VIDEO EVERYWHERE:
WHEN VOICE AND TEXT JUST WON'T CUT IT

The future of communication is here today, and it's called video.

We all know that humans communicate better when we can see the other person's facial expressions. Whether it's in a business, educational or personal setting, over 50% of a person's understanding of a conversation comes from non-verbal clues. That's why videoconferencing (also known as VTC) is a vital component in a company's overall AV and IT strategy – it makes communication more effective.

Video conferencing is also a cost-saver. A recent study has shown that the cost of a typical five-person meeting involving travel is over $5,000, while the same meeting over a video conferencing platform costs around $1,700. **That's a 67% savings.**

Given the importance of video communication, it's no wonder that we have many different technologies available to us that allow video communication over distances. These include:

- **Web Collaboration Platforms**: These technologies connect individuals by video call, typically using desktop or laptop computers as end points, and are popular for conducting webinars and web meetings.
- **Mobile Video Calling Platforms**: The explosion of mobile devices such as the iPad, iPhone and Android devices has led to a similar expansion of video communication within the mobile realm, led by platforms such as FaceTime.
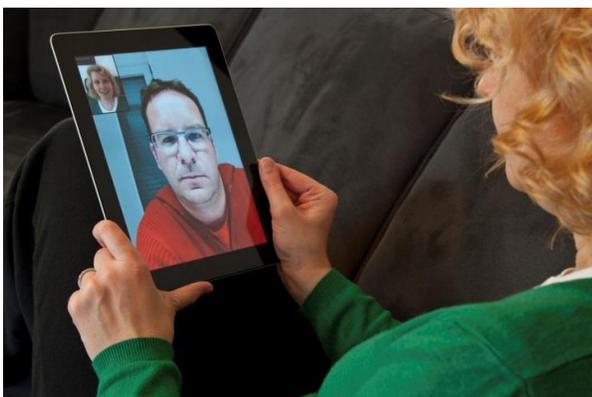
- **Enterprise Grade**: Corporate VTC is a very different proposition from web collaboration and mobile video calling, providing a higher level of performance at a higher cost. While the other technologies tend to focus on connecting individuals, Enterprise Grade VTC focuses on connecting locations like conference rooms or classrooms.

SNAPSHOT: TYPES OF VIDEO CONFERENCING TECHNOLOGIES

	Web Collaboration Platforms	Mobile Video Calling Platforms	Enterprise VTC Platforms
What's Connected	Desktop & Laptop PCs	Mobile Devices	Rooms
Equipment	Software, Camera & PC	Mobile Device and App	VTC System and Display
Cost	Free to Low	Free to Low	High
Reliability	Good	Fair	High
Ubiquity	Broad	Broad	Limited
Sample Platforms	Skype, Lync, Go-to-Meeting	Skype, FaceTime, Tango	Cisco/Tandberg, Polycom, LifeSize

Despite the differences between the various types of videoconferencing systems, it's critical to understand that they are related to one another by the simple fact that they solve the same fundamental problem: Allowing people to communicate remotely while seeing one another.

Video conferencing offers enormous benefits over a typical audio conference. Some of them are obvious, but others are less apparent:

1. **Reduced travel costs**. A white paper published by Verizon revealed that a typical five-person meeting involving air travel for four attendees costs three times as much as a videoconference.
2. **Time savings**. The Verizon study showed that the average time participants spend to prepare for, travel to and attend an in-person meeting is over 53 hours – more than three times the amount of time for a video conference.
3. **Employee Well-Being.** The same study showed that 72% of employees have a neutral or negative view of business travel, especially when their frequency of travel is high. When given the option, most employees would prefer to stay home rather than travel.
4. **Environmental Concerns.** With the newfound global emphasis on reducing carbon emissions, any activity we undertake to minimize the burning of fossil fuels – like minimizing travel - is highly beneficial.
5. **Efficiency**. If an employee travels from Toronto to Seattle to attend a two-hour meeting, they cannot attend a meeting in Mexico City on the same day. Videoconferencing allows employees to interact with a greater number of clients or co-workers over a smaller time period.

It's easy to see how a well-developed videoconferencing capability can lead to enormous benefits to employee well-being, corporate efficiency and the bottom line.

From the AMX White Paper Videoconferencing: Can You See Me Now? (www.amx.com)