

New paths for
corporate
communications

Communicating professionally using Web conferences

Netviewer White Paper

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netviewer

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Executive summary

Corporate communication faces growing challenges. Sticking out from the crowd, building up a good image and maintaining it for the long term – considering today's flood of information, this is no easy task. Despite this volume of news and information, how can you still awaken interest? With a solid connection to your target group – whether partners, employees, investors or the press. In this area, you are already a pro. But are you taking advantage of all the possibilities that are available today?

Time- and cost-efficient methods are indispensable – in public relations, but also in internal communication. At the same time, the quality has to be right. Fortunately, there is a way to combine the two: Web conferences.

With conferences and meetings held via the Internet, business partners, PR and media representatives as well as colleagues around the world exchange information in an effective and easy-to-understand manner.

In this whitepaper, you will read how you can use Web conferences to manage agencies more efficiently, improve your PR efforts and break new ground in this critical area. You will learn how online meetings are used successfully to improve contact with investors and communication with employees.

1. Challenges of corporate communication

Using suitable tools to represent your company and its services to all important target groups – this is the defined goal of corporate communication. PR officials have to manage agencies efficiently, coordinate international public relations, maintain relations with investors and master conversations with analysts. An equally important task is to provide employees with information about decisions and news and to organize internal gatherings. These varied tasks require communication tools that are correspondingly versatile.

1.1. Faster communication

In all of these areas, one thing is becoming increasingly important: speed. Information gets to the public ever more quickly, and its half-life decreases. For example, immediate response is critical in a crisis situation – as otherwise long-term image damage may result. Conversely, reacting promptly to current trends can be beneficial to the company's image. Competitive pressure and external expectations define the work: Press releases have to be approved quickly and conferences called immediately. Maintaining investor relations is very similar. Corporate news that is subject to ad hoc disclosure requirements must be made available to the public immediately.

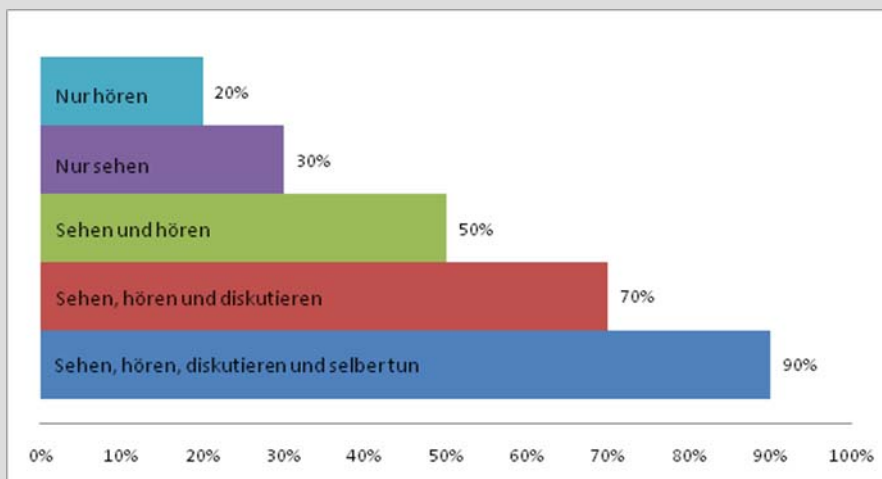
1.2. Working efficiently in distributed teams

More and more tasks, more and more e-mails: This costs you time. Overflowing inboxes are on the everyday agenda, and messages have to be sorted and filtered. For example, if the communications department is preparing for a trade show appearance, the employees have to coordinate numerous details with contacts throughout the entire company and external service providers – meaning many rounds of coordination. If the contacts are spread across different locations, it can be even more difficult to wrap up projects quickly. Moreover, briefings often raise questions that require a great deal of effort to clarify later. Classic breeding grounds for misunderstandings.

The origin of communication

The Latin term "communicare" means "share, allow to take part, make common". All that via e-mail and telephone? Preferably not.

After all, the critical factor is this: Information has to be understood and retained. The amount that a person can remember depends primarily on how the information is presented to him or her:



Studies in the field of scientific psychology have shown that people remember just 20% of the information conveyed to them strictly via spoken language. Similarly, they remember only 30% of what they see. Therefore, Web conferences are a better tool than phone or e-mail: Rather than just seeing and hearing the person they are talking to, they discuss drafts, proposals and ideas. They can edit, mark up and comment on documents directly.

Efficiency meets effectiveness.

Online meetings are a suitable tool for mastering these challenges effectively. They make distances vanish: Instead of a long flight or car ride, meetings are only a mouse click away. Collaboration also becomes faster: Employees discuss documents and edit them directly online in the same file. That saves time.


Information that is presented and conveyed clearly prevents misunderstandings from the start – this benefits relations with employees, agencies and investors.

2. The many possibilities for using Web conferences

The possibilities for using Web conferences are many and varied, enabling new, more efficient forms of collaboration.

2.1. Managing agencies

A critical requirement for successful communication is close collaboration between the company and its advertising, PR and event agencies. This may sound familiar: The briefing went great. However, when the deadline comes, the results do not meet expectations. Regular feedback is necessary, but phone calls and e-mails alone do not provide sufficient clarity and can easily lead to misunderstandings.


A red speech bubble callout containing the text "Clear briefings, fewer misunderstandings".

Clear briefings,
fewer
misunderstandings

Webconferences make presentations interactive: You go through texts for press releases and brochures together or discuss ideas and drafts – even if the agency is halfway across the world. This makes approval processes much more streamlined. The service provider knows exactly what must be done, provides results faster – and can present them via the Web in a clearly understood manner. You enjoy the assurance of maintaining complete control and getting the full picture – in the truest sense of the word – of the current status at any time.

2.2. Online press conferences

The responses were unanimous: Despite a high degree of media interest, Festo AG received nothing but refusals when it sent out invitations to a press conference at the Hannover Messe trade show in 2009. No wonder – editorial departments are making heavy use of the red pen, and the need to cut costs rules the day. Travel budgets? Not a chance. For many journalists, the cost of visiting the trade show for a press event would not be justified. The world's leading provider of automation technology responded promptly, moving the conferences to the Internet on short notice. The results: Over 20 editors from important trade publications took part.

A red speech bubble callout containing the text "Lower barriers to entry, greater response".

Lower barriers to
entry, greater
response

Online press conferences have many advantages: Media representatives can follow along conveniently on their computer, whether from the editorial office or at home. This is of particular interest for freelance journalists, for whom every dollar and every minute saved by online meetings count. Companies can broadcast the conference live, enrich their press releases with product videos and other illustrative materials and make it available for download. Editors can use this material for their reports. The barriers for entry into the media are lower, and the response is greater. Moreover, the company saves time and money, as facilities and catering do not have to be organized.


Checklist for online press conferences:

- Illustrate your presentations with video clips and multimedia content
- Be available during the conference for questions and comments
- Provide materials used, such as presentation slides, for download
- Be available to media representatives even after the press conference, for example via chat
- Make a recording of the event at the click of a mouse – as an additional source for research

2.3. Works meetings

How can you bring hundreds of people together from around the world to provide them with information about new objectives and company requirements? While also ensuring that everyone can take an active part in what happens?

Using Web conferences – as in the BMW T-Forum. Held at the beginning of each year, this meeting involves executives and some 700 managers from Europe, America, Asia and Africa. Charts, photos or slide shows can be presented easily without the hassle of e-mailing them first. The individual locations also participate in the program in order to deliver opening remarks or introduce a new vehicle model, for example. The employees also interact with each other – instead of anonymous lectures, there is a real feeling of togetherness, just as if all participants were in the same location.



At the same time,
all around the
world

2.4. Annual shareholders' meetings

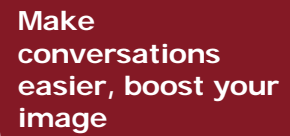
In Germany and other countries, all shareholders in a company are entitled to participate in the annual shareholders' meeting. For the communication department, this means explaining the corporate strategy to the stockholders and obtaining their confidence in the direction taken by the board. However, many shareholders do not have the time or resources it takes to attend the meeting in person. Netviewer allows them to participate easily and inexpensively, pose questions and follow the event live. Thus the company involves its investors in the proceedings, creates trust and reinforces the sense of community.



Better investor
relations

2.5. Public relations

Online meetings and Web conferences with Netviewer enhance classic PR methods. There is no need for travel – this saves time and allows media representatives to have direct contact with busy corporate executives or experts. Unlike the telephone, the Internet also allows onscreen content to be transmitted. This is an ideal way for spokespersons to enhance information with graphics and videos. An added bonus: The presented materials can be offered to the editors directly for download.



**Make
conversations
easier, boost your
image**

Web conferences benefit communications departments in practically all areas: Internet meetings combine the speed of the Internet with the advantages of person-to-person communication. Agents and clients can sketch out ideas, present them and edit documents together. This creates personal contact between the business partners. Incidentally, companies that use Web conferencing will be making a positive contribution to the environment by avoiding the need for many business trips – reducing their CO2 emissions.

At a glance:

How Web conferences enrich corporate communication

External	Agency management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier-to-understand briefings • Discuss drafts jointly and edit them directly
	Press conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowers the barrier to participation for journalists • Both sides save time and money
	Annual shareholders' meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase investor involvement • Promote trust
	Public relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up-to-date image • Authentic contact
	Analyst conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive opportunity to present your company and its products
Internal	Works meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier organization and execution • Provide information all to all employees, wherever they are
	Communication with employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More personal than e-mail or telephone • Direct address means that employees feel that they are taken seriously

3. Easier collaboration via the Internet

A Web conferencing solution brings teams that work in distributed locations around a virtual table and makes distances disappear. Collaboration is in the foreground: Employees can see, talk and create along with others and persuade them – without any communication detours or loss of time.

The Netviewer web conferencing software is **easy to use**. A moderator starts Netviewer on his or her computer, and the meeting begins with one click. Participants join the meeting by following a link sent by e-mail. This allows people around the world to work together without any downloads, installation or configuration. All participants can use the pointer to draw attention to something important, and solutions are discussed using a virtual whiteboard. Brief surveys allow you to find out quickly what colleagues are thinking. The functions are self-explanatory and easy to use.

A red speech bubble callout containing the text: "The meeting is only a click away – without the need for a download".

The meeting is only a click away – without the need for a download

Erroneous or incomplete meeting minutes are a thing of the past. The **conferences can be recorded** and retrieved later whenever they are needed.

Netviewer works **across firewalls** and still meets the most stringent security requirements. Thus over 800 financial institutions and more than 15,000 companies trust the European market leader's solution. A multi-tiered security concept ensures that data are protected from unauthorized access. An added bonus: Comprehensive and versatile interfaces allow the Web conference software to be **integrated easily into existing IT landscapes**.

A red speech bubble callout containing the text: "Maximum security provided by a security system with multiple certifications".

Maximum security provided by a security system with multiple certifications

Protecting the climate with online meetings:

In times of heated climate discussions, increasing emphasis is placed on corporate responsibility. Online conferences are not only good for the environment and your wallet – they are also good for your image.

Netviewer meetings are completely climate-neutral: By reforesting areas where trees have been cut down, we can balance out the energy consumed by servers and other computers. For more information, visit: www.climateneutral-meetings.com



Climate Neutral Meetings

4. Conclusion

Communications departments face the challenge of conveying corporate messages internally and externally via an increasing number of channels. In this effort, efficient collaboration with PR, advertising and event agencies is critical. Web conferences can be used to make briefings more clearly understood, shorten approval processes and implement projects more quickly. Communication with investors, employees, media representatives and agencies is more direct and efficient than ever. The consequences are noticeable: Companies save on marketing and PR campaign budgets, lower travel costs and improve the quality of collaboration with its service providers. Communication between colleagues in different departments likewise becomes easier: Coordination is clearer and decisions are made more quickly. This makes projects go more smoothly, allowing employees to have more time for their day-to-day work.


Netviewer – The Web conference specialists


Founded in 2001, Netviewer AG is the leading European manufacturer and provider of Web conferencing solutions. Its solutions give employees the ability to overcome spatial distances and collaborate as if they were sitting in the same room. Web conferences not only make meetings, training events, and technical support easier, They also make customer acquisition easier and support sales in other ways. Visual real-time communication over the Internet significantly reduces the time and expense of travel while increasing productivity. By traveling less, Netviewer users even make a positive contribution to preventing climate change and protecting the environment.

More than 15,000 corporations and medium-sized companies in 55 countries already take advantage of the benefits provided by Netviewer Web conferences, including Bayer, BMW, Deutsche Post, Ernst & Young, SAP, Siemens, and Swisscom. The company currently employs more than 200 people and continues to grow.

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