality or time.

Such opportunities and challenges are best addressed by teams. And while teamwork has long been a component of business, today's teams are exponentially more complex, tending to be more:

- **Multifunctional**, comprising members from a wide range of specialties
- **Technical**, with more business challenges requiring a greater range of functional knowledge and technology
- **Dispersed**, featuring key members from a range of geographies and time zones
- **Diverse** in terms of gender, nationality, language and culture
- **Expansive**, often featuring members from external companies, including customers, suppliers or, in some cases, competitors (coopetition)
- **Regulated**, as more and more business activities feature higher degrees of “excessive and badly written” government supervision
- **Ephemeral**, forming and dispersing as needed to address issues and opportunities as they arise then wane
- **Mobile**, relying on multiple mobile devices while traveling or working from remote locations

Keela Robison, CEO of Seattle-based Urbanspoon, says complexity is a key challenge for today's teams. Urbanspoon uses its website and its smartphone applications “to help customers find great food and dining experiences,” says Robison. Immediately, the company shows its collaborative savvy in its strong focus on user-generated content. Users help tell the company about new and existing venues, “write reviews, tell us the hours of operation, find the best dishes—all of that,” says Robison. So essentially, the company collaborates with its users.

But the company also faces challenges with internal collaboration. For example, of its approximately 50 full-time employees, 10 or so are either highly mobile or work remotely all the time. As Robison explains, “Our Android developer works out of L.A., and several of our content editors work from home.” This is great for the workers, says Robison, “as they have more flexibility in terms of location and schedules.” But it also means that the company has to up its game in terms of virtual collaboration. Accordingly, the company takes steps to ensure remote workers are engaged, including using tools that promote collaboration.

Indeed, amid so much complexity, the ability to collaborate becomes an engine of comparative advantage. So it is no surprise that so many organizations are embracing today's tools. As Kostner maintains, “Compared to how teams have worked together in the past, today's technology can supercharge the interaction.”



¹“Over-regulated America”, *The Economist*, February 18, 2012



THE COLLABORATIVE TOOLSET

Collaboration isn't new. What is new are the aforementioned increases in complexity and intensity teams encounter today. And another element in all of this is the arrival of a wide range of tools for enabling greater levels of collaboration.

Indeed, companies today see a nearly bewildering set of collaborative tools at their fingertips. This begins with overall strategic workflow systems but quickly dives into everything from file and screen sharing to electronic meetings, web and data conferencing—even calendars, discussion platforms, blogs, surveys and wikis.

Believe it or not, the truth is, to date, the majority of companies have not been all that successful in deploying technology to further their collaborative ambitions. As Lepofsky explains, “I like to call the last three to five years the ‘training wheel’ era of collaboration.” That is, large numbers of executives have been waking up to the need to improve collaboration. And more than likely, they’ve invested in

one or more of a wide range of technological tools for this purpose.

But where their efforts fall short, says Lepofsky, “is in implementation.” What fails to happen speaks volumes. “People don’t embrace the tools [and therefore aren’t] making them a part of their daily work.” The trouble, says Lepofsky, is “that you can’t just throw the tools at people and hope for something worthwhile to happen.” Instead, companies need not only to choose the right technologies but then also to embed those tools into day-to-day collaborative processes.

Overall, those interviewed for this report say the real business value of collaboration kicks in when processes and workflows are redesigned from a collaborative mindset. It may begin with greater use of basic collaborative tools. But where it leads, says Afshar, is to “a process-driven rethinking of how work gets done.”

WEB CONFERENCING IS BECOMING A CRITICAL TOOL



use web conferencing



plan to either maintain or significantly increase the use of web conferencing

Source: Frost & Sullivan



COLLABORATION DRIVES PROCESSES

One of the key drivers of heightened investment in collaboration is the value created when companies break down their organizational silos. Disparate groups within companies, such as sales and marketing, human resources, finance, production or logistics, too often (even today) still think and work compartmentally. But when these groups begin working more collaboratively with one another, transformational opportunities abound.

- **Same-function collaboration** Certainly, members of any corporate function can benefit from closer collaboration with others from the same group. For example:

Marketing and Sales Though working to the same ends, these two sets of closely related workers often fail to coordinate. This can lead to cases such as marketing launching a series of new promotions that the sales team doesn't hear about until after the fact, or even worse, "they're told [about the promotion] by one of their own customers," says Lepofsky.

HR Consider human resources onboarding—the process of bringing a new employee into the fold. As Lepofsky explains, "Ten years ago, you showed up for your first day, you're assigned a 'buddy,' they show you to the lunchroom, introduce you to a few co-workers, and maybe, you get to watch a video about the company." Today, however, says Lepofsky, collaborative tools, like those that support interaction, training, demos and related interactions, can accelerate how quickly an employee becomes integrated.

- **Process-based, cross-functional collaboration** But where the real value is created, says Lepofsky, is when collaborative tools are focused "to improve end-to-end processes," which by their nature tend to be multifunctional. Then, add collaboration with external groups such as partners or customers, and the opportunities multiply.

Consider:

Proposals/Requests for proposals (RFPs)

Many organizations live and die by the proposal process. But the more complex the offering, the more moving parts and hence, the more functions involved. A typical RFP can involve finance, production, logistics, legal—not to mention marketing and sales or even HR if a successful bid might lead to new hiring. This means hundreds if not thousands of interactions—all of which could be enhanced through better collaborative tools and processes. Says Lepofsky, "This is another case where you can achieve real breakthroughs in effectiveness."

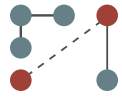
Production planning

What products/services are meeting success in the marketplace? What are our sales forecasts into the next two or three quarters? Is our supply chain flexible enough to handle any significant upticks? To address the challenges of production planning, executives need close collaboration with logistics, sales, sourcing—perhaps even finance and strategic planning.

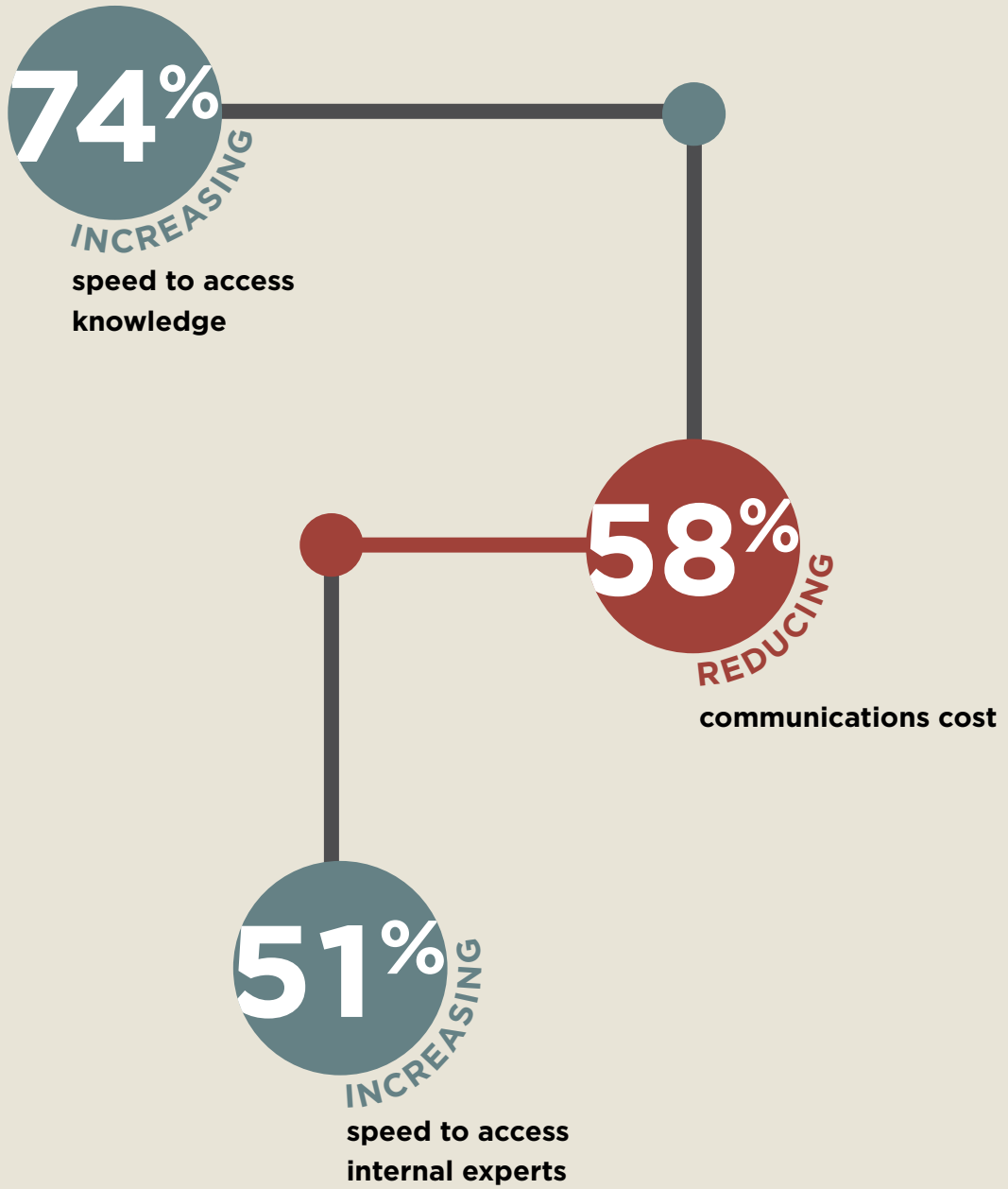
Customer experience

Customers can be touched by nearly every function within an organization: marketing introduces the offering; finance sets the credit terms; sales closes the deal; production builds; logistics delivers. These and many other groups collectively form the customer experience. And in doing so, they form dozens of multifunctional, end-to-end processes, such as "order to delivery" (sales, production and logistics) or "order to cash" (sales and finance). New tools, says Lepofsky, improve collaboration.





COLLABORATIVE TOOLS ARE:



IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF COLLABORATION

Kostner maintains that meetings conducted with virtual technologies “are far more efficient than what can be accomplished in the traditional, face-to-face model.” Not only are such meetings more efficient, “but the participants are actively engaged, since their input matters.” Overall, says Kostner, “for teams, today’s collaborative technology is beyond awesome.”

Leading companies recognize that effective collaboration drives value creation. Improved collaboration helps to inform decision making, better optimize workflows and in general, optimize business processes. But getting there requires a number of crucial elements. Companies need to:

- **Choose the right tools** As Kostner explains, virtual tools supercharge collaborative effectiveness. However, companies need to choose the right tools—tools that are intuitive, easy to use and effective in the eyes of users. Which means, says Kostner, “they need to do what they’re supposed to.”

The Ovum study found that, in fact, 66% of businesses are looking for new web collaboration tools, and of these 66% the number one reason they are looking to switch is a better user experience. Meanwhile, offering evidence of dissatisfaction with current approaches, 35% of executives say they are using additional collaboration solutions beyond those mandated or provided by their companies.



say they are using **additional collaboration solutions** beyond those mandated or provided by their companies

- **Enable the right devices** The Ovum survey also reveals that 80% of meeting participants bring their own devices to each meeting. Moreover, the more senior the executive, the more device-laden, as senior executives tend to be the most likely to bring one or more devices to any meeting. Overall, these survey findings indicate that virtual collaboration tools are becoming important even in face-to-face meetings.

This also points to the need for tools that are easy to implement and easy to use. Collaboration tools must be able to work seamlessly with a wide array of devices. Simplicity is key, explains Kostner, because “you shouldn’t feel the need to call the IT department every time you want to organize a meeting.”

- **Provide appropriate training** Companies need to do more than merely activate new meeting capabilities. As Kostner explains, if they are to harness the value of new tools, team members need training. “Executives need to learn not only how to ‘push the buttons’ on their toolset, but also how to engage a virtual workforce; how to give people a sense they are valued and need to be engaged in every meeting and on every call.” A survey often cited by Kostner shows “that only 16% of people have received training to prepare them to work effectively in a virtual setting.” Even in cases where training is provided, the question is whether the focus is purely technical or if it fully delves into today’s menu of entirely new ways to dramatically improve virtual meeting effectiveness. In general, says Kostner, “there’s a lot to learn to get the most from these tools.”

² The Challenges of Working in Virtual Teams, RW3 LLC, 2012

THE COST OF MEETING MISMANAGEMENT

Beyond the opportunities inherent in optimized meeting effectiveness, consider the costs of continued ineffectiveness. Executives, the Ovum study shows, are called in to an average of at least one meeting a day (the average is 6.4 meetings per week). For enterprises between 1,000 and 2,000 employees, that number is just shy of nine per week.

Meanwhile, studies show that the number of remote workers is rising dramatically. In its 2013 study *The Future of Work*, Chess Media found that 81% of companies are using flexible work arrangements—and where it's allowed, 77% are taking advantage of telecommuting. This is in accord with the Ovum research, which shows that 46% of executives say that the number of virtual meetings is increasing.

But are meetings effective? The Ovum study also finds that two out of three workers (67%) now say that fewer than half of the meetings they attend are worth the time.

Issues of how to conduct a virtual meeting or of motivating virtual team members aside, consider next the basic fact that according to the Ovum study, over two-thirds of workers, 68%, say that up to 95% of scheduled meetings start late. The average delay is 10 minutes and 40 seconds—a figure climbing to 15 minutes, 42 seconds for senior executives.

In terms of time, this loss of productivity for the typical senior executive translates to 139 hours—five days and 19 hours—per year. In terms of value, assuming a salary of \$150,000, the cost reaches \$3,544. Multiply this latter figure by five (assuming an expected return on salary invested) and then by 300 (assuming the number of executives in a typical midsize enterprise), and the phenomenon of simple meeting delays climbs to \$5,316,000. Awareness of such costs should be a key driver of more and better training—and better tools.

67%
OF WORKERS

say that fewer than **half of the meetings** they attend are worth the time

COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION

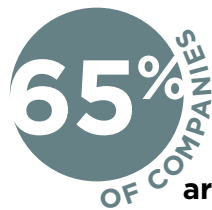
Companies value innovation. And here, collaboration can play a key role.

At Urbanspoon, the company sets aside one day every other week when employees are encouraged to work on “whatever projects inspire them,” says CEO Keela Robison. And without instruction or direction of any kind, says Robison, the company is finding that such activities wind up being highly collaborative.

For example, someone in the company’s development team had learned “that marketing was spending a great deal of time looking for pretty photos” of specific kinds of foods. And so, on one of these so-called “Dev Days,” the developer “built a tool that would search for a dish or a cuisine and then, based on whatever ratings there were from the user community, rank each photo.”

This new application is proving highly effective for the marketing team. And the fact that a developer picked up on and cared about this need—and then was given the time to address matters—can be attributed to the culture of collaboration taking hold at Urbanspoon.

Next, there is a trend toward the consumerization of collaboration. That is, more companies are seeking to involve their customers in strategic decision making. For example, as Afshar of Extreme Networks explains, “we were recently working to ‘rebrand’ the company, not change our mission but rather refine how we go to market.” So the enterprise turned to its customers asking for input on such basic elements as the corporate logo. “Tens of thousands looked at four different ideas and voted.” So, in essence, says Afshar, “we crowdsourced our logo,” a collaborative approach that if nothing else “shows that we’re listening” and overall “builds customer engagement and loyalty.”



are using an **internal collaboration system**
to gather information and ideas for innovation

CONCLUSION: USE WHAT WORKS

The need for and value of collaboration are growing exponentially. But the heightened complexity that is fueling this surge at the same time greatly complicates the processes that enable collaboration.

Companies need to promote cultures that value collaboration. In addition, they need to equip their teams with tools that enable closer collaboration within and between key business functions.

Meetings are one of the fundamental building blocks of collaboration. And as more organizations feature workforces that are dispersed and mobile, the ability to conduct ad hoc, bring any device you like, virtual meetings becomes even more important.

Even so, today's research reveals that for a variety of reasons, a majority of the workforce says that fewer than half the meetings they attend are worth the time.

Companies need meeting tools that are simple to use and easy to implement. But in addition, they need training that harnesses the benefits of such tools in order to maximize their value.

These are demanding and complex times, when the ability to collaborate confers enormous competitive advantage. Companies need to take steps to make sure that they have the right tools—tools their people will find valuable and will actually use—to enable collaboration as needed.



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