

CASE STUDY

Zillow Scales Their Business with BlueJeans Meetings

Zillow Group houses a portfolio of the largest and most vibrant real estate and home-related brands on the web and mobile. The company's brands focus on all stages of the home lifecycle: renting, buying, selling, financing and home improvement. Zillow Group is committed to empowering consumers with unparalleled data, inspiration and knowledge around homes, and connecting them with the right local professionals to help. In addition, Zillow Group develops a comprehensive suite of marketing software and technology solutions to help real estate, rental and mortgage professionals connect with millions of consumers.

Zillow Group's real estate and home-related brands include Zillow, Trulia, StreetEasy and RealEstate.com, among others, commit to offering innovative technology and services to consumers and real estate professionals alike. The company has grown its web and mobile app traffic to over 188 million unique visitors per month with approximately 1.9 billion visits annually.

Maintaining Zillow Group's pace of innovation and growth requires a digital workplace that empowers employees to do their best work. The self-described goal of Zillow's IT team is to help the company scale by "making users more efficient and happy with their day to day technology experiences". As Zillow Group has expanded into new lines of business and opened new offices, the number of employees has grown, as has the need for more modern, highly standardized communication methods. Director of IT, Ryan Blackbourn and Senior Program Manager (Audio/Visual), David Coates, needed to scale everyday communication capabilities, including collaboration tools and services, to make meetings consistent, robust, and easy to use—across multiple offices and meeting rooms.



Industry: Real Estate

Challenge: Scaling and standardizing communications technology to meet growth.

Delivering ease of use and self-service to workplace meetings and collaboration tools.

Solution: BlueJeans' cloud-based platform simplifies deployment and management for seamless scalability.

BlueJeans connects multi-vendor room systems through one, centralized meetings platform.

Results: Standardizes user experiences across 250+ Lifesize rooms—huddle, conference, and training rooms.

30,000+ BlueJeans meetings happen each quarter and are increasing as the company scales.

Livestreamed 83 BlueJeans Events to remote offices and across devices.

We've standardized our meeting rooms to the point where people can just walk in, tap a BlueJeans button, enter the meeting ID and start a meeting. That's BlueJeans.

– DAVID COATES, SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER (AUDIO/VISUAL), ZILLOW GROUP

Beyond Audio-Only Conference Calling

Originally, Zillow had PGI audio-only conferencing, which was the primary mode of communication. Additional meeting features, like content sharing, were minimal. If it couldn't happen via a traditional conference call, it wouldn't happen. Later, team meetings were hosted with Skype for Business, but the user experience, particularly on mobile devices, proved less than ideal. That's when BlueJeans meetings were introduced. Giving employees one touch access to a single video, audio, and web conferencing platform made sense to handle the expected business growth as well as satisfy the bottom line.

Today, Zillow Group is scaling and opening offices that support new business, including support of real estate office partners. As in many enterprise companies, Zillow Group's IT Department is a cost center. "When we add 200 new employees, we utilize technology to help us scale. This means self-service and automation are big initiatives continue to be large initiatives for my teams' focuses. BlueJeans really shines in making users lives easier for collaborating across the country," Blackburn said.

Realizing the Vision of Modern Meeting Rooms

Having one, consolidated, "always on" meetings platform makes every room that much more robust. Each meeting experience is simple to use, consistent, and dependable—every time, across 250+ conference rooms outfitted with Lifesize hardware. "We've standardized our rooms to the point where people can just walk in, tap a BlueJeans button, enter the meeting ID, and start a meeting. That's BlueJeans," noted Coates.

Interoperability is key to the BlueJeans platform. It easily lets IT, in tandem with Zillow Group Facilities team, plan and roll out new, multi-purpose meeting rooms. Now, no matter where an employee is—San Francisco, Irvine, New York, or anywhere—there isn't a difference. "It's the exact same room experience every time. People learn how to do it once and then don't have to think about it anymore," Coates added.

Online Meeting Flexibility with Cloud-First Mandate

Aligning with forward thinking IT departments, Zillow is cloud-first. In fact, leadership at Zillow Group cited Amazon Web Services (AWS) as a game changer for cloud computing because it enables SaaS solutions to scale, fueling more dynamic and effective user interactions. BlueJeans is a model for the kind of modern, secure, and trusted SaaS solutions making headway across enterprise companies. "We had over 30,000 BlueJeans meetings in Q2 alone. The majority take place via rooms, but people use laptops when no rooms are free. Content sharing is really big among our users," Blackburn said.

To make every employee feel a part of the team, Zillow uses BlueJeans Events to host company-wide, all-hands meetings. During these meetings, executive leadership and other team members present while it is livestreamed to all employees. To date, they have conducted 83 BlueJeans Events, which livestream to employee laptops using Accelerator, BlueJeans' bandwidth savings feature. "People don't notice when things work, but when they don't, it's an issue. Our users like BlueJeans because it just works," Coates stated.