




DYNAMIC MARKETS

*The
Meeting Room
Marathon -
A Waste of
Corporate Time*

Independent Market Research
commissioned by

CASIO[®]

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Executive Summary:

- **Meeting room technology problems are a genuine and largely ignored burden on large British organisations - a single IT manager is called upon to solve 447.2 incidents a year per company.**
- **For the total population of 8265 large British organisations, this means the total cost to business is at least £103,064,550 pa.**
- **Yet a significant 57% of IT managers do not know how much money is spent annually on maintaining meeting room technologies.**
- **This research strongly suggests there is vast scope for improvement on the existing meeting room technologies being used: during the last 12 months, 69% of presentation teams have been let down by meeting room technology when presenting.**
- **Of the total number of meetings that overrun, more than 1 in 5 do so as a direct result of problems with meeting room equipment - this is equivalent to almost 3 working days of wasted time per year, per meeting participant.**
- **IT managers say 88% of users complain about the equipment they have in the meeting rooms.**
- **The most unreliable technology seems to be the projector, where 46% of presenters have encountered problems during the last 12 months.**
- **However, according to IT managers, on average 62% of all meeting room technology problems are caused by users being impatient.**

Research Findings:

Backwards and forwards:

This research explores the challenges faced by British IT managers in large companies who support teams of presenters in the company's meeting rooms. It also explores the issues faced by British employees from large companies who get involved in formal presentations as part of a presenting team, either in their own company's meeting rooms or in those of another company.

The findings demonstrate that meeting room technology problems for IT managers are a genuine and largely ignored burden, and that the cost to British business is high. It shows that, when someone hosting a meeting calls on an IT manager to help with meeting room technology problems, on average each incident eats up 23.1 minutes of an IT manager's time, which includes the time from the initial call to them getting back to their desk and carrying on with what they were doing [Table 1].

Table 1: Time consumed by meeting room technology problems

| | A day | A week | A month | A year |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| IT manager's time | 39.72 minutes | 3.31 hours | 13.24 hours | 22.95 days |
| Number of incidents for IT | 1.72 incidents | 8.6 incidents | 34.4 incidents | 447.2 incidents |

That may not initially sound too bad, but the research also shows that each IT manager gets a significant 8.6 such calls for help every week (and for some IT managers, this can be as many as 200 calls a week). This average number of incidents can be extrapolated to a total of 34.4 incidents a month and 447.2 incidents a year. It is also unlikely in such large companies that only a single IT manager is called upon to solve such problems, so this is very likely to be an underestimation of the magnitude of the situation.

10% of an IT manager's working year is eaten up by helping out with meeting room technology problems

So how much of an IT manager's time is eaten up by helping out with meeting room technology problems? The research shows that IT managers spend 3.31 hours a week on average helping presenters solve their problems; which equates to 22.95 working days a year. This is equivalent to just under 10% of an IT manager's working year.

On a lighter note, all this traipsing to and from meeting rooms must surely be keeping IT managers fit. Indeed, IT managers report that, on average, they walk a distance of 92.5 meters from their desk to the meeting rooms and back each time they have to go to help with a meeting room technology incident. With such a high number of incidents, it is not surprising to learn that the average IT manager walks a distance of 795.5 meters to service 8.6 incidents a week.

This equates to 3,182 meters a month (or 3.2 km); and 41,366 km a year – this is equivalent to walking 25.85 miles – almost the distance of the 26-mile long London Marathon; or from London Bridge to Gatwick Airport.





Running late:

But what are the implications on the presenters and the other meeting participants? The research shows that presenters who have experienced problems say, on average, each problem eats up 31.5 minutes of the meeting time from the initial attempts at resolving the problem by the meeting room participants and IT, to the final resolution of the issue.

Furthermore, presenters report that such problem meetings occur on average 3.1 times during a typical month for them. The research also shows that, of the total number of meetings that overrun, on average more than 1 in 5 of them (21%) overrun as a direct result of problems with meeting room equipment.

Using the average number of incidents and the average amount of time wasted, this equates to 21.2 hours per attendee per year; this is equivalent to almost 3 working days each (2.83 days). But it is not just the time of the presenter that is wasted, but that of the other meeting participants too. If we assume a typical meeting has 1 presenter and 4 other participants, with each one wasting almost 3 working days a year, this adds up to 14.13 days or corporate manager time wasted each year; and such meetings are very likely to include senior and thus highly salaried managers.

Financial implications:

IT managers report that the average annual cost to the business of maintaining meeting room technologies, excluding their time, is £8,329 pa. However, this ranges from as little as £200 pa to a significant £50,000 pa. Yet, the research seems to have touched on an area that IT managers are not generally well informed on. Indeed, a significant 57% say they do not know how much money is spent annually on maintaining meeting room technologies.

Irrespective of this ignorance, this figure excludes the cost of the IT manager's time and that of the meeting participants. Using the amount of time an IT manager says they spend dealing with incidents, the number of incidents a week they have to attend, and the average IT manager's salary of £41,500 pa, the research shows that when an IT manager's time is considered, the additional cost per company per IT manager is £4,141 pa (and

this assumes only 1 IT manager per company solves meeting room technology problems, so this will be an underestimate). [See full calculations in Appendix 1]



Adding the average annual cost that is actually recognised by IT of £8,329 pa per company to the IT manager's time costs, this adds up to £12,470 pa per company. For the total population of 8265 large British companies, this means the total cost to business is £103,064,550 pa.

When it comes to the cost of the time wasted by the meeting attendees, this is harder to pin down, as the total number of meetings per company is an unknown. However, if each meeting with problems wastes the equivalent of 14.13 working days a year of executive time, based on an average corporate manager and senior official's salary of £47,186 pa, this equates to another £2,892 pa wasted per presenter and his audience. Extrapolating just this snapshot would add another £23.9 million to the bill for large British businesses.

Impatient users:

Putting the financial implications to one side for a moment, there are other softer, less tangible consequences for companies who do not have easy-to-use and reliable, resilient meeting room technology in place.

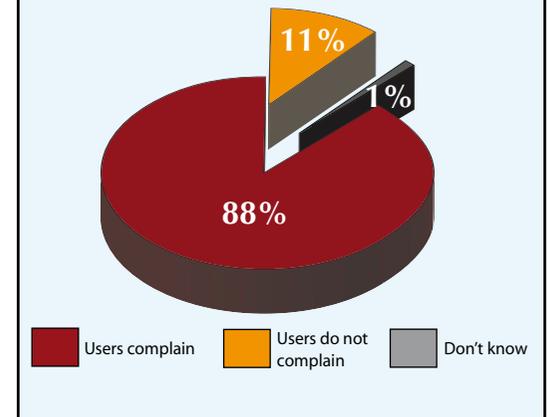
Good impressions are important, and it is much harder

to quantify the lost opportunity costs when meetings with customers and prospects are interrupted in this way; and the same is true of the impact on one's personal development when meeting technologies fail to enable an employee to make a good impression to their peers and bosses.

93% of IT managers say meeting room technology problems are caused by impatient users

The research does show that when things go wrong, common emotional reactions from meeting room hosts are embarrassment (47%) and frustration (40%). 57% are apologetic, but 40% blame the equipment and another 23% actually blame IT. Indeed, IT managers say 88% of users complain about the equipment they have in the meeting rooms [Chart 1].

Chart 1: User complaints about meeting room technology



Similarly, when things go wrong, 58% of presenters say meeting hosts try to fix the problem themselves before calling IT - only 12% seek help from IT immediately.



Unfortunately, 93% of IT managers say some meeting room technology problems are actually caused by impatient users making mistakes and creating problems and / or making them worse. They go on to say, on average 62% of all meeting room technology problems are caused by users being impatient. 63% think at least half of all such problems are caused by users, and almost 1 in 10 IT managers (8%) are of the opinion that all such problems are caused in this way.

A presenter's worst nightmare?

This research strongly suggests there is vast scope for improvement on the existing meeting room technologies being used in terms of making it easier for the average business user to set them up, connect them and project a professional and high-quality image on screen. It shows that, during the last 12 months, 69% of presentation teams have been let down by meeting room technology when presenting. Perhaps not surprisingly, more of those

who have more frequent presentation meetings (5+ a month) have encountered such problems (87%), compared to those who only have on average 1-4 such meetings a month (67%).

Meeting room technologies that cause problems include projectors, laptops and PCs, and among these, the most unreliable technology seems to be the projector, where 46% of presenters have encountered problems during the last 12 months. This is followed by laptop / desktop hardware (34%), and laptop / desktop software (26%). Peripherals (such as the mouse, keyboard etc) have let 21% of presenters down during this time, and another 15% have had issues with audio hardware when presenting.

From the IT manager's point of view, the most common problem they have to resolve is to do with the connectivity of the projector to a PC or laptop, where 87% of IT managers say it is among the Top 3 most common

problems they have to deal with. 82% concur that image quality from the projector is among the three most common problems and another 60% say locating presentation documents falls into this category. 41% say lamp replacements is a Top 3 problem for them – and this applies to more IT managers in very large companies with more than 1000 employees (50%).

Conclusions:

- Presenters and meeting participants seem to have regular and considerable trouble with their meeting room technologies, which wastes the time of everyone attending the meeting.
- IT managers are persistently called upon to troubleshoot such problems, which collectively eats up a considerable amount of their time.
- The regularity of such problems is equivalent to a steady drain on corporate funds.
- Companies could invest in better, more user-friendly equipment and / or invest some of their IT manager's time in educating users.





Research Methodology:

200 interviews were collected with British employees from large companies. All employees confirmed prior to interview that they worked for a company with at least 250 employees (i.e. large companies), their job function and that they get involved in formal presentations as part of a presenting team, either in their own company's meeting rooms or in those of another company. Information was also collected on their age, gender, their seniority in their company and how many presentations a month they get involved in. They were also given a definition of the term 'meeting room technologies' which they were told included projectors, laptops and PCs used when people present.

In addition, another 100 interviews were collected with British IT managers in large companies. All IT managers confirmed prior to interview that they were an IT professional, that they worked for a company with at least 250 employees (i.e. large companies), and that they provided maintenance and support for meeting room technologies in their company. Information was also collected on their age, gender and their level of seniority. They were given the same definition of the term 'meeting room technologies' as the employee sample.

The fieldwork was carried out using a global online panel and took place between 4th and 10th June 2010. Before and during the interviews, respondents were not aware that Casio had commissioned the research.

The results have been analysed and sig-tested at a 95% confidence level. For this summary, the main differences that are interesting and statistically significant have been described accordingly.

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Appendix 1: Calculations and assumptions:

Assumptions:

- Average salary for ITC professionals across companies of all sizes and sectors (including public and private) = £41,503¹.
- Average time spent by ITC professionals per incident dealing with meeting room technology problems = 23.1 minutes (from IT manager's survey Q1).
- Average number of incidents with meeting room technology problems that ITC professionals attend in a typical week = 8.6 (from IT manager's survey Q2).
- Average annual cost of IT maintaining meeting room technologies = £8,329 (from IT manager's survey Q8).
- Only 1 IT professional in each company deals with meeting room technology problems, which is likely to be an underestimate.
- Average salary for managers and senior officials across companies of all sizes and sectors (including public and private) = £47,186¹.
- Average meeting time lost due to dealing with meeting room technology problems = 31.5 minutes (from presenter's survey Q2).
- Average number of incidents with meeting room technology problems in a typical month = 3.1 (from presenter's survey Q3).
- Average working day is 7.5 hours.
- A 13 x 4-week month lunar year is used in the extrapolations from months to years.
- Working days per year = 230 (average working weeks per year = 46; average working days per week = 5; therefore, the average number of working days (46 x 5) = 230).
- Average number of meeting attendees (including presenter) = 4 to 6, therefore ~ 5.
- All companies have problems.
- The UK population of large companies is 8265, including private and public sector².

IT Managers calculations:

Average amount of time spent per company by a single ITC professional solving meeting room technology problems: Ave time per incident x ave number of incidents = $23.1 \times 8.6 = 198.66$ minutes or 3.31 hrs per week. This is equivalent to $3.31 \times 4 = 13.24$ hrs per month for a 4-week month; therefore $13.24 \times 13 = 172.12$ hrs per year; and $172.12 \div 7.5$ hour working day = **22.95 days per year.**

Average number of incidents per company solved by a single ITC professional: Ave number of incidents per week = 8.6 per IT manager, per company; therefore, $8.6 \div 5 = 1.72$ per day; $8.6 \times 4 = 34.4$ incidents per month; and $34.4 \times 13 = 447.2$ incidents per year.

Annual cost per company of a single ITC professional dealing with these problems: Daily wage of ITC professional x number of days spent on these issues per year = $(£41,503 \div 230) \times 22.95 = £4,141$ per year.

National cost of ITC professionals' time spent dealing with meeting room technology problems in large companies per year: Cost per company x number of companies = $£4,141 \times 8265 = £34.2$ million worth of IT managers' time per year.

Presenter calculations:

Average amount of time wasted per company per presenter on this activity: (This is also the time wasted for each of the other attendees at the meetings). Ave time per incident x ave number of incidents = $31.5 \times 3.1 = 97.65$ minutes or 1.63 hrs per month. This is equivalent to 1.63×13 months = 21.2 hrs per year = $21.2 \div 7.5$ hours a day = **2.82 days per year.**

Average amount of time (man-days) wasted per presenter and his team due to this activity: Number of attendees & presenters x time wasted per person = $5 \times 2.82 = 14.1$ days a year.

Annual cost per presenter / attendee: Daily wage of attendee x number of days spent dealing with problems per year = $(£47,186 \div 230) \times 2.82 = £578.54$ wasted per person.

Annual cost of wasted time of 5 meeting participants due to these problems: Attendee cost x number of attendees = $£578.54 \times 5 = £2,893$ wasted per company.

National cost of meeting Attendees' wasted time due to meeting room technology problems in large companies per year: Cost of this activity per company presenter x number of companies = $£2,893 \times 8265 = £23.9$ million per year.

Cost of IT maintaining meeting room technologies:

Recognised national cost of maintaining meeting room technologies per year: Annual recognised cost to IT per company x number of companies = $£8,329 \times 8265 = £68.8$ million per year.



References:

¹Source: The UK Office of National Statistics 2009 ASHE report (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings), published 1st quarter 2010.

²Source: The UK Office of National Statistics, BIS (Department for Business Innovation and Skills) Small and Medium Enterprise Statistics 2008; BIS Enterprise Directorate Analytical Unit.

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