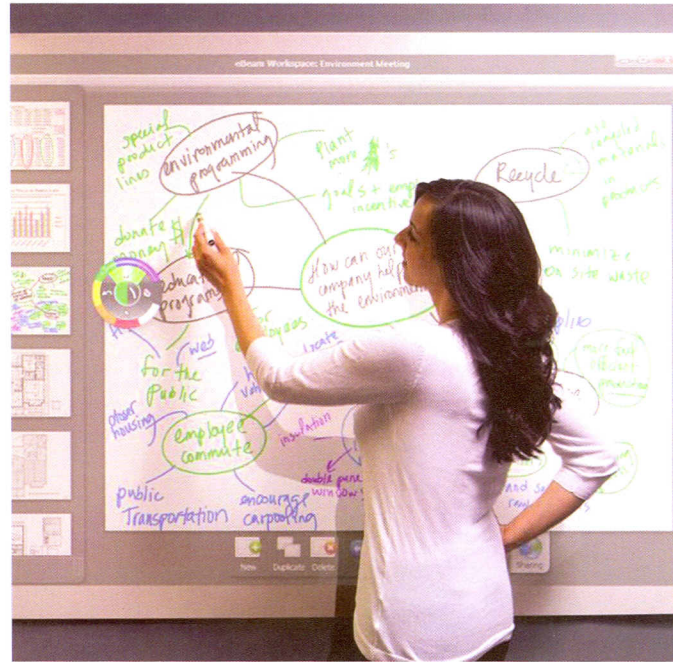


Imago's Wayne Mason asks what the future holds for the video communications market.

Future perfect?



The world we live in today, as we all know, is one that moves at a fast pace. The changes the industry has seen over the last fifteen years are literally astounding. As we move into a new age for video communications, I find myself being asked the question on a weekly basis. What does the future hold for video communications?

The larger IT Vendors are clambering to be involved in the market, so all the signs are there that the future is bright for video.

I think it was Tennyson who wrote: "For I dipped into the future, far as human eye could see, Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be..."

When Tennyson wrote those words in the middle of the nineteenth century, he wouldn't have thought to even consider the strides technology would make, but it continues to make them, with video being considered more and more when organisations, public or private, think about their strategies for the future.

The fast paced nature of business is demanding this progression. Organisations require immediate answers to problems, issues, concerns and more efficient communications overall. One missed call could mean the

difference between locking in a new account or losing the deal to your competitor. Cost reduction has driven globalisation, home working, outsourcing, and decentralised company structures that demand better communications infrastructure.

As more businesses get exposed to the value of video conferencing. Many will quickly determine that consumer products are often designed for insecure applications, almost always limited to two people, and generally use peer-to-peer connections. These applications do exist, so the world of video communications must embrace them, developing cloud based services that can host not just one vendor but a multitude of different vendors and applications into one call.

The video conferencing device has come of age, no longer just gathering dust in a boardroom, it is now being utilised anyplace, anytime.

As leading industry analyst groups, such as Wainhouse Research and Frost & Sullivan predicted, much of the increasing market demand for conferencing services triggered increased IT spending, better system and software interoperability, and increased acceptance of the technology itself.

Currently, the traditional business-to-

business video conferencing market is a \$3 billion industry, predicted to grow to \$5 billion by 2015 (Infonetics estimate, as of June 2011).

Incorporating other forms of visual communications including unified communications, online collaboration and web conferencing, rich media communications is a \$10 billion industry forecasted to reach \$15 billion by 2015.

This is what I think, but what of my industry peers, in my role as head of marketing at Imago Group Plc, I speak to many different people. Graham Fry, managing director of AV Solution, whose own case study is further on, believes:

"Like the progression from letters to email and landlines to mobile phones, visual communications will increasingly become the norm. Many people are already available 24/7 and this will continue to grow, enabling quicker and more responsive decision making. Video conferencing within meeting rooms will become standard and there will be continued uptake in the adoption of high end telepresence rooms.

"Many networks operate in isolation at the moment, but when video conferencing is as easy as making a phone call, adoption will be well on its way to matching the development in telephony during recent years." ☺

Increased remote working and collaboration means that the future is bright for video communications.