



case study

Columbia Business School Brings Zoom to the Ivy League

Business schools play a major role creating leaders in businesses, nonprofits, and governments around the world. Why? First, these schools give students an education in a variety of fields necessary for business leaders, such as accounting, marketing, and finance. But they go beyond just teaching these subjects. Great business schools also teach students to be leaders that synthesize, analyze, and put to use all the information and resources at their disposal to make the best decisions for their company.

Columbia Business School has been particularly adept at developing leaders. Top employers recognize this, consistently hiring about 97% of Columbia Business School students within three months of graduating. The school has been pioneering business practices and educating leaders from around the world for nearly a century. Columbia Business School joins rigorous academic theory and real-world practice through broad engagement with the business community. In doing so, it fosters in students an entrepreneurial mindset for recognizing and capturing opportunity - critical attributes for global business leaders.

Columbia focuses on four key areas for their students:

- **Knowledge:** faculty members teach a transformative and ever-evolving curriculum that develops true leaders poised to create opportunities.
- **Access:** taking advantage of their status as the only Ivy League business school in New York City, Columbia offers students unmeasured access to leaders at every level across every sector and industry.
- **Community:** Columbia's culture encourages



Columbia Business School

Summary:

- Columbia Business School is one of the top business schools in the world.
- They use Zoom for staff collaboration and meetings.
- Cost and functionality were the keys to their switch to Zoom.

entrepreneurial thinking and an open exchange of ideas both inside and outside of the classroom.

- Impact: Columbia's network of more than 40,000 alumni work in every corner of the world, making an impact on business and society at large.
- In short, Columbia Business School is "at the very center of business," according to Glenn Hubbard, Dean and Russell L. Carson Professor of Finance and Economics.

But how do Dean Hubbard and the rest of Columbia's faculty and staff meet these lofty goals for their students and create a world-class institution that lives up to its name? In part, they rely on real-time, interactive communications technology like Zoom.

To learn more, we spoke with Howard Miller, Deputy CIO at Columbia Business School. Miller is responsible for the PMO, IT Governance, IT Security and Compliance, IT Finance, asset management, and technology purchasing. Columbia had been using an audio conferencing system and a web meeting system, but was looking for something better. Miller explains: "Columbia is constantly looking to explore and incorporate the latest technology. A lot of our more recent bigger implementations have been cloudbased, such as Zoom."

Zoom is spreading throughout Columbia Business School. The Dean's office and the Marketing department make frequent use of Zoom, while other teams use it as needed. For example, Miller's team now uses Zoom for all of their vendor calls.

As for the Dean's office, Zoom is mostly used for senior staff meetings. "Our senior team is constantly on the move meeting with alumni, prospective students, and others. This means that when these important senior staff meetings take place, the team is not always in the same

physical space," says Miller. To ensure these meetings can still take place and that all members feel engaged and have easy access to the meetings, they join by Zoom.

Why did Columbia Business School go with Zoom?

First: cost. Their existing audio conferencing system was prohibitively expensive. "Every dollar counts," explains Miller, "If we can do it cheaper, better, and faster, we're going to." Plus, he adds, "the fact that Zoom provides both video and audio makes it a compelling alternative" to their audio-only and web meeting solutions.

Second: the quality of Zoom's HD video and audio. "Everybody really liked the HD functionality; the connections have been crisp and clear," says Miller.

Third: functionality, especially Zoom's robust mobile collaboration platform. The Dean's team was the first to test Zoom. They were immediately sold, largely because of Zoom's ability to work across devices. Explains Miller, "When we initially tested it, someone had a laptop, someone had an iPhone, and someone had a iPad in the room, so we could see how Zoom worked on different technology. The mobile aspect of it was really appealing. People like being able to dial in from their iPhones and iPads as opposed to just traditional desktops."

Another functionality they appreciate is the Zoom Room Connector, which Miller can turn on and off based on specific requests. For example, when staff is meeting with an outside company that only connects via traditional room systems.

Fourth: reliability. Zoom just works. "Zoom has performed in a very stable fashion. We're happy with what we've purchased, and the people that have been using it seem happy with it. I've heard nary one complaint since we started using it," says Miller.



And finally: easy adoption. This is especially helpful for Miller's team as it means they don't have to spend their days running around the school showing people how to use Zoom. "It's been about 99.5% hands off. People pretty much get their invitation, set it up themselves and they're off and running. There's no need to hear from them again. It's been that intuitive for folks."

Given all these benefits, Zoom has clearly enhanced communications and teamwork at Columbia Business School. However, Miller knows that there is still a lot they can do with Zoom. "I think we've only started to scratch the surface with how we're using it," he says. For now, they plan to approach Zoom as a "needs-based" tool, providing it for individuals and departments as the need arises for video, web, and mobile collaboration.

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