

Collaboration Endpoints: Choose the Right Ones for Productive, Effective Teleworking

This document discusses how Cisco can support teleworking with technology solutions to enhance the lives and productivity of employees who work remotely.



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Teleworking addresses the needs of companies and employees for increasing productivity while improving work-life balance. It is a solution that benefits all—knowledge workers, team leaders, executives, and the overall business. But teleworking requirements are not the same for everyone; maximizing productivity depends on your daily collaboration needs—how frequent, business-critical, and intensive these needs are. Cisco proposes solutions for teleworkers that are adapted to each of the following product models:

- **Telepresence:** Cisco personal telepresence solutions such as the Cisco TelePresence® EX Series offer the most effective approach for visual collaboration to bring people together when they cannot be in the same room. It is the preferred medium for workers who need “in-person” meetings even when miles separate them. Read more about Cisco personal telepresence at: <http://www.cisco.com/web/telepresence/products/endpoints/personal.html>.
- **Video IP phones:** Cisco® Unified Video IP phones, including the newly announced Cisco Desktop Collaboration Experience DX650, interoperate with Cisco TelePresence and other voice-over-IP (VoIP) phones. You can attend all meetings with confidentiality and presence. Read more about Cisco Video IP phones at: <http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/ps12956/index.html>.
- **Soft clients:** The Cisco Jabber™ unified communications and video client is available on all platforms. It is the perfect tool when mobility is required, such as at the airport or the local cafe. Read more about the Jabber® application here: <http://www.cisco.com/web/products/voice/jabber.html>.
- **Voice IP phones:** Cisco Voice IP phones offer you all professional call features at a lower cost and bandwidth to manage your call-control resources effectively. Read more about Cisco IP phones at: http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/ps6788/Products_Sub_Category_Home.html.

Table 1 shows typical collaboration cases and how Cisco Collaboration solutions can enhance these cases.

Table 1. Typical Collaboration

	Call Duration Estimates	Criticality	Telepresence	Video Phones	Soft Clients	Voice Phones	Email IM
Asynchronous, noncritical tasks		Low					Yes
Maintaining relationships	5 min	Low	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Informal small discussions	10 min	Low	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Daily meetings or reviews	15 min	Low	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Formal presentations	30–60 min	Medium	Yes				
Active collaboration	1–2 hours	Medium	Yes				
Business decisions	1 hour	High	Yes				

Selection of the right tool for the task is based on the frequency, duration, and intensity of the discussions.

Call Duration

The level of attention and concentration you need is not the same when you are using telepresence versus voice only. It is difficult to maintain concentration in a 2-hour meeting or short consecutive meetings with voice-only devices. Therefore, we believe the longer you need to maintain communications focus, the closer you should be to in-person meetings.

Criticality

More than 60 percent of the message received in the communications process is interpreted through gestures and expressions. Being able to reproduce these gestures and expressions accurately increases your chances of being understood clearly and allows you to better understand the message being communicated by others in the meeting. Thus, the more critical the meeting, the more clearly you will want to be able to see and impart the visual cues that are so important to the communications process.

Reachability is another important aspect. To allow business continuation, hard clients offer the best experience and reliability. They are always on and ready to take a call, enabling the teleworker to be contacted at all times. In addition, a dedicated video screen does not occupy additional screen real estate on the computer, so the teleworker has more flexibility.

Productivity Increase

There is a misperception that teleworking is for people to work **only** from home, that is, 5 days a week, 8 hours a day working at home. Teleworking is more than that:

- **Flexible working hours:** What if instead of spending time in traffic jams or rushing to work you could prepare and attend these meetings at home? Is taking the kids to school conflicting with your working hours? Teleworking is also about giving you flexibility in your working day. You can be less stressed and get the job done.
- **Virtual meetings:** Late evening or very early morning meetings are sometimes difficult to accommodate when you have a family. Whether you need to participate in these meetings locally or with colleagues from around the world, with teleworking you can do both.
- **Remote working:** Working from remote or field office or teleconference facilities can bring you closer to a typical office environment and save commuting time.

Employees teleworking 1 or 2 days a week can significantly benefit the employer. Office sharing can dramatically reduce the cost of office and parking spaces, in addition to the resulting decrease in cost of bandwidth and electricity. It also has a direct impact on employee satisfaction, which translates into higher loyalty and productivity for the company.

As the hours of teleworking increase, workers could want a more social and interactive way of communicating in order to feel more connected to their teams. Table 2 recommends the types of collaboration tools that can help teleworkers feel like they are integral parts of an organization, depending on the number of hours spent teleworking each week.

Table 2. Collaboration Tools

Hours of Teleworking per Week	Telepresence	Video	Voice
0–5 hours	Optional	Recommended	Required
5–10 hours	Recommended	Required	
10–40+ hours	Required		

As an example, John is an executive working in the branch office of a London bank. He lives 18 miles (30 km) away from his office and commutes 90 minutes a day in traffic. Assuming John would work from home 1 day a week and balance his day by time shifting, the benefits he and his employer would get are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. Benefits of Teleworking

	Employee Benefits	Company Benefits
Saves 90+ minutes per day in traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less stress • Better life balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More availability • Higher productivity
Saves 1+ gallon of gas per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces carbon footprint • Saves 45 gallons or 170 liters of gas a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces carbon footprint • Saves on operating cost
Enables office sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses Single Number Reach (SNR) to be accessible wherever the location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces required space by 20 percent
Works with other time zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids spending time in airports and planes • Enjoys better life balance • Promotes business continuity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases productivity • Saves on travel costs

Connectivity

Cisco partners with many service providers globally to facilitate the installation of home offices. This solution is often the preferred one for small organizations or independent workers.

Cisco offers all of our customers different secure ways to connect from their homes to the on-premises call control of your company.




Cisco Video Communication Server Expressway (VCS Expressway) is a scalable way to help ensure business-to-business and business-to-everywhere video collaboration, and it applies to all telepresence endpoints.



Cisco Virtual Office is a home-office router that directs the teleworker's Internet traffic to the company's internal VPN while sending the rest of the teleworker's traffic to the public Internet. It applies to all endpoints.

The **Cisco AnyConnect® Secure Mobility Client (VPN)** software application provides VPN access; it is typically used with software clients, and it is also embedded as default in the Cisco DX650.

Table 4 lists the Cisco solutions for teleworkers.

Table 1. Cisco Solutions for Teleworkers

<p>Cisco TelePresence System EX90</p> 	<p>Display:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24-inch LCD display with second display connectivity <p>Video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to send and receive video at 1080p at 30 frames per second (fps) • Multiparty calls up to four simultaneous participants • Cisco TelePresence PrecisionHD camera with 45–65° field of view • F1.7 camera for high response in low-light conditions <p>Audio:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two stereo front speakers and subwoofer • Integrated microphone and handset <p>Connectivity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects to PC with DVI-I or HDMI • Registers to Cisco Unified Communications Manager (UCM) or VCS through VCS Expressway or Cisco Virtual Office router <p>http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/collateral/ps7060/ps11303/ps11308/ps11327/data_sheet_c78-627494.html</p> <p>Controlled with Cisco TelePresence Touch 8: http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/collateral/ps7060/ps11307/ps11336/data_sheet_c78-646041.html</p>
<p>Cisco TelePresence System EX60</p> 	<p>Display:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21.5-inch LCD display <p>Video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to send and receive video at 1080p at 30 fps • Cisco TelePresence PrecisionHD camera with 50° field of view • F1.7 camera for high response in low-light conditions <p>Audio:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two stereo front speakers • Integrated microphone and handset <p>Connectivity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects to PC with DVI-I or HDMI • Registers to Cisco UCM or VCS through VCS Expressway or Cisco Virtual Office router <p>http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/collateral/ps7060/ps11303/ps11308/ps11327/data_sheet_c78-627494.html</p> <p>Controlled with Cisco TelePresence Touch 8: http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/collateral/ps7060/ps11307/ps11336/data_sheet_c78-646041.html</p>
<p>Cisco Desktop Collaboration Experience DX650</p> 	<p>Display:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7-inch LCD display with Integrated 7-inch touchscreen for support for multitouch gestures <p>Video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to send and receive video at 1080p at 30 fps • HD camera with 60° field of view <p>Audio:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated microphone and speaker <p>Connectivity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects to PC with HDMI • Registers to Cisco UCM through embedded VPN client or Cisco Virtual Office router <p>On-screen controls with touch interface: http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/ps12959/index.html</p>

<p>Cisco Jabber platform</p> 	<p>The Cisco Jabber platform is available on Android, Blackberry, iPad, iPhone, Mac, and Windows. Video capability is available on Windows (up to 720p) and iPad only.</p> <p>http://www.cisco.com/web/products/voice/jabber.html</p>
<p>Cisco IP phones</p> 	<p>Cisco offers a wide range of IP phones from the Cisco Unified IP Phone 3900 to 9900 portfolios. Video capability is supported by the Cisco Unified IP Phone 8900 and 9900 Series models.</p> <p>http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/ps10691/Products_Sub_Category_Home.html</p>

Q&A

- Q.** What is the best teleworking setting for me?
- A.** Your teleworking setting depends on your role, company, organization, and the time you will spend working from home. The tables in this document should give you an indication of the solution you need.
- Q.** With teleworking will I lose contact with my colleagues?
- A.** Teleworking does not necessarily mean working from home 5 days a week. It is also about giving you flexibility. Many companies now allow time shifting with core hours in the middle of the day. This paradigm gives you more time to organize your life (for example, taking your kids to school, having meetings early or late, avoiding rush hours, etc.). With telepresence, your colleagues can also meet you “in person” as easily as knocking at your door.
- Q.** How will teleworking improve my company's productivity?
- A.** Your company benefits by improving your work-life balance. You will be less stressed, spend less time in transit, and be better able to organize your life—so you can be more productive. Your company will also see the direct returns in saving office space and transportation costs, and benefitting from your better availability.
- Q.** How do I preserve confidentiality when I'm home?
- A.** Confidentiality is a key aspect of enterprise-grade solutions; calls can be encrypted and secure from end to end. Cisco endpoints also give you a lot of flexibility when it comes to confidentiality. You can deny calls when you are busy, use your presence status, turn off video, or even use instant messaging before escalating the call to audio or video.
- Q.** I have a video client on my desktop. Isn't that enough?
- A.** Software clients work well, especially in mobility contexts when you are in a hotel or on the road. A software client such as the Cisco Jabber application offers you call features similar to what you have on a Cisco phone. However, when you are on extended video calls or when a good impression is paramount, a dedicated hard endpoint will give you the best comfort and experience. Cisco TelePresence systems and Cisco IP Telephony devices are dedicated devices. They are always on and always available. They are configured ideally so that it takes no time to set up, and they do not compete with any other running applications, so you get the best performance possible at all times.



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