TIPS FOR DIGITAL MEETING TOOLS

The popularity of digital meeting tools has increased significantly in recent years. In particular, the increase in functionalities and ease of use have made a significant contribution to this.

With the current outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, these types of services are now more popular than ever. We have created a list of tips to help users how to successfully organise or attend an online meeting.

TIP 1: A solid foundation

Firstly, and most important: what infrastructure is required?

» A stable internet connection, preferably wired!
» Equipment with a working camera and audio. Often the sounds and microphone of the device itself is good enough, but avoid background noise. If that is not possible, invest in a directional microphone that can be set up via the laptop.
» Make sure you have enough light when using your webcam, so you are clearly visible. Do not sit with your back towards the sunlight as the exposure will make you look too dark. If the room is already too dark, a simple desk lamp will aid you in illuminating yourself.

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TIP 2: Avoid distractions

You are easily distracted during a video meeting, by way of a mobile phone or other programmes that are open in the browser for example. The tips below can help increase concentration.

» Shut down the programmes and devices you are not using during the meeting.
» If possible, sit in a room by yourself without any other family members or pets present.
» When you are not speaking it is polite to mute your microphone, this is so that not every noise or cough distracts the other participating members, sometimes even causing the screen to jump.

TIP 3: Angle of the camera

Your camera angle during a call is very important. Everyone knows that a view from below the chin looking up is less flattering, and you would prefer not to have this in a business meeting. Please be aware that some new laptops are still being introduced onto the market with a webcam at this bottom of the screen instead of the top, with the default view being exactly as described above. Make sure that the camera is positioned in advance so it is at eye height. Use an adjustable stand or, if necessary, a stack of books to aid you position your camera to the desired height.

TIP 4: Use of a background

The background you choose determines the tone of your conversation. For example, do not aim the camera at a room full clutter during a business meeting. Make sure that you are in the middle of the camera and that no objects in the background create strange situations with your head. Various services also offer standard virtual backgrounds, where you can easily set a logo of your own organisation as your background.

TIP 5: Multiple monitors

When using a computer or laptop it is very useful to connect a second monitor. This way you can open and share documents on one screen and you can continue to view all participants in the conversation on the other. This prevents a lot of non-verbal communication from being lost.

TIP 6: Share files and/or screen

Digital meeting tools have the ability to easily share media without ever having to send files. With the click of a button, presentations, documents, images, videos or even the entire desktop can be shared with the other participants. The receiver is not only able to view the data, but can also follow how the user handles it in real time, how it is navigated and how changes are made. Most systems also have a whiteboard function, useful if you have to brainstorm or create something together.

TIP 7: Audio transcription and recording

Another very useful function that many meeting tools have to offer is audio transcription and the possibility to record a meeting. Audio transcription implies that all spoken text is typed by the application itself during a virtual meeting or presentation. The recording ensures that images are also captured. This saves a lot of time and effort and ensures that there can never be any uncertainty afterwards about agreements made during the meeting.