

Conference Room Support and VTC Request Process

1. Consider an experience:

This experience revolves around the setup, support and request processes for about 500 video tele-conference (VTC) and standard conference rooms across a nationwide business.



2. Set the Scene

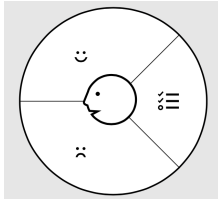
Today, I work for a major defense contractor in the IT End User Services group. I am responsible for about 500 conference rooms across multiple states spanning from the east to west coast. These conference rooms have a number of different technologies and capabilities in them including VTC. Some technologies are the responsibility of the IT department like computers, monitors, phones and network connections. Other technologies like projectors, screens, TVs, and sound systems are the responsibility of the facilities group. Rarely do these two groups collaborate on customer needs and standards for the conference rooms and VTCs. To add another layer of complexity the facilities groups at each of the different sites operates autonomously from one another unlike the IT group which is a fairly cohesive and organized group working at a national level. This causes confusion for the customer when requesting devices or service and results in delays and interoperability issues among equipment in the conference rooms at each of the different sites due to no standardization in the service or request process.



3. What goals were the customers trying to accomplish?

There are many goals the customer is trying to accomplish. The ultimate goal is to walk into a conference room and effectively use the capabilities to collaborate without down time or intervention by trying to fix something that isn't working. The customer doesn't know how to fix something that's not working nor do they care to. For example, they just want to display their screen on the projector easily and reliably. Other goals are quick turnaround in service requests for new gear or refreshed gear without getting the run around from either IT or Facilities, and

attending or hosting VTC meetings with little to no setup time on their part. The VTC needs to be scheduled and set up which requires a bit of coordination between host and guest groups and the Central VTC Bridge for making the connections. This is a fairly lengthy process that requires many contact points and detailed coordination.



4. Create a Customer Profile

By using the methodologies from Osterwalder, Pigneur, et al. ((2014) Part 1: [Customer Profile](#), pp. 3-25 (pdf), a customer profile is built. This customer profile assist the system analyst in clarifying the customer understanding by delineating the jobs the customers need to do, identifying pains in the current state of doing these jobs and uncovering gains or benefits the customers would like to achieve as a result of doing these jobs.

Jobs – Most of the jobs listed here are functional due to the nature of this service. They are also listed in order of importance. The first are the most important and the last are insignificant:

1. Share a laptop screen on a projector or TV to share with team
2. Schedule a VTC
3. Connect a laptop to the corporate network to access data
4. Use the telephone to call into a conference bridge to speak to other team members or collaborators that are remote
5. Collaborate with on site and remote team members
6. Request a refresh or new capabilities in a conference room
7. Buy new technology to satisfy capabilities.
8. Request a new conference room be built and populated with capabilities
9. Play quality video in conference room via computer or laptop
10. Play quality audio in conference room via computer or laptop

Pains – The pains the customer realizes are a combination of undesired outcome, problems, obstacles and risks. Ranked in order of relevance, the first are the most extreme and the last are moderate:

1. Cost for IT gear comes out of my budget
2. Takes too much time and effort to schedule VTCs
3. Takes time away from a meeting if technologies are not working hence meeting is less efficient and wastes many peoples time.
4. Frustration and annoying with technical difficulties.
5. Afraid that old technology in conference rooms make a tech company look bad to the partners and customers.
6. Expendables like batteries and projector bulbs are hard to get.
7. Have to go to multiple groups to get different things serviced/delivered.

8. Not sure what to buy due to lack of standards.
9. May buy wrong gear and risk interoperability issues.

Gains – These gains are functional, social and emotional. They make the customer's job functionally easier, makes them look better in the eyes of their leaders, peers and customers, as well as gives them a feeling of accomplishment and success when the meeting is complete. These are ranked in order of severity. The first are the most essential and the last are nice to have:

1. Savings in purchasing conference room equipment
2. Simple to use
3. Time back to host meeting
4. Stream lined VTC request process getting time back to focus on real job
5. Effective use of all meeting participants time
6. Credibility in the eyes of partners and customers
7. Seamless use of technology
8. Quick turn in requesting capabilities.
9. Dealing with one person/org for conference room and VTC needs.
10. Quick response to emergency request.



5. Write a persona

The Think, See, Feel, Do check list as described in *Personas for Needfinding, Design and Growth* by Alex Cowan May 30th, 2013 was primarily used to create and develop the customer personas or archetypes for the customers of the VTC and Conference Room service. A few of the main customers of the VTC and Conference Room service are Lawrence the Senior VP and Todd the mid level program manager. Each customer has different needs, wants and tolerances for the technology, service and support of the conference rooms and capabilities inside them.

Lawrence Senior VP of Operations



Lawrence is a 56-year-old Senior VP of Operations at a major defense corporation. He's been with the company for 31 years this May. Hired right out of college in the mid 80's, he has come up

through the ranks starting out as a test engineer on the factory floor. In this role, he is responsible for getting product out the door quickly, efficiently, and with little to no defects since the product being delivered is usually high cost/low volume. The company has recently consolidated from five to four business units with each business unit having very different product lines. As a result of this consolidation, Lawrence's business unit has absorbed 84% of the fractured business unit. Another result of the consolidation created a larger footprint for Operations. Lawrence is now responsible for three additional major factory operations that span from the east coast to the west coast. Previously, he was only responsible for two factories. Lawrence is constantly on the go attending meetings, both locally and remotely in other states, he is reviewing business plans from his tablet device or smart phone and needs to be connected 24x7 to respond to issues and drive business results.

In this new landscape, Lawrence is faced with the challenges of improving efficiencies and decreasing the time to deliver with shrinking budgets over a greater amount of workforce. This decrease in budget means that Operations doesn't have the money to spend on things that do not directly support factory floor operations and delivering quality product on time and in spec. Things like travel costs and nonessential IT products and services that are peripheral to his business objectives are targets for potential cuts.

One motivation that drives Lawrence is the ability to collaborate more effectively with these new factories that he inherited as part of the company consolidation. The ability for him to meet face to face with his peers and subordinates is essential but with travel budgets being cut this affects Operation's bottom line. Lawrence uses the current VTC system but is confused and frustrated with the request process and the fact that it is different in each of his factories. He would like a way to collaborate seamlessly and bring his teams together in a virtual conference room experience as well as on the factory floor across regions but wishes the systems was easier to use schedule.

Think	Lawrence thinks that VTC will help run his business better but does not like the idea that his organization would have to pay for the technology. This directly affects his bottom line and with the current cost cuts, this option would fall under the line. He also dislikes the fact that scheduling the VTCs at the different sites is so different. He likes the fact that this will bring his business closer together and foster seamless collaboration across a dispersed geography.
See	Lawrence sees this technology when he visits other suppliers and customer's site. He also reads about it in a number of industrial engineering and operations whitepapers and magazines. He understands the value it can bring his organization by modernizing it and would like to see IT enable Operations in a new way.
Feel	Lawrence feels that he is wasting valuable money every time he has to travel to a site. Not only wasting money but wasting time. Standing in line at the airport and waiting for planes takes away from him being available for his factory floor operations. He also feels burdened with the request process for scheduling a VTC.
Do	Lawrence is always on the go, talking on the phone or consuming information about his business. This enables him to make decisions that drive the future of his organization.

Todd Mid-Level Program Manager



Todd is a 42-year-old Mid-Level Program Manager at a major defense corporation. He's been with the company for 5 years. Although Todd is not new to the company, being that he's been here for 5 years, he feels that he is still learning how this particular company works. Process, personnel and technologies seem to be ever changing. He has many years of experience with a different defense contractor in their Program Management Office and is quite capable at running large programs with multiple projects. He knows his way around an Integrated Master Schedule and is especially good at keeping people on task.

At his last company, he travelled about 75% of his time and was tired of the back and forth. He wanted an opportunity that allowed him to spend more time with his two kids, one boy and one girl. Todd enjoys working for this company and is motivated by the fact that he can run programs and not have to travel as much. This is due to the strong collaboration capabilities that are offered. His team is geographically dispersed and often needs to meet for design review and project planning activities.

Todd also has a budget that gets tighter every year. What's worse is that his budget consists of multiple contracts that are constantly competing with other outside vendors and firms. Every little bit of overhead and unnecessary costs needs to be streamlined since the margins are so small. Todd can't afford to keep up with expenses that IT should be responsible for which includes buying gear and maintaining it on his own. He is also frustrated with the state of the conference rooms that he uses. They are not well kept and it seems that, constantly, he and his team are trying to make them work rather than just rely and depend on their capability.

Think	Todd thinks that the capabilities to collaborate with his teams both locally and remotely are great but the execution and service behind maintaining them is very poor. He continually has to spend program dollars to buy and install TVs, projectors and other devices in conference rooms. He thinks this should be an end-to-end service that IT is fully responsible for allowing him and his team to focus on their real job.
See	Todd sees the technology not work at times and the conference rooms are usually a mess with wires all over the table and floor. The Projectors have bad bulbs and don't work, the PCs are old and slow, most of the network jacks are not connected and the Wi-Fi signal strength is poor not allowing an effective meeting.
Feel	Todd feels embarrassed when he wastes a lot of time trying to set up a room for a meeting and it is not working. Many highly paid engineers and program support personnel are sitting around watching him try to turn on the computer and make it display on the projector screen to no avail. He also comes in early to try and give extra time to the set up and that still doesn't help.
Do	Todd supports the technology and capabilities the best he can and will work with IT to develop a service strategy and operation that will support his programs.

