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Jim Boomer • Dec. 04, 2015



Conference rooms in firms across the country are getting makeovers. Is your meeting space up-to-date with the latest technology to ensure effective meetings? As more and more firms are either renovating their existing office space or moving altogether, the conference room seems to be a focal point for installing the latest and greatest technology.

Lose the Projector & Screen

Although projector and screen setups are still quite prevalent in conference rooms across the country, we are seeing an increasing number of flat panel displays taking the place of this arrangement. Even though HD projectors are increasing in functionality and decreasing in price, the same is happening with flat panels. Why

not consolidate the points of failure and number of connections required? This is an

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Whether it's an office or a meeting room, wires have been an eyesore and significant effort has been dedicated toward hiding them as much as possible. Wouldn't it be great if you could eliminate at least some of these wires? Now you can with wireless presentation technologies like ClickShare by BARCO, Miracast and Steelcase Virtual Puck. These solutions allow you to connect a USB dongle to a computer or multiple computers and share a screen at the push of a button. No more unplugging, passing the cable and plugging back in. We saw the BARCO system in action at ClarkNuber earlier this year and it was very impressive – not to mention easy.

Add some Video

I've been beating the video conferencing drum for some time now but too many firms still haven't given it a try. While there are certainly circumstances that call for a true face-to-face meeting, most can be just as effective through video conferencing. Even those firms that have invested in video conferencing in their conference rooms are seeing limited use because the setup is too complex or the remote attendees can't see people's faces.

Robots Join the Meeting

If you find talking to a stationary display isn't satisfactorily replicating a face-to-face discussion, you can always add the ability for remote employees to move around the room. This is being done through telepresence robots which essentially put a video display on wheels. Tools such as the BeamPro and Beam+ from Sutable Technologies or the Double from Double Robotics provide a physical presence to those that can't be there in person. I'll admit, I found this one a little weird at first but after hearing first-hand accounts of the benefits, it makes more sense. With static displays you are dependent on the angle of the camera but with these technologies you can turn and face the person you are interacting with, thus replicating the experience of face-to-

face conversation much better. These technologies are still in the early adopter stage

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offer a solution for the ever growing challenge of effective utilization of overall office space through hoteling kiosks and software. While hoteling has been the norm in the Big Four for years, it's finally starting to gain interest in all sizes of firms.

Your conference room is the primary meeting spot for your team as well as a sought after location for client meetings. Doesn't it deserve a little investment to make sure it's the best it can be? Plenty of firms across the country think so and I'd encourage you to adopt the same mentality.

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