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# AI and the Digital Workplace

Where Predictive and Generative AI Tools Fit in the New Ways of Working

## Introduction

“Work is changing” was always imminent — until it happened. The last few years have seen profound shifts in different ways of working that organizations are still hoping to optimize.

Amid hybrid work models, new products and solutions are tailored to ease employees’ work lives by incorporating predictive or generative AI. These tools assist with everyday routines, removing low-level tasks and allowing workers to focus on more significant activities.

Maximizing productivity and optimizing the digital experience are crucial for all employees, whether onsite or offsite. In a series for Reworked, Zoom explored how AI fits into the workplace and how leaders can use it to enhance the digital employee experience.





## 7 Ways Leaders Can Use AI to Improve the Digital Employee Experience

The best companies are laser-focused on providing exceptional experiences for their customers to differentiate themselves in competitive markets. But to provide that experience externally, they need to look inward first and think about how they provide exceptional experiences for their employees. To attract and retain the best talent, organizations need to be able to sustain a thriving culture, and [digital employee experiences](#) are becoming essential to keeping employees happy, engaged, and productive.

Many organizations, including Zoom, are creating [AI tools](#) as a way to serve employees and help them to do their jobs better. For example, when I couldn't attend a meeting recently, our AI summary feature helped me stay on top of what I needed to do. Zoom's [meeting summary](#) sent me a quick recap of the topics covered and an action item I was able to complete within minutes, saving me time while helping my team take their next steps.

On the other hand, employees are understandably nervous that [using AI to automate tasks](#) may make their roles redundant and it may be better to think about how we can use AI to simplify and streamline tasks. Navigating this tension and figuring out how to incorporate AI in the workplace effectively is on a lot of employers' minds lately.

I sat down with Zoom customers Casey Santos, chief information officer at Asurion; David Strickland, VP of telehealth and care at home technology at Kaiser Permanente; and Jason Averbook, senior partner and global leader of digital HR strategy at Mercer, during our most recent [Work Transformation Summit](#) to talk about how they're using AI to improve the digital employee experience. Here are some key takeaways.



### 1. AI Won't Replace the Human Touch, but It Will Enhance It

"We've been using AI to help prompt contact center employees to get to the answer more quickly, so they can serve customers with a more personal touch."

— Casey Santos,  
chief information officer,  
Asurion

Casey said that at her organization, AI enables employees to respond to customers' needs more quickly, which makes everyone happier. They also use chatbots internally to help employees with routine IT questions or actions in a self-service model.

Chatbots can free up staff to handle more complex interactions that need a human touch, which has a positive effect on employee and customer experience. "It unlocks capabilities to reach people more easily and effectively," Casey explained.

### 2. Personalization is Key to Deepening Digital Employee Experiences

"Anytime you can tell an employee or customer, 'I know who you are and I know what matters to you,' you're deepening the relationship."

— David Strickland,  
VP of telehealth and care  
at home technology,  
Kaiser Permanente

All those hours teams spend creating content for learning and training could be knocked down to mere minutes using generative AI. Content can be tailored to an employee's specific role, goals and career path, making it even more effective.

"AI can allow me to personalize content like never before based on who you are, what you do, where you've been, and where you're going in an organization," Jason said. He noted that organizations are prioritizing generative AI to elevate the traditional intranet or employee portal to a truly interactive digital employee experience. By leveraging data and learnings about how employees work and interact, employers can create digital tools that "know" employees and make recommendations to help them be most efficient and effective.

### 3. AI Can Meet Employees Where They Are With Language They Understand

"The technology has to work for employees, managers, and leaders who don't speak HR or IT. It needs to speak the language of humans."

— Jason Averbook,  
senior partner and global  
leader of digital HR strategy,  
Mercer

Older technologies expected employees to know what keywords to use to get the information they needed, and often those phrases weren't intuitive. Think of how you might have searched for something in the past, speaking in keywords like "add a dependent" or "parental leave."

Generative AI has opened up the ability for people to have conversations with technology in ways they never have before. Jason pointed out that large language models are capable of understanding how employees speak, not in specialized HR or IT terms. Now people can say, "I'm having a baby," and get benefit details or guidance on updating their information. That back-and-forth exchange helps build trust and adoption of the technology.

#### 4. Change is Hard — So Practice Changefulness

“We’ve got five generations of people who are working together. Some are digital immigrants and some are digital natives. For some, these tools and skills come naturally — continuous innovation, learning, experimentation, but for others, change is hard.”

— Jason Averbook,  
senior partner and global leader of digital HR strategy,  
Mercer

AI is evolving at a pace we’ve never seen before. If we’re going to take advantage of what this technology can offer, it requires what Jason refers to as “changefulness,” a mindset open to change.

That means trying new things, innovating and yes, failing fast — an idea that can be scary for some companies. I personally prefer to think about it as continuous learning. With AI capabilities increasing exponentially, companies doing pilots and encouraging experimentation will be in a position to keep up with the evolution, while the ones taking a traditional approach by blocking or restricting the use of AI technologies will have fallen behind.

#### 5. Don’t Know Where to Focus? Start With Impact.

“The way we can really help folks is to focus on the problem we’re trying to solve or the opportunities that we can pursue.”

—David Strickland,  
VP of telehealth and care at home technology,  
Kaiser Permanente

Embracing experimentation doesn’t mean opening your organization up to risk with a free-for-all approach. But it can be difficult to know where to start. Jason encouraged companies to ask themselves, “How are we as an organization going to use these tools based on how we want to work?” in order to focus their efforts on what will be most impactful for employees and the business.



## 6. Think Minimum Lovable Product, Not Minimum Viable Product

“Phase one has to work. It has to be minimum lovable, not minimum viable, because our audience has expectations unlike they’ve ever had before.”

— Jason Averbook,  
senior partner and global leader of digital HR strategy,  
Mercer

Implementing a new technology too quickly can have its pitfalls, however. If employees have one bad experience with a product that doesn’t have all its kinks worked out, it might discourage them from using it in the future, even when the technology gets better. Jason recommended that employers should aim for a “minimum lovable product” because a minimum viable product might not meet employees’ high expectations.



## 7. AI Leaves Time For “Hearts’ Work”

“We’ll be able to move away from doing the day-to-day work to focus on what’s more creative, unique — what separates us as businesses, as partners, as humans.”

— Casey Santos,  
chief information officer,  
Asurion

There are three different types of work, as identified by Jason — hands’ work, heads’ work and hearts’ work. He predicted that AI will replace the research and transactional duties that make up hands’ work — like the time-consuming task of creating content for a learning course, a new HR policy, or a job description.

That leaves us with more time to focus on heads’ work, like how to grow your business and hearts’ work, like driving empathy into your actions and decisions.

“We’ll all have an opportunity to pursue vital work for our organization,” David added.

## Meetings On the Go: 5 Dos and Don'ts

The average workday doesn't mean you're at your desk for eight hours straight. Life happens — you need to run out for an appointment or take your dog for a walk. Or you could be taking time during the day to meet with a customer, attend a conference or bond with a coworker.

But just because you're away from your desk doesn't mean collaboration has to stop. You still need to be able to dial into those important calls and share information with your colleagues. But how do you do that from the road while staying safe and keeping your communications professional and polished? Start by following these five dos and don'ts.

### DO: Stay Safe by Connecting to Your Car Display

Whether you're heading to a customer meeting or picking your kids up from school, you may often find yourself in the car during the workday. That's why car manufacturers now offer infotainment systems that are designed to mirror the features of popular mobile devices, helping drivers communicate in a safe and effective way using their car display.

Zoom has added support for [Android Auto](#)<sup>1</sup>, making it easier for drivers to stay connected while on the road. Android<sup>TM</sup> users will now be able to start and join conference calls by audio only and browse meeting schedules from their compatible car display. Active calls are managed through Android Auto, letting you mute your microphone when needed and end the call when finished.

Android Auto joins [Mercedes Benz](#), [Tesla](#), [Apple CarPlay](#) and more in accommodating safer, on-the-go collaboration with Zoom.

### DON'T: Forget to Mute or Turn Off Video

There's nothing worse than interrupting a call because you had your mic on by accident, except maybe when your camera shows you from an unflattering angle. But when you collaborate on the go, these things are prone to happen a bit more.

You can set your camera and mic to be turned off when you start and join meetings in your [Zoom Meeting settings](#), helping you avoid potentially awkward situations. These settings should apply to any meetings you join from your mobile device, too, which will help you stay professional even if you're taking a call from the school pick-up line.

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<sup>1</sup> Android and Android Auto are trademarks of Google LLC. To use Android Auto on your car display, you'll need an Android phone running Android 8 or higher, an active data plan, and the Android Auto app.

<sup>2</sup> When you connect to Android Auto, your video is automatically off.



## DO: Use a Phone Solution When You Don't Need Video

Sometimes, hopping on video doesn't make sense for the situation you're in — like if you want to avoid unnecessary distractions while driving — or you just need to speak with someone over the phone one-on-one to get the information you need. That's where a voice communications solution like Zoom Phone comes in. You can take [Zoom Phone](#) calls from your mobile phone with the Zoom mobile app while you're on the move without having to sacrifice the privacy of your personal number in the process. Plus, you can [send SMS text messages](#) to your contacts when you want to relay quick details once you're out of the car.

## DON'T: Forget to Set Expectations

Want to make sure people know you're on the go before they call you? In [Zoom Team Chat](#), you can set a status message that displays a note as part of your profile, which others can see when they select your contact or chat with you. You can share that you are out at an appointment, will be slow to respond, or are in the field for the day. You can also set your status message to expire at a certain time — at the end of the day or your PTO, for example.

You can also switch your [presence status](#) — the green, red or gray dot next to your icon in chat — to indicate that you're available, busy or out of the office, respectively

## DO: Close the Loop With a Chat App

Sometimes you don't need to meet when a simple chat will do. And if that's the case, you can easily keep communications going whenever you're not driving and can respond safely.

When you need to answer a question or share quick details with coworkers, using a chat app like [Zoom Team Chat](#) on your mobile device is the move. You can fire off important details in a snap, and even share any files, photos, or documents stored on your mobile device. You can even type out a chat and schedule it to be sent at a later time.

If you take a meeting on the road and can't fully respond in the moment, you can always close the loop with [continuous meeting chat](#), where you can follow up with the same meeting attendees over a dedicated group in Zoom Team Chat. When enabled, this feature sends in-meeting chats into that group channel as they are sent in the meeting, helping you catch up on the conversation after the meeting ends and respond appropriately.

## Collaboration That Meets You Where You Are

The modern workday isn't what it used to be. We're now communicating from more places than ever before — from the office, our homes, the road, you name it. You need technology that helps you share information whenever and wherever you need to.

The Zoom platform is designed to help you do just that. With Zoom, you get one centralized place where you can communicate with colleagues and customers across your preferred channels. And that extends to your car and mobile device, so you don't have to worry about travel getting in the way of communication. With Zoom, collaboration goes with you wherever you need to be.



## 5 Tips for Updating Your Office With Hybrid Workplace Technology

Whether your employees are in the office a few times a week, 100% remote or connecting across multiple locations, it's time to update your hybrid workplace technology to [support your team's needs](#), wherever they're working.

Hybrid work technology refers to all the software tools and hardware devices in your workplace that [help in-person and remote work employees collaborate with each other](#). And with teamwork more dispersed than ever, facilities and workplace departments need to design and outfit their spaces with hybrid work tech that supports distributed teams.

A [2022 Gallup poll](#) shows that hybrid work has increased steadily since 2020 to a high of 49% in June 2022, and 8 in 10 remote-capable employees are on a hybrid schedule or work remotely full time. Employees are often collaborating with a mix of colleagues who are in person or remote, but according to Zoom's head of real estate and workplace, Alana Collins, most offices are not properly equipped for effective hybrid work.

"From my experience in talking to several of our industry peers, companies are still navigating this new hybrid work era," Alana said. "Conference room technology is outdated and there aren't enough collaboration spaces that can be used equally for in-person or hybrid gatherings."

Evolving your hybrid workplace technology helps people connect better and be more productive, no matter where they're located. Here are some tips for setting up a [hybrid work environment](#) for a better employee experience that also makes more efficient use of space:

1. Move to a hoteling model with desk booking technology
2. Help hybrid teams develop better in-office collaboration
3. Design different types of hybrid work spaces
4. Rethink the conference room for hybrid meetings
5. Take fully remote workers into consideration



## 1. Move to a Hoteling Model With Desk Booking Technology

If your employees are working from home several days a week, not everyone is going to need their own assigned desk at the office. But how can you make sure employees who come into the office have space to work?

Office hoteling, or reserving a desk in the office for when you come in, has become a common approach for [companies with a hybrid work model](#). Think of it as an evolved form of hot-desking, which involves choosing desks on a first-come-first-served basis.

With hot-desking, employees who show up to the office might not be able to find a workspace next to their team members or with the setup they prefer. Worse, they may not be able to find a desk at all.

Hoteling lets employees book their workspace ahead of time, ensuring everyone has a space for the day and the tools they need to be productive and plan ahead.

[Desk booking software](#) like Zoom Workspace Reservation allows employees to pick a desk near their project team for better collaboration or find a spot near the coffee machine if they prefer. Your solution may even use AI to recommend the best seat based on an employee's preferences or next to frequent collaborators.

Hoteling isn't just handy for employees — facilities teams will be able to see how many people are coming into the office based on workspace reservation data. "For our team, analytics are really important to learn how we can continue to invest in those areas people spend the most time in, or experiment with underutilized spaces," Alana said.

That could inform some of your decisions. Maybe you can consolidate office space from several floors down to one, or even close a satellite office that's no longer needed. Plus, office managers can plan more efficiently for lunch orders, supplies and other in-office items.





## 2. Help Hybrid Teams Develop Better In-office Collaboration

Having a place to sit is just part of the equation. Working alongside direct team members allows employees to quickly ask each other questions, chat about related projects and build a sense of community — all important parts of the in-office experience.

Setting up workplace “neighborhoods” within your office for different departments can help employees find seats close to those they work with most. This approach allows you to allocate the appropriate space that each department needs — for instance, if most of your product team is in person, you might want to place their neighborhood on a floor that has larger conference rooms to support their team meetings. If your finance team is largely remote, you can allocate fewer desks and set up a smaller neighborhood.

You can designate neighborhoods within your desk booking system so employees know where to look when reserving their desks.



### 3. Design Different Types of Hybrid Work Spaces

Employees who have a flexible or hybrid work schedule might feel more motivated to go into the office if there are a variety of spaces that meet their needs for hybrid meetings, focus work and socialization. When designing these spaces, from individual workstations to meeting areas, take into account what employees are looking for out of various environments and experiences.

“As workplace leaders, we need to ask ourselves, ‘Do we have the right technology and resources available to employees to help them have the best work day when they’re in the office?’” Alana said.

Alana noted that [Zoom’s new London office](#) includes 75 work points, ranging from library-style benches, touchdown spaces and agile tables for collaboration to traditional desks. “Our employees can book these spaces with our Workspace Reservation tool, helping them plan and navigate their day in the office,” she said.

Here are a few different types of spaces your office might need:

- **Phone booth-style spaces:** One-person, phone booth-style spaces are perfect for employees to have a private spot to take a video call without bothering people at their desks.
- **Small hybrid meeting rooms:** Employees may want meeting areas that are smaller and less formal than conference rooms for team meetings. Set those spaces up with an all-in-one device for video conferencing – perfect for two to three people to meet comfortably with remote colleagues.
- **Large meeting rooms:** Larger rooms can be set up as hybrid gathering spaces for all-hands or town halls where in-person and remote workers can come together. Optimize these types of spaces for presentations, keeping in mind that you may have presenters both in the office and on Zoom.
- **Open areas throughout the workplace:** Employees who come into the office may want space to socialize or have impromptu conversations. Consider how your communal areas might facilitate ad hoc meetups and informal meetings.
- **Flexible spaces:** When you need to quickly set up a hybrid meeting space on the fly, an [all-in-one meeting device](#) on a mobile cart can be a great option. You can simply wheel it to a room to set up a video meeting in a snap.



## 4. Rethink the Conference Room for Hybrid Meetings

Conference rooms are an office staple, but most are set up for in-person collaboration around a long, large table. When you add remote participants into the mix, they get the dreaded “bowling alley” view, where it’s almost impossible to clearly see or hear people at the far end of the table. In-person participants end up talking mainly to each other while remote attendees find it hard to engage with the conversation.

Now that so many of us work with dispersed teams and meet with customers or partners remotely, it’s time to optimize your conference room with hybrid workplace technology:

- If your employees are dealing with a mess of wires and cables to set up every video meeting, invest in [conference room software](#) that makes it easy to get connected with the touch of a button.
- [Smart camera technology](#) like Zoom’s intelligent director uses AI technology to frame each person in the room in their own video tile (bye-bye, bowling alley view!) so remote attendees can actually see their faces, and microphone arrays allow everyone in the room to be heard, no matter where they’re sitting.
- For visual collaboration, a [digital whiteboard monitor](#) is a must so everyone can see and contribute to the board, even if they’re remote.



## 5. Take Fully Remote Workers into Consideration

When making decisions about your physical offices, you might think fully remote employees are unaffected – after all, they may never step foot in your workspace. However, your hybrid workplace technology has a direct effect on how in-person employees interact with their remote colleagues.

Some of the solutions mentioned above, like smart cameras and digital whiteboards, allow remote employees to have a more engaging experience, especially in hybrid meetings. When designing different types of spaces, pay attention to lighting, camera angles, audio systems and other details that matter for remote participants.

“We’re seeing how our workspaces can encourage in-person collaboration and innovation while also having the tools and technologies to foster digital connection and a sense of community with our global teams,” Alana said.





## In Summary: The Modern Hybrid Workplace Requires Collaboration

As employees rely on hybrid work technology and effective workspaces to get things done, the relationship between a company's IT and workplace teams is more important than ever.

Workplace or facilities teams should work hand in hand with IT to optimize the complex relationship between people, the places they work, and the technology they use. This means gaining an understanding of what employees need (through surveys, interviews and other feedback initiatives), and working together to create spaces that seamlessly incorporate digital collaboration tools.

You may find that your office has too many large meeting rooms that employees just aren't using, or too many open workstations when employees are looking for private booths. Surveying employees on a regular basis and understanding how they're using your current spaces can help you stay informed and make decisions about your office design.



## How AI Points the Way Toward More Meaningful Work

Even though we're more digitally connected than ever, collaboration still requires a lot of effort. Keeping distributed team members updated on the status of projects, taking notes, sharing action items from meetings and keeping up with chats and emails all take time away from getting work done.

This collaboration paradox is preventing many of us from achieving greater productivity and doing more meaningful work, as we found out in a new survey from Morning Consult,\* commissioned by Zoom. The good news is that new generative AI technologies can help. The global survey of more than 11,000 leaders and employees uncovered compelling findings in AI usage and sentiment between leaders and employees, revealed which tasks they spend most of their time on and demonstrated the impact of the latest [generative AI tools](#) on helping them save time and improve collaboration.

Below are some key trends and insights, and you can take a look at the full [AI in the workplace report](#) for all the findings related to how AI helps fuel modern collaboration.

### The Collaboration Paradox Is Real — and It Affects Leaders More

The report confirms what many of us experience day to day – that the majority of people spend a lot of work time on administrative or busy tasks like status updates and sharing notes with colleagues. More than 70% of leaders said they spend a few times a week on these tasks, compared to more than half of employees. Adding to that, many leaders said they spend more time than they want to on these types of tasks.

With 67% of leaders saying they often work more than eight hours a day, their responses indicate they could use more time back to focus on other things. When asked what they'd do with more time back, the top response from leaders was developing better processes and workflows for their team; employees wanted more uninterrupted focus time to complete their work.

### AI Avoiders Don't Realize How Many Hours They Could Be Saving

Respondents who are currently using AI tools at work say they are seeing significant time savings – leaders more so than employees. Seventy-four percent of leaders say it saves them one or more hours a day, versus 46% of employees.

However, those who don't use AI at work aren't just missing out on those extra hours – they don't recognize how much time they could potentially be saving. When asked how much time they anticipated AI would save them during a typical workday, 55% of employees and 50% of leaders who don't use AI said they didn't know. This uncovers a huge opportunity cost for AI avoiders, and educating this group on the benefits of AI could potentially help drive adoption.



## Leaders Report Positive Effects, But Employees Are Still Hesitant to Adopt

Leaders whose teams are using AI reported many benefits, especially around collaboration. This may be because AI can be used to automate or aid in certain tasks like sharing notes and action items after meetings, composing messages and organizing information.

However, tension remains between the benefits leaders are seeing, and employees' overall sentiment toward AI – 82% of leaders said they were excited about AI, compared to 57% of employees. That sentiment gap also translates to adoption: 73% of leaders said they use AI at least a few times a week, compared to just 32% of employees. And 23% of employees say they don't use AI at all (at work or for personal use).

The lack of adoption could explain employees' perceived drawbacks related to technology, with employees' top three concerns including job loss, data security and accuracy. This shows just how imperative it is for leaders to take the opportunity to educate employees and equip them with the right training to help them understand and adopt AI.

## Regional Insights, Barriers to Adoption and More

[Read the full report](#) to gain even more insights into how leaders and employees are thinking about and using AI, and how sentiment breaks down across the globe.

As you consider your organization's next steps with AI, including implementing tools like [Zoom AI Companion](#), find out how leaders are implementing AI successfully in their own organizations to create positive employee experiences in the follow-up piece: "[AI at Work: Enhancing Employee Engagement and Business Success](#)," developed by Harvard Business Review.



## How Generative AI Makes Meetings Better

The amount of time workers spend in meetings has [tripled](#) over the past four years. Which would be fine if workers felt that meetings were a productive use of their time. The opposite is often true; however, with [71% of workers](#) calling their meetings unproductive, according to research. This isn't helpful, particularly when consumers demand better and faster responses from the companies they trust than ever before.

Enter generative AI, a powerful tool organizations can leverage to do more with less. Generative AI adoption rates are nothing short of dizzying. ChatGPT in particular gained 100 million users in just 3 months – an unprecedented adoption rate when compared to other disruptive pieces of technology, such as mobile phones or the internet.

While much has been made of how generative AI affects creativity, companies like Zoom are looking for ways to deploy generative AI to take care of low-level mundane tasks – freeing workers to accomplish higher-level objectives. At Zoom's recent Work Transformation Summit, Chief Transformation Officer Xuedong (XD) Huang sat down with CEO of the Atlantic Nicholas Thompson for a fireside chat on how generative AI can be used to improve worker productivity and the employee experience during meetings.

### Reduce Distractions

As XD points out, meetings are the most important business function. This will only increase as more organizations move toward a hybrid working model. According to [recent Reworked research](#), 26% of organizations envision that the next year will bring a substantial increase in remote working. Further, 42% of organizations are seeing increased employee interaction through technology tools such as Zoom or Slack as a result of remote/distributed work adoption.

But if workers spend all their time taking notes during virtual meetings, then they aren't really present in the moment, able to think strategically or contribute productively to the conversation. Thanks to generative AI, workers can have their meeting notes transcribed automatically, freeing workers to participate more fully in each meeting they attend. "People go to meetings to solve problems," XD said. Generative AI transcription lets workers keep that objective.

### Increase Communication

Globalization and a push to improve Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) are just some of the factors leading to a workforce from sometimes wildly divergent backgrounds. As organizations continue their push to increase the number of diverse opinions in their workforce, it's important that they also do what they can to facilitate communication between workers.

Communication is a key part of any meetings, and the level to which all participants can make themselves understood plays a critical role in meeting effectiveness. Communication can fall apart if teams can't understand each other due to disparate language skill levels. Using technology to remove the language barriers between native and non-native speakers allows global teams to work together more effectively and reduce the potential for misunderstandings. "Our AI Companion can take notes for you, identify speakers or clarify what was said in the moment," said XD.

## Facilitate Follow-up, with a Privacy-First Mindset

When employees use generative AI for meeting transcription, they can more easily share those notes with meeting attendees or use the transcription as the building blocks of their own after-action summaries.

While next-generation meeting transcription is making workers' lives easier, it shouldn't come at the cost of privacy and security. The meteoric rise of generative AI and its capabilities in particular, is concerning for over [60% of adults in the U.S.](#), according to recent research. Zoom's AI Companion shares meeting notes only with meeting participants, as the company is committed to keeping privacy top of mind. "We don't use transcriptions to train our AI, as privacy is very important to us," said XD.

## How Zoom AI Companion Makes Meetings Easier

Throughout the keynote, XD and Nicholas explored the various ways that Zoom AI Companion was designed to improve workflows in the age of overabundant meetings. One of AI Companion's chief capabilities is to join meetings and transcribe what's being said in the moment. By delegating the low-level task of meeting transcription to technology, workers are freed to participate fully in each meeting they attend, devoting their entire self to the task without worrying about making sure they capture what's been said. While in the meeting, if they haven't caught what's been said, they can query the AI for meaning. This makes it easier for workers to be understood and reduces miscommunication. Finally, with a complete meeting transcription at their fingertips, workers can share their notes with participants and use AI Companion to generate meeting summaries for easy identification of next steps.





## Distributed Teamwork Isn't Easy — Tips for Global Team Collaboration

Distributed teams often need to work harder to collaborate effectively, and many tasks that help keep teammates up to date can take away from true collaboration. Tasks like sending meeting notes, action items or updating a collaborator on the status of a project can hinder a person's ability to connect with others and focus on meaningful work. In fact, based on Zoom's [AI in the Workplace report](#), 73% of leaders and 55% of employees spend at least a few times a week sharing notes and action items with colleagues, and 71% of leaders and 51% of employees provide status updates on projects multiple times during the week. That's a lot of busy work that can get in the way of team collaboration.

Zoom isn't immune to these challenges. As a global company, it's had to be strategic about how it approaches team collaboration. It leans on its own tools to help. Here's how.

### A Collaboration Hub Where Team Members Come Together

With team members located on different continents, collaboration is a logistical challenge. There's often no way for everyone to get on a live call without someone having to join in the middle of the night.

The Zoom platform is the glue that binds teams together, enabling continuous collaboration across time zones and languages. Central to the platform is [Zoom Team Chat](#), which provides a way for employees to communicate asynchronously or in real time, one on one or in groups.

"I'm on East Coast time [in the U.S.] and most of my counterparts are on the West Coast, but I also work with people in Europe and Asia," said Darin, head of productivity applications. "We have this truly global collaboration going on."

As a manager, Darin tries to be mindful of sending chats to his colleagues outside of work hours. "Some people don't mind being messaged after hours, but others prefer that boundary. Team Chat allows us to work both ways. I can schedule a chat so the recipient will get it in the morning, their time," he said.

Team Chat helps Darin stay in the loop on many different types of workstreams, whether he's an active player or just needs to be aware at a high level. Even when those conversations are happening in another language, Darin uses Zoom's built-in [Team Chat translation feature](#) to translate the messages. And when collaboration spans across multiple products — from meetings to chat, for example — [continuous meeting chat](#) helps keep the discussion in one place so he can continue the conversation even after the meeting ends.



## Asynchronous Collaboration Across Time Zones

Zoom employees rely on Zoom Team Chat as a hub for communication, discussion, and decision-making. But when team members need to share a product mock-up or point out a bug, words and static images often don't tell the whole story.

"In the past, we would take screenshots and write descriptions and paste them in chat or in a document. You could piece together what was going on, but it was much more time-consuming," Darin said.

That process changed with the introduction of Zoom Clips, an [asynchronous video tool](#) built into the Zoom platform.

"With Clips, we can collaborate asynchronously over video. I find it's the best tool for demonstration," said Matthieu, a product manager. From France, he can work with engineering teams around the globe to fine-tune specific product features.

"The engineering team will work on a feature and record a short demo. When I get online, I can check to make sure it fits the requirements and design," Matthieu explained. "I can make a comment at a specific point in a clip if I see something that doesn't fit a requirement, and start a discussion from there."

On the other end of that feedback loop is Kendall, manager of product design, and his team. "As a designer, sometimes I receive a requirement within a Clips link. It gives me context, like I just had a walk-through meeting with the product manager," Kendall said. "If I have a draft design ready in the afternoon, I can take a few minutes to prepare a clip to present my ideas, and the following morning, I will have comments on my clip or in Team Chat. If everything works well, they post their thumbs-up to the clip."

Darin sees this solution to the back-and-forth of chat messages as having a huge return on investment for his team. "We have clear communication in a very short amount of time," he said.

Asynchronous communication gives Laura, a content designer in the U.K., time to digest the information being presented and organize her ideas. "Personally, when I'm on the receiving end of a clip, it's wonderful to have a little space to think about my response," she said. "Clips make communication a little easier for me."

## Built-in Translation Tools Enable Multilingual Team Collaboration

Time zones aren't the only challenge Zoom's global teams need to overcome. Language barriers can also prevent teams from communicating clearly. Team collaboration tools need to be able to support communication across different languages.

Providing an agenda before the meeting is a good practice in general, but it also helps those who don't speak the primary meeting language prepare ahead of time. Darin says he keeps track of agenda items in [Zoom Notes](#), which can be shared in chat and pulled up in the meeting tab.

Laura's engineering and product design counterparts, who mainly speak a different language, share their meeting agendas in Team Chat, where she can then [translate the messages](#) into English with a couple of clicks. During the meeting, she turns on [real-time translated captions](#) to keep up with the conversation. "I'm able to participate and listen comfortably without language being a huge barrier," she said.

## Three Takeaways for Global Teams

If you want to help your distributed teams communicate better across time zones and language barriers, here are three things to consider:

- **A central hub helps teams stay connected.** When teams know where to go for information, it enables them to collaborate better. With one platform for team collaboration that includes Meetings, Team Chat, Clips, and [Workvivo for broader company communications](#), employees can stay on top of their cross-functional projects and get organizational updates without leaving Zoom. "Workvivo is now the best place for us to find up-to-date company news," Matthieu said.
- **Not everything has to be "live."** Asynchronous communication via Team Chat and Clips can be just as effective as a live meeting in certain situations, or a great way to get a conversation started. As Laura said, "Clips isn't a meeting replacement but more of an accompaniment to keep momentum going." And, even if you can't make a meeting, AI-generated meeting summaries can help you get caught up.
- **Integrated solutions save time.** When your teams don't need to toggle back and forth between third-party translation tools, they can communicate with colleagues more quickly and efficiently. "Team Chat's translation feature is helpful for my team. It's quite easy to let us double-check the meaning of a message when we have doubts," Kendall said.

# An Economist's Take On the Power Of Predictive AI

Our lives are all about making decisions. Will you take an umbrella on your walk or not? How about if there's a 25% chance of rain? How about if you're wearing something you really don't want to get wet?

According to [Ajay Agrawal](#), economist, professor and co-author of [Prediction Machines: The Simple Economics of Artificial Intelligence](#), we use a combination of prediction and judgment to make every decision, big or small. The power of AI comes from its ability to take care of the prediction part of that equation – to tell you the chance of rain. Ultimately, you'll use human judgment to decide whether you should bring an umbrella based on how much you dislike getting wet versus how much you dislike carrying an umbrella when it doesn't rain.

Artificial intelligence models can process massive amounts of data to identify patterns and generate accurate predictions. There's no doubt AI is [enhancing how individuals work](#), helping them be more productive, improving how they collaborate and upleveling their skills. And [when companies use AI for predictive analytics](#), it can transform how leaders make decisions, helping them better serve customers, allocate resources and create new and improved processes.

Ajay recently joined Zoom's [Work Evolved webinar series](#) to talk about the power of AI and predictive analytics. Zoom sat down with Ajay to continue the conversation on predictive AI – here's what he had to say about its potential for changing entire industries and which employees have the most to gain from using predictive AI tools.

**Zoom: Some people view AI as smart machines, robots capable of talking or thinking like humans. As an economist, how do you think about AI?**

**Ajay Agrawal:** Artificial intelligence helps us with prediction. Prediction is using information you do have to generate information you don't have.

That's what generative AI models like ChatGPT are doing – using prediction to generate human-sounding language. Generative AI models predict the next token, or word, in a sequence to create a human-sounding message. Another example would be a bank using AI for fraud detection, processing data from past transactions and user habits to accurately predict whether a purchase is fraudulent.

A basic principle of economics is that when something becomes cheaper, we use more of that thing. The rise of AI represents a drop in the cost of prediction. And as prediction gets cheaper, we'll use more of it.

**Zoom: Let's talk more about prediction. What is predictive AI and what are some real-world examples?**

**Agrawal:** Predictive AI uses input data to generate output. As a traditional example, we can use 20 years of historical sales data to predict third-quarter sales for next year. The historical data is the input, and the sales prediction is the output.

Less traditionally, we can use the pixels in a medical image to predict the label on a tumor as malignant or benign. The pixel data is the input, and the label on the tumor is the output. That's also a prediction.

One interesting feature of AI is that, unlike prior statistical techniques, it can utilize multimodal data (e.g., pictures, video, language), not just numbers, as input data, and it can produce predictions in the form of pictures, video and language.

Predictive analytics is core to many types of innovation. We can see the real-world applications of using AI for prediction in things like driving, translation, fraud detection, particle size distribution, email replies and inspection.

**Zoom: In industries where predictive AI is becoming a dominant force, what effect will AI have on jobs? People are worried that this AI revolution could eliminate their positions. Is that a valid fear?**

**Agrawal:** Before we had washing machines, it took two people all day to do the laundry. Now, one person can spend a fraction of their day washing clothes. But nobody's complaining that those machines took their jobs.

Similarly, we'll be able to offload some aspects of our work to machines. When we think about our jobs, a lot of it is based on making decisions. And every decision has two elements: prediction and judgment. If we can offload predictive analytics to the machines, we're left with human judgment, and that skill is what people need to focus on growing.

AI can use prediction to draft an email or map a route from point A to point B — but [it takes a human to decide](#) whether that email message achieves the goal, or whether the route makes sense to take. AI is the copilot, the assistant, but it can't make the decision.

**Zoom: What effect does AI have on employees' productivity and the workforce in general?**

**Agrawal:** When computers were introduced, it made highly skilled people disproportionately more productive, and that led to a lot of income inequality. AI seems to be having the opposite effect. Lower-skilled workers have the most to gain from using AI assistants or copilots.

Take, for example, call centers. They began introducing AI tools that would give employees recommendations to help the customers they were speaking with. [Researchers at MIT and Stanford](#) discovered that AI had a limited impact on the high performers because they already knew what to say. But employees who previously hadn't performed as well were now brought up almost to the level of highly skilled workers with the help of AI tools.

Another example we're all familiar with is how navigational AI has made it so that anyone can drive in any city as well as a pro. That enabled innovative companies like Uber. Before Uber, there were 200,000 people who were professional drivers. Now, there are 3-4 million people who drive for Uber. We're sitting at the precipice of a moment in history where this sort of system-level shift is starting to happen across different industries.



**Zoom:** What advancements are you most excited about with AI? If you could take out your crystal ball, what do you see being the next big innovation and how will it affect our world?

**Agrawal:** I predict that in two to three years, we'll see AI coming off the screen and into the physical world. Right now, we have models to predict a series of words on a screen, and the next stage is to have robots predict a series of actions to accomplish a task like making a coffee or parking your car.

But the real profound shift will be in terms of scientific discovery. We'll have AI models that can generate a hypothesis and test it, trigger robots to run the experiment and feed the results of that experiment back to the AI, which updates the hypothesis and runs another experiment. We're already seeing labs doing a version of this.

## Conclusion

As organizations adapt to new ways of working, it's important to recognize AI's role. Despite employees' concerns about AI replacing them, savvy organizations will use AI to enhance human interaction, personalize experiences, meet employees' needs with user-friendly language, focus on impactful solutions and free workers to focus on higher-level tasks.

Tasks like updating teams, note-taking during meetings and sharing project updates consume valuable time despite increasing digital connectivity. Generative AI tools offer significant time savings for employees. AI enables better meeting experiences by transcribing discussions and facilitating communication, particularly in global teams. Additionally, predictive AI revolutionizes decision-making, empowering employees with enhanced productivity and skill development instead of threatening their jobs. As the future of work progresses, AI will continue to evolve and expand its role beyond traditional applications into areas we're only speculating about today.

## Appendix

### Further Reading

Longer versions of the following articles were published on zoom.com. Click on the links below for the original sources.

[7 Ways Leaders Can Use AI to Improve the Digital Employee Experience](#)  
[Meetings On the Go: 5 Dos and Don'ts](#)  
[5 Tips for Updating Your Office With Hybrid Workplace Technology](#)  
[How AI Points the Way Toward More Meaningful Work](#)  
[How Generative AI Makes Meetings Better](#)  
[Distributed Teamwork Isn't Easy – Tips for Global Team Collaboration](#)  
[An Economist's Take On the Power Of Predictive AI](#)

### Further Watching

Some articles were synthesized from Zoom webinars. Click on the links below to watch the webinars on demand.

[Zoom's Work Transformation Summit on-demand library](#)  
[Work Evolved webinar, featuring Ajay Agrawal](#)

### Resources

Click on the links below for more information on Zoom's products and solutions.

[Zoom Workplace](#)  
[Zoom Rooms](#)  
[Zoom AI Companion](#)

## About

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Zoom's mission is to provide one platform that delivers limitless human connection. Zoom Workplace – our AI-powered, open collaboration platform built for modern work – streamlines communications, improves productivity, increases employee engagement, optimizes in-person time, and offers customer choice with third-party apps and integrations. Zoom Workplace, powered by Zoom AI Companion, includes collaboration solutions like meetings, team chat, phone, scheduler, whiteboard, spaces, Workvivo, and more. Together with Zoom Workplace, Zoom's Business Services for sales, marketing, and customer care teams, including Zoom Contact Center, strengthen customer relationships throughout the customer lifecycle. Founded in 2011, Zoom is publicly traded (NASDAQ:ZM) and headquartered in San Jose, California. Get more info at [zoom.com](https://zoom.com).

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