

Placetel UC-One® My Room

The Path to Efficient and Effective Meetings

Introduction

An estimated \$37B is wasted each year in ineffective meetings.¹ Time spent connecting the various parties, delays in sharing information via emails, lost conferencebridge numbers, and distractions or multi-tasking not only impact the bottom line, but also lead to poor employee morale and low customer satisfaction. The problems affect all levels in the company from the accountant up through the CEO.

Analysis of meeting behavior has highlighted a number of techniques that leaders can implement to improve overall effectiveness such as sticking to a published agenda, starting and finishing on time, and managing “time waster” participants or people that go off topic; collaboration technology helps meeting leaders achieve these goals.

Placetel's Unified Communications Solution, UC-One, addresses meeting efficiency head on with a capability called “My Room.” *My Room* is a virtual office for every UC-One user that brings together Voice & Video Conferencing, multi-party chat, and desktop sharing. Placetel's approach to *My Room*, is to simplify all aspects of multi-party interactions by making the user interface intuitive, and by making *My Room* an extension of the business UC environment, not a separate tool. With *My Room* employees, customers, suppliers and partners connect instantaneously for meetings without the need to dial conference bridges and access codes, and without the need for expensive and confusing video conferencing room systems. *My Room* is always on, always available, and accessible from your PC, smartphone, tablet, or even just a browser.

Placetel UC-One's *My Room* empowers your team to get your meeting started on time and finished efficiently with results.



Too many conference numbers, too many meetings

There are 3 key reasons for inefficient conference calls.

- 1) Delays in getting everyone on the bridge
- 2) Delays due to the lack of the right material
- 3) People not staying focused

Getting everyone on the bridge

How many conference calls do you attend per month? Depending on your role, between 25% and 40% of a work week can be taken up with meetings and conference calls. As much as 50% of that meeting time can be ineffective and just wasted.² Contributing significantly to that waste of time is how long it takes to get started. Each conference call has its own bridge number and passcode and while these are religiously added to meeting invites, there's often someone who doesn't have the right number, or has last week's number. Video conferencing rooms add to the complexity.

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Reviewing the right material

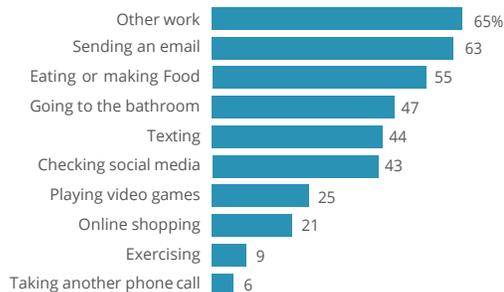
Has everyone got the spreadsheet? No. What version? Did you send it out? When? Oh I can forward it to you. Are we allowed to send this to the customer? Get started, I'll catch up when I find the document.

Another major contributor to wasted time is getting everyone looking at the right material and keeping everyone in sync. Forwarding documents is one way to get around this challenge, but now everyone on the call is really looking at a different version of the document. Any edits made by the moderator or author start to skew page numbers in a document, or cell numbers in a spreadsheet. To greatly improve the efficiency of the meeting and drive down the wasted time, everyone needs to be looking at the same document, and the moderator should control the material for the team.

Lack of Focus

Not everyone is paying attention. According to a 2014 article in the Harvard Business Review, [What People are Really Doing When They're on a Conference Call](#), all too often people are checking up on social media, doing other emails, online shopping, or even exercising.³

WHAT ELSE ARE EMPLOYEES DOING DURING A CONFERENCE CALL?



SOURCE INTERCALL

HBR.ORG

In fact, corporate culture no longer even views this as an egregious lack of professionalism as everyone from the CEO on down is expected to be multi-tasking; there are no negative consequences to being caught

not paying attention. A simple "Oh, I'm sorry, I was looking at an email, what was the question again?" and everyone just carries on with the meeting.

This drives down the productivity of the meeting, adds to the overall length of the meetings, and diminishes the accuracy of the result of the meeting. Really, if most of the team is not paying attention, how confident should the leader be that the decision made is the right one?

The Solution

It's quite simple - start on time, work from the same reference material and use video conferencing to improve focus.

The challenge with starting on time is that it's not easy and intuitive to join the meeting. By making the conferencing and collaboration session a natural extension of the business communications environment, everyone knows how to connect with their phone, laptop, smartphone, or tablet. Extend this to customers, partners and suppliers by giving them a simple "one click" link to join the session with a browser.

Working from the same reference material is about visual alignment. Desktop and application sharing inside the session ensures that everyone is looking at the right version and can follow along, as well as correct, reject, or comment on each edit.

Keeping everyone focused is perhaps the hardest. Multi-tasking is now a staple of the corporate environment. Rather than attempting to change that, using video conferencing provides the incentive to pay attention, and also the opportunity for the team to self police the call, and proactively re-engage team members whose focus and participation is needed in a timely manner.

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UC-One My Room for efficient and productive meetings

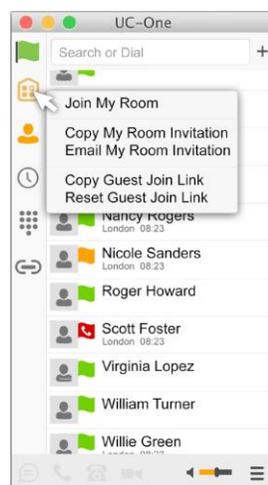
My Room brings together all the productivity tools to ensure that meetings start on time, the team is engaged, work gets done, and the meeting finishes on time with results. *My Room* is a richly featured team conferencing and collaboration environment that includes calendar and email integration, chat, voice and video conferencing, desktop sharing, and meeting moderator controls. In this paper, we'll focus on the "in meeting" benefits of *My Room* that keep the team focused, engaged, and efficient. And best of all, *My Room* is a natural extension to your Unified Communications solution for your business, which doesn't require any new accounts or passwords.

Easily Join MyRoom

There are 3 ways to quickly and easily join *My Room*, which all start from the meeting invite.

From the UC-One client, the meeting host has quick and easy access to the meeting details, and those details can be added to a meeting invite or email. In the invite are the key details everyone joining the session needs to know. UC-One users merely find the host in their client on iOS, Android, PC or Mac, and "Join My Room." This automatically joins the UC-One user into the *My Room* Session and offers access to tools such as Chat, Voice & Video Conferencing, and Desktop Sharing.

The second way to join is from a Web Browser. The Web link in the meeting invite or email automatically connects customers, partners, suppliers, or anyone, over the public Internet with one simple click.



The guest is presented with a screen splash to identify him or herself, and the host is sent a request to admit that guest ensuring that the call remains secure.

And finally, all *My Room* environments are accessible by dialing a traditional PSTN bridge and access code.

Keep the team focused with video



Google the phrase "does video conferencing improve communication" and it will bring up hundreds of articles and studies about the benefits of video communications. There are two reasons why video conferencing greatly improves decision-making and efficiency: non-verbal clues and managing multitaskers.

For almost all of human history, real time communication was face to face, and it's only in the last 150 years that real-time communications was possible without it. Not surprisingly, 80-90% of communications is non-verbal. Eye rolling, shoulder shrugs, confused looks, or even someone raising their hand speeds up the overall objective of the meeting whether that is driving to a decision, communicating a new policy, or educating employees, partners, or customers on a product.

As many as 60% of the people on conference calls are also doing something else. The meeting leader doesn't have 100% of the attention that he or she needs to be effective. *My Room's* Audio and Video

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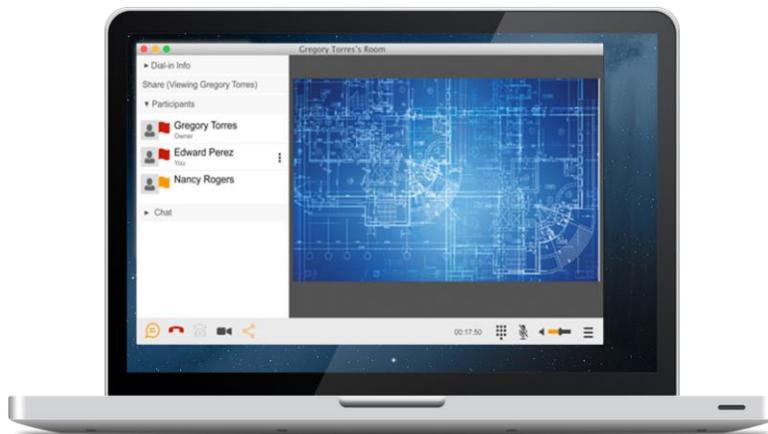
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Conferencing is a powerful tool to determine who is plugged in and contributing and who is not. Rather than use this to guilt people to “pay attention,” video conferencing provides the same opportunity as a face to face meeting to politely bring people back into the conversation. If it looks like the team is not plugged in, a simple “I know people are busy, but everyone needs to pay attention to this point” or “Dave, this affects your team” is sufficient to reengage the key team members.

All eyes on the same document with Desktop Sharing

Roughly 50M business emails are sent every **minute** and 25% of those have attachments (in scientific notation, that's 4.5×10^{12} emails with attachments each year).⁴ IT policies often restrict access to sharable online storage space, so presentations, spreadsheets, and documents are sent to internal and external participants routinely. Meeting efficiency suffers as people look for “the latest” version, work from the wrong version, and fail to follow the conversation concerning which chart, cell, page, or paragraph is being discussed or edited.

Desktop Sharing in *My Room* brings the team focus on to the right document and the right page. Everyone knows what is being discussed, leading to better comprehension and quicker decision making.



My Room brings it all together

Many of these tools exist in the form of Over the Top applications. *My Room* uniquely brings them all together and ties them to the user's business identity. *My Room* is a natural extension to the calling experience and does not require any new tools or new accounts or passwords to get started. All the meeting details are easily shared with employees, customers, partners and suppliers in meeting invites or emails.

And *My Room* is “always on” — there are no resources to reserve, and no last minute running around to book a bridge. *My Room* has all the features needed to invite extended virtual groups to a session, connect team members no matter what access they might have, enhance comprehension with Video, and keep the team on task with Desktop Sharing.



For more information,
visit us online at
www.placetel.com

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My Room Feature Set

Feature	Benefit
Calendar & Email Tools	Intuitive tools to quickly create invites and emails that include information for employees, customers, partners and suppliers to connect from apps, browsers, and phones.
Multi-Party Chat	Send and receive messages in <i>My Room</i> with all participants. Multi-party chat allows the team to share links, ask and answer questions, and engage in side bar conversations without interrupting the flow of the meeting.
Voice & Video Conferencing	Voice/Video conferencing for up to 30 people from apps, browsers and video capable phones. Video Conferencing improves comprehension and decision making with face to face communications.
Desktop Sharing	Share documents, presentations, spreadsheets, web pages, and other content with the team. Everyone is working off the same material, lowering errors.
Guest Participant	Connect customers, suppliers, or anyone outside the business from Chrome, Internet Explorer and other browsers. Participate in Chat, Voice, Video, and Desktop sharing without downloading an app.

Summary

Technology is conspiring against effective meetings. Distractions like social media, news, YouTube, multi-tasking, emails, other work, and hundreds more are the enemy of reaching a decision and moving the business forward. *My Room* gives the team leader the tools necessary to wrest back control of the meeting and team, increasing productivity and effectiveness, closing more business, and staying on task. With Voice & Video Conferencing, Chat, Guest access from browsers, and Desktop Sharing, *My Room* takes control of team meetings.

UC-One and *My Room* are a critical part of a Service Provider Unified Communications and Collaboration offer. Please contact your Placetel sales representative to set up a detailed discussion and demo of UC-One and *My Room*.



References

1. Atlassian - <https://www.atlassian.com/time-wasting-at-work-infographic>
2. Meeting King <http://meetingking.com/37-billion-per-year-unnecessary-meetings-share/>
3. Harvard Business Review - <https://hbr.org/2014/08/what-people-are-really-doing-when-theyre-on-a-conference-call/>
4. Raticati Group - <http://www.radicati.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/email-stats-report-exec-summary.pdf>