

Expensify Eliminates the Tech Chaos and Time Wasted Trying to Start Meetings, Stand ups and Calls

“We’re spending less time trying to help people solve connection issues because those have all gone away,” McNamara explained. “No more conference calls — they’re the worst!”

Expensify

Industry	Financial
HQ	San Francisco
Location	United States (San Francisco, Michigan, London)
Employees	90
Use Cases	Team meetings, daily check-ins, real-time collaboration



Problem

A distributed workforce struggling to stay in sync

At expense report software company Expensify, employees keep in touch through short and sweet check-ins throughout the day — but glitchy video conference platforms failed to effectively connect Expensify’s different office teams and remote workers to one another, leading to time-consuming and productivity-sapping meetings.



Solution

Highfive’s uniquely simple set up and ease of use

Lightning-fast installation, ease of use and high-quality technology led to a seamless experience for employees, and soon the whole team began using Highfive to hold their meetings.



Results

Time savings and increased productivity

By eliminating meeting time spent dedicated to fixing technical bugs and providing for virtual face-to-face communication, Highfive allowed Expensify employees to make full use of their check-ins, leading to boosted engagement and efficiency.

PROBLEM



Struggling to spark real-time, long-distance conversations.

Instead of turning in paper receipts, Expensify provides a digital solution for companies to manage expenses worldwide. No matter their location, Expensify encourages their team to communicate via quick check-ins and short, stand-up meetings, preferably in person. But with their team of nearly 100 working out of offices in Michigan, London, San Francisco and several remote locations, that wasn't always possible — so finding a suitable substitute for in-person meetings became a priority.

“The importance of face-to-face communication — the intimacy of being with that person — has always been a huge driving factor for how we operate,” said Matt McNamara, Director of Engineering at Expensify. “There’s just this special thing that happens when you actually see the person’s face that you’re talking to, and that’s something that we’ve always wanted to make pervasive in everything that we do at Expensify.”

Expensify needed a way to enable those conversations all around the world — without lengthy delays caused by technological difficulties. But several different experiments with communications platforms like traditional conference calls, a pricey customized audio-video system, Skype, Google Hangouts and HipChat video, all failed to meet their standards.

“The curse of audio-visual stuff is that it’s complicated to the point that, even when we just try to connect our entire company for a quick meeting, we end up only touching on main priorities because of technological issues,” said McNamara. “Connecting the teams for those stand-up meetings was the biggest nightmare for the past two years — until Highfive came around.”



SOLUTION



An approachable, intuitive, video conferencing solution.

“The thought of bringing in Cisco and their web conferencing tools just seemed to fly in the face of our culture at Expensify, but this nice little device on top of the TV fits with our brand really well. I installed all of the units myself, and it took about two minutes. It was so simple. It just worked. We don’t have to do any maintenance: we just plug it in, and we’re done.”

Previously, one of the biggest problems with conferencing platforms was convincing everyone to actually use them. And when a slight delay from technological difficulties meant the whole day could be thrown off, employees had been hesitant to use them. So, when it came time to introduce Highfive, the Expensify team set up one Highfive for use in a conference room. Once a handful of employees started using it, it was easy to get the rest of the company on board.

“I didn’t even have to give people instructions on how to get started,” McNamara recalled. “It was just completely seamless. Highfive has this viral effect where once you have a call with one person and they see how much better it is, they go to their next meeting and demand that Highfive happens there as well. Everybody was training each other after they got started themselves, and it spread like wildfire around the office.”



RESULT



A happier, more engaged and more productive team.

“As a result of using Highfive, we’re spending less time trying to help people solve connection issues because those have all gone away,” McNamara explained. “I actually don’t think I’ve seen our old Polycom setup outside of that once a month meeting — they’re just collecting dust. No more conference calls — they’re the worst!”

Since adopting Highfive company-wide, Expensify’s far-flung global team has quickly unified. Instead of watching attendee count dwindle due to connection problems at their stand-up meetings, numbers are now up. And it’s not just attendance that’s increasing, either — remote workers are engaging with the home office team, participating as if they were there in person. With Highfive’s ease of use and reliability, the team feels more cohesive than ever before.

“Since we’ve scattered Highfives through the office and created a culture where people are using it, our international and remote teams are much more involved and connected than ever before,” McNamara explained. “Nobody wants to join an all-hands meeting that’s being broadcast through the speakerphone of someone’s cell phone. Now that we have the clear audio and everyone can actually see what’s going on, people are more engaged. It makes everyone feel like a part of the team, no matter where they are based.”