Transforming the Microsoft boardroom with Windows 10 and Office 365

The Microsoft Board of Directors meets regularly to oversee management and assure that shareholder long-term interests are served. Microsoft products and technology are essential to the success of these meetings. Products such as Windows 10, Microsoft SharePoint Online, Microsoft Outlook, and Microsoft OneNote make it easy to collaborate, communicate, and organize agenda content for executives and board members. The Microsoft Surface Hub, with Windows 10 and Skype for Business, has turned executive meeting rooms into collaboration workspaces that provide a great meeting experience for in-room and remote attendees.

To facilitate these meetings at Microsoft, the Office of the Corporate Secretary manages the meeting schedules, logistics, and material preparation and distribution. Additionally, Microsoft IT has a dedicated Executive Support Services team that supports devices for board members and executives. To prepare for meetings, the Office of the Corporate Secretary and Executive Support Services partner with a dedicated member from the audio and visual (AV) team that supports and manages Surface Hubs and other devices in executive meeting rooms.

Microsoft products help improve administrative agility

The Office of the Corporate Secretary uses Microsoft Office and Microsoft Azure cloud-based services to collaborate on meeting logistics and to prepare and manage meeting content. They use Microsoft Office 365 products—including Outlook, SharePoint Online, and OneNote—to respond to board and management requests and to seamlessly collaborate in real time across multiple work streams. They can securely access their data from anywhere and from any device.

Communicating and scheduling using Microsoft Outlook

Microsoft Outlook is the primary tool the Office of the Corporate Secretary uses for communication—it’s heavily relied on to prepare, coordinate, and execute successful meetings. The ability to create distribution groups and tag email messages with reminders, or to set content permissions using the Information Rights Management feature, helps facilitate seamless communication to the individuals responsible for preparing meeting materials and meeting presentations. The Outlook Calendar feature optimizes scheduling efforts. Multiple calendars can be viewed at one time, meeting participants can be tagged as required, optional, or for awareness in the same meeting invitation, and tracking participant responses allows the team to efficiently plan meeting logistics.

Collaborating and managing content in Microsoft SharePoint Online

The Office of the Corporate Secretary uses Microsoft SharePoint Online as a secure team collaboration site to prepare and manage board meeting content before it’s posted to a third-party board portal. In the past, board meeting information was compiled into large paper binders mailed to board members before each meeting. The binders were cumbersome and posed a risk to confidential company information. Using an online board portal enhances the portability and security of meeting information.

The SharePoint site functions as a hub for board content, a working archive for company records, a knowledge center for policies, and year-over-year tracking of board meeting activities. User access is limited by role, document versions are tracked, and classification standards for confidential data are applied. This is structured within a robust and accessible design that offers long-term historical, legal, and business value.

The Office of the Corporate Secretary uses OneNote in SharePoint Online, in addition to other Microsoft productivity tools. OneNote extends how meeting planners collaborate on tasks, activities, logistics, and agenda-related content. The folder-based structure in OneNote makes it easy to keep track of various workflows in a single location.
Managing the meeting room experience

Many of the executive conference rooms at Microsoft include the Microsoft Surface Hub with integrated audio and video technologies, including built-in speakers, microphones, and video cameras. The Surface Hub is flexible, so it's easy for the AV support team to add external equipment, including extra video cameras or microphones.

The Surface Hub is more than a projector. Teams can interact with it during presentations and use it as a collaborative workspace. And they can use different methods to connect to presentation content, including:

- Project wirelessly via Miracast with the option of a security PIN, or through an optional HDMI input.
- Upload content directly to the Surface Hub from a flash device or cloud storage.

Whether the content is on the Surface Hub or being projected from another device, presenters can use its touch capabilities and inking to navigate through the presentation, create callouts, or edit on-screen information.

Surface Hub uses the Windows 10 servicing model, called Windows as a service (WaaS). The goal of WaaS is to continually provide new capabilities while maintaining a high level of quality. At Microsoft, the Surface Hub is a domain-joined device, and its feature and quality updates are managed using Windows Update services.

Before each meeting, the AV support team performs a system health check and functional performance tests. If updates were recently applied to the Surface Hub or the applications on the Surface Hub, they'll ensure that the updates succeeded and that apps, like Skype for Business, Whiteboard, and PowerPoint, are functioning. To ensure a good experience for people in the conference room and people attending via Skype, they test run a Skype meeting before each meeting—they check acoustics, camera, and content sharing. For more information about how we manage Surface Hub and Skype Room Systems, see Managing Skype Room Systems and Surface Hub devices.

Supporting executive devices

Executives' devices are managed in the same way as all employee devices. Domain-joined devices are updated using System Center Configuration Manager, and managed devices are updated through Microsoft Intune.

An in-place upgrade process is used to install Windows 10 updates. Using the WaaS model, quality and feature updates are more frequent, but the updates are typically smaller, take less time, and there are far fewer installation failures or data migration issues. The process works well for all Microsoft employees—which there's no need to create a different update process for executive devices.

Before a board meeting, a health check is done on the Surface Pro 4 device that's used to present meeting content through an HDMI connection to the Surface Hub. The health check ensures that all available updates were applied and that the system is ready for the meeting. Executive Support Services is available during the meeting to ensure a quick resolution for any technical issues that might arise.

Conclusion

Microsoft SharePoint Online, Microsoft Outlook, and Microsoft OneNote have contributed to efficiencies, allowing for more secure transfer of company information, more timely delivery of meeting content, and overall improved meeting experiences for all participants.

Microsoft regularly publishes quality and feature updates for the Surface Hub, and they are automatically installed through Windows Update. With Windows 10, apps like Whiteboard and Skype for Business, and integrated AV technologies, the Surface Hub is a flexible, easy to manage, all-in-one collaboration workspace.

From an IT perspective, Windows 10 makes it easier than ever to keep executives’ devices up to date. Updates are released regularly, using the same in-place upgrade method and device management infrastructure that's used for all
Microsoft employees. It installs feature and security updates while preserving user settings and data. For more information about how we streamlined operating system updates at Microsoft, see Adopting Windows as a Service.

For more information

**Microsoft IT**

[Microsoft IT Showcase](https://microsoft.com/itshowcase)

**Microsoft Surface Hub**

Deploying Skype Room Systems and Surface Hub devices in meeting rooms

Planning and supporting meetings in a complex global enterprise

Protecting and managing Microsoft data with SharePoint governance

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