Reactiv SUITE
Enabling Remote Creativity

Reactiv SUITE vs The World

The need for a Remote Creativity Platform

Introduction

The ability to communicate ideas and information is one of the most important elements in the evolution of mankind. Humans have always been communicating, collaborating, and sharing information. Now our society is changing faster than any time in history, and much of this can be accredited to our ability to communicate, share ideas, and innovate. In this world of change and constant competition, enterprises must also learn to communicate better, innovate faster, and adapt quickly. Organizations are investing more and more resources on technology, software, and new methodologies to try and help a growing remote workforce accomplish this goal but are not always achieving the necessary results. To understand what is likely the next disruptive event in our corporate meeting methodology, we must examine the evolution of meeting communications.

Pen and paper, chalk and board, and other 'analog' means have been used effectively for hundreds of years. Even today these traditional methods still have a place in our digital world. Passing paper back and forth, writing ideas down, highlighting areas, and drawing concepts are exceptionally easy tasks when face to face. Therefore, many teams will travel for hours or days to meet face to face with co-workers, clients, and suppliers. The costs of these traditional methods are high. Additionally, they can't always be edited, digitized, archived or shared easily. To date, technology has not been able to adequately replace these traditional methods.

Over the last few decades, technology has provided us with email, instant messaging, cloud repositories and other communications platforms. Nowadays, organizations routinely use many different software platforms such as Slack, IM, SMS, DropBox, OneDrive, and even social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to spread the message. All these technologies have made some contribution to how we work or do business today; but even though they increase our productivity, there is a cost. Due to the incompatibility of these different platforms, our messages become fragmented and we frequently lose context. More importantly, these platforms don't let us connect in the same way as, or duplicate the experience of, a face to face meeting. The user experience does not mimic the act of collaborating with your team at a table where creativity can be let loose.

Even simple telephone calls have evolved into group video conference calls with products from Skype, Zoom, WebEx, Go-To-Meeting, etc. There are definite benefits derived from seeing people, sharing video, audio and data in a conference call. Of course, the host can share their screen to present documents and use a camera to show and give context. While this is a clear improvement over a basic voice phone call, something is still lost; everyone just becomes a passive observer, as conference call technologies do not allow individuals to contribute as effectively as if gathered in the same room. Essentially, participants are all just watching TV; watching someone else talk and share a slide deck. Nowhere close to the same experience as a face to face meeting with pen and paper on hand!

With a demonstrable need for better meeting communications, a host of new technologies are attempting to change the way that enterprises communicate and share information in the digital world. Many companies are creating collaboration workspace software, online “white boards”, and persistent workspaces that remote teams can use to layout and share information. Yet, although technology has made it easier to share data and analytics, it has also made it tougher to be creative. There is a wide array of choices when it comes to collaboration technologies, but which is the right approach?

This document will discuss the pros and cons of many technologies or methods that drive meetings. Even though there is a growing need for corporate teams to work smarter, brainstorm, share ideas, and make better decisions, do any of these technologies have a hope of beating a face to face meeting where everyone is at the same table?

Pen & Paper / Whiteboard & Marker

No one can argue against the simplicity of using a pen & paper - or a simple marker board. It has been an effective tool for millenia. It is accessible anywhere in the world, requires very little training, and has no technological barriers. There are no ‘software upgrades’, power or compatibility issues. Pen and paper also offer infinite resolution, precision and there is no ‘latency’. These tools work as fast as you do. They just work.

Yet in our digital workplace, these ‘analog technologies’ have many limitations. They can’t be easily archived, shared or edited, because scanning, printing, copying, or archiving is a manual process. Significantly, our messaging is getting more complex and our media is richer today than in the past. We use many different file formats and document types in our day to day lives. Spreadsheets; documents; images; videos; web and other content, are not easily represented by pen and paper.

Digital hardware and software solutions that simply try to mimic the capabilities of pen and paper will invariably fail. In order to justify the high costs, digital technologies can’t merely compete with pen and paper - they have to deliver something that is fundamentally far more compelling. Just saving digital whiteboard content, or allowing multiple people to write on it, is not enough. A useful digital solution must provide the same intuitive interface and simplicity of working as with pen and paper, but must also seamlessly integrate digital document management, archiving, and sharing into the process, which then takes it to the next level.

PROS

- Intuitive and easy to use - we have been using these tools for millenia.
- No power or technology required.
- No technical limitations such as resolution, accuracy or speed issues. Infinite resolution, accuracy and allows the user to write as fast as possible.
- Low cost and accessible anywhere in the world.

CONS

- Can’t easily edit, archive and share.
- Converting from analog (print/paper) to digital (files) is cumbersome and file formats are not always compatible DOC -> PRINT -> SCAN -> PDF.
- Difficult to convert some of the many different types of digital content to paper.
- Restricted to simple files. Web pages, movies and multi layered data cannot be easily represented.
- A Lot of intermediate steps needed to be able to archive and share.

PowerPoint / Laptop + Projector

We have grown up in the ‘PowerPoint era; modern presentation software has changed the way people present ideas and information to an audience. With just a few clicks and keystrokes, one can add graphics, text, audio, video and animation to a slide show. Customized presentations and templates can be saved and modified as required and used again as needs arise. These tools offer the presenter great visual aids and help focus and navigate the conversation. Using a laptop and projector in a conference room setting is one of the simplest ways to get one’s message across.

However, there are significant drawbacks as well. The linear nature of presentations forces us to reduce complex subjects to a set of bullet items that are too weak to support decision-making or show the complexity of an issue. In a team environment, real engagement is unleashed when the presenter is able to use a narrative instead of simply reading off of a slide. In addition creativity is hampered when you cannot easily be non-linear; unable to pull up back up data, visually compare items, and organize data of different types readily. For example, when analyzing numbers, a simple slide might not be able to drill down to the root cause of an issue. Content such as online dashboards, projections in a spreadsheet, forecasts and models may be required to provide further context and backup. As our workflow becomes more complex, e.g., editing a video or analyzing competitive environments, linear presentations create even more limitations.

The next generation of digital technology must allow a presenter to work with a linear presentation, but also be able to switch to a non-linear presentation style when required. During a presentation, one must be able to navigate to any content in your repository and then easily pull up any additional information required without hindering the flow. Compare different versions of documents, contrast data from different sources, arrange and present content regardless of file format - all this should be possible without having to wait for the technology to catch up. The technology should be as fast and agile as your thought process.

PRO

- Worldwide familiarity and very accessible.
- Already part of the workflow in most of the meetings.
- Easy to create presentations with text and simple images.
- Captures audience attention better than a whiteboard.
- Any laptop and projector can be used - high infiltration of this technology in our workplace.

CONS

- Very linear - falls apart when non-linear presentation and discussion is required.
- Hard to express complex issues as bullet points in a PowerPoint presentation.
- Difficult to integrate video and other rich media.
- Distracts focus from the narrative.
- Cannot easily compare and contrast information from varied sources.

Video-Conferencing

Video conferencing solutions are here to stay; they represent the evolution of the audio call. Now, not only can you hear someone's voice, you get to engage more deeply with them over video. Once video engages the entire feel and etiquette of the meeting can change. Participants can see and be seen and any sense of distance is removed. There's no longer any semblance of "out of sight, out of mind." Research has also shown that participants are less apt to "zone out" or multitask, as they might on a simple phone call, and instead maintain "virtual eye contact." The result can lead to superior levels of closeness and engagement.

The reality is, however, that every organization is struggling with the limitations of these video call technologies. We routinely turn off video and devolve back to a simple audio call. Most organizations are starting to recognize that video conference calls provoke every worry we have about how we look on camera without offering any of the advantages of meeting face to face. Sharing data and organizing information is once again difficult. Rarely do we need to just 'see each other'. Most of the time we need to see each other AND share information and data - seamlessly. These days, we have to discuss, present and contrast information from multiple websites, videos files formats, documents, images and information from many other sources simultaneously and simple screen sharing is not very effective at this task. In addition, traditional video conferencing tools create an environment of a 'presenter' and an 'observer'. The observer is delegated to a passive participant as they can't contribute actively to the conversation. Suggesting changes, making modifications and providing a different point of view is difficult at best when you cannot interact with any of the content. Finally, the technical hurdles of starting a conference call, dealing with browser plug-ins, camera, microphone and other issues compound these problems and often make video conferences very ineffective. Simple screen sharing is not good enough anymore.

The next generation technology must build upon the advantages of video conferencing and deliver the promise of 'feeling like being in the same room'. We must realize that people not only need to see each other; they need to be able to share and discuss any type of data and present information without restrictions. With today's remote teams, data and information is spread over multiple computers, email attachments, cloud drives, text messages and various other platforms. Any new collaboration platform must be able to bring all of this data together as well. Not only should you feel like you are in the room with all of your participants, but you must feel like your data and information is in the same room as well.

PROS

- Offers a better experience than an audio call.
- Allows users to get familiar and feel like the participants are in the same room.
- Very familiar and pervasive in our workplace today.

CONS

- Complexity of joining a call - no one has really made this easy.
- Most of the time we don't want to see each others faces - we want to see data
- Passive screen sharing results in passive engagement.
- Very hard to combine everyone's data into a non-linear presentation.
- Far cry from a real face to face meeting experience.
- One presenter, one desktop - all others are forced to just watch.

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Existing Productivity Software

There is a plethora of productivity software tools in the market currently. Tools that will create online whiteboards that are shared in the cloud; presentation tools that create beautiful content; online document editing tools; even meeting and organizational tools. Many of these tools are very effective at certain tasks and definitely can help a team become more productive. A number of these tools, e.g., MS Teams, are cloud databases that can store and organize a large amount of information.

However, there are many challenges and costs associated with these productivity tools that are hampering wide scale adoption. First, many of these tools focus on minute and specific workflows, which can be insufficient. A remote whiteboard is ideal for certain tasks, but not ideal for presentations. Presentation tools are ideal to convey information but not for brainstorming. All of these tools must then be paired with remote sharing, video conferencing, and cloud repositories to stitch together a comprehensive solution. Next, the user interface and experience in this 'cobbled together' solution is sub-par as every tool has its own UI and complex interface. This lack of consistency makes it difficult for users to learn and adopt. In addition, many of these tools force you to share information on their cloud infrastructure. This can cause security issues with data compliance, and cause conflict with your internal IT policies. Furthermore, many of these productivity tools do not natively work with commonly used file formats. Everything must be converted to PDF or other standards which severely hampers workflow as files have to be converted back and forth.

For wide scale adoption of the next generation productivity and collaboration software platform to occur, the software must be able to facilitate multiple types of workflows. Everything from simple presentations and document markups, to complex brainstorming sessions must be handled. The software must also be easy to use and intuitive yet allow users the ability to automate unlimited workflows. Existing file formats and all sources of data and information must be handled by this platform - without restrictions. In addition, the software must allow for complete IT and security flexibility, so that organizations can deploy on-prem or on cloud without barriers. The platform must also work with existing policies such as domain controllers and user authentication so that it can be easily integrated into different corporate environments. The ultimate solution should be a communication hub that seamlessly allows remote teams to collaborate with their data from any device. An interactive white board to a personal computer, for example.

PROS

- Some of these tools are good at specific tasks and workflows.
- Cloud repositories and data management tools can store and organize information effectively.

CONS

- Many existing software platforms are built on Apple/Linux and don't support native WIndows environments.
- Several productivity software packages force data onto their proprietary cloud networks, compromising your network and data security.
- Doesn't widely support common file formats resulting in back and forth conversion.
- Limited workflows - only a presentation tool or a simple whiteboard.
- Many have complex user interfaces that result in extensive training and reduced adoption.
- Not intuitive or feature rich; have limited benefits.
- Many solutions do not operate across multiple devices.

Existing Ecosystem (hardware + software)

There are several major manufacturers creating and deploying complete communication and collaboration platforms that consist of hardware and software solutions. Usually these solutions are integrated into a complete 'appliance' that is easy to deploy, setup and manage in a corporate environment. These product offerings from companies such as Samsung, Microsoft, Google, Zoom and others, have exposed numerous organizations to the benefits of a complete ecosystem product that has the potential of streamlining and solving all of the remote team collaboration needs.

Unfortunately, these products have in turn suffered from some major flaws that hamper widespread adoption. One of the major issues is the nature of these products, and the implementation and use of custom operating systems. This dramatically reduces the ability of internal IT to apply their policies. In addition, several of these solutions don't offer on-prem data or software deployment and force the use of their proprietary cloud offerings. This can severely restrict the ability of the corporate IT teams to safeguard and control access to data. On one level, some of these products are just hardware boxes that force the end customer to install custom software and launchers and figure out their own workflows. On the other level they are completely locked down and focus only on simple workflows such as screen sharing, or act as video conferencing endpoints for boardrooms.

An ultimate solution should allow corporations to work within the parameters of their own corporate structures, and data. No solution should force a corporation to deviate from their way of doing business. An all-in-one communication and collaboration system should integrate seamlessly with a corporation's operating system, data servers, authentication tool, personal computers, conference room projectors, and interactive white boards. In addition, the hardware, peripherals and software technologies must be seamlessly integrated into a complete solution such that the end customer need focus only on deploying the solution, versus managing and maintaining the solution. The best technology in the world is the technology that becomes invisible and allows users to just get results.

PROS

- Unified product with cohesive hardware and software.
- Complete environment with prescribed software workflow.
- Seamless integration of hardware, peripherals and other components for end user simplicity.

CONS

- Trapped into a specific operating system or environment.
- No flexibility, have to use what they offer.
- No ability for IT to set policies or control user management due to locked down design.
- Minimal workflows and not a deep software stack.
- Some of the solutions don't integrate software and hardware effectively.
- User experience is not maximized in many of the solutions.
- Performance and depth of product is compromised at the cost of simplicity.

Ideal Solution

What if:
we could manipulate documents, write on them and share them as simply as they were paper?
we could do a linear or non-linear presentation seamlessly?
it was possible to work in a single software ecosystem that offered us everything we needed, as an integrated platform?

What if we could integrate a complete solution that allows a corporation to maintain its policies and security guidelines but also dramatically improve the workflow related to collaboration?

Reactiv SUITE is the result of this philosophy. Reactiv SUITE is a brand-new way of working that will change the way we communicate. Instead of simply being a remote communication or remote collaboration platform, it is the first ever remote creativity platform. It has been designed from the ground up to solve the issues that plague industry and set the bar for what next generation productivity software platforms must be capable of doing.

Reactiv SUITE operates as simply as pen and paper - but without the limitations.

Reactive SUITE

- Natively process all common file formats and allows users to manipulate them like paper. No menus, no dropdowns.Just a simple, natural, and intuitive user experience that is the closest to pen and paper.
- Embed 'digital ink' directly into a document as easily as writing on paper.
- Archive and share with a simple click.
- Gives users that "pen on paper" experience, while working in a completely digital environment.
- Seamless digital document management. File formats are honoured and new documents and revisions are archived automatically.

Reactiv Suite is the ultimate presentation tool

- Supports linear and non-linear presentations. Open a simple presentation OR start pulling up any other information as needed.
- Natively supports all common file formats. Show any number of files and any common format without hassles.
- Pull up, arrange, contrast and navigate to any other content easily.
- Extend, present and mirror content on all existing projectors and secondary displays.

Reactiv SUITE transforms traditional video conferencing

- The 'Digital Table' allows all users to simultaneously visualize each other's data and the data on the table.
- The closest experience to actually "being there".
- Any user can participate, because anyone can manipulate, add/remove content to the table, and ink and markup any document.
- No presenter / attendee role playing - anyone can take over based on needs.
- Complete bi-directional support for voice, video, user interactions/remote control, data and content management.

Reactiv SUITE is the ultimate productivity software that is the ecosystem

- On-prem or cloud data storage - offers complete flexibility based on your data needs.
- Standard Windows 10 platform that allows IT to deploy using existing policies, user and data management tools.
- A complete ecosystem of products that allow for unlimited workflows.
- Intuitive UI that results in fast learning curve.
- A user experience that focuses on getting work done and ROI.

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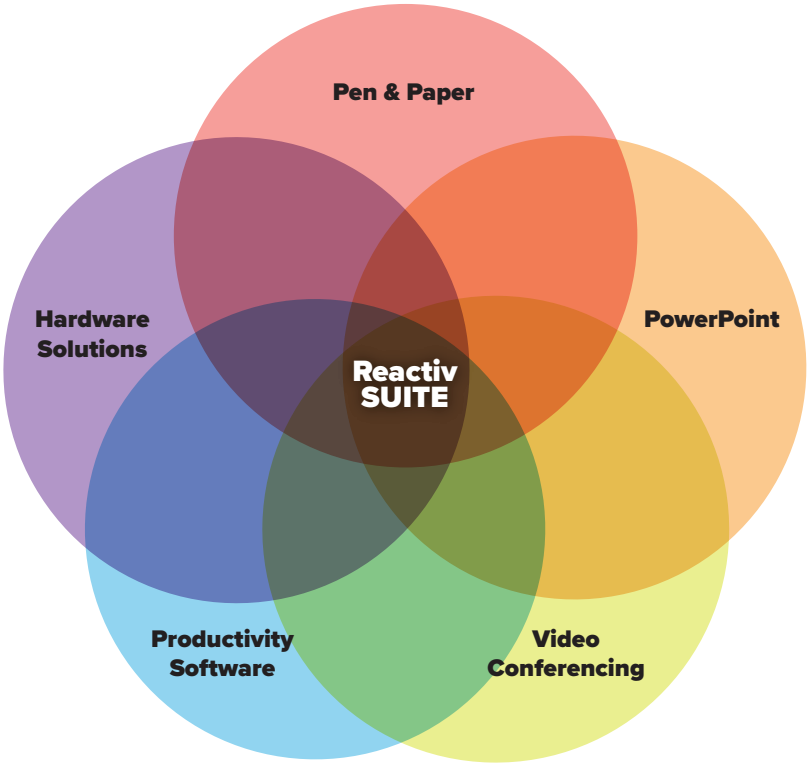
Reactiv offers the complete solution

- A hardware integration strategy that combines the best in class hardware, compute, sensors and software stack for the ultimate user experience.
- Built on a Windows platform that allows corporate IT to deploy, manage and secure using existing data and user policies.
- Connect to local, network, authenticated Active Directory or cloud repositories based on your preferences.



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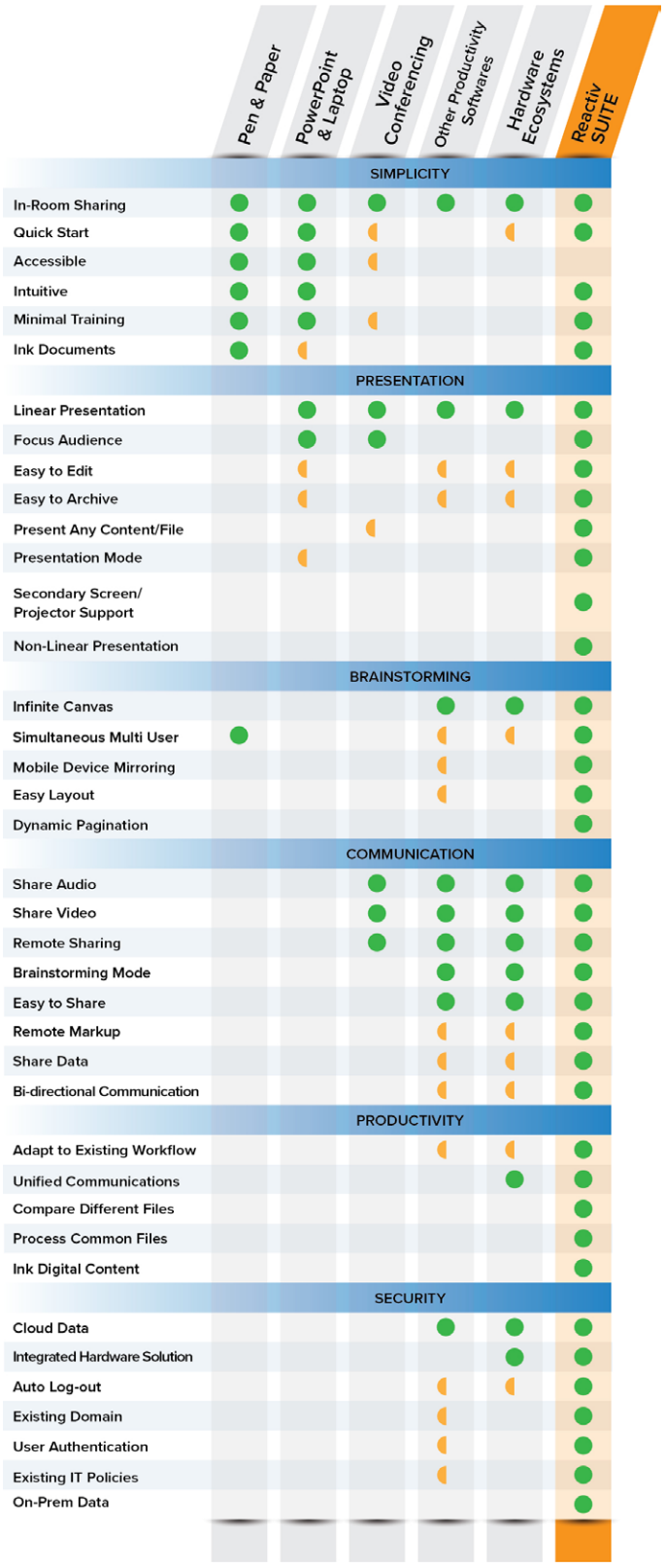
Reactiv SUITE can provide all the advantages of traditional and existing methods while removing the various barriers associated with them.



	Pen & Paper	PowerPoint & Laptop	Video Conferencing	Other Productivity Softwares	Hardware Ecosystems	Reactiv SUITE
SIMPLICITY						
In-Room Sharing	●	●	●	●	●	●
Quick Start	●	●	◖		◖	●
Accessible	●	●	◖			
Intuitive	●	●				●
Minimal Training	●	●	◖			●
Ink Documents	●	◖				●
PRESENTATION						
Linear Presentation		●	●	●	●	●
Focus Audience		●	●			●
Easy to Edit		◖		◖	◖	●
Easy to Archive		◖		◖	◖	●
Present Any Content/File			◖			●
Presentation Mode		◖				●
Secondary Screen/ Projector Support						●
Non-Linear Presentation						●
BRAINSTORMING						
Infinite Canvas				●	●	●
Simultaneous Multi User	●			◖	◖	●
Mobile Device Mirroring				◖		●
Easy Layout				◖		●
Dynamic Pagination						●
COMMUNICATION						
Share Audio			●	●	●	●
Share Video			●	●	●	●
Remote Sharing			●	●	●	●
Brainstorming Mode				●	●	●
Easy to Share				●	●	●
Remote Markup				◖	◖	●
Share Data				◖	◖	●
Bi-directional Communication				◖	◖	●
PRODUCTIVITY						
Adapt to Existing Workflow				◖	◖	●
Unified Communications					●	●
Compare Different Files						●
Process Common Files						●
Ink Digital Content						●
SECURITY						
Cloud Data				●	●	●
Integrated Hardware Solution					●	●
Auto Log-out				◖	◖	●
Existing Domain				◖		●
User Authentication				◖		●
Existing IT Policies				◖		●
On-Prem Data						●

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