



# When ISE dramatizes and focuses on SOLUTIONS

The 2017 edition of ISE, Integrated Systems Europe, took place at the RAI in Amsterdam from the 7th to 10th of February this year.

ISE is the largest trade show at the global level and is centered on AV technology and system integration.

## Beyond the numbers, catering to needs

Some numbers? 73,413 visitors (11.7% increase over 2016), including 22,733 first-time visitors and 1,192 exhibitors (including 202 newcomers).

But beyond the numbers, it should be noted that the products on display were for the most part presented in “real” scenarios, that is, as solutions to meet the needs of a growing number of end users, many of whom attended the show.

Mike Blackman, ISE Managing Director, commented on the event’s success: “We’re listening to the industry and we’re listening to our exhibitors. We’re investing in dramatization and have the resources to produce the type of exhibition they need”.

ISE opened with two inspiring keynote speeches. These were delivered by the award-winning architect Ole Scheeren and the President and CEO of the Cirque du Soleil Daniel Lamarre.



The two speakers emphasized the overwhelming importance of creative thought and innovative technological development for architectural design and live event production.

The ISE trade show’s co-owners, CEDIA and

InfoComm International, have put in place two educational programs for the residential and commercial equipment market sectors.

Hundreds of new products and services have emerged and many exhibitors chose to present their stands in an innovative and theatrical manner.

## Two dominant themes

ISE is an extremely wide-ranging and multifaceted event. One might think, therefore, that it would be difficult to identify one dominant theme. And that would be understandable. However, Brad Grimes, Communications Director at InfoComm, and Dave Pedigo, Vice-President of Emerging Technologies at CEDIA, have distinguished two of them ....

Let’s listen to Grimes: “I’ve had quite a few discussions with exhibitors and a radical change is occurring in our industry: we’re starting to move beyond technology and the focus is shifting quite clearly in the direction of the solution. The question is becoming: what does this “do”? What result will be achieved by the customer?”

The upshot is that attention is now being focused entirely on the customer experience and the ways of providing a solution.

For Pedigo, the show’s overriding message is the transition to voice as a user interface, with special reference to the concept of the “intelli-



gent house”. Amazon Echo and Google Home are working in this direction. However, Pedigo admits that this shift will take more time in Europe, given that Echo is less available and



Mike Blackman

Home not available in this region.

In any event, the emphasis is on use here too. Pedigo thinks that there are many circumstances in which it is easier to use your voice than a control panel, a remote control or an application. These interfaces will not necessarily disappear, but the industry will provide users with a wider choice: voice will be regarded as complementary to what already exists.

## Speaking the language of those who sign the checks

Grimes drives his point home: “Our customers are no longer restricted to AV specialists or installers. What we do fits into the technology strategy of companies and is of enormous interest for senior management and IT managers. They are focused on ROI, productivity and, quite naturally, on use and solutions. Let’s not forget they are the ones who sign the checks!” Both view this sea change as an opportunity. Installers must realize that that what they offer is not technical expertise but a real ability to provide a company with a solution that is perfectly tailored to its needs.

In the past, it was the famous “Wow” factor (innovations, surprises) that attracted the crowds at ISE. But what customers actually buy is something that solves a problem!



# An Industry Pivots from Products to Solutions

By David Labuskes, CTS, CAE, RCDD,  
Executive Director and CEO, InfoComm International

I was at an event in New York recently and came across a character who is familiar to many of us in the United States and elsewhere in the world. Oddly, he was black-and-white, slouching low in a leather armchair, sunglasses on, facing a stereo system and literally blown away.

Perhaps you've seen him somewhere: His tie is flying in the wind and in some scenes, there is a cocktail glass falling over. It's the blown-away Maxell guy, from what was an iconic, 1980s advertisement for Hitachi Maxell tapes. Maybe you've never seen it, in which case, a quick Google search of "Maxell guy" will fix that. It's a compelling visual and a classic representation of what makes the audiovisual industry so great. But to be clear, it's an advertisement for tapes. They don't even make video tape players anymore. And audio cassette decks? Well, there are a few still being built for niche applications. But that's precisely what I love about the old Maxell ad: Products and technologies come and go, but experiences are the enduring impact of audiovisual systems. And experiences are the result of the right solutions—a mix of features and capabilities that achieve a desired outcome.

InfoComm International ([www.infocomm.org](http://www.infocomm.org)), the global trade association representing the AV industry and co-owner of the annual Integrated Systems Europe show in Amsterdam, believes that AV professionals were really in the business of creating experiences, not just selling products; that new technology is great, but tomorrow's customers want solutions. AV has come to pervade all aspects of life. The technology is so out-

standing—and accessible—that it is in high demand. InfoComm research indicates that this year should see continued growth in solution sales.

At the same time, two other things have happened: AV technology has grown more commoditized, and it has started to fall under the purview of information technology departments at more and more enterprises. Those enterprises now understand the business benefits of AV sys-



David Labuskes

tems—video collaboration, digital signage, presentation systems—and they want them to be part of their overall technology strategy. At first blush, this may sound like unwelcome change. It's not. Enterprise technology customers are ready to invest in AV, but on their



terms, which means they are more interested in the solution than the products and technical specifications. In a recent InfoComm research report, one technology customer at a European manufacturing company said, "There is no room in our vendor base for someone who purely delivers equipment." It is important that the industry change the way it communicates the value of AV, otherwise AV could be marginalized, made niche, and relegated to another service hanging off an IT network. IT departments understand data and efficiency, but they do not always understand the experience of AV, nor the fact that, when it comes to AV systems, it is experience and the right integrated solution that will lead to the business outcomes their bosses seek, whether that is increased productivity, better collaboration, higher utilization of rooms and spaces, and more. Therefore, the AV industry needs to be selling experiences, solutions, and outcomes, not products. So take the message directly to enterprise decision makers—the peo-

ple in corporations, universities, hospitals, stores, and hotels who write the checks for technology solutions (or influence the writing of checks). InfoComm and its members have been successful in growing this industry. Now we all need to grow the market for the solutions that this industry creates.

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# Video plays a key role in the UN's General Assembly Room thanks to Televic's Plixus® architecture

*The General Assembly is the beating heart of the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.*

It is home to large-scale meetings with every official member and it features some of the biggest and most complex interactions. The focal point of the room's new conference system was video, made possible through Televic's state-of-the-art Plixus® conference network architecture and a custom hardware approach.

With over 2200 participants, the General Assembly Room at the UN's headquarters requires a rock-solid conference architecture to ensure that meetings run like clockwork.

But the biggest challenge is providing every delegate with a perfect view of the proceedings. Large rooms with historical architecture do not always allow all participants to have an unobstructed view. However, video distribution is an elegant and efficient solution.

That's where Televic's new Plixus® architecture made the difference: it makes Full HD video available on the

network with delays of only a single frame.

To make the most of the available space in the General Assembly room, Televic designed a custom flushmount panel with an integrated camera. The panel was made entirely to the UN's specifications and is a tailor-made product, fit for the room and designed to blend in with the existing furniture.

The integrated camera provides close-up video

of any speaker who activates his or her microphone.

The custom unit combined with the Plixus® architecture delivers efficient results for all participants. Video of the active speaker is available to anyone on the network. Including interpreters who have a crisp, lip-synced view that allows them to better convey the message of the speaker with far more detailed non-verbal information at their fingertips.



As a result, Televic's conference solution for the UN fuses the unique video features of its Plixus® network with a custom hardware unit to arrive at more involved and interactive meetings that ensure participants work more efficiently.

**Televic Conference**  
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## Unilever chooses Clearone for their new, state-of-the-art training facility

*Unilever, in creating their "Four Acres" Singapore training facility required site-wide streaming music, voice announcements, messaging, and digital signage.*

Unilever retained the multi-disciplinary integrator, Principle One, to install the project. ClearOne solutions were chosen to provide the audio and video backbone for this state-of-the-art installation.

ClearOne StreamNet® technology provided the solution for all of these needs in one package- covering 24 dedicated zones, including training halls, syndicate rooms, an amphitheatre, a gymnasium, dining facilities, a leisure center, and meeting rooms for the senior staff.

Audio and video is fed throughout two main buildings to 49 end-points.

A ClearOne ANTHOLOGY® media server was chosen as the main audio source.

Four simultaneous audio feeds are available at any time throughout the zones. Control is provided via an iPad so that the end users can pick and choose background music.

ClearOne solutions are designed with integration in mind.; the product support and design

assistance that made the ClearOne solution an easy decision for Principle One.

ClearOne sales support was on-hand consistently to ensure the installation and functionality worked seamlessly.

ClearOne's StreamNet technology is available across a family of devices.

Encoders enable you to easily connect audio and video sources to the network, whilst a series of corresponding decoders take signals at end points to connect to screens, projectors and local audio systems.

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# AV technology is now available in huddle rooms

**No doubt about it, huddle rooms are proliferating in all enterprises, whether small, medium-size or large.**

According to Wainhouse Research (WH), there may even be as many as... 50 million of them throughout the world!

## The basic idea and its variations

WH explains: this is not a new phenomenon. However, what has changed is that the AV equipment necessary to transform them into small, really productive meeting spaces accommodating laptops, tablets and smartphones is now available.

The idea behind this technology is easy to understand; it is about making the sharing of information between mobile devices as simple as possible.

Basically the room is equipped with a large flat screen and may also contain interactive touch-screen technology, as well as a device enabling participants to project images from the screens of their devices onto the central screen. Sometimes it is even possible to project images from multiple mobile screens at the same time.

Increasingly, these huddle rooms are equipped with facilities for audio or videoconferencing, the latter enabling information to be shared between different locations.

In this way a collaborative work environment,

as opposed to the centralized structures existing previously, can be easily created. Today, interactivity and sharing reign supreme.

## Millennials in focus

In any discussion concerning conference rooms, mention will be made of millennials. This generation, born between the beginning of the 80s and the early 2000s, is currently in leading positions in the business world. This age group has been studied extensively due to its socio-economic importance, and the attitudes and preferences of its members have been widely noted. Millennials enjoy working in a team and interaction. The key to a productive space is that it must be easy to use intuitively. There must be absolutely no need for an AV technician on site. But it should be noted that this ease of use does not just happen as a result of simply

choosing "good products". Everything must be carefully planned from the outset – you must determine how a space is to be used and then integrate the appropriate technologies into it, making sure they can work together in a transparent manner.

Huddle rooms do not replace traditional conference rooms - they complement them, being designed to facilitate a parallel, but different, way of working.



# Black Box enhances IKEA's business collaboration

## Background

Swedish group IKEA has 328 branches in 28 countries and is the largest furniture retailer in the world. The company is well known for their self-assembly furniture and household items. In Belgium there are eight



stores, a distribution centre and an IKEA Service Centre.

The Service Centre, which employs fifty people, supports the branches and manages the financial transactions between the different departments. During meetings it is necessary to share financial data quickly and easily on a big screen using PowerPoint presentations, Excel spreadsheets and videos. To meet these needs, IKEA was looking for a wireless, software-based solution for their nine conference rooms and huddle spaces.

## Challenge

IKEA management researched and tested various solutions including Black Box's Coalesce. Their focus was on the technology, ease of use and cost. They also

wanted to keep the number of devices needed in each conference room to a minimum. "The more technology that is present in the room, the more risk of it disappearing or breaking" says Dries Roggeman, Country & Local IT Manager for IKEA Belgium. They decided to avoid using dongles, which would require every PC user to connect to the system. This solution also turned out to be a lot more costly than a networked solution such as Coalesce where the user can access the system through the existing infrastructure. Meeting participants can use Coalesce client software on a standard USB stick for their laptops, or an application for iOS or Android tablets and smart phones, instead of a hardware dongle.

The company preferred not to install any software on individual PCs. IKEA has a strict software policy, employees do not hold administrator rights, and nothing beyond the standard list of software may be installed. Deviating from this software list as an individual country within the international IKEA Group proved impossible.

## Solution

After assessing the technology, ease of use and cost, Coalesce proved to be the ideal solution with the lowest total cost of ownership (TCO). "Coalesce was actively tested by our staff for two weeks in one of the conference rooms. A short manual was sufficient to inform users about the operation" says Dries Roggeman, "Moreover, it is easy for our IT department to manage all our Coalesce systems via the Coalesce Central platform."

To maintain the security of the network, visitors are given the software via USB or app, after which they can



connect to the specified SSID. With the built-in firewall between the wired and wireless interface, it is possible to ensure security on the network, while visitors can still access the internet.

## Outcome

"Coalesce works seamlessly. We don't even notice the presence of technology in the conference room, and Coalesce complies fully with our expectations. The solution is now being examined by the Retail division within the IKEA group, and could also be rolled-out to other countries, in addition to Belgium." says Dries Roggeman.

**Winfried Schultz**  
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**Free Tech Support: 00800-2255 2269**  
**Website: [www.blackbox.eu](http://www.blackbox.eu)**

View a video demonstration of Coalesce on [www.black-box.eu/Coalesce](http://www.black-box.eu/Coalesce)

# From Niche Tool to Everyday Communication Tool

*Videoconference has been used for about 20 years in multiple businesses, but not a lot of them use it regularly.*

It's true that videoconference is often deployed in a limited way, principally to connect to other branches or for management only usage.

## Failed Sales Tactic

Let's remember that at its beginning, videoconference was sold as an alternative to travel, and it was promising a reduction in travel costs as well as a less tumultuous life for higher management.

This was a failed sales tactic. First, a lot of collaborators would see travelling as an advantage linked to their job, and secondly, videoconference was classed as an inferior solution to face to face meetings.

This failed promotion made collaborators almost feel "punished" when they had to use videoconference. On top of all this, you have to add to the picture the large difficulty that would exist to connect with other businesses if you have incompatible systems.

Despite this gloomy picture, new technologies reinvigorated the notion of videoconference to the point where it is reasonable to expect a booming growth in the field.

## BYOD and SaaS to the Rescue

The quality and omnipresence of today's Internet allows you to use videoconference without needing to deploy large updates throughout the business network.

In most cases, standard high speed bandwidth connections will do the job. It is very rare that a system requires dedicated IP

connections.

On top of this, smartphones, tablets, and laptops (all the BYOD) are able to deliver high quality video communication. Just think of FaceTime that is integrated in every iPhone. While limited, it is available to every user and makes people at ease with technology, making them realize what visual communication tools can be.

Here again, SaaS, or software as a service (video services), greatly reduces the complexity and launching costs of a videoconference environment. It is important to underline that the whole growth of the videoconference market, in the last 2 years, is because of SaaS providers.

## Increased Flexibility and Decreased Costs

As usual, increased availability and decreased costs play a big role in popularity. Effectively, without even looking at lower costs incurred, businesses now have the choice between having a local videoconference system, or using an outside infrastructure as a SaaS model. For security reasons (for example) some businesses will opt for a local system. Others will adopt the SaaS model that guarantees a larger flexibility and reduced costs. Here, technology will be installed at the rhythm of the business, following its needs.

At the same time, a large section of the market is moving away from terminals in dedicated videoconference meeting rooms, and moving towards computers coupled with high



quality webcams that can pivot, incline, and zoom, all while usually being equipped with a microphone and speakers. This way of proceeding allows for a massive deployment that won't break the bank and that is perfectly suited for small meeting rooms.

## The "Snowball" Phenomenon

All this leads to the "snowball phenomenon": more users adopt the technique, which leads even more users to do the same.

Compatibility problems are solved by using SaaS: it is now as simple to dial the "number" of a client or a manufacturer in SaaS as to dial the number of a user within a business. This phenomenon heightens the effectiveness of videoconference.

All these elements force us to look at the videoconference phenomenon differently. It is busy moving from a niche tool reserved for dedicated rooms to an everyday communication tool for entire organizations.

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# Choosing the right projector

*Projectors are an integral part of many conference rooms. They are an investment to promote the sharing of information by companies with their employees and customers.*

It must also be recognized that today's models are light years ahead of their noisy ancestors of the past, which required several minutes before they were ready.

## Neither frustration nor waste

They have a wide variety of inputs for connecting numerous sources and project an image that is comparable to that of a flat screen. Many models offer screen splitting for video-conferences, allowing users to view the content of the meeting and the participants at the same time.

The choice is varied. Here you can find the delight of a huddle room where only a handful of persons take part or you can also get your hands on models designed for a medium-size (a few dozen persons) or even a large (hundreds of participants) audience. Characteristics such as brightness, color accuracy, resolution and contrast have become increasingly important, along with wireless connectivity and ease of use.

Choosing the right projector (for your company) can therefore be a daunting task. If you choose a limited model you may eventually feel frustrated with its performance ...and if you opt for a model that is more powerful than necessary, you will regret the waste of the additional investment.

## Brightness and color accuracy

The key question is to know what maximum size the image must have in order to meet your criteria. Will the audience be small, medium-size or large? In the latter case, must the lights stay on or may they be switched off? If they are to stay on, a high brightness will have to be chosen. This is measured in ANSI lumens (from 3,000 to 6,000 lumens). The higher the brightness the easier it is to see the image. In practical terms, a projector with a light output of 3 to 3,500 lumens is suitable for a small, dark room with a 60 to 80-inch screen and an audience of fewer than ten persons. With between 3,500 and 5,000 lumens, you address a medium-size room equipped with an 80 to 120-inch screen and with an audience of 10 to 40 persons. If the projector has a brightness of 5,000 to 6,000 lumens, it will be able to function in a large conference room, with a screen measuring fewer than 300 inches and fewer than 60 persons in the audience. These powerful projectors offer a high degree of flexibility and can, for example, replace digital signage by projecting large images on walls or the sides of buildings.

## Resolution, contrast and wireless capabilities

Resolution is the level of detail in the image. The required resolution depends in large part on the

resolution of the source that you are going to project, but since the resolution of tablets and laptops is continually increasing, the right solution is to opt for the best resolution possible. Let's not forget too that today's audiences are used to viewing high-quality images (HD and ultra HD) at home.

As regards contrast, this is the ratio between the whitest white and the blackest black that the projector can generate. The higher this value, the better the contrast. Combining high resolution and high contrast ensures that the projected graphics and texts appear both bright and sharp. Wireless capabilities are a characteristic that is becoming increasingly critical. Until recently, to project content from a laptop you needed to implement a cable connection that limited the possible sources and dictated the place where the presenter had to be located.

Fortunately, that time is now past. Wireless presentation software solutions are now available that enable multiple presenters to work from their BYOD.

Ease of use is also crucial. Of course, whatever the complexity of a machine, once you have mastered it everything becomes simple. However, this reasoning must not be followed here. The fact is that everything must be simple right from the start, so that people are likely to use the projector. It is well known that utilization leads to utilization and that at some point the snowball effect sets in. And that the reverse is also true.....



# The Meeting Industry and the Leaders of Tomorrow

## *Are the meetings of today giving motivation to the leaders of tomorrow?*

To answer this crucial questions concerning the arrival of “millennials” to the workplace, we need to change our way of seeing things.

### Promoting Enthusiasm

To inspire these young leaders, meetings must meet the objectives of participants and promote enthusiasm by offering an approach that they desire in their careers, while respecting the goals and objectives of the business. We need to take into account that the leaders of tomorrow are way more demanding with the way they use their time: they want to make sure that the minutes spent at a meeting are worth their attention.

This kind of expectation is very understandable, but sets the bar really high.

Their goal is to be inspired and energized after a meeting to be able to focus more efficiently on their work and careers.

They do not consider technology as the most important factor of face to face meetings, since that information can easily be accessed online. Instead, they try to create relationships and af-

fective contacts that favor the progression of their careers and personal development.

### Leaving With “Efficient” Acquaintances

The “millennials” look for knowledge and tips on how to deploy their action and capacity in the business, and see meetings as a perfect way to gain that information.

In this optic, organizers must have a larger perspective than one that looks only on a day by day basis.

They must offer participants a clear approach to what they can do with the gain knowledge. For example, they pay less attention to the objectives of the business if they are just “listed”



to them. The participants must leave the meetings with clear measures, knowing how to use the gained knowledge, and knowing how this gained knowledge can influence the results.

There will always be space for face to face meetings, but if they are done, there needs to be a return on investment for all the participants... and, of course, for the business footing the bill.

## To Accelerate, You Need to Stop Braking!

### *What if we analyzed the stopping factors that constrict the massive deployment of videoconference in businesses?*

As we know, videoconference brings a lot of advantages to the table: travel cost reductions, carbon emission reduction, time savings, reduction in tiredness linked to travelling, and while we're at it, time savings for collaborators who only need to take into account the real time taken by meetings.

### Parameters Carefully Modified

Some people are shy about being face to face. They confuse videoconference and public speaking. However, these are two very different situations! To fix this mental block, a first successful videoconference must be had to reinforce the comfort of this new face to face situation that doesn't require travelling. This first experience cannot be improvised: the new person needs to be accompanied by someone who is experienced with videoconferences, who shall demystify the whole experience.

Another brake: technical problems. This fear is inherited from the days where videoconference required a thousand and one settings that were not always clear. This is all over to-

day with SaaS solutions giving a “seamless experience”!

The way of using videoconference can also create some problems. Sound is primordial, it needs to be carefully setup: good microphone disposition to isolate it from table vibrations, high quality speakers, smart lighting to see the faces properly, and avoiding direct lighting (indirect is the best way).

Finally, the camera should be at eye or chest

height and not be too close (to avoid large looking nostrils!).

### Pruning the Extras to Spend More Time on the Purely Relational

The brake of price. In the past, it was true, only a few manufacturers were sharing the niche market and charged... exorbitant pricing. But things have changed with the arrival of the Internet, and prices are now normalized across the board. SaaS systems are doing real miracles since they spread the cost of their centralized equipment to an important number of client terminals.

Finally, the “cultural” brake, linked to the adage “nothing beats a face to face with your speakers”.

The only thing to do here is to realize that one doesn't stop the other, and that either way, videoconference reinforces the links that we have with the speakers instantly, and complements real meetings. Imagine having the work done during the videoconference sessions... that way, the real meeting can purely focus on the relational aspect... perfect for both sides!



# IMEX, the synthesis between current state of the industry and new trends

**IMEX 2017 will take place from the 16th to the 18th of May this year at the Frankfurt exhibition center and will offer an innovative new experience, as it has been designed to meet the needs of a wide variety of visitors.**

On the program are networking and new exhibitors, but also EduMonday, a new experience that is scheduled for the 15th of May, the day before the show opens.

## Educating, innovating and assisting

EduMonday, for which you can register free of charge, will offer a series of courses, based on an interactive approach and with the participation of experts, on event design, critical reflection, new trends in the industry, and education – all targeted at planners and exhibitors. The aim is to educate, innovate and assist customers in establishing close ties with the right persons.

Carina Bauer, CEO of IMEX, explains: “IMEX is in constant evolution. We offer brand new ideas, business opportunities, education sessions, and networking programs to help event planners build their business and develop their knowledge and skills”.

PCMA Business School will teach, in an interactive session, EduMonday participants the importance of emotion in decision-taking. In fact, we are unable to take decisions that are completely rational.

Starting on the 16th, a free expanded education program will run throughout the 3 days of the exhibition. This will consist of 150 sessions, including workshops and “camp fires”. Participants will be able to choose and can create a personalized calendar that will document their

appointments with exhibitors.

**The best place to obtain a “snapshot of the market”.**

One of the main themes will be the future of events. Here the IAE will explore event trends. MPI will study commercial trends based on the findings of their latest “Meetings Outlook” survey. For its part, the German Convention Bureau (GCB) will share the latest impact trends, innovations and societal developments within the framework of its Future Meeting Space project.

Janet Sperstad, ranked as one of the 25 most influential persons in the meetings industry, will speak on a topical issue. She will present a research study on the five pillars of meetings: design, wellness, behavioral science, CRS/Legacy and event technology.

For a very wide public, IMEX is the best place to obtain a snapshot of the overall market. Here you can meet 3,500 global organizations and hundreds of meeting professionals and also discover the latest trends – all at one location. This year the show will be bigger than ever and will open its doors to new exhibitors from Saudi Arabi, Puerto Rico, Moldavia etc.



## imex Five reasons you need to be at IMEX 2017



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# Increase the size of your audience for your events

**Broadcasting in live streaming is one of the most prominent marketing trends.**

The reason is simple: this technology makes it possible to reach a wider audience, via a single mouse click. The broadcasting of conferences, working and coaching sessions, and other events can enhance your brand image.

## A few tips....

Of course, a video is more likely to draw audiences if it is aesthetically pleasing, but this is not the only criterion. Other factors must also be considered.

First and foremost, you must target your audience and know who will be really interested by the broadcast of a given event.

The timing of the broadcast is also important. For example, you would be wise to avoid broadcasting on a Friday afternoon, as this is the time when many people have their minds set on getting home as soon as possible so they can begin enjoying the weekend. The middle of the week is more suitable as regards programs focused on work or training. In fact, it is particularly important to try to determine the times when your audience is most likely to be online. Of course, you must also notify people of future broadcasts of the program, inviting them to watch while perhaps offering gifts to subscribers and posting an advertisement in



the social media. You must also pay attention in the quality of the video. It must be in high resolution: no less than 720p. This means that you will need to use the appropriate cameras and lighting.

## You have 8 seconds to convince the viewers

Let's assume the goal will be to achieve worldwide dissemination. In these conditions, you will need to use specialized streaming platforms like Teachable, Thinkific and YuJa. For small enterprises that are unable to afford ac-

cess to these resources, social media also enable live broadcasting (YouTube, Facebook and Twitter).

The first few minutes of the live broadcast of your video will be dedicated to motivating the audience to watch what follows. You have around eight seconds to achieve this goal. Try not to exceed the threshold of 58 minutes, as a recent study showed that the average viewing

time does not exceed this limit.

You are also advised to add an instant messaging section to the live broadcast.

Also offer those who have missed the live broadcast the chance to see the video. You will be able to (re-)broadcast it this way and possibly even sell it (we are thinking here in terms of training courses). Several websites, including « Academy of Mine », « Udemy », and « Ruzuku », offering different solutions, enable this. It would also be wise to allow a preview of your video to be seen. For example, if it consists of several parts, the first part could be made available free of charge.

# Advice for organizing a successful interactive conference

**The conference, whether contributions from the floor, the speech, or the keynote address, is the very core of the event!**

If the presentation suffers a glitch, you can expect a flood of negative comments as well as less participation during following events.

## Avoid endless talk

In order to succeed, it is indispensable to ensure interactivity and avoid endless talk by the speaker. For example, the Q&A session should never be omitted, even if the speaker exceeds (as generally happens) his allotted speaking time by several minutes. He must ask his audience some questions and they must respond. You should plan at least a quarter of an hour for this session. We should also not forget that if the event is re-broadcast in streaming, it will also be necessary to respond to any questions from the remote audience. Multiple Q&A sessions may also be envisaged: if the presentation is long (e.g. one hour), you can allow for a ten-minute session after 30 minutes of speaking, and another right at the end.

## Making the audience laugh in order to engage them

The learning process does not have to be devoid of humor! If the speech drags on a little too long, even the most attentive listeners are likely to switch off. A good way of keep-

ing the audience engaged is to make them laugh. You think it isn't easy to find speakers who are both competent and funny? Sure, but it is worth the trouble, because an audience that is involved is more likely to ask questions and volunteer to take part in demonstrations. Use the services of a moderator! Odd? No, his role is more important than is generally thought – he performs some crucial tasks. Among other things, he will introduce the speaker, ensure that the planned timing is observed, prompt the speaker to switch to the next subject at the appropriate moment, manage the Q&A session, and collect the questions posed in social media networks. To boost participation, you must make use of tech-

nology according to the circumstances of the conference. This can be via an application enabling the audience to give their opinion, or a poll whose results appear on a screen in real time, but it can also take the form of a “social media wall” where we see the audience taking part by tweeting their questions, for example.



# Associations World Congress 2017

## 2-4 May 2017, Vienna, Austria

<http://www.associationscongress.com>

### Knowledge sharing is at the forefront of the Associations World Congress in Vienna

The associations sector is vast and hugely diverse. Association executives are involved in every sector imaginable and this incredible diversity has inspired the programme for this year's Associations World Congress taking place in Vienna, Austria on May 2-4, with content and sessions tailored to suit your wide-ranging interests and needs.

The Congress is all about getting the most relevant content to assist you in your development, addressing challenges and inspiring innovation. With over 70 speakers discussing the latest thinking, future trends and key challenges facing international associations the line-up for 2017 is set to be the best yet.

Content streams – providing the most relevant information

The pre-congress day on May 2 will start this focused approach by breaking into three targeted events: the Association Leaders' Forum, the Aspiring Leaders' Meeting and the Medical Associations' Focus Meeting.

The main congress days will kick off with keynote sessions that will set the tone for this exciting and diverse programme. Hear from: Cynthia Cherry, President and CEO, International Leadership Association  
Lodwijk Klootwijk, Director, European Golf Course Owners Association  
Sarah Sadek, CEO, XYZ University



The days then break out into six key streams: Strategies for Growth: How to Build Reach and Relevance

Development Strategies for Exceptional Events  
Member Engagement: Putting Members at the Heart of your Strategy

Leading your Sector: Thought Leadership and Professional Development

Events: From Design to Delivery  
The Explosion of Video: Video Communications and TV Channel Strategy

Peer-to-peer learning - be inspired by what other Associations are achieving

Knowledge sharing is one of the key reasons association executives attend the Congress. This year there will be an increased focus on case studies and real-world examples of how other associations have addressed key challenges, achieved great results and more. The popular association success stories series has been given dedicated time in the programme. Plus, a series of workshops have been designed

to help delegates tap into the experience of specialists covering topics such as: Social media; Membership growth; Sales skills; Maximizing your vital volunteer resources; and Strategic planning in a chaotic world.

### Reader Offer

Communications Business Solutions is delighted to be supporting the event, and are pleased to extend to our readers a 15% reduction on the current registration rate.

Simply register using code: CBS15

Enquiries: mail to [victoria@associationexecutives.org](mailto:victoria@associationexecutives.org)



Cynthia Cherry



Lodwijk Klootwijk



Sarah Sladek

# The conditions and challenges of effective internal communication

*Within an enterprise, effective communication between the employees far outstrips the sending of emails or notices scattered throughout the office.*

The public-opinion research company Gallup has pointed out that effective communication at the workplace is associated with high levels of employee commitment.

## The challenges

Simply put, employee commitment is the emotional commitment the employee feels towards the company and the objective it pursues. He cares about his work and the company that employs him.

Commitment appears when the employee feels valued, protected, supported and respected. In this context, productivity sours. According to a McKinsey report, it rises by 20 to 25%. In contrast, a lack of effective communication can prove to be quite costly. Employees who are « disengaged » have absenteeism rates that are 37% higher, and 49% more accidents. Communication problems also lead to high employee turnover rates.

A big challenge for effective communication is being « heard ». Employees are bombarded by various types of information and it is important to be able to make a difference in order to get their attention.

The high number of communication channels also detracts from the visibility of messages. Digital signage, email, telephone, meetings, intranet, notice boards, podcasts, texts etc. – these are all channels that are not always very coherent. Since there is a lot of redundancy, employees may reach the point of eliminat-

ing « repeated » information by considering it « white noise » and then run the risk of missing important information that could engage them. Third challenge: information must become more communicative than directive. It must be informative and also give special emphasis to the « why » of the desired action.

Another challenge is related to the delay of « communicators » in adapting to the changes in the habits of employees who today want a real dialogue and who are technically oriented and users of mobile and social media.

## Successful training generates customer satisfaction

Effective communication via successful training has a large impact on the customer experience. In fact, staff training plays a major role in this process. A well-trained employee is better equipped to answer the questions and solve the problems of the customer. Well-trained staff can enhance the customer experience and even reach the point of providing a level of quality that can often exceed the customers' expectations. The consequences are not negligible: according to the Harvard Business Review, when a consumer has a positive custom-

er experience he may go so far as to spend 140% more money than he would otherwise! And, on top of that, he « comes back », makes some new purchases and sings the company's praises to his friends and acquaintances. By contrast, inadequately trained personnel



spend more time searching for the relevant information....and the likelihood that they will supply faulty information is much greater. And in this field of training, the number of hours of instruction conducted by a trainer is declining (decrease of 2% per year) while the hours available for technology have increased at the same pace. In the same vein, 33% of companies declare that they rely on technology to a high or very high degree in order to ensure knowledge sharing among their personnel, that is, on-the-job learning.



Legamaster

# Digital Signage Summit Europe 2017

Major enhancements for Digital Signage Summit 2017

<https://digitalsignagesummit.org/europe/>



Digital Signage Summit Europe is the leading business strategy event for Digital Signage and Digital out of Home professionals. The 2017 edition of the event will take place in a new, dedicated conference and exhibition venue. For the first time in the event's history, visitors will have the option to attend either the exhibition show floor, the conference or both.

Being held at the Internationales Congress Center München, DSS Europe 2017 will run from 5-6 July 2017 and feature a two day,

New Technologies, Changing Demand and Market Consolidation. Over 40 leading thought leaders and experts will be involved in the pro-

while Day Two will focus on Digital Signage and Retail Technology. Both days will begin with two hours of networking and matchmaking, including lunch. Day One will conclude with the annual invidis awards presentation and launch of the Digital Signage Yearbook. Day Two will conclude with a networking reception.

As in previous years invidis consulting Managing Director Florian Rotberg will chair the event and also present a keynote speech. There will be a wide variety of presentations, roundtables, keynotes, case studies and workshops.

Confirmed speakers so far include: Stewart Caddick, Connectiv; Bob Raikes, Meko; Thomas Just Rasmussen, Intersport Group and Abdul Bakhani, Digital Communication LLC.

## Discounted tickets are now available

An Early Bird special offer for registration will run until 30 April 2017, offering attendees a 30% discount on the standard admission price of 690€ to both the conference and exhibition. <https://registration.n200.com/survey/2wo1trpedu024>



Right on the picture: Florian Rotberg

twin-track conference, exhibition, workshops, awards ceremony and numerous networking and matchmaking opportunities.

gramme. Day One will cover DooH and Smart Cities

## More than just a conference!

DSS Europe 2017 will feature an expanded exhibition area in a space that will showcase leading digital signage manufacturers and service suppliers. Visitors will now have the option to just visit the exhibition show floor without having to attend the conference. The exhibitors, showcasing the latest digital signage products, services and solutions, will be featured across two floors of the ICM in close proximity to the two conference rooms.

## Programme tackles Digital Signage at the Crossroads...

Across two packed days and twin-tracks, the DSS Europe 2017 conference programme will explore Digital Signage at the Crossroads –



# The New World of Digital Signs

*Driving and travelling can be rewarding experiences, even exciting ones, but going to a specific location can sometimes be challenging...*

Imagine racing through an unknown airport or railway station, forcing your way through the crowd, trying to find the right door... only to miss your connection...

## Finding Your Way without Any Loss of Time

Imagine being at a large exhibition where you have to find an exhibitor; imagine a shopping centre where you want to get to a particular shop; imagine a big hotel, a convention centre where you are looking for the right conference room.

Without visual aids to guide us, chances are we will get lost! Signs are absolutely essential!

They come in many forms, but there are quite a few reasons why digital displays are used for modes of transport.

Until recently, "static" signs were used. But today these would be totally inadequate given the changing nature of modern transport methods. Digital signs can be easily updated and can integrate data in real time. Additionally, they can carry other information, such as the news, the weather report, emergency alerts, geographical information and also... advertising.

Digital signs reduce the time it takes a passenger to find a specific spot. If the latter changes, instead of having to replace a static sign or print new maps, the server instantly sends the new

information to the display units.

## The Beginning of the Era of More Intelligent Advertising

As mentioned above, they can also be used for disseminating advertisements. These can be effectively targeted according to the place where they are disseminated, making them very meaningful and effective. Of course, showing the logo of your brand and its colours is child's play! It is even possible to interact with the devices of passers-by, such as their smartphones. Digital signs mark the beginning of an era of more intelligent advertising that will lead to improved customer engagement, as well as boosting sales.

Kiosks are also extremely helpful. Their touchscreens enable users to search for a specific point of sale in a particular terminal and to get directions to that destination.

In installing digital signs, there are several points that need to be taken into account.



Knowing what the objectives are is the first one. The second is determining the type of digital sign that is most suitable for reaching the objectives.

For example, if a transport system just wants to have a digital map, a 42- or 46-inch screen will do, whereas an advertising sign will need a larger screen (about 65-70 inch).

## DOOH, Wi-Fi Hub and Beacons

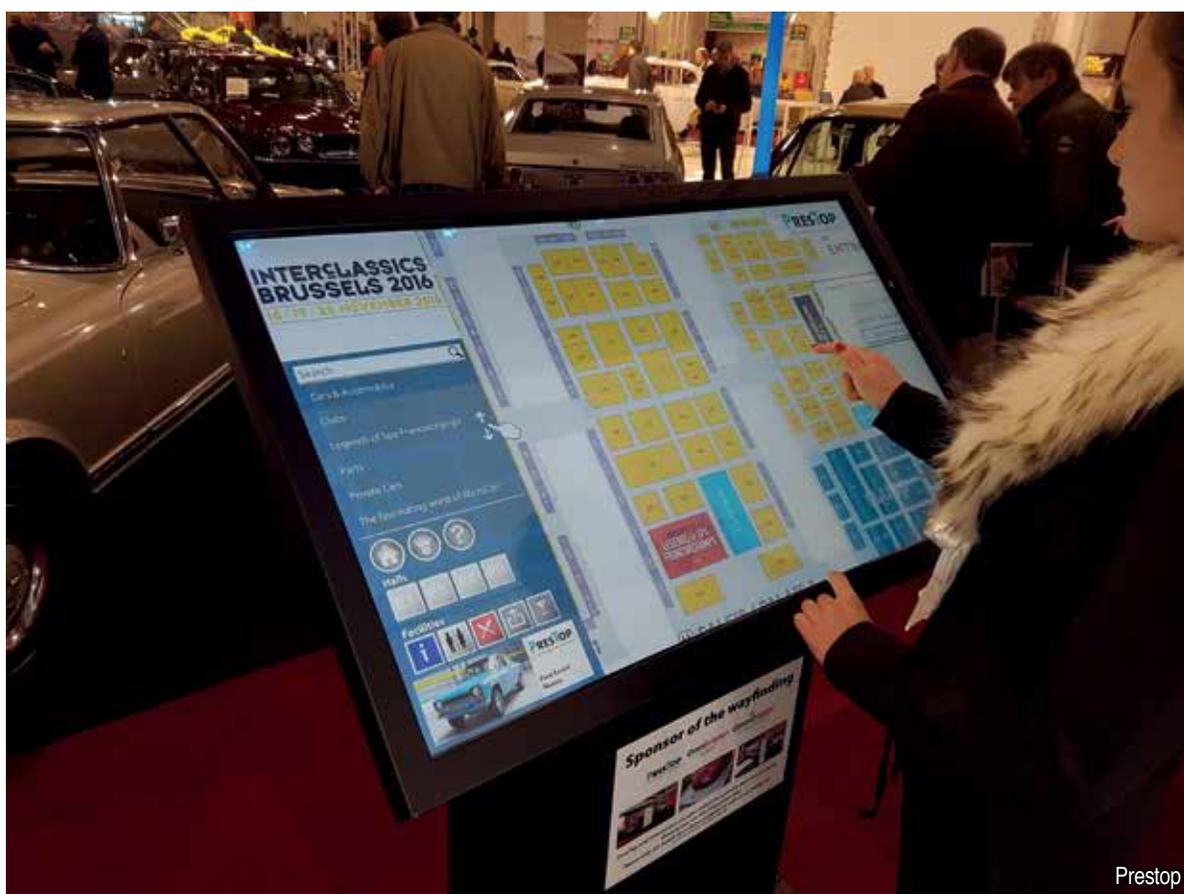
Finally, it is possible to incorporate other technologies. DOOH advertising, for example, is the most obvious addition to a tracking strategy.

This type of local advertising is often considered less intrusive than traditional advertising. Travellers look at it as they wait for their transport. It provides information about places to eat or stalls in a terminal, local attractions and services like Wi-Fi.

It is possible to add communication beacons of the type NFC, or using an RFID chip, at the kiosks and to the digital screens. This allows travellers to receive (transit or product) information directly on their mobile devices.

It is worth noting that these beacons are becoming more and more popular.

Finally, a kiosk can also be turned into a Wi-Fi hub to which travellers can connect. This makes it possible to increase revenue thanks to the Wi-Fi charges, if any, and the targeted advertising. It is clear that digital signs can do much more than show the way; they can engage the traveller and interact with them and, in doing so, create a more pleasant travel experience, while also boosting revenue.



# Green Screen for Digital Signage?

*If you plan on going from print publicity to digital publicity but hate digital signage solutions to reach your “in the field” targets, you’re hurting yourself against hind thoughts.*

For example, its presumed exorbitant prices, its necessary regular content updates that seem to require too much effort, or the size of your business may not require such a deployment.

## The Good Question and Good News

These are normal preoccupations even if they are not the right questions.

We know that the costs are going down, that refreshing the content is not hard if planned properly, and that solutions exist for smaller businesses. However, you may wonder if digital signage has an impact on the environment: is it an ecological solution?

This is a good question, and as an answer, some good news: compared to print medium, digital signage is much greener!

Here’s a demonstration: imagine that you had to print a thousand publicity posters for a promotional campaign, and that you waited a few weeks to receive them.

Something went wrong (which is frequent) and there is a really obvious error on the posters. To

the garbage the posters go! Time to print them all over again, with a result of a loss of paper and time.

If you commit the same error with digital signage, no drama, the content can be modified rapidly without hurting the environment.

## A Logical Conclusion

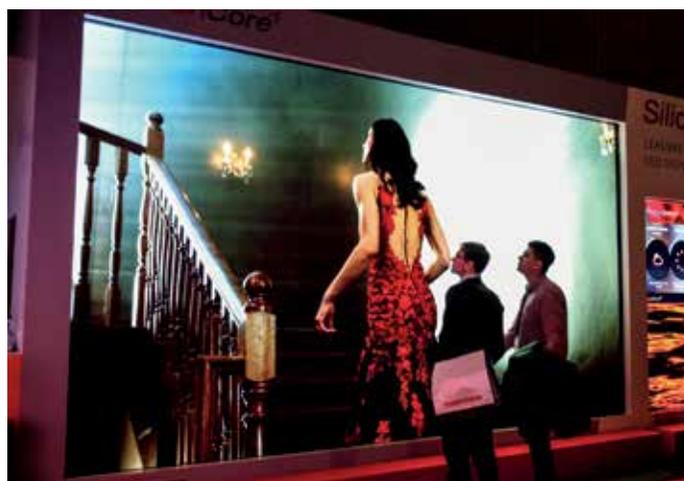
Even worse, think about the cafeteria of your business or a restaurant chain. If posters are used to display the menus, as soon as a dish is added, it has to be changed! A lot of wasted paper in both cases.

However, you could argue that paper can be recycled. This is true, but even recycling has an impact on the environment: garbage trucks, engines to sort out the recyclable materials, and machines to transform the materials consume a lot of energy.

That being said, digital signage is obviously not 100%

ecological, nothing is, but it is a large improvement compared to classic printing methods. Of course, the screens have to be powered, but they are very energy efficient. LEDs are more ecological than LCDs since they use less electricity and offer a longer lifespan.

As environment protection laws are becoming stricter, keep into account the possible evolution and make your own logical conclusion: digital signage costs way less than any taxes or fines that could hit polluting businesses.



## The dynamic and intelligent wall

*For guests of the Sofitel hotel, this wall is something uncommon. It is, in fact, exceptional, as it mixes information and emotions in a very successful cocktail!*

### Tom is a virtual advisor

This dynamic screen is also interactive and enables you to have a “connected experience” that is undoubtedly unique in the world. It reflects Sofitel’s image and values, engages people and provides them with hotel guidebook information tailored to their needs – as it enables them to plan



their stay better, to share it, and to express their creativity!

This wall is called the “Welcome Wall” and plays the role of a virtual advisor. It also has a friendly

nickname – it is called “Tom”.

Tom is the end result of 16 months of research and development with Float-4, a Canadian design and interactive technology studio in Montreal.

Tom provides a variety of information: a primer on the hotel, the services (gym, business lounge etc.), the restaurant « Carte Blanche », virtual visiting of the rooms, interactive hotel maps, and presentation of the Sofitel brand.

In addition, it offers suggestions in response to questions! For the business man in a hurry just as well as the family on vacation or those hooked on shopping: what to do, where to go for a walk, where to relax, where to spend the evening, what restaurant to choose?

Answers received by the guest can then be sent by him to his email address.

### And Tom loves to play!

But Tom can also change into a playful and creative surface and become a wall of artistic expression, both for adults and children. Especially amusing are Tom’s “modes”: the “atmospheric” mode (where feathers fly about in

slow motion on the screen), the “passing” mode (where they react to movements) and the “active” mode (where the information invites the guest to participate and where, as soon as he has touched the wall, navigation is activated and a menu appears).

Creative too, this application that enables people to play with their own image. The guest chooses a background (a photo of Paris) and then sees his portrait blend in with the image. He can then adjust different parameters, then confirm everything and even share the result on the social media networks and send it to himself via email.

For its part, Tom’s Graffiti application enables the guest to choose his background and then draw on it, followed by sharing and/or sending by email if desired.

Tom illustrates perfectly the care taken by Sofitel to cater to new trends among travelers and to no longer content itself with offering a comfortable five-star establishment. Here preference is given to the convivial atmosphere, the new technologies, and sharing and exchange in a space without partitions.

**Sofitel Paris Baltimore Tour Eiffel  
88 bis avenue Kleber, 75116 Paris  
FRANCE**

# Kiosks and mobile technologies in hotels and restaurants: rivalry?

*Hotels and restaurants continually embrace new technologies with a view to improving their customer service and their efficiency.*

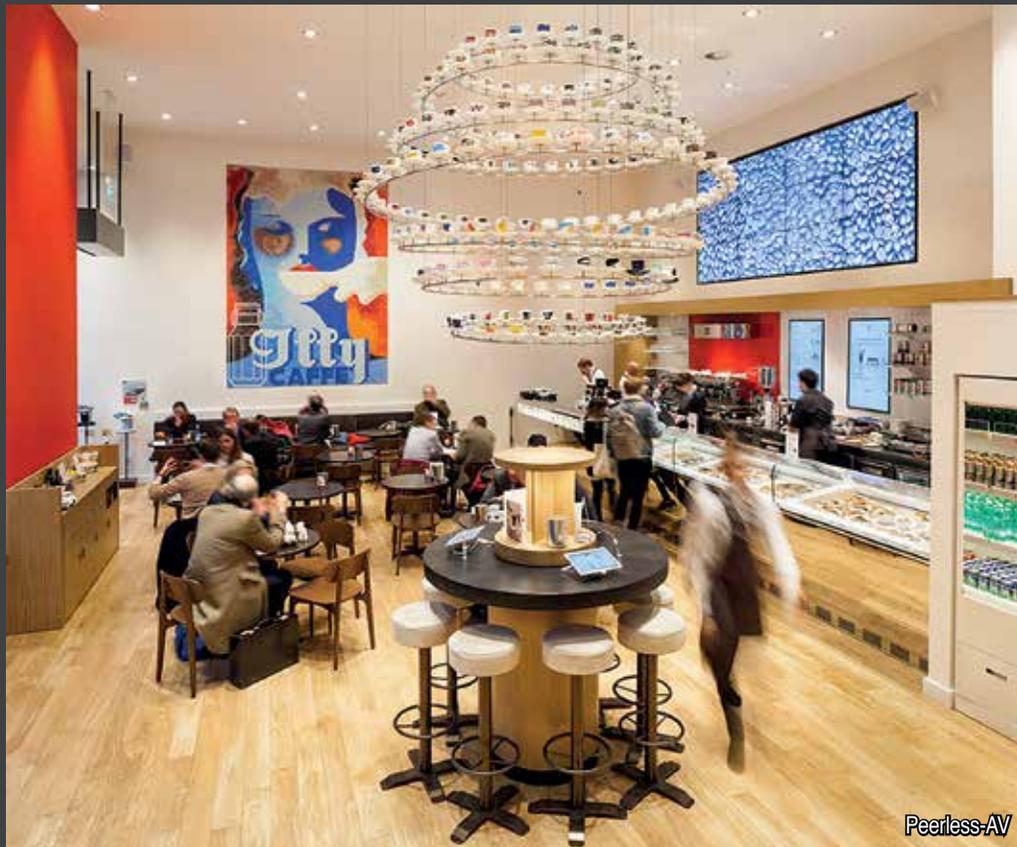
While these sectors have gradually adopted self-service kiosks, mobile « order and pay » applications have risen to prominence, primarily because they have been quickly adopted by consumers.

## Rivals or partners?

This has reached a point where it is fair to ask: is mobile technology going to check the expansion of self-service kiosks in the hotel business? Are the two technologies going to become rivals or partners?

The most recent study on this issue was carried out by Hospitality Technology Magazine. It indicates that the adoption rates for « mobile » applications will exceed those for kiosks in 2017. Let's take Starbucks as an example, where we see that that mobile technology comes with certain challenges. "Mobile orders and payments make up more than 7% of Starbucks' total transactions", says Kevin Johnson, president and CEO. "They have brought gains in efficiency at the point of sale, but the success of the mobile order has also created a new operational challenge that arose with the growth in volume: a gridlock in the shops".

Starbucks has therefore introduced new procedures and tools and has acquired new resources for mobile purchase and sale. "But it should be noted that the Starbucks application is widely used, as the Starbucks brand is



an integral part of the everyday life of millions of people", points out Frank Olea, the chairman of a kiosk-manufacturing company. "It's a unique case. Are a significant number of people ready

to download and configure an application for a hotel that they will visit only once? Probably not".

## Double-track approach

This is partly the reason why several chains are investing in a double-track approach: kiosks and mobile technology.

Saladworks (a fast-food chain) has seen continuous growth in online orders over the last three years, but according to its president Pat Sugrue, the company is planning to introduce self-ordering kiosks. Its « Life Bar kiosks » enable a choice of menus based on dietary restrictions. The food restrictions are entered and the menu greys out all options that do not comply with the desiderata. The same functionality will eventually be available online. Sugrue wonders whether there will still be a need for kiosks once this point has been reached. "In any event", he concludes, "at the present time there is enough room for both technologies"!

It's pretty much the same story at UFood Grill, which is planning to deploy kiosks in addition to its online orders. Samantha Rincione, the company's vice-president, declares: "There will always be customers without reservations as well as diners who prefer to use the kiosk and to choose their meal when they are in the restaurant".

When all is said and done, a consensus seems to be emerging: mobile check-in and payment can provide support to kiosks by managing the most common transactions.

