



The importance of AV and
remote meeting equipment
in today's office



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Video conferencing
was a lifeline for teams in

2020

How has the pandemic affected meetings?

In early 2020, the global workforce shifted to remote working, where our homes became the new office. During that time, many professionals spent countless hours on a series of Microsoft Teams calls, webinars, and online video conference calls. The spotlight was on video conferencing applications, such as Zoom. The rise of video calls became a global story in how it helped businesses remain operationally stable at a moment of crisis. At the very least, video conferencing was a lifeline for teams that became separated during the pandemic.

By addressing the changing demands for workplace technology, ramsac has identified often overlooked areas. Specifically, we were interested in the ways businesses have changed and evolved the experience of meeting up, collaborating and communicating.



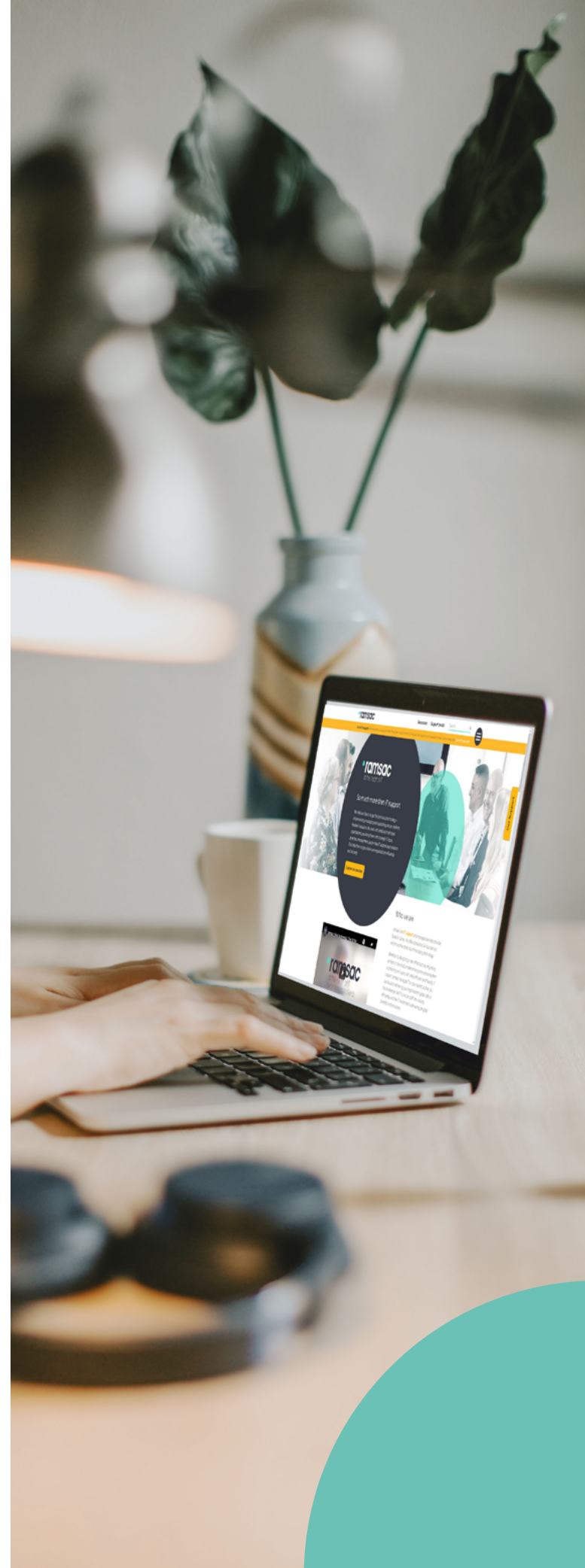
Disruptions of all kinds have the power to undermine how your teams

are connecting. The rise in VC (video conferencing) solutions has been helpful in overcoming the literal distances that have grown between us since lockdown. Increasingly, tools like Microsoft Teams are reimagining the concept of a meeting. This event brought to our attention the growing importance of AV equipment and remote meeting equipment in today's office.

A new approach to work

How do we prepare ourselves for the new world of work? As businesses gear up for changes in their workplace, as a way of adapting after the pandemic, many are wondering what comes next.

Discussing everything from new tech products on the market to changing our perceptions about meeting up, ramsac sat down with Mohammed Khalifa from Microsoft UK and Tom Ballard from Maverick to explore the changing needs of meeting room technology in the new hybrid office. This gave us a unique opportunity to breakdown what we mean by 'hybrid' working and the new office space.



Why are we talking hybrid?

Many employers have been revisiting their return-to-work strategy after the pandemic, including high-profile brands like Google. Organisations are adapting in different ways. According to Microsoft's view of these changes, there have been **three** main phases that explain how businesses initially adapted to the pandemic and have recovered and grown immediately after it.

The three phases include:

- 1 Respond**
How did businesses first adapt to remain in business?
- 2 Recover**
Looking to the immediate future, what has been the most effective strategy for businesses looking to recover?
- 3 Reimagine**
Looking ahead, how are businesses preparing now and in the future?

Hybrid office model, explained

Simply, the hybrid workplace model is a new work environment that represents a blend of technology that helps employees remain connected, whether remotely working or commuting to the office.

While confined to the home during lockdown, working setups where participants could dial in remotely worked well. A hybrid office might even signal the end of the 5-day work week. Increasingly, more businesses are enquiring into remote office setups, by investing more time and resource in the right tech products.

As we start to understand the impacts of remote working more widely, we have noticed a change happening in the meeting room. Meetings might have participants dialling in remotely, or even some from within the office. These are called **hybrid meetings** and represent the future of how teams and other delegates connect using VC solutions. Yet, not all organisations are invested in the right tech products to make this feel seamless.

How will hybrid working challenge your workplace technology?

The change is already happening, and we see this in how we operate and conduct meetings.

Since the reopening of offices across the country, however, new challenges have emerged. We identified some of the top issues for offices, which were:

- 1 Meetings have become increasingly mixed, where participants might be dialling in from the office or remotely.
- 2 Where offices might be open planned, it's increasingly less practical to find a quiet corner for meetings.
- 3 Meeting room layouts are no longer conducive to time-effective meetings.

A recent survey shows less than
5%
of organisations
have adequate video conferencing solutions in their meeting rooms.

What's changing?

With offices reacting and adapting to new demands, and with new challenges to overcome, one of the key areas to change is **meeting spaces** and how colleagues connect using technology.

From our event with Microsoft, we explored the topic of meeting room spaces, AV equipment, and the changing demands that workplaces – and their managers – now face.

What has changed since 2020? Not only has technology struggled to keep up with the new demands of hybrid working, but the concept of a *meeting* seems to have taken on new meanings. Meetings are no longer contained to an office, and we are increasingly seeing businesses where customers have their first interactions over video conferencing apps like Teams.

Modern meeting room pain points

Commonly, we hear about similar challenges that offices are facing when it comes to hosting and connecting to meetings.



Late or unprepared participants



Trouble scheduling everyone



Overrunning meetings or delayed starts



Poor call quality and troubled connectivity

AV equipment

Given the various pain points, especially when it concerns troubleshooting quality issues, the tech used in your meeting space is more important than it ever has been.

Meeting room hardware matters more than ever, because the demands for effective meetings are key for business success. This means audio-visual technology needs to be more thoroughly planned and considered to make your meetings the most efficient they can be. The types of AV equipment you use will largely impact how a meeting is experienced practically, including how well remote participants can hear and see what's being shared.

New considerations for AV equipment should include:

✓	Meeting experiences that are equal for office or remote participants
✓	Users can collaborate and interact
✓	Hardware that is up-to-date (i.e. cameras and speakers)
✓	Audio quality is optimal (i.e. where is the microphone in the room?)
✓	Video quality is optimal (i.e. where is the camera in the room?)

Meeting requirements: what did we discover?

1

Multi-tiered meetings

Meetings are now two-tiered because of a mix of participants, with some dialling in remotely and others meeting up from an office space.

You might have a handful of participants connecting to a Teams meeting from a physical office, whereas there are other participants, colleagues and users who might be remotely joining, whether from home or another office or organisation.

We're starting to see changes and businesses are now being encouraged to work towards a people-centric meeting room experience, where key AV equipment like cameras and speaker devices are increasingly bridging the gaps between remote and shared meeting spaces. This is significant because companies like Microsoft are more aware of people priorities when it comes to meetings.

“

The digital experience of meeting with your teams will impact the view and perception of your business and its brand.

2

First impressions have changed

Organisations have invested thousands into visitor experiences. First impressions, typically, happen in those early interactions that a client or customers might have with your business, its people and your office. A client, for example, might learn a lot about your business and its culture by walking through the front door. The reception has been the focus of first impressions, where this was one of the earliest points of interaction a client will have with your business.


Increasingly, we are finding that clients and customers are actually experiencing a business for the first time via the conference room as they dial in. So, if AV equipment performs poorly, where audio and video quality is lacking, this could limit how well a new customer experiences your business.

Meeting rooms should have personalities

Meeting spaces are the focus of this change, where innovating digital experiences will be critical for businesses moving forward in the next year and beyond. But it's not enough to think only about how many meeting rooms you have, but how well these are equipped to handle different meeting types, or personas.

As business owners drive digital transformation in their organisation, they should consider how meeting spaces can be important in helping support hybrid work. There are different types of meetings; these might be for sharing, collaboration, status meetings, or meeting or onboarding customers.

A business should think about their spaces and how they can encourage key behaviours in meeting rooms. Depending on the needs of a space, different AV products can help business leaders drive the kinds of meetings they want to see in their organisations. This might, for example, mean rethinking how a meeting space can be designed to better help your teams connect, collaborate and share ideas, problem solve and achieve goals.



Meetings rooms can be broken down by types and goals, whether you're driving collaboration or formal meetups. This means we need to start thinking about meeting rooms having personas, rather than a one-size fits all approach.

Meeting room personas

The two major focusses for rooms include in-team collaboration, or meeting and sharing information. These personas account for up to 50% of all meeting types, which can be broken down as follows:

Collaboration

This defines where a few colleagues – three or four users – are meeting to collaborate on a project, or single shared ‘canvas’ or document. These are usually goal oriented, with a final result in mind.

Status

Microsoft calls this ‘meet and present’, which describes a room where a participant is sharing information and presenting to a captive audience.

Other personas include:

Onboarding

How do you introduce new talent to your organisation when there are limits on office capacity? Onboarding rooms allows your business to meet, interview and onboard new talent in creative and flexible ways.

Client

Where a prospective or existing client or customer is dialling in to discuss a business matter, these meetings are increasingly occurring in offices today.

Sharing

When there is a need to share and explain information across an organisation and beyond, the likes of Teams can offer the user features to share, distribute and explain information or data in a more accessible way than traditional email.



On average, it can
take anywhere from
approximately

12–14

minutes just to get
a meeting started.

A new meeting culture

We're increasingly seeing a change in the organisations we work with. Nowadays, we see businesses with staff working three or more days remotely. As this change forces businesses to adapt, the need for greater huddle space technology will grow around a business' demands and requirements.

Where meeting rooms can be adapted around personas, practical considerations for technology will also change. This might include an office with multiple AV devices that allows for greater connectivity between different rooms within a workplace. The need to think beyond the walls of an office is another challenge. But investing in quality AV equipment means you can more optimally connect with your teams, whether remotely or within the workplace.

AV solutions can help by:



Making it easier
to join a meeting



Making it easier to
share content during
a meeting



Centralising room
controls for Teams
meetings

Microsoft Teams AV solutions

Meeting room technology can transform any space with simple one-touch join, easy content sharing, and convenient controls for Microsoft Teams. ramsac is partnered with a leading UK distributor to design bundles of meeting tech that can suit different sizes of organisations. This features Logitech Room Solutions for Microsoft Teams, which can be used to build out better conference rooms.

These are available in the following bundles:



Small room bundle



Medium room bundle



Large room bundle

All bundles feature the Logitech Tap room solution, so you can join and manage meetings without using a laptop. With these features you can do everything from muting participants, to managing the lobby of guests, displaying content or simply adding new members.

The full suite of meeting room tech can be discovered [here](#).

Meeting in one place with Microsoft Teams rooms

Whether small, medium or large, AV equipment can be installed to drive more effective meetings throughout an organisation, even when it has users dialling into meetings remotely or outside of an office.

There are different practical considerations when designing a conference room for meetings where not every participant is physically in the room. Huddle space technology, which can be installed more conveniently in bundles depending on the size of the room, can help you achieve the best outcomes from your meetings.

Businesses should also create memorable experiences for *all* participants. Depending on your tech, you can make sure everyone is connected no matter where they are.



Meet better with ramsac

You hear about troubleshooting meetings for better shared experiences all the time. In the future, it's seemingly a case where meetings will need to accommodate different users and participants who may be dialling in from somewhere else. Transitioning your office into a better state of mind to cope with this is no easy feat. That's where we help.

ramsac delivers services and advice from technical experts who understand their field. Work with us today to unlock the full potential from your IT.

Find out more

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