

part. Special telepresence rooms house these video conferencing equipments that include furniture and displays arranged in a specific way so as to create a feel that the other participants are sitting on the other side of the conference table and are able to maintain natural eye-contact. Mid sized businesses generally do not look at telepresence solutions as they find the deployment quite costly and even if they were to think about it, it would essentially be for senior management. Let us look at some questions that medium businesses must be asking before going in for telepresence solution.

Telepresence offerings for mid-sized businesses

Mid-sized businesses are now in a stage where they are trying to understand what benefits can telepresence bring to the organization. Let's look at the offerings.

Business Octane: They have offerings for mid-sized businesses in this space called Immersive Dynamic Telepresence Suites where, the requirement for bandwidth has come down further by 1/3rd, starting as low as one Mbps. Along with conferencing, it allows participants to share their desktops and white-boards at the press of a button with both local and distant teams. There are three offerings under this – Collaborator TurboMax, Collaborator HS and Collaborator Powermax. These 3 suites are fully integrated solutions that include furniture and interiors, embedded with complete networking, lighting, electrical, audio-visual etc. Business Octane has developed a User Interface called SimpliUSE+ that incorporates TeleconnectWIZARD for connecting multiple locations over its Telepresence suites or with legacy video conferencing studios and multiple audio participants added in. So it allows collaboration with any kind of video conferencing set-up, whether over IP or over ISDN, anywhere in the world.

Cisco: Cisco offers Cisco TelePresence Commercial Express which combines three infrastructure components – TelePresence Manager, TelePresence Multipoint Switch and TelePresence Recording Server – onto one server using VMware. TelePresence Manager is a software application that allows one-button-to-push call launch for Cisco TelePresence meetings by intelligently automating scheduling and conferencing tasks. And Telepresence Multipoint Switch acts as a video switch as well as a services gateway. As a gateway, the Cisco TelePresence Multipoint Switch can interoperate with any Multiple Control Unit that supports this protocol. This setup enables customers with older video conferencing systems to use all the existing equipment and infrastructure with Cisco TelePresence systems while maintaining the

Sanjay Bansal, Chairman of the Board & Managing Director, Business Octane on Telepresence



Is Telepresence for mid-sized businesses?

Some of the challenges that customers talk about are cost factor and bandwidth issues. They feel that adopting immersive telepresence suite would require a huge amount of capital investment. Further, they are

hesitant in experimenting with a new technology because of the challenges that they faced while using video conferencing solutions. There is a need to educate customers more aggressively as these are no longer challenges in adopting immersive telepresence. Companies need to realize the ROI that they get with this one time investment.

What parameters mid-sized businesses need to look for while choosing a telepresence solution?

- **Customized solution** – Organizations should choose solutions that are customized to meet the specific business requirements to ensure higher return on investments.
- **Flexibility & interoperability** – Companies should ensure that the solutions are flexible and interoperable with other communication applications. Meeting participants whether on audio, desktops, and video conferencing sites should be able to seamlessly collaborate with the company's immersive telepresence solutions.
- **Running cost** – Solutions that require less maintenance cost. Most of the companies end-up spending huge amount on maintenance.
- **Media Rich Solutions** – Solutions that encourage meeting participants to be able to get real work done over telepresence meetings. Media Rich Immersive Telepresence enables sharing of content: documents, desktops and whiteboard with remote participants with full clarity and vice versa.

Cisco TelePresence experience for those Cisco TelePresence endpoints. The product bundle is delivered as a single Cisco Media convergence server with one or more Cisco TelePresence application DVDs, license keys, and instructions to install the product, including the recommended VMware configuration. A VMware license is included in the TelePresence Commercial Express license; customers are not expected to purchase a separate license. □