

## THREE TRENDS MAKING HUDDLE SPACES A REALITY

Historically, room AV equipment was not seen as cost-effective for smaller spaces. A presentation switcher or control panel designed for a corporate boardroom is typically overkill for a huddle space, from both a cost and functionality perspective. Similarly, purchasing a \$10,000 videoconferencing system for a huddle space would be highly impractical and outside the range of most budgets. This is why huddle spaces have traditionally contained very little to no technology: Until now, it has been difficult to justify the investment.

Fortunately, major changes have taken place to make technology much more affordable in small spaces. Three of the most relevant trends are:



### TREND 1

**Web Conferencing** – Thanks to conferencing applications like Skype and Lync, organizations can conduct web conferences without requiring the substantial investment in a video conferencing system. This is particularly relevant to the small meetings that take place in a huddle space that don't require the sophistication of an enterprise videoconferencing system.

### TREND 2

**Modularity** – Some novel technologies have been developed for Huddle Spaces like the ControlPad, which combines the UI and controller into a single cost-effective device, and the Presentation System (like Enzo from AMX), which eliminate the need for a PC in the room and reduces installation cost.

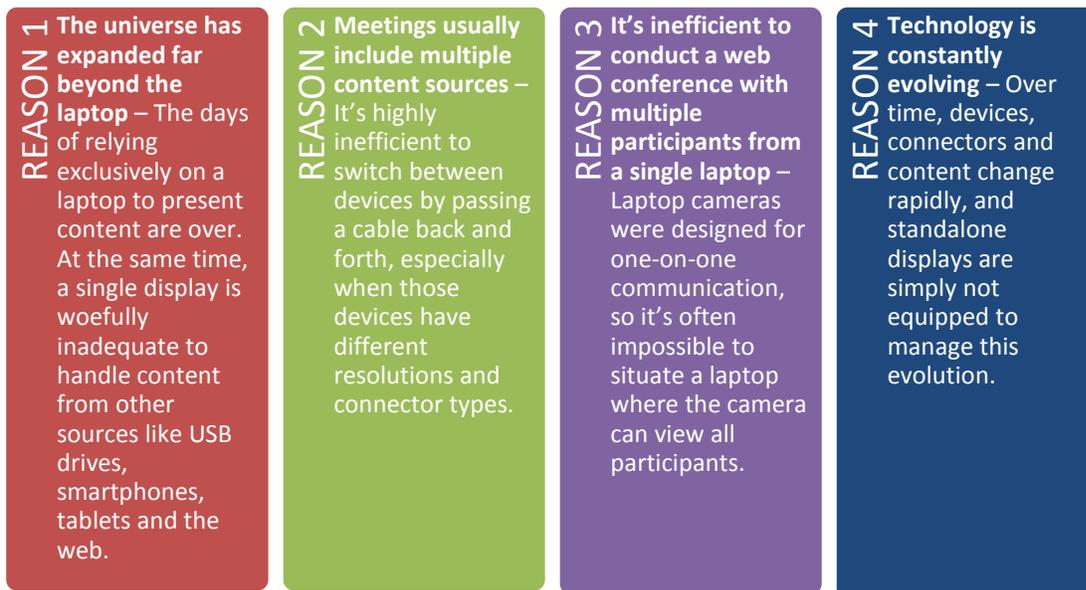
### TREND 3

**Configuration vs. Programming** – One huge hurdle for smaller rooms in the past has been the cost of programming the AV system. Fortunately, new software solutions such as Rapid Project Maker from AMX can eliminate programming and allow even non-technicians to configure a complete solution in less than an hour. This can result in savings of up to 50% of a room's AV expenditure.

## PERCEIVED FUNCTIONALITY ISSUES WITH HUDDLE SPACES

The second common complaint about purchasing AV presentation equipment for small rooms is that it isn't necessary. Some organizations feel that they need nothing more than a display that attendees can directly connect their laptops. In such a scenario, meeting attendees plug in and unplug different devices as the meeting progresses.

This "pass the cable" tactic seldom goes well, for four reasons:



- REASON 1** **The universe has expanded far beyond the laptop** – The days of relying exclusively on a laptop to present content are over. At the same time, a single display is woefully inadequate to handle content from other sources like USB drives, smartphones, tablets and the web.
- REASON 2** **Meetings usually include multiple content sources** – It's highly inefficient to switch between devices by passing a cable back and forth, especially when those devices have different resolutions and connector types.
- REASON 3** **It's inefficient to conduct a web conference with multiple participants from a single laptop** – Laptop cameras were designed for one-on-one communication, so it's often impossible to situate a laptop where the camera can view all participants.
- REASON 4** **Technology is constantly evolving** – Over time, devices, connectors and content change rapidly, and standalone displays are simply not equipped to manage this evolution.

To summarize, the evolution of mobile devices, the breakthrough of web conferencing and recent advances in collaborative technology make the need for a simple solutions for technically managing huddle spaces more necessary than ever before. We will now discuss the best ways to outfit huddle spaces with the right AV technology to make these spaces incredibly productive.

*From the AMX White Paper "Collaboration Technology in Small Spaces" ([www.amx.com](http://www.amx.com)).*