

# [experts panel]



**Simon Egan**  
Vice President,  
Western Europe, TANDBERG

## Why has video conferencing technology come of age?

As businesses become more globalised, video conferencing is seen as an increasingly critical communication application offering great benefits in the workplace. Coupled with today's economic climate, video is an attractive option to businesses looking to reduce unnecessary costs and increase productivity, whilst hitting CSR objectives. Not just by 'being green' but also by promoting a good work-life balance and enabling home and mobile working.

Huge technological improvements such as HD and advanced codecs, plus the availability of IP bandwidth means historical barriers have now been removed.

## What is telepresence and how does it relate to video conferencing?

The availability of immersive telepresence technology has opened businesses' eyes to the potential of video. But telepresence isn't an isolated technology, it forms part of a total video conferencing solution where video is accessible to everyone, anywhere: from the boardroom to desktops, to home workers and workers on the road.

However, it is critical that video integrates with existing telephony, network and desktop tools to drive collaboration, productivity and ROI.

## What value are companies seeing from video communication? Our customers benefit from:

- increases in productivity
- reduced carbon emissions
- travel and cost savings
- accelerated decision-making

There are also softer benefits that are just as important:

- unifying the organisation
- scaling knowledge: connecting with remote experts
- promoting work-life balance

## A couple of examples:

TNT estimates that video conferencing will save the company over € 11m in 4 years due to reduced travel and contribute to a 20-30% reduction in CO2 emissions.

Scottish Universities Physics Alliance SUPA uses video to access specialist lecturers located on different campuses, helping to unify the universities.

## What does the future look like?

We're confident the mass adoption of video will continue and expect to see two trends. Firstly, the inevitable movement towards Unified Communications with video at its core, linking to presence, voice and other messaging solutions. Secondly, companies and public sector organisations using video to engage directly with customers from video call centres, remote diagnosis in healthcare to sharing knowledge in education.

**The result:** seamless integration of video, making it the 'natural' mode of communication in the new global economy.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

T: +44 (0) 01784 274600

E: [simon.egan@tandberg.com](mailto:simon.egan@tandberg.com) | W: [www.tandberguk.co.uk](http://www.tandberguk.co.uk)



**John Dumbleton**  
SVP and Managing Director,  
MASERGY

## Once you've selected the right telepresence equipment, how important is the underlying video network?

The video network is a critical part of any telepresence solution, since the key differentiator between telepresence and high-definition video is the end-user experience. Telepresence technology uses life-size images and CD-quality audio. For these to be able to combine in order to create a lifelike experience for users, they need an underlying global high speed network. Anything that interferes with the experience, such as dropped packets or out-of-sync audio, degrades that experience. Indeed, putting a video solution on a network that is not built to support telepresence completely mitigates the effort put into selecting the right telepresence equipment.

## Does this suggest that businesses should put their telepresence on a separate or "overlay" network, rather than on their corporate WAN?

Most businesses build a separate network just for their telepresence solution. This can streamline the implementation of the telepresence solution, since most corporate WANs cannot support the quality and the additional bandwidth requirements for telepresence. MASERGY's global IP MPLS network was purpose built to support real time applications such as telepresence, even on a converged corporate network. This means that we can guarantee and deliver 100% packet delivery between every customer location for voice and video services on either a converged or an overlay telepresence network.

## What about businesses that want to talk with other companies who also have a telepresence solution on a private network?

As the use of telepresence in the workplace becomes more commonplace, we are evolving our network services to allow for businesses to communicate with other companies via telepresence. The current problem companies are faced with is the inability to connect with companies using different IP carriers and the concern that network security will be compromised. To avoid this issue, we have developed a Video Extranet service that allows customers to make calls to the telepresence units of other companies, while securely protecting both companies' private video networks, even if the other telepresence unit is on another carrier's network.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

T: +44 (0) 207 173 6900

W: [www.masergy.com](http://www.masergy.com)

## WE ASKED LEADERS FROM FOUR LEADING ORGANISATIONS FOR THEIR THOUGHTS ON THE INDUSTRY



**John Geaney**  
Business Development Manager  
IP COMMUNICATIONS  
HP Network Solutions Group

## Why is Unified Communications important?

Companies have major investments in many different communications media. The technology has now advanced to the stage where these different channels can be integrated into a single framework. It's all about better business outcomes. Having fast access to accurate information and the related stakeholders means being able to make better business decisions faster, and that means competitive advantage.

## How important is video in Unified Communications?

High quality, easy to use, video communication is the next best thing to being face-to-face. Various studies have shown that meetings using video are much better (than those using telephone) in terms of persuasiveness and levels of audience retention. Video adoption in enterprises is increasing rapidly so it is important that it is not deployed as a completely separate technology island. It needs to fit in the overall UC strategy so that it can leverage (and be leveraged by) the other communications channels. This maximises the ROI for the complete communications infrastructure.

## How should companies go about implementing Unified Communications?

There are some key considerations, willingness to change, links to business processes, and breaking the complete journey into manageable stages. A key goal of UC is to reduce latency in business processes. It is important therefore, to identify the key processes where reduction in latency will yield improved business results. From the technology perspective, it is important to develop an architectural framework upon which all of the individual projects are built. Such an architecture will typically cover the underlying IP core network infrastructure, the access devices, the key business applications, and common areas such as security and overall systems management. Using this approach, each stage of deployment is more easily managed, is less risky but at the same time fits well with the other stages on the journey to full UC implementation.

## What are some of the non-technical criteria for a successful UC implementation?

One success factor in reaping the benefits of UC requires that organisations are willing to change how they work. Streamlining a business process means nothing if the new process is not adopted. Another factor is ease of use. There can be complexity involved in integrating the various communications channels but the end users experience should always be straightforward and easy to adopt.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

T: +41 (0) 79 310 1826

E: [john.geaney@hp.com](mailto:john.geaney@hp.com) | W: [www.hp.com/go/networks](http://www.hp.com/go/networks)



**Lisa Honan**  
CEO, EYENETWORK

## How will the public access video conference market develop in the next 3 years?

Video conferencing will become more usable and widespread. Those who invest in their own video conference systems can access a public network of facilities and are able to link with others who have not bought equipment. They get more use out of their facilities, and everybody travels less.

These two sides to video conferencing – public and private – will work hand in hand. Companies will be looking for new ways to keep ahead of the game without stretching their work-life balance to breaking point.

In addition the low cost, no risk solution that is offered by public facilities means that many SMEs will choose to video conference on demand before buying in-house.

At board levels, Corporate Social Responsibility will play a key role in the development of travel and environmental budgets; video conferencing is in the enviable position of ticking both boxes and delivering outstanding results.

## What impact will telepresence have upon traditional video conferencing?

Telepresence has brought a tide of welcome publicity for the video conference industry. TANDBERG, Cisco, Polycom and HP are leading the field with their life-size, high bandwidth, multi functional systems connecting on at least 5Mb bandwidth. Traditional video conference systems are also improving, with sophisticated cameras and better compression rates, the quality at 384kbs or 512kbs is excellent.

We envisage two tiers of video conferencing. Consider traditional video conferencing as 'business class', it gets you from A to B and you can meet successfully with others and see and hear them in real time. Now customers can meet by 'first class' using telepresence suites. There is a market for both technologies and this will be dictated by budget.

## How do you envisage the future of video conferencing?

The industry continues its growth and video conferencing becomes as ubiquitous as email is today. As we all know, technology seems to have no end of clever people making it quicker, smaller, more reliable, and cheaper. We will see video conferencing being used for all manner of applications not just business meetings; film castings, speed dating, shared social experiences, who knows where it could end?

## Can video conferencing and telepresence really save the planet?

Yes. One of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions (CO2) is air travel. Anything that reduces the amount of business travel automatically reduces carbon emissions. We just need to do more of it!

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

T: 0845 355 0290

E: [info@eyenetwork.com](mailto:info@eyenetwork.com) | W: [www.eyenetwork.com](http://www.eyenetwork.com)