

# **Five Ways Streaming Video Could Change Your Business Today**

A VBrick White Paper

## Executive Summary

Video is no longer a boardroom accessory. It has evolved into a critical business tool for accelerating productivity, expanding intelligence and cutting costs across the global enterprise. A steady technological evolution has converged with emerging cultural and market-driven factors, putting streaming video at the tipping point of widespread adoption and application. This paper details just five of the factors that will drive this adoption, and give readers a start on what questions they should be asking about how streaming video can revolutionize the way they do business. The whiz-bang factor of the latest gizmo may drive adoption among consumers. But businesses only adopt new technologies that demonstrate clear and immediate strategic or competitive value.

For the past decade, we've listened to evangelists predict an imminent explosion of streaming media based on their assumption that the technology's strategic and competitive benefits would fuel rapid adoption across the business world. And, indeed, many businesses have unified their operations, accelerated growth and enhanced agility by implementing streaming video in that time.

The industry's moderate growth to date has belied these predictions. At the same time, however, the steadily expanding adoption of streaming media has allowed its underlying technology to mature, becoming more sophisticated with each application and more intuitive to non-technical users. This, in turn, has helped expand streaming media's potential business applications. Once used primarily for corporate broadcasts, streaming platforms now expand the reach (and value) of video conferencing and digital displays across the enterprise, and enable cost-effective distribution of television over existing IP networks. In addition, recent integration with familiar desktop collaboration tools has made streaming video a valuable addition to the unified communications toolbox.

While all this has occurred over the past decade, those who haven't yet adopted video confront ever mounting evidence of streaming media's real world benefits, and its game-changing impact on industries from finance to healthcare.

Streaming media's growth appears increasingly organic – driven less by the push of evangelists than by the pull from a needs-based market. Today, the industry is on an accelerating curve of adoption across the business world as the drivers listed above converge with newly emerging factors. Below, we discuss some of the new forces driving adoption, and provide guidance on smoothly implementing streaming media in your business.

### **1. An increasingly familiar fixture in people's personal lives, video is filtering into the workplace.**

Although YouTube remains primarily a consumer phenomenon, it has rocketed streaming video into the popular consciousness. Now a familiar part of people's everyday lives, the medium is comparatively absent in the workplace – and not for lack of value. As YouTube and similar sites have demonstrated, streaming video can be a powerful tool for influence, education and leadership. Forward-looking businesses recognized this long ago. But today, the enabling technologies have never been easier to implement and use.

## **2. Streaming video is now seamlessly integrated with unified communications.**

Early implementations of streaming video meant putting up a new portal, website, or content location for users to visit. Today, streaming video is no longer a stand-alone medium. It is now integrated with desktop collaboration tools, like Microsoft's Office Communications/Lync and SharePoint platforms. That means users can now easily share video data, collaborate in real-time, and make informed command decisions – all with the click of a mouse. Integration also means point-and-click access to business video content, business television, or the ability to deliver an enterprise-wide webcast to your desktop, over the Internet and to mobile devices. In five years or less, streaming video will be as common a tool for collaboration as presence, instant messaging, Voice over-IP (VoIP) and Video Conferencing. The business applications for this are endless. Examples include:

- ▶ Extending existing video conferencing and telepresence resources to reach every employee on any network
- ▶ Distributing cable TV via IP with real-time text messaging
- ▶ Executive/Commander webcasts with a real-time built-in chat
- ▶ Online seminars or events that combine scalable, high quality video and rich interactivity
- ▶ Training channels with live expert collaboration
- ▶ Integrated surveillance with the ability to escalate the feed to your manager via text messaging

## **3. Video introduces new opportunities to make marketing stand out from the competition**

Streaming video and content not only promote high click through rates for web pages, they also improve the SEO impact. Within your arsenal of marketing content, nothing has the communication power of video, especially video. Forrester Research recently reported that a web page with video is 53 times more likely to come up in the first page of a Google search, compared with a text-only web page with the same content. More importantly, video not only attracts viewers, it captures and holds their attention by delivering all the emotion and body language needed to effectively convey your message.

## **4. A highly personalized medium, streaming video puts the “social” in “social media.”**

Business-to-business and business-to-customer communications are increasingly conducted via email, chat, and online platforms from blogs to Twitter. But despite the proliferating ways to share written ideas, face to face video interaction has been relatively slow to catch up. That's changed considerably as business users now widely use web conferencing services like WebEx or GoToMeeting. Furthermore, business leaders are discovering how simple it is (and beneficial) to synchronize live video with other content, like presentations, graphics and animations. The personal element of a human can be the richest element. Video also allows you to engage a viewer on a personal level, create trust and direct them to take an action.

## **5. Streaming video solutions have never been easier or more cost-effective to implement and use.**

Capabilities are only one measure of a video appliance's technological sophistication. Another – arguably more important metric – is how transparently simple it is to use. Streaming video technology has rapidly evolved on both fronts. Today's solutions have not only made it a snap

to share high-quality video with an unlimited audience, they've simplified the task of integrating live and on-demand video streams into your website or desktop communication platforms. The technology has also made it easier and more cost-effective to distribute cable television, digital signage and enterprise-wide webcasts with little or no impact on your existing IP network.

Whether to personalize leadership, accelerate the tempo of communications, unify the enterprise behind a strategic goal, or enhance collaboration, streaming video will have an expanding impact on where, when and how business is conducted. Hopefully this paper will lead you to consider how it might help forward your business's strategic goals. As you do, remember: It costs nothing to pick up the phone to ask questions and learn more.