

EBOOK

MEETING MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE BUYER'S GUIDE



THE MEETING CHALLENGE

We say it so often, it should be one of our taglines: without a meeting management solution, a one-hour meeting is never just a one-hour meeting. Meetings are a constant source of wasted resources and frustrated office workers. In fact, according to recent research, meetings are considered the No. 1 time-waster at the office.

The average US office employee spends over four hours preparing for them. That is more than an entire working day devoted to meetings. For managers, it is even worse. They report an average of 12 to 14 hours a week in meetings.

Add it all up to 62 hours a month that the average office worker spends sitting in meetings, 37% of which are ranked as having no value and being unproductive. Just as frustrating as an unnecessary or low value meeting is the inefficient tasks that are required to meet in the first place.

Workers report that one of the biggest meeting challenges is finding a place to meet. 70% of employees report spending 15 minutes every day looking for a place to collaborate with colleagues. Which means that companies are facing millions of hours wasted, productivity loss, and resources squandered.

This has major repercussions for the average company. Inefficient and unnecessary meetings cost US businesses approximately \$37 billion a year. Yes, BILLION.

Despite meetings' frustrating side effects, meeting frequency continues to increase year after year. It is abundantly clear that the business meetings are not going anywhere. But that does not mean office workers must accept the current situation. So, how does one solve the problem with meeting inefficiencies and squandered resources?

THE MEETING SOLUTION

Meeting management software takes the frustration out of the meeting booking and handling process, takes care of guests, and delivers analytics to improve overall meeting room utilization.

If you are thinking to yourself - this type of solution sounds like a big deal - it is. It will change the way your company handles meetings forever, and save an incredible amount of time and resources in short order.

While the process of finding and purchasing the right solution is a major decision with repercussions that resonate throughout the entire company, it does not have to be an overwhelming process.

This means that your organization stays in control, gets complete visibility and consistency across processes, increases operational efficiency, while employees enhance productivity and organizations.

Often, just getting started is the hardest part. This buyer's guide will help you make the important decisions needed in the process of investing in a meeting management solution in eight steps:

Step 1: [Understand what a Meeting Management Solution can do](#)

Step 2: [Identify your meeting problems](#)

Step 3: [Understand how a Meeting Management System will help](#)

Step 4: [Know your users](#)

Step 5: [Do your research](#)

Step 6: [Determine a realistic cost of ownership](#)

Step 7: [Consider the future](#)

Step 8: [Provide the proper training](#)

STEP 1

UNDERSTAND WHAT A MEETING MANAGEMENT SOLUTION CAN DO

A robust platform will integrate seamlessly and be available within the tools you already use most for everyday planning, such as Outlook, Office 365, or Google Calendar. Users can search for and book rooms based on availability, number of meeting attendees, purpose of the meeting, and in-room resources.

Meeting management will enable and facilitate booking meeting rooms across multiple locations and time zones. Users will instantly know the availability of the room before they even try to book it.

Meeting management technology also makes it easy to customize meetings, such as booking catering or requesting specific technology.

The front desk staff is automatically alerted of all activity and visitor management, while other processes, such as security check-in and printing name tags, are handled by the system.



STEP 2

IDENTIFY YOUR MEETING PROBLEMS

Piling pain points together can quickly become overwhelming. Nevertheless, it is critical to make an actual list of each problem employees face when planning any type of meeting - from major board meetings to solo phone booth reservations. Dig into each inconsistency, tedious task, and redundancy and calculate how much time is wasted each day on these activities. This will reveal the financial and emotional toll on the company.

This list serves the dual purpose for evaluators who may need to convince company decision makers of the importance of a meeting management solution, as well as the first step in the roadmap towards solving them.

Most common meeting management problems include:

Finding the right room

Employees lack an easy-to-access overview of every room, room occupancy, technology resources inside those rooms, and availability.

Catering complications

Ordering food and coffee for longer meetings requires days of advanced planning, phone calls, and coordination. If the meeting is moved or cancelled, all catering plans must be adapted by the meeting coordinator.

Visitor management

When visitors arrive, security must be alerted,

name tags printed, direction givens and meeting hosts tracked down. There are many opportunities for names to be left off guests lists, guests to get lost searching for the right meeting room or facilities, and inconveniences for all to abound.

Room sharks

Room sharking is an unintentional yet common problem, especially for businesses with open office concepts and a variety of private meeting rooms. An employee, looking for an empty room to settle in, finds a vacant conference room and occupies it. Soon, a group that had already booked the room walk in to find the 'room shark' that occupied their space. That person must stop what they are doing, gather their things and exit, so that the group can initiate their meeting.

Ghost meetings

Specific meeting rooms and technology resources are reserved in advance, but no one shows up and the facilities end up unused.

Room under-utilization

Without a full overview, employees overlook certain rooms, and spaces remain empty.

Lack of technology resources

Meeting coordinators struggle to find a meeting space that provides the technology resources they need, such as video conference tools or projectors.

STEP 3

UNDERSTAND HOW A MEETING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WILL HELP

Knowing what you want to do will help you know what you want. Visualize what you would like the meeting process to look like. How would a tool streamline room booking or check in? Who would be using the solution? What would it look like? From where would it be accessed?

Here is how a meeting management solution will address the problems listed above:

Finding the right room

Users search for and book rooms based on availability, number of meeting attendees, purpose of the meeting, and in-room resources.

Catering complications

Book catering requests directly from the software. Facilities, the canteen, and the front desk resources are connected to the order. The order automatically follows when the meeting time and location are changed, without any extra direction from the meeting host.

Visitor management

A visitor management tool will automatically print name tags for visitors or send email/SMS confirmation to guests with customized information. Registration, document signing, and printing are all handled automatically. Security and front desk resources provide a full overview of all guests in the building at any given time, including unexpected guests.

Room sharks

Employees looking for an empty meeting room can pull up all available rooms from their desktop platform or mobile device. View a room's occupancy or upcoming reservations directly from the display screen outside of each conference room so meetings are never interrupted.

Ghost meetings

If guests have not checked in to a reserved meeting room within a specific time frame, the room is automatically released for others to use.

Room under-utilization

A robust meeting management solution will also provide analytics, so users can gain insight and metrics into how office space and meeting rooms are actually used. Understanding key metrics such as types of meetings held, number of attendees, and rooms most commonly used help employees.

Lack of technology resources

Meeting coordinators can search for rooms based on the technology resources found in each room. Solution analytics display the types of technology most commonly requested, so facilities management can improve offerings and ensure that the right tools are always available to the employees who need them.

AskCody offers seamless solutions to all the problems listed above. Comprehensive meeting solutions that fully integrate with Outlook, Exchange, Office 365, and Google Calendar. Here is what you get:

Meeting Management

Search for and book rooms based on availability, number of meeting attendees, purpose of the meeting, and in-room resources. Users have access to a full suite of tools for easy room booking, catering ordering, resource reservations, and guest communications and management. Search for meeting rooms across multiple locations and time zones. Instantly know the availability of the room before you try booking it. Do everything in just a few clicks from within the platforms users already know and use.

Meeting Room Displays

Display the day's events and meeting room status both outside the meeting room and in the reception. Improve meeting room efficiency instantly by providing employees and visitors with a complete overview of daily meeting activities. Users can make a reservation, check availability, confirm reservations claim the room, improve meeting room utilization, change the face of the office space and create a premium environment with screens throughout the office. Meeting Room Displays eliminate the hassle of meeting no-shows and prevent meeting room crashers.

Catering Solutions

Book catering, facilities, or invite external guests to your meeting and instantly let the canteen, facilities management or reception know exactly what, when, and where you need it. If a meeting

is moved or cancelled, AskCody automatically updates the catering order to follow the meeting, so no additional action is required.

Visitor Management

AskCody's intuitive visitor registration system sends automatic email and SMS notifications to the host upon visitor check in to ensure hosts are always aware of visitor location, thus, visitors are never left waiting. Visitor Management delivers a full overview of all guests in the building at any given time, including unexpected guests, to improve security. The platform also enhances the overall visitor experience by printing name tags, providing Wi-fi access for visitors and sending email/SMS confirmation to guests with customized information. Registration, document signing, and printing are handled automatically.

Insights & Analytics

AskCody Insights deliver precise metrics and quantifiable data on what is happening in your meeting rooms. Users can dig deep into conference room activity with daily reporting of key metrics such as meetings, attendees and occupancy to get the full story of how each individual office space performs. Insights are displayed in user-friendly dashboards that can be accessed anywhere, from any device, without the need for any on-premise installation. This makes it easy to control and regulate meeting room booking behavior, enhance productivity, optimize resources, and improve room utilization.

STEP 4

KNOW YOUR USERS

Like any enterprise software, it is important to first know who will be using your meeting management solution. This will give you a realistic understanding of the technical expertise of the audience, how they use tools now, and how they best consume information.

Talking to and understanding end-users will more clearly define exactly the type of solution that will work best for your company and have the highest chance of permeating company culture. Understanding how end-users would best interact with a new software indicates whether it would realistically fit into current workflows

or if it would be considered just one more complicated system to learn and a hassle to use.

The right meeting management solution should be accessible from and communicate with the platforms employees are already using, such as Outlook, Office 365, or Google Calendar. High user adoption is one of the most important elements of any successful software integration. Without high user adoption, the ultimate end goals of a more streamlined and productive meeting strategy will never be realized.



STEP 5

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Read the reviews, talk to existing clients, and arm yourself with as much knowledge as possible to have realistic expectations for what a meeting management suite can do. The ability to talk the talk will give you the upper hand when interacting with sales teams. Not to mention, it will ultimately help you avoid information overload and give you the confidence you need to be an informed consumer.

Take multiple solutions for a test drive. Do not settle on the first comprehensive solution you find. Be your own advocate in the buying process. You may not find the magic elixir that solves every single pain point in precisely the way you had imagined, but that does not mean you need to throw out your list of ideal solutions and go with something “good enough.”

It also does not mean you should build your own solution from scratch. We often see business decision makers wrestling with this choice when it comes to all or parts of a meeting management

solution. It is often incredibly difficult to accurately estimate the long-term consequences of building over buying, which later leaves those on the front lines struggling to pick up the slack and deal with the choice that was ultimately made. Companies who choose the road of customized software creation must also maintain and upgrade it definitely going forward. This is an incredible suck of internal resources.

With the right amount of research, demoing, and trials, you should be able to find a pre-built solution that requires minimal technical upkeep from your end, and comes with a team of specialists who can answer questions, help you plan for the future, and serve as industry experts.

STEP 6

DETERMINE A REALISTIC COST OF OWNERSHIP

One of the most often-cited frustrations during and especially after the purchasing process of any type of enterprise software is the surprise total cost of ownership. Often, the initial estimate is not even a speck in the rearview mirror of the final bill.

Many solutions providers bury hidden fees, implementation fees, licensing, maintenance, and training from the initial cost of the software itself. By the time you are through adding everything you need over time, the initial single price point now looks like a hockey stick stretching upward.

Be wary of those who suggest a build over by solution. While a completely customized solution might initially sound attractive, this route is guaranteed to significantly slow time to implementation and raise the price.

Partner with a provider that is upfront and committed to keeping your total cost of ownership as low as possible and who has experience with end-to-end solutions for companies of every size. This ensures your needs will be met now and in the future.



STEP 7 CONSIDER THE FUTURE

Always have an eye towards the future when discussing your meeting management solution needs. Just as the modern office is ever-evolving, so will be your meeting room needs and expectations.

Unexpected needs may always arise down the road, but start by setting yourself up for success with a meeting management solution that scales easily, is user-friendly, and integrates seamlessly with other platforms, all of which are indicative of potentially limitless future growth.

Map out how easy it would be to add users in the future and what the terms should be. Understand the possibilities of expanding your office footprint in the future and what that means for the meeting management solution you have today.

Do not get stuck with an inflexible tool that could cost big bucks to adjust down the line.

STEP 8 PROVIDE THE PROPER TRAINING

Training is an important piece of any enterprise wide software implementation that must be considered that the time of purchase. Without the proper training, end-users will not have the knowledge they need to get the most out of the new tools at their fingertips. A tool that is sold as “user-friendly” does not necessarily mean every type of users will have the expertise needed to utilize its valuable features.

For all intents and purposes, an automobile is “user-friendly”, but you would never give a car to someone who has never driven before without first providing the training they need to properly drive. The same logic applies to enterprise software solutions.

Offering customized training is the best way to ensure high user adoption and proper usage of your meeting management system. The right partner will be with you every step of the way of your onboarding process, offer personalized training, and help set you up for success right out of the gate.

Training should also be a consideration throughout the lifetime of your meeting management solution. As new versions are released with new features and capabilities, refresher courses and quick tutorials are an important step in ensuring that users are able to properly utilize the technology.

THE BENEFITS OF THE RIGHT MEETING MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

The benefits of the right meeting management solution are plentiful. Overall productivity increases because employees spend less time in the weeds coordinating the details of meetings such as searching for and booking rooms, planning catering, and handling visitors.

Meetings themselves get a productivity boost because interruptions are eliminated and time is more properly utilized.

A seamless meeting management process boosts efficiency and collaboration between employees who can easily find a space that is conducive to their needs - whether that be a large conference room with all the bells and whistles or a small huddle room for a few coworkers to gather to brainstorm.

Consider the face of your company as visitors enter your offices. First impressions matter. A meeting management and visitor management system delivers an elegant experience to employees and visitors.

Finally, the long term cost savings make it a smart investment. Important resources are utilized where they really matter, and employees stop wasting time dealing with meeting minutia.

A fully integrated meeting management solution is the key to creating and fostering a truly modern office environment. Give your employees the tools they need to succeed.



AskCody

The Modern Workplace Platform that eliminates Office Friction, improves productivity, work pleasure, and enhance workplace utilization.

The AskCody Platform accommodates all organizational aspects of meetings, reducing the organizational load while minimizing the number of hours spent per employee on organizing and scheduling meetings.

Manage your meetings and find rooms with ease. Try AskCody's efficient meeting room booking features integrated with Microsoft Outlook.

Book A Demo →

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