

When managed network services provider Masergy was looking to demonstrate its capabilities from its Farringdon head office in London, the company teamed up with partner AVSolution to convert a spare meeting room into a telepresence space.

Showing off collaboration



“**T**he room as installed can accommodate six people when in telepresence mode or twelve when it’s being used as a boardroom. Down one long wall we’ve integrated the Polycom ATX 300 or architected telepresence experience. That’s essentially three of the Sharp ultra-thin bezel displays paired up with HDX 8000 codecs. There are then three Polycom HD cameras mounted centrally above the displays, one for each, and then three Polycom microphones mounted in the ceiling,” began Graham Fry, MD of AVSolution.

“In an ideal world of course we’d be using rear-projection with no bezels, but that isn’t always possible with price and available space. The narrow bezel products give us the perfect answer.”

The system is configured so that the cameras and microphones provide as realistic-a positional experience as possible. Each display has its own camera which helps with eye contact, and the microphones are established left, centre and right to help with positional audio. DSP for the sound is provided by the Polycom the HDX codec itself.

Graham Fry, MD of AVSolution explained the ATX concept:

“When you buy the ATX system from

Polycom, they sell you the codecs, the cameras and the microphones, but the rest of it is provided by the integrator. That means the displays and furniture and so forth. Polycom also sell the OTX system, but in that case it’s a complete package, with screens and furniture, and they install it as well.”

Added to the standard telepresence solution are some collaborative tools designed by AVSolution. Each position on the boardroom table features a preview monitor, which allows participants from view additional documents. These are introduced to the system via laptop inputs built into the desk. Content being viewed on laptops can be shown to the rest of the call participants by means of a duplicate of the video feed. Whilst this isn’t fully interactive, as other callers cannot interact with the content, it does allow anything on a laptop to be viewed and discussed in the call.

“In a call you can share data you are talking about with the far end and out of a call you can use the matrix to switch content onto any of the large displays,” added Fry.

These additional feeds are switching through the Polycom codec using a Crestron DGE video processor and an AV2 control processor. The user interface for occupants is Crestron’s TPMC V-15 touch panel. This allows them to select sources to send during call, or to select which

display is to be used for what during a presentation or boardroom scenario. The Crestron panel also acts as a dialler for the telepresence system.

According to Fry, this is what makes the ATX system stand out from the OTX, the level of customisation means that it can be tailored to any control system or customer requirements.

“We also have a demo site set up at distributor Imago’s offices. That is fully compatible with what we run here, and has all the preview screens and so forth, but is set up more for video conferencing rather than telepresence.

“Their support for us is excellent, they are the first point of contact and escalation for technical queries. We use them over other Polycom distributors because their technical support is so good.”

Fry was at pains to point out that AVSolution is vendor agnostic, and that there are several good alternative systems out there, but on balance he recommends Polycom to customers simple because of the level of cross platform compatibility that it offers at the moment.

“Why the Polycom solution stacks up for us is that it plays with everything else. It doesn’t matter if the customer has Cisco telephony or what-have-you, it will integrate fully.” ∞

The meeting room at Masergy can be used as a boardroom or full telepresence suite, thanks to the flexibility of the space.