

## TECHNOLOGY AND THE WAYS OF WORKING

Over the past few years, Automation Associates Commercial Ltd has been working closely with companies throughout New Zealand to develop Audio Visual designs that link technology and workplace behaviour.

We assist our clients in establishing AV technology concepts based on data gathering early in the project. This is done through a series of workshops facilitated by our consultation teams which in many cases highlight the following fundamental themes:

- 'Real estate' availability, the number of purpose-built meeting rooms being provided
- Room booking
- Confidentiality/privacy
- Audio quality
- Video quality
- Staff training/engagement with technology
- Means to support interactive processes.
- Connectivity
- Control and user interface
- Software/hardware/process consistency

These themes underpin the one principal that is characteristic to all organisations: ***100% Engagement in every meeting and/or presentation session where AV is present and used as a facilitation tool.***

The themes in the bullets list above point to an initiative that 'dove-tails' the concept of technology and a workplace that inspires collaborative, creative and productive behaviour. These are the building blocks that provide an infrastructure that promotes and encourages these behaviours. Removing any one of these blocks could potentially see an entire technology project initiative fail.

These fundamentals have given rise to the following system design principals that provide the 'mortar' for these building blocks. These are detailed below:

### 1. High Definition Audio and Video

Our workshop sessions highlight the theme of '*Hearing and Being Heard, Seeing, and Being Seen*'. This is achieved via a high-spec HD AV system in each of the technology-driven spaces.

Given the availability of high, and ultra-high definition consumer grade screens and audio products currently available, organisations are almost compelled to provide all users with the optimal 1080p resolution and high definition audio. This is especially important as it established how productive the typical 60 min meeting will be. If meeting attendees, whether in a video conference, video collaboration or presentation session, aren't able to properly hear or see the content and/or remote participants, the technology has failed to support the activity and will result in loss of productive time.

### 2. Interactive Screen Technology

Spatial design and initiatives surrounding the creation of a highly productive working environment has seen organisations both local and abroad adopt digital interactivity as part of their 'ways of working' presentation capabilities. This technology is nowadays found in many commercial-grade screens and provides a facility to engage with the technology and the media content. It also provides a means to create and encourage collaborative, brainstorming and free-thinking session supported by the meeting environment. Each of these interactive screens are carefully matched with the space and its intended activity to ensure that the meeting/presentation is as productive as possible.

### 3. Device Connectivity

Collaboration and productive discussion are only as good as the content provided. We have worked with project teams to identify a system that not only allows for a hard-wired connectivity but also a wireless connection capability. We understand that not all organisations issue team members with a laptop which is why we encourage our clients to explore the option for a platform that will support most mobile devices via the wireless connection system.

Given the current mobile technologies available in the consumer market, we have found that users now expect the same capability in the work place as they have at home. Providing a comparable technology environment will encourage a more relaxed, creative environment ultimately fueling productivity.

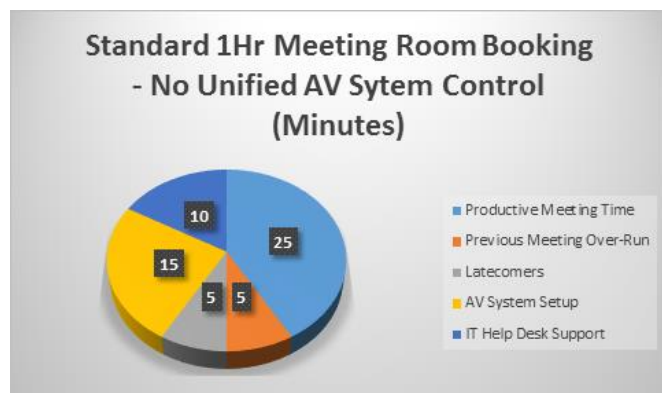
#### 4. Multipurpose Video Conferencing

One of the primary communication facilities for many organisations is the video conferencing system. After consulting with project teams and user groups we almost always land on a design that creates a multipurpose video conferencing space(s). These spaces offer users the capability of both HD quality video and audio when communicating with external as well as internal groups.

The HD video and audio quality will also allow team members to have sensitive discussions without the expense and downtime of traveling. Being a multipurpose space, the technology solution also provides an interactive capability where users can share content as part of the VC session, annotate over shared content or have the option of a digital whiteboard as part of the session.

#### 5. Unified System Control

The success of any AV project depends on how well the technology is adopted by team members and how much productive time they get out of an average 60-min meeting. During our workshops with project - and team members - we often determine that the user/facilitator can spend anything up to 15min trying to set up the AV systems in the room and perhaps another 10min in conversation with IT support.



This leaves only 35min of productive meeting time. Take into account the 5min over-run of the previous meeting and another 5min for latecomers, we are down to only 25min left for a productive meeting. The diagram on the right has been compiled based consultations with our clients over the years.

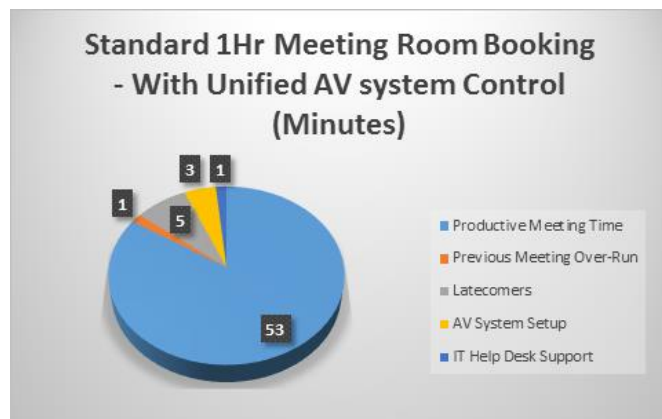
The unified system control facility for the rooms is primarily aimed at providing a platform for the user with a consistent mode of operation when setting up the presentation in preparation for the meeting session.

This consistency does not only extend to the way the user interfaces with the room technology but also provides a consistency in the automation of the shut-down procedure when a session ends. This ensures that the user setting up the next meeting executes the system setup in the same manner every time. This eliminates confusion and decreases wasted time on non-essential processes prior to the meeting start. The result, more productive meeting time and less time setting up.

#### 6. Room Booking System

One of the primary themes that we typically uncover during our workshops was the issue surrounding the lack of purpose-built meeting spaces.

In many cases some organisations have limited real estate in meeting rooms and will often fall well short of what is actually required to satisfy the needs of the individual business groups. Unable to manage the time spent in these rooms by other groups, will result in over runs. As a result, this causes frustration with other teams who will often



either find alternative meeting spaces that are unfit for purpose and compound the issue by engaging alternative VC - and presentation technologies i.e. Skype, mobile phones etc. We have also found that these teams often scrap scheduled meetings or exclude regional VC participants because of a lack of available purpose build spaces and/or technology.

The good news is that it provides an organisation a unique opportunity to manage the available spaces more efficiently by deploying a dedicated room booking system.

The Room Booking System provides a means of securing the space as well as the AV technology in the room. It also interfaces with Outlook eliminating the need for additional systems outside of the current work-flow, minimising training and maximising overall adoption. This system will secure a booking, monitor time spent in the room and alert occupants when a session is due to end. This mitigates over-runs and essentially manages the limited real-estate. This as vital part of a technology project initiative and we recommend that this system be considered as a means to ensure maximum room usage and meeting session productivity.

There is a definite push for the implementation of workplace technology solutions that is attuned to the ways of working for an organisation. This is a carefully planned and coordinated process to find a technology platform that provides its users with a means to confidently, professionally and collaboratively engage colleges and clients.

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