

The office of the future is hybrid.

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Within a very short time, the coronavirus pandemic has curtailed the number of business trips and the economy has converted to remote operations overnight. Communication was relocated to the net, while online meetings are suddenly part of the daily routine. No-one disputes that this development will be a sustained one. And it also impacts on the spatial environment in the office.

Video conferences have been a thing for many years, especially in larger companies with several locations. However, so far, expensive technology, slow lines with poor transmission quality and not very intuitive handling have heavily hamstrung the spread of video communication. Thus, (unfortunately), it took a virus for online meetings to receive a significant boost. Although the degree of travel activity will rise again after the pandemic, it will hardly return to the same level as before coronavirus. Companies will no longer send their employees on trips covering hundreds of kilometres for each short appointment, but rather will make greater use of online meetings and webinars. This not only increases efficiency, but also has positive effects for the environment.

Plug & play: meetings become increasingly hybrid.

In future, every meeting room should be able to integrate virtual participants seamlessly into the meeting – completely regardless of its size: from the smallest huddle space for spontaneous exchanges of thought and knowledge to classic conference rooms to large multi-functional rooms for seminars and conferences. This requires a setup concept aligned with the respective communication needs as well as modern conferencing technology. Collaboration tools such as Teams, Slack and Zoom as well as technically sophisticated all-in-one hardware that combines room microphones, speakers and video cameras in one device are the basis for a functioning meeting experience. In combination with contemporary displays for visualisation, in hybrid meetings with several physical and virtual participants they also ensure optimal image and sound quality.

See also: [Rethink your office: seven scenarios for planning office space after the COVID-19 crisis.](#)