

Improve Content Management to Make Meetings More Productive

An IDG survey shows we need more effective tools to facilitate brainstorming during meetings as well as capturing, sharing, storing, and accessing content afterwards.



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We've all been in meetings where people are brainstorming ideas, with someone furiously scribbling on a whiteboard or paper flip chart, while remote colleagues struggle to follow along, never mind participate. Maybe someone takes notes and snaps photos of the flip charts. Perhaps they share that content or save it centrally, perhaps not.

IDG Research Services recently conducted a survey of line-of-business (LOB) managers, directors, and senior executives that puts real numbers to the problem. The survey finds widespread agreement among respondents on the importance of being able to capture, share, and build on the ideas created during group discussion, from local and remote participants. But fewer than half of respondents are confident their own organizations effectively enable that sort of dynamic, essentially admitting that their meetings are not as efficient and productive as they could and should be.

The IDG survey points to the need for a fresh approach to capturing and sharing ideas, and how to treat content generated at meetings as an essential corporate asset.

Content Creation and Capture Disconnect

The most common ways to create content, ideas, and information during meetings is by using web conferencing tools, employed by 82% of respondents, followed by projectors displaying content on a screen and traditional whiteboards (both at 72%). Some respondents use electronic whiteboards (39%) and flip charts (31%). Such results indicate meetings often include geographically distributed participants and a proclivity for producing content by handwriting in one form or another.

The affinity for handwriting also extends to how people take notes at meetings, with 85% expressing a preference for handwritten notes (see Figure 1).

These survey results point to a fundamental problem: The tools that employees use most to create content aren't ideal for capturing and sharing that content. For example, while about four out of five respondents use web conferencing tools, far fewer use the audio/video recording and whiteboard features typically built into those tools to capture any content or discussion. That shows people either aren't aware of those features, or the tools are too hard to use. And even if those tools are used, nearly all participants are still taking notes on their own.

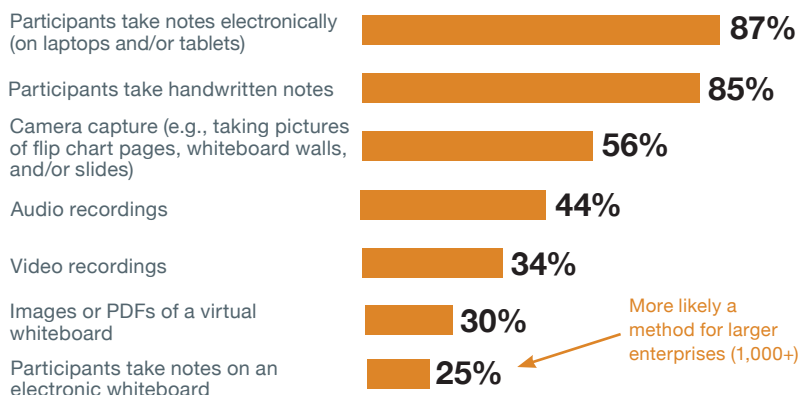
Similarly, we know intuitively that writing on a flip chart or whiteboard is a good, natural way to brainstorm and share ideas in a meeting, but it's difficult to archive and share the content afterwards.

Survey respondents confirm they are falling short in terms of effectively sharing meeting content—43% agree that content is often not shared or distributed at all. That means notes, takeaways, or next steps often remain under the control of the individuals who captured them, most likely on their PC or personal device.

Biggest Pain Points

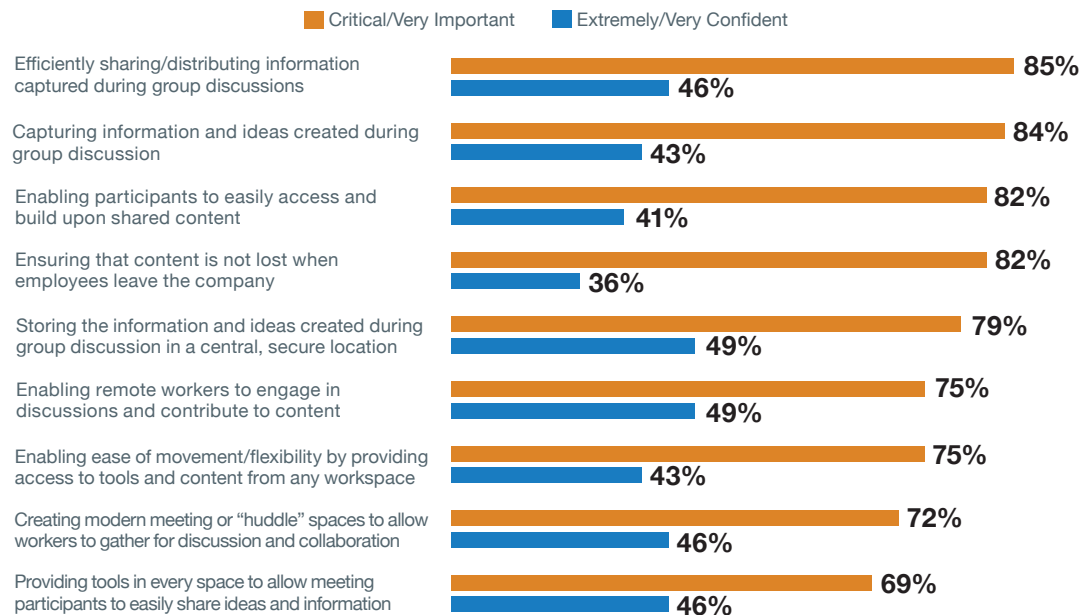
The survey uncovers the biggest sticking points by examining the difference between the importance of various features that enable collaboration, and the ability of current tools to deliver on those features.

How Content from Meetings is Captured



Source: IDG Research

Features Enabling Effective Collaboration - Importance vs. Confidence in the Ability to Delivery



Source: IDG Research

For example, 82% of respondents agree it is "very important" or "critical" that content is not lost when an employee leaves the company. But only 36% are "very" or "extremely" confident that their company is performing adequately in that area—a gap of 46 points, the largest for any of the attributes.

As Figure 2 above shows, similarly large gaps exist in important areas, including:

- Capturing content created during group discussions (41-point gap)
- Enabling participants to easily access and build on shared content (41-point gap)
- Efficiently sharing and distributing information gathered during group discussions (39-point gap)

A Better Approach

Such findings are troubling, as they demonstrate that corporate assets generated during meetings aren't being reliably captured and effectively distributed. At best, that means companies are wasting time trying to figure out where they left off at the last meeting. At worst, it means whenever an employee leaves the company, any corporate assets he or she happens to "own" from various meetings goes out the door.

Getting the most out of meetings means effectively capturing, sharing, and storing the content created at those meetings. It also means effectively accessing and leveraging that content for work continuity, which in turn improves efficiency and productivity. While collaboration technology such as web conferencing

has evolved to enable multiple far-flung participants to "attend" meetings, that technology doesn't make it easy for participants to use the tool with which they are most comfortable—handwriting—and to share content afterwards.

In short, meetings are not as productive as they could and should be.

QuirkLogic has developed a new approach to tackle the problem, with Quilla, a portable, collaborative eWriter that facilitates the creation, sharing, and storage of handwritten content. Team members use the device collaboratively, just as they would paper and pen, to create original content, or they can pull in images and prepared content from elsewhere and mark it up.

All content is securely stored centrally, in the cloud, so users have access from wherever they are, and can immediately pick up where they left off. Content is easily shareable, and multiple colleagues can collaborate in real time to see each other's changes, making remote participants full participants in brainstorming sessions and other meetings.

Perhaps most important, the cloud-based platform protects content as the asset that it is; no more lost notes, documents, to-do's, plans, or designs stuck on someone's laptop, or worse—content walking out the door.

To learn more about QuirkLogic's Quilla, visit www.quirklogic.com/solutions.