

Make Every Meeting Equal

A Phased Blueprint for Hybrid Work and the Modern Meeting Room

For IT and Business Leaders of Growing Organizations

How to read this paper: This blueprint is architecture-first and technology-neutral. Each phase opens with the capability you need and what to look for in any solution, then a clearly marked Cisco recommendation for teams who want a single integrated stack. If you run mixed meeting platforms or another vendor's room hardware today, the phases still apply: adopt the architecture, keep what works, and treat the Cisco sections as one fully integrated way to deliver it.

Executive Summary

Hybrid work is now a standard part of how growing businesses operate. Employees come to the office to collaborate, solve problems, connect with colleagues, and meet with customers. When meeting room technology is difficult to use or creates an unequal experience for remote participants, it reduces the value of that time together.

For SMB and Midsize organizations, improving hybrid work can be especially challenging. Employees expect high-quality experience, but IT teams are often supporting multiple platforms, different room systems, and an expanding workforce with limited time and resources. Simply adding cameras or replacing individual devices may improve a few rooms, but it does not provide the visibility or centralized management needed to support the environment at scale.

This blueprint offers a practical four-phase approach:

1. **Equip Every Room:** Improve priority spaces so everyone can be seen, heard, and included, regardless of where they join or which meeting platform the company uses.
2. **Unify the Fleet:** Manage rooms centrally, understand how spaces are being used, and diagnose meeting-quality problems faster.
3. **Elevate with Intelligence:** Introduce AI capabilities that capture notes, summarize discussions, identify action items, and help employees focus on the conversation.
4. **Consolidate Communications:** When the business is ready, simplify meetings, calling, and customer communications through a more integrated platform.

The approach is designed to protect existing investments. Organizations can continue using Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, Webex, or a mixed environment while modernizing the rooms and experiences that matter most. Each phase delivers value independently, allowing the business to move forward at its own pace without requiring a disruptive, all-at-once transformation.

The goal is simple: create better meeting experiences for employees and customers while making the environment easier for a lean IT team to manage, support, and grow.

The Commute Has to Be Worth It

Employees don't come to the workplace just because that's where work happens anymore. They come to work together, establish relationships, exchange ideas and get work done that is better when people are together. Which is why the workplace, particularly the meeting areas, needs to be an experience worth commuting for.

At least most meetings today have someone remote. Remote participants are at a disadvantage if they can't easily see the room, hear the conversation, or jump into the conversation effortlessly. The outcome is more than a difficult meeting: decisions might be delayed; ideas can be overlooked and employees and customers can feel less engaged.

Bigger companies have a problem on top of that. They require easy professional meeting experiences, but have a limited IT team supporting different offices, meeting platforms, devices, and network infrastructures. If a meeting goes bad, IT must swiftly figure out if the problem was the room equipment, the local network, the internet connection, or the meeting service itself.

You can get an instant upgrade by buying new cameras for each room, but that doesn't solve

the underlying operating problem with the technology itself. The business also requires a mechanism to centrally manage rooms, assess room usage, and identify the root of meeting quality concerns without additional tools or administrative labor.

The appropriate plan is not to replace everything. It begins with the rooms that make the biggest difference, such as customer-facing spaces, executive chambers, collaborative places, and locations that generate the most support requests. From there, the organization can grow according to demonstrable results and business priorities.

The goal for Velocity firms is clear: create a consistent, inclusive meeting experience that can scale with the business without forcing the IT team to scale at the same rate.

The Meeting Room is the Network Endpoint

A reliable hybrid meeting depends on more than a good camera or microphone. The technology in the room captures people, voices, and content, while the network determines how clearly that experience reaches remote participants. When a meeting freezes, audio drops, or content does not load properly, the issue may be in the room, on the local network, with the internet connection, or along the path to the meeting service.

For organizations with lean IT teams, visibility into both the room technology and the network connection makes troubleshooting faster and more effective. Instead of guessing or moving between multiple tools, IT can identify the source of a problem, resolve it quickly, and reduce repeat support requests. Managing each room as a connected endpoint creates a more consistent employee and customer experience while providing a foundation that can scale as the business grows. One endpoint. Two jobs.

The Blueprint

Build at the Pace of Your Business

For SMB and Midsize organizations, successful modernization begins with the right sequence. Start by improving the rooms where employees and customers will notice the greatest difference. Once those rooms deliver a dependable experience, centralize their management so the environment can expand without creating more work for IT. From there, introduce AI capabilities that improve productivity and, when calling is critical to the business, consider bringing meetings and calling together on a more integrated platform.

Each phase is designed to deliver value independently. An organization can complete the first phase and immediately provide a more inclusive meeting experience, then move forward as priorities, budgets, and resources allow. Clear success criteria help IT determine when the business is ready for the next step, while each investment becomes part of the foundation for future growth. Nothing needs to be discarded simply because the organization advances to another phase.

This approach can support a company as it grows from a few meeting rooms to a larger, multi-location environment. The objective is to create a consistent experience that can scale with the business without requiring the IT team, number of management tools, or support burden to grow at the same pace.

What to Look For: One Operational View

A lean IT team should not need to move between several dashboards to manage rooms, monitor usage, and troubleshoot meeting-quality issues. Look for a unified management experience that provides visibility into devices, room health, utilization, and the network connections supporting each meeting. AI-assisted operations can further reduce the workload by helping teams identify the source of an issue and move toward resolution faster.

The Cisco Recommendation: Cisco Cloud Control

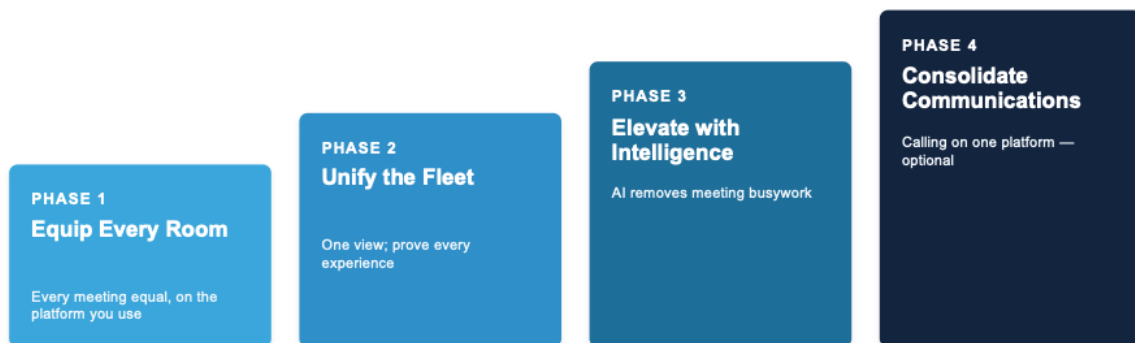
Cisco Cloud Control provides a shared operational view across networking, security, observability, and collaboration. Collaboration Control Hub operates within this environment, giving IT teams one place to manage collaboration devices and investigate the network conditions affecting meeting quality. Instead of passing an issue between multiple teams or tools, a growing organization can work from shared information to resolve problems more efficiently.

Cisco Cloud Control also includes AI Canvas, an AI-assisted workspace designed to help teams investigate and address issues across the environment. Cisco Cloud Control and AI Canvas are currently in controlled availability, with broader availability planned through 2026.

With this scalable operational foundation in place, organizations can move through the four-phase approach, starting with the rooms that matter most and expanding as their business needs evolve.

A Blueprint That Grows With You

Start with the room. Each phase is independently valuable.



Stop at any phase — the value already banked stays. **Phase 4 is optional, for voice-first organizations.**

Phase 1 – Equip Every Room

The promise: Give in-room and remote participants an equally clear and inclusive experience while continuing to use the meeting platform your business relies on today.

Business outcome: A visible improvement for employees and customers, with technology that is easier for a lean IT team to deploy and support.

An inclusive meeting begins in the room. Intelligent camera framing helps remote participants clearly see the person speaking, while high-quality microphones and noise reduction allow every voice to be heard. Simple controls and one-touch content sharing remove common frustrations, helping meetings start on time and keeping participants focused on the conversation.

Modernizing the room should not require changing how the entire company meets. The right devices should support Webex, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, or the combination of platforms already used by the business. Start with customer-facing rooms, executive spaces, and locations where important decisions and frequent hybrid meetings take place. This focused approach creates an immediate improvement that employees and leadership can recognize from the first day.

What to Look For

- **AI-assisted video and clear, noise-managed audio** so everyone can be seen and heard, regardless of location.
- **One-touch join and intuitive controls** that make it easy for employees and guests to start meetings.
- **Support for your current meeting platforms** so existing technology investments can remain in place.
- **Options for every type of space**, from individual work areas and huddle rooms to larger conference rooms.
- **Fast, consistent deployment** that allows a small IT team to add and manage rooms efficiently.
- **Centralized cloud management** to simplify updates, monitoring, and support as the business grows.

The Cisco Recommendation

Cisco collaboration devices provide a consistent experience across individual workspaces, huddle rooms, conference rooms, and larger meeting spaces. They are designed to support Webex, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Google Meet, giving organizations the flexibility to improve their rooms without immediately replacing their preferred meeting platform.

Cisco devices combine cameras, microphones, speakers, computing, and intelligent software into an integrated solution. This reduces the need to assemble and support multiple room components. On-device AI capabilities improve camera framing and audio quality while processing key functions locally for faster performance and greater control.

Although Cisco may require a higher initial investment than some entry-level alternatives, the business value extends beyond the hardware. Organizations gain a consistent user experience, centralized management, ongoing software enhancements, and a platform that can support future phases of modernization. For a lean IT team, this can mean fewer room issues, less time spent supporting disconnected components, and a solution designed to grow with the company.

What You Deploy

- **Cisco collaboration devices sized to each priority space:**
 - Desk Pro G2 for personal workspaces, focus rooms, and small huddle spaces
 - Board Pro G3 for small-to-medium rooms and interactive collaboration
 - Room Kit Pro G2 for larger and high-impact meeting spaces
 - **A Device subscription through the Cisco Collaboration Flex Plan**, providing cloud registration, software updates, and management through Collaboration Control Hub.

Platform Considerations

Organizations can continue using their existing meeting services. A Cisco device configured as a native Microsoft Teams Room also requires the appropriate Microsoft Teams Rooms license from Microsoft. The Cisco device subscription continues to provide Cisco cloud management and software capabilities.

Included Capabilities

- On-device intelligence for camera framing, speaker focus, and audio optimization
- Centralized management through Collaboration Control Hub
- A scalable management foundation for the next phase of the blueprint

Ready for Phase 2

Phase 1 is complete when priority rooms are equipped; employees can join meetings with one touch, and both in-room and remote participants receive a clear and consistent experience. With that foundation established, the organization can begin bringing its growing room environment into one centralized operational view.

Phase 2 – Unify the Fleet

The promise: Manage every room from one operational view and improve troubleshooting without adding more work for the IT team.

Business outcome: Simpler operations, faster issue resolution, and reliable usage data that supports workplace and real-estate decisions.

A few meeting rooms may be manageable individually, but that approach becomes difficult as the business adds employees, locations, and devices. Phase 2 brings the entire room environment into one centralized view. IT can remotely monitor device health, keep software

current, apply configurations across multiple rooms, and identify potential problems before they affect an important meeting.

Workspace analytics also help leaders understand how meeting spaces are being used. By identifying rooms that are frequently occupied, underused, or regularly over capacity, the organization can make better decisions about office layouts, future investments, and real-estate needs.

The greatest benefit comes from seeing both the room technology and the network supporting the meeting. When someone reports poor audio, frozen video, or dropped content, IT can more quickly determine whether the issue originated with the device, local network, internet connection, or meeting service. For a lean IT team, this means less guesswork, fewer tools, and faster resolution of one of hybrid work's most common support requests.

What to Look For

- **Centralized cloud management** for remote monitoring, software updates, bulk configuration, and device-health alerts.
- **Workspace usage and occupancy analytics** to guide room planning and real-estate decisions.
- **Network-path visibility** to help identify where meeting-quality problems originate.
- **A unified operational view** that reduces the need to move between separate tools and dashboards.
- **Scalable administration** that allows the room environment to grow without creating a matching increase in support effort.

The Cisco Recommendation

Cisco combines device management, workspace analytics, and network visibility to provide a more complete view of the meeting experience. Collaboration Control Hub enables IT to centrally monitor Cisco devices, manage software and configurations, review room usage, and assess device health.

Cisco devices can also use an integrated ThousandEyes Endpoint Agent to measure the network path between the room and the meeting service. This helps IT identify whether a meeting problem is associated with the room, local network, internet provider, or connection to the meeting cloud. Because the agent is integrated into RoomOS, organizations can gain this visibility without installing a separate appliance in every location.

These capabilities can also provide useful visibility when Cisco devices are used with supported third-party meeting platforms, such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom. This allows organizations to strengthen management and troubleshooting while continuing to use the meeting services already familiar to their employees.

Collaboration Control Hub connects with Cisco Cloud Control to extend visibility across collaboration, networking, security, and observability. The greatest value is realized as more of the organization's technology environment is managed through Cisco, but businesses with mixed-vendor environments can still benefit from centralized device management and network-

path visibility. Cisco Cloud Control and its AI Canvas cross-domain workspace are currently in controlled availability.

What You Deploy

- **ThousandEyes Endpoint Agent licenses** for Cisco collaboration devices requiring full network-path visibility. The agent is integrated into RoomOS, while activation and entitlement requirements depend on the selected ThousandEyes subscription tier.

Included Capabilities

The Webex Device subscription established in Phase 1 includes fleet-management capabilities through Collaboration Control Hub, such as:

- Remote device monitoring
- Centralized software and configuration management
- Device-health visibility
- Workspace and usage analytics

Optional Capabilities

- **Control Hub Pro Pack** for organizations requiring more advanced analytics, security, and administrative controls.

Ready for Phase 3

Phase 2 is complete when meeting rooms are centrally managed, software and configurations can be maintained at scale, workspace data is supporting business decisions, and IT can diagnose meeting-quality issues across both the room and the network path. Organizations already using Cisco collaboration devices may have much of this foundation in place. With dependable rooms and centralized visibility established, the business is ready to introduce intelligence that helps employees get more value from every meeting.

Phase 3 – Elevate with Intelligence

The promise: Use AI to reduce meeting busy work for employees, whether they participate from the office, home, or another location.

Business outcome: More productive meetings, clearer follow-through, and less administrative work, without requiring additional room hardware.

Once meeting rooms are dependable and centrally managed, AI can help employees get more value from every conversation. Automatic transcription, summaries, and action-item capture allow participants to focus on the discussion instead of dividing their attention between contributing and taking notes. In-meeting assistance can also help employees catch up, find important details, and better understand what was discussed.

For SMB and Midsize organizations, these capabilities can reduce the time spent documenting meetings and following up on decisions. They also help create greater accountability by making important takeaways, responsibilities, and next steps easier to find and share. The benefit extends to everyone in the meeting, whether they participate remotely or from a conference room.

AI should complement the way employees work. It should operate with the organization's preferred meeting platform, connect with existing business and productivity tools, and provide appropriate privacy and administrative controls. Where supported, on-device processing can also improve response time and help keep sensitive audio and video processing closer to the room.

What to Look For

- **AI meeting assistance** that provides transcription, summaries, highlights, and action-item capture.
- **An inclusive experience** that works for both in-room and remote participants.
- **Compatibility with the meeting platform already in use** to avoid unnecessary disruption.
- **Integration with existing productivity and business applications** so meeting outcomes flow into familiar workflows.
- **Clear privacy, security, and administrative controls** for managing how meeting data is processed and shared.
- **On-device intelligence where appropriate** to improve speed, audio, video, and privacy.

The Cisco Recommendation

For organizations using Webex, Cisco AI Assistant can provide meeting transcription, summaries, action items, noise removal, and in-meeting intelligence within the Webex experience. These capabilities help employees remain engaged during meetings while making decisions and next steps easier to capture and share afterward.

Cisco is also expanding intelligent capabilities across its collaboration devices. On-device AI can improve camera framing, speaker focus, and audio quality, while emerging in-room capabilities can help capture notes and outcomes from informal discussions and huddles. Processing selected functions on the device supports faster performance and greater control over the room experience.

Webex integrates with commonly used productivity and business applications, helping meeting information reach the tools employees already use. Organizations using another meeting platform can continue using that platform's meeting assistant, while Cisco devices provide device-level intelligence and centralized management. This allows the business to add value without requiring an immediate platform change.

What You Deploy

- **A Webex Suite subscription through the Cisco Collaboration Flex Plan** for applicable users when Webex is the organization's meeting platform. Cisco AI Assistant

capabilities are included with eligible paid Webex plans, subject to the selected subscription and feature availability.

Included Capabilities

- On-device intelligence on supported Cisco collaboration devices for capabilities such as camera framing, speaker focus, and audio optimization.
- Centralized device management and visibility through Collaboration Control Hub.
- Support for the organization's existing meeting platform, with meeting-assistant capabilities determined by that platform.

Ready for Phase 4

Phase 3 is complete when employees are actively using AI meeting assistance; meeting summaries and action items are improving follow-through, and relevant outputs are reaching the tools where work continues. With dependable rooms, centralized management, and intelligent assistance in place, the organization can determine whether simplifying calling and meetings on a more integrated platform is the right next step.

Phase 4 – Consolidate Communications

This phase is optional and intended for organizations where reliable calling is essential to employees, customers, or daily operations.

The promise: Bring meetings and business calling together on one platform with one administrative experience.

Business outcome: Simpler operations, fewer disconnected systems, and more dependable communications for employees and customer-facing teams.

Not every organization needs to consolidate calling immediately. If the calling service included with an existing productivity platform meets the company's needs, the earlier phases can continue delivering value on their own.

Phase 4 becomes relevant when voice communications are critical to the business. This may include organizations with customer-facing teams, front-line operations, multiple locations, or an aging on-premises phone system that is becoming costly or difficult to maintain. Contract renewals, office expansions, acquisitions, and broader cloud initiatives can also provide a natural opportunity to evaluate the calling environment.

Bringing meetings and calling together can reduce the number of vendors, management portals, and support processes IT must maintain. Employees receive a more consistent communications experience, while the business gains clearer ownership and accountability when an issue occurs.

What to Look For

- **Cloud calling integrated with meetings and messaging** through one platform and administrative view.
- **Support for existing room and desk devices** to avoid creating a separate hardware environment.
- **Simple administration and deployment** that a lean IT team can manage across users and locations.
- **Resilience and site survivability** for locations where calling must remain available during a network or cloud-service interruption.
- **Flexible licensing** that supports full-featured users, occasional users, shared spaces, and common-area devices.
- **Contact Center capabilities** when customer service, sales, or support teams depend on voice communications.
- **Visibility into call quality and the supporting network** to help IT identify and resolve problems faster.

The Cisco Recommendation

Webex Calling brings cloud calling, meetings, and messaging together within the Webex platform. It works natively with Cisco desk and room devices, allowing organizations to extend calling to technology already supporting their meeting environment. Administration through Collaboration Control Hub gives IT one place to manage users, devices, services, policies, and locations.

For organizations moving from an existing Cisco phone system, Webex Calling provides a practical path to the cloud while preserving familiar capabilities and supporting a phased migration. Businesses can move locations or user groups over time rather than completing the entire transition at once.

Cisco also provides visibility into the network supporting voice services. This helps IT determine whether a call-quality issue is associated with a device, local network, internet connection, or the path to the calling cloud. For SMB and Midsize organizations, faster diagnosis can reduce downtime and limit the burden placed on a small support team.

Where customer communications are central to the business, Webex Contact Center can extend the platform with customer-service capabilities. This enables organizations to connect employee collaboration and customer engagement while selecting only the capabilities their operations require.

What You Deploy

Webex Calling through the Cisco Collaboration Flex Plan, with licensing aligned to different user and workspace requirements:

- Professional licensing for users requiring comprehensive calling capabilities across multiple devices
- Standard licensing for users with more straightforward calling needs
- Workspace licensing for shared spaces and common-area devices

- **Webex Suite**, where combining calling, meetings, and messaging in one subscription provides a simpler fit.

Optional Capabilities

- **Webex Contact Center**, licensed separately, for organizations that require customer service, support, or other contact-center capabilities.

When to Consider Phase 4

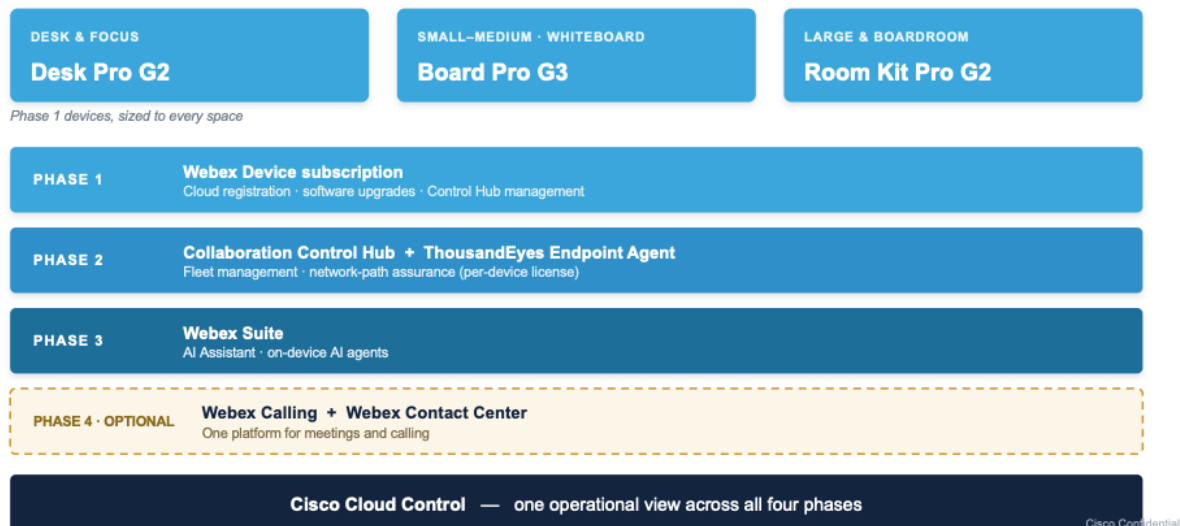
Phase 4 is appropriate when calling is essential to business operations; customer-facing teams depend on reliable voice communications, or an existing phone system is ready to move to the cloud. Organizations without immediate needs can pause after the earlier phases and still benefit from modernized rooms, centralized management, and AI-assisted meetings.

The result is a phased modernization journey that begins with better meeting experiences and can ultimately provide a simpler, more integrated communications environment as the business grows.

One Platform, Built Phase by Phase

Start with the devices. Each phase adds a layer — all managed from one console.

WHAT YOU DEPLOY



Where to Start?

Start with the Technology You Already Have

The blueprint is designed to meet your organization where it is today. Modernizing hybrid work does not require replacing every platform, device, or productivity tool at once. Begin with the

areas creating the greatest challenges, preserve the investments that continue to provide value, and expand as business priorities and budgets allow.

If You Already Use a Standard Meeting Platform

Continue using it. Whether your organization relies on Webex, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, or another service, you can begin by equipping priority rooms with devices that support that platform. This improves the meeting experience without changing how employees schedule or join meetings.

If You Already Use Another Vendor's Room Hardware

Keep the equipment that continues to meet your needs. As existing devices reach the end of their useful life, or as new and high-priority rooms are added, introduce modern devices with stronger management and network-visibility capabilities. This phased approach avoids unnecessary disruption while moving the organization toward a more consistent environment.

If You Already Use a Productivity Suite

Protect the value of the identity, device management, productivity, and AI capabilities already included in your suite. Then address the areas it may not fully cover, such as the physical meeting-room experience and visibility into the network supporting each meeting. Adding those capabilities can strengthen hybrid work without requiring the organization to abandon familiar tools.

If You Have a Lean IT Team

The blueprint is built for organizations with limited time and resources. Prioritize solutions that bring devices, room health, usage, and network performance into one operational view. AI-assisted operations can further reduce manual troubleshooting, while a Cisco partner or managed service can support assessment, deployment, and ongoing management when additional expertise is needed.

Each phase also creates a natural review point. The organization can measure results, confirm business priorities, and decide whether to continue, pause, or adjust the next phase.

The Cisco Recommendation

For organizations that prefer a more integrated approach, Cisco brings collaboration, networking, security, and observability together through Cisco Cloud Control. Collaboration Control Hub provides centralized management for meeting rooms and devices, while Cisco's broader platform can extend visibility across the supporting technology environment.

Cisco solutions can be deployed directly or with support from a Cisco partner or managed-service provider. For a growing SMB or Midsize organization, the value is greater operational simplicity: fewer disconnected tools, faster troubleshooting, more consistent experiences, and a technology foundation that can scale without requiring the IT team to grow at the same rate.

The best starting point is not a complete replacement, it is the first practical improvement that delivers visible value to employees, customers, and IT.

Getting Started

Begin with a focused assessment of your meeting rooms and the experiences they deliver today. Using existing management tools, or working with a Cisco partner, the assessment should provide three practical outcomes:

- **A room inventory and readiness review** identifying the spaces, devices, platforms, and capabilities currently in place.
- **An experience and network baseline** showing how well meetings perform and where connectivity or quality issues may exist.
- **A phase-readiness evaluation** comparing the current environment with the success criteria outlined in Appendix B.

The assessment is designed to be low effort and minimally disruptive. It gives business and IT leaders a clear view of what is working, where employees and customers encounter challenges, and which improvements can deliver the fastest and most visible value.

From there, your organization can prioritize the rooms that matter most, establish measurable goals, and move through the blueprint at a pace that fits your budget, resources, and business priorities.

Appendix A – Solution Reference

Phase	Capability you need (any solution)	Cisco recommendation
1 — Equip Every Room	AI-assisted room and desk devices, multi-platform, sized to every space	Desk Pro G2 · Board Pro G3 · Room Kit Pro G2 (RoomOS) · Webex Device subscription (Collaboration Flex Plan)
2 — Unify the Fleet	Cloud fleet management + usage analytics + network-path assurance, one view	Collaboration Control Hub in Cisco Cloud Control (incl. with device subscription) · ThousandEyes Endpoint Agent license per device (Essentials/Advantage)
3 — Elevate with Intelligence	AI meeting assistance across your platform, integrated with your tools	Webex Suite subscription incl. Webex AI Assistant (where Webex is your platform) · on-device AI agents
4 — Consolidate Communications	Cloud calling consolidated with meetings on one console, with assurance	Webex Calling (Professional / Standard / Workspace) or Webex Suite · Webex Contact Center where needed

Appendix B – Solution Reference

Phase 1 complete when: priority rooms equipped and joining your existing platform / every equipped room delivers an equal in-room and remote experience / one-touch join in use.

Phase 2 complete when: full fleet managed from one view / firmware and configuration handled centrally / usage data informing space decisions / meeting-quality issues diagnosable across room and network path.

Phase 3 complete when: AI meeting assistance in active use across meetings / outputs reaching the tools your people work in.

Appendix C – Sources

Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2026 · Gallup, Hybrid Work Needs a Workplace Value Proposition · Owl Labs, State of Hybrid Work · Gartner, CIO Agenda 2026 · CIO.com, Top Priorities for CIOs in 2026 · Independent device assessments and verified user reviews (industry analyst and review sources) for in-room experience, room-persona coverage, and device longevity · Cisco product documentation (RoomOS, Collaboration Control Hub and Cisco Cloud Control, ThousandEyes assurance, Webex Suite and Webex Calling) for capability and availability status. Product availability, license tiers, and feature timing should be confirmed against current Cisco documentation before external publication.