

## Remote meetings? What's the best way to connect?

Working from home is becoming a necessity to help flatten the curve. What facilities or services are available to make meetings and interactions with your colleagues and customers?

For larger organisations, many will already have a preferred teleconference service like Microsoft Teams or a platform like Zoom. For a smaller SME or business what services are available for you to use for virtual meetings.



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Firstly, you need to consider a few things, cost, privacy and method of communication.

From a cost perspective, a voice call dial out from your mobile would be based on your existing contract package, so best to check what your per minute/second cost is and possibly purchase additional Voice Minute bundles.

A cheaper option would then be voice calls via WhatsApp, Facetime (Apple), Facebook Messenger or Skype. Here privacy becomes a concern. Some employees or customer may not want to engage with their mobile number (WhatsApp & Facetime) or reveal their Facebook profiles. That's where Skype is a more ideal option.

For straight "voice calls" via Skype/Whatsapp/Facetime/Messenger they use roughly 0.15MB to 0.5MB per minute so are very cost-effective.

When you start looking at video calls and conferencing services, the most popular services presently would be Skype and Google Hangouts. Depending on the video quality selected, the quality of your camera and the number of participants on the video call, the data consumption can be anything from 5MB up to around 25MB per minute.



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Ideally, for video calls, it is ideal to use Wi-Fi or a fibre connection for large or lengthy calls. A two-person video conference can consume between 300MB and 1GB of data over an hour. So, if using a mobile, be cognizant of what data bundle you have.

The quality of Skype and Google Hangouts/Meet are very good, but for larger meetings, it is often better to use a subscription-based service, such as Zoom or Cisco's Webex which provides a far more reliable solution. Both these paid services do offer either a free plan or a limited trial free plan.

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