



## **Professional videoconferencing vs mainstream tools : what are the differences ?**

Videoconferencing is now positioned as an everyday tool for many of us. User friendly, easy to access and fun, it is a great way to communicate easily and for less. The development of the use of this technology can be explained by several factors: widespread use of broadband, development of video enabled equipment, development of easy-to-use solutions in the market, development of a “as a service” business model, free solutions... For example who does not know or use Skype today?

However, according to the kind of meeting you want to hold (personal or professional) you won't use the same technology. Organizations must be careful and take time to compare professional and mainstream solutions.

It's the aim of this document to underline key differences between the two kinds of solutions. Organizations willing to implement a videoconferencing service or infrastructure in a corporate context, pay attention to what follows!

### **-Availability:**

Signal loss, poor picture or sound quality, obstacles to multi-site communications... Does it ring a bell? Who has never experienced such situations? Of course, in a personal context, it is merely uncomfortable, but in a professional context, this becomes unthinkable. Imagine a board of directors with managers of subsidiaries widespread all over the world. Another example: a videoconference gathering prestigious scientists speaking before professionals... It goes without saying that fluidity and quality must be there. In this kind of situation there are real differences between professional and mainstream tools. Tools designed for people at large do not guarantee different levels of services ( known as SLAs) whereas professional tools guarantee availability rates exceeding 99,9%... This notion of quality is therefore a key competitive advantage.

### **-Tailor made solutions:**

The organization is also a strategic point. In a corporate environment, computing and communication tools must adapt to the organization and its expectations. It is obvious that such a prerequisite can be fulfilled by mainstream solutions that can be used as they are, this is a significant obstacle. A professional approach allows, for its part, to rely on scalable infrastructures, solutions and services adapting to changing needs. Thus, to benefit from tailored virtual rooms, an on-demand service with specific features, it is essential to build a truly professional approach.

### **-Security:**

This element is also crucial. Don't forget that the information exchanged ( video + documents) are often strategic in nature and should therefore be “ protected”. Only the corporate approach is able to guarantee the desired security level. You need a dedicated device to ensure the security of the infrastructure and the service offered to customers and partners.

### **-Maintenance in operational condition**

Beyond the availability of the service, its operational maintenance is a necessity. This is not a role for the user, who does not necessarily have the resources, particularly in SMBs. This element must be integrated and included in professional offers (transparent evolution of service, distance management, preparation of meetings ...).

Here are some specifics that show the number of differences between mainstream and professional solutions. It's just different applications.

There are limits not using professional solutions. Firms have to weigh the pros and cons and choose between a random and standardized process or an industrial and tailor made approach.