

Explore



Develop



Transform



Collaboration Tools in 2016: An In-Depth Guide For Marketers





In the article 'Collaboration Tools For Marketers Who Want To Excel', we discussed some of the technology that helps marketers collaborate. However, there is a lot more to collaboration than technology - in fact technology is just the beginning!

Collaboration is something everybody is talking about. As Facebook's age hit double digits a couple of years ago, it marked a generation that has grown up with social collaboration and sharing as part of its everyday life.

Surprisingly, it is sometimes a different story in the workplace, 39% of employees felt people within their organisations did [not collaborate](#) enough. Collaboration for marketers, with clients, the wider team, external stakeholders and others is the key to success, a sentiment that is supported by:



86%
of executives and employees who cite a lack of collaboration or [ineffective communication](#) for workplace failures.

For marketers to move forward and excel in 2016 they need to improve the way they collaborate and the tools they use to support them.

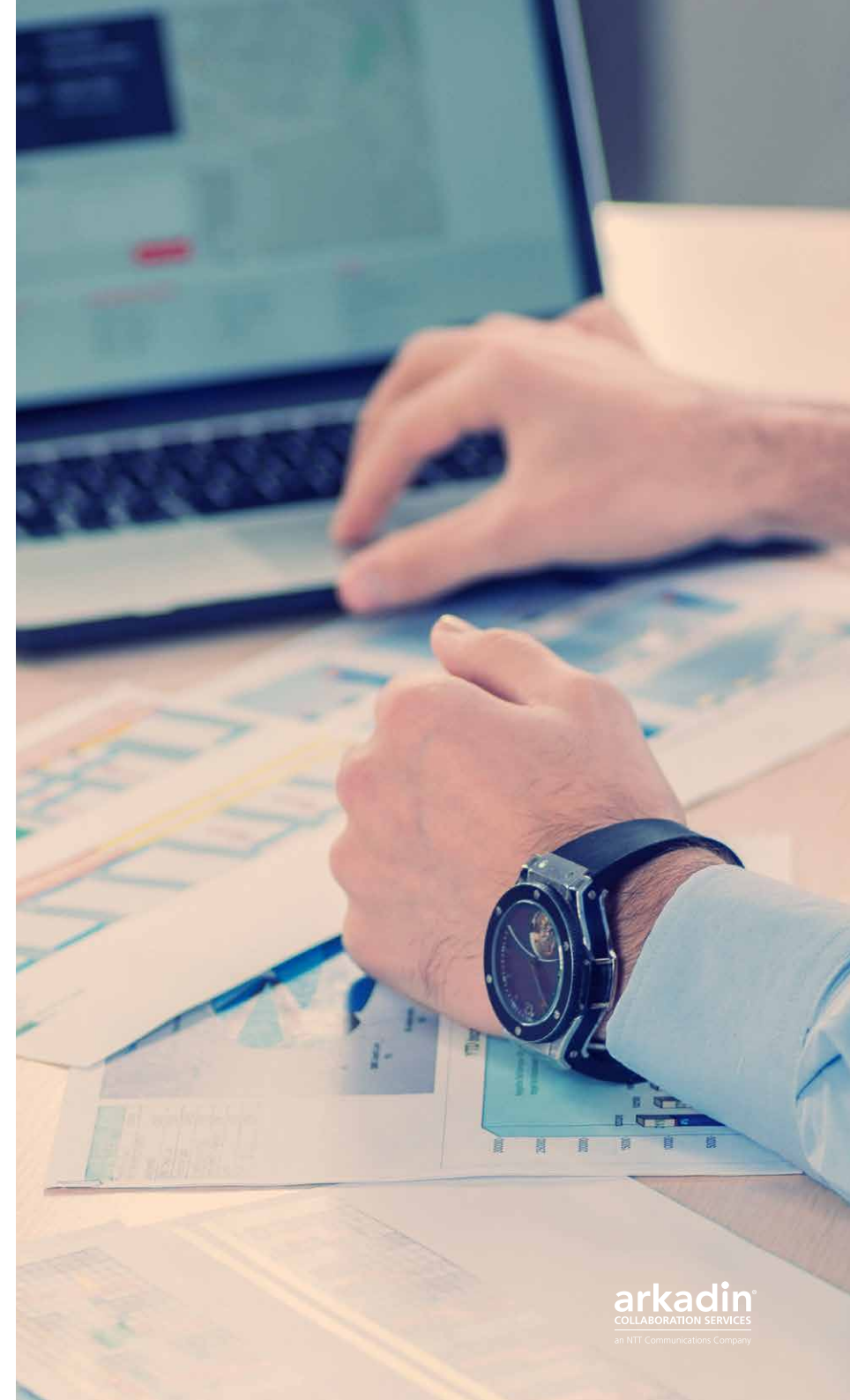
If it looks like Facebook...

One lesson to learn in terms of collaboration software is that if it looks like Facebook, or Snapchat, or Whatsapp, it's going to work well in the workplace.

Software companies are aware of this. Yammer, for example, was an independent company offering small private social network facilities to organisations; it had sufficient appeal for Microsoft to buy it a few years ago and licenses are included in Office 365. People preferring to steer away from corporate suppliers might want to look at the reasonably long-established Jive Software or Convo and Slack which have also been making a lot of noise in this space recently. All of these products are web-based, they have mobile apps and they do the same thing - taking the Facebook lookalike sharing idea and translate it into a business setting.

What's actually happening is that a lot of organisations are looking at how workflows develop in various projects and using technology to help them do it. As Tad Johnson, CMO, JAMF Software writes in [Information Age](#), "[a] prevalent reason for the growing popularity of consumer technology in enterprise has come from the employees' expectations of how they use their smart devices at home and how they wish to bring that ease of use into the workplace."

Take Trello as an example. This is basic project management software that allows the users to create and share "boards"; you add lists of tasks to these boards and these tasks in turn can be broken down into do-lists, assigned to individuals, and have comments added. The tasks can be moved from list to list (so "proposed" tasks can be dragged to "pending" and then "complete" - choose the categories yourself). As long as there is a data connection you can update it through an app or on the Web, so the creative team is always up to date.



Take your presentations to the next level...

Marketers need to communicate clearly, professionally and seamlessly with clients and the wider business.

Getting the message out to the client base, internal teams or other stakeholders requires the use of digital tools that can impress, and whether it is driving lead generation at the top the funnel or driving conversion at the bottom - the webinar is in vogue. Whether presenting to an audience of 10s or even 1000s, around the world with ease, and without the need for costly and time-consuming travel. Complete with stats, analytics and with plenty of scope to be creative the webinar is becoming the preferred element of the marketing mix.

Yet, according to the 2016 B2B Content Marketing Trends; Content Marketing Institute/Marketing Profs [report](#) found that 66% of B2B marketers use Webinars/Webcasts for Content Marketing only 25% of B2B marketers use virtual conferences. This provides a great opportunity for collaboration savvy B2B marketers to get ahead of the curve.

Cultural shifts.....

All of this requires some sort of cultural change in longer-established organisations. The technology doesn't belong to you, it's effectively rented; this can feel like quite a shift. More importantly, creative businesses with a hierarchical structure may not appreciate the incursion of the collaborative technologies into their working practices. A private email is no longer private, it's a shared communication among many and it's searchable. People playing the office politics game will need to watch out! The technology is ready to help collaborators but the collaborators themselves have to be ready to make it work.



Webinars were voted the most effective B2B marketing tactic, second only to "in-person", by 65% of organisations according to the 2016 B2B Content Marketing Trends; Content Marketing Institute/Marketing Profs [report](#).

What is next?...

The next question is of course, where is all of this going? The answer, is in Unified Communications. Unified Communication is what it sounds like: the bringing together of many of these disparate technologies into one.

Consider for a moment this possible scenario. Someone picks up on an interesting conversation in Slack. They start a private conversation with you - or maybe they take it to Skype. Skype then allows them to escalate this to a voice and possibly video call, and they ask if they can show you a few things. You agree and then go to a screen sharing facility to work on the document together.

What using numerous collaboration tools has in common with dining out...

Translate this into most other industries and you can see just how frankly peculiar it is. Take a restaurant. You go for a drink beforehand, maybe not at the restaurant itself - that's normal enough. You sit down and order your starter. Then you get up, grab your coat and move to another restaurant which specialises in main courses, back to the bar for a drink and then on to a third establishment for your dessert (and there's a problem if your companion wants cheese and biscuits instead). It's also possible that these restaurants may be in different tax jurisdictions so your finance people are going to have an entertaining time keeping track of whether each payment is VAT rated.

That is the way a lot of people are buying their communications at the moment by having separate collaboration, voice, video, and IM - un-unified comms! Integrating your UC&C will break down barriers, drive efficiencies and give a consistent user experience.





Takeaways



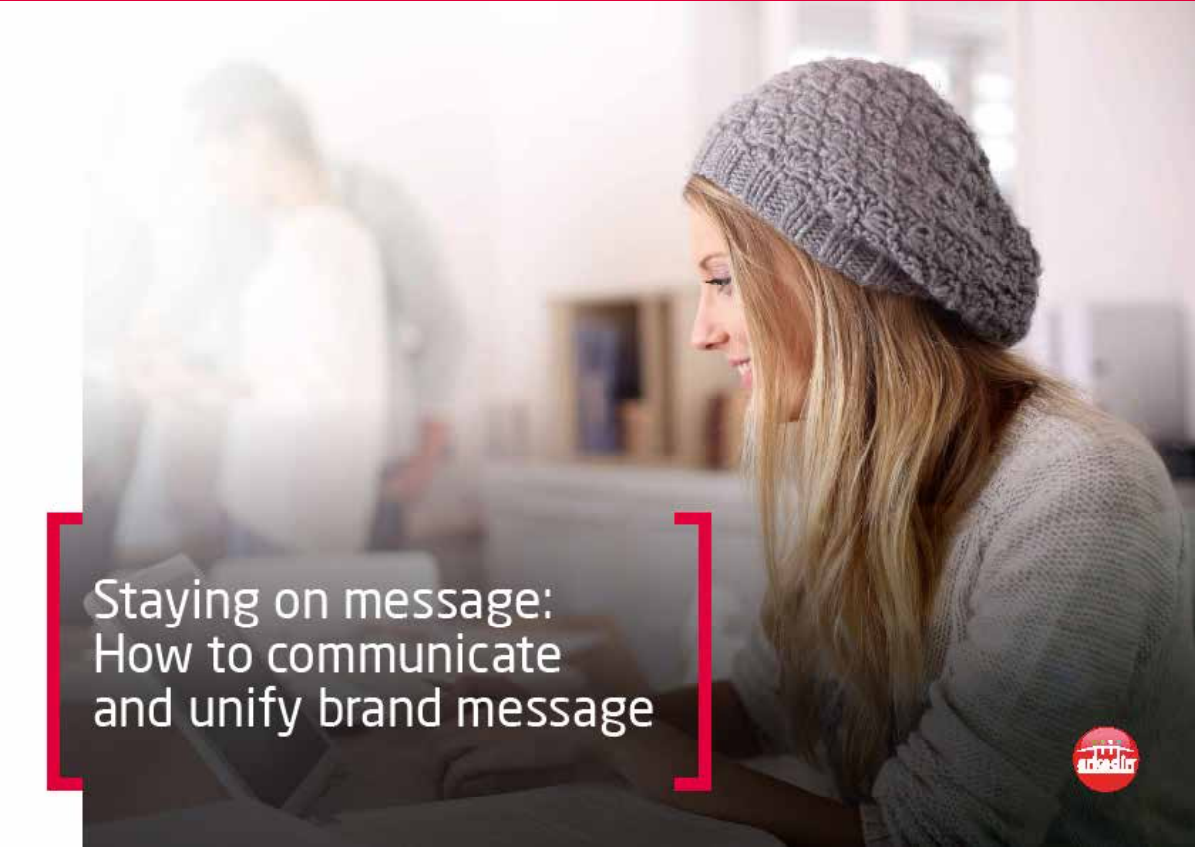
Collaboration technology needs to be suited to the user.



Using disparate collaboration tools can, and will, cause problems.



Virtual events enable you to transmit your message to 10s or 1000s with ease.



[Staying on message:
How to communicate
and unify brand message]

Discover the difference clear
communication can make to your brand,
download:

Staying on message: How
to communicate and unify
brand message

Download now

[Enjoy sharing]

Arkadin is the world's fastest growing Collaboration Services Provider. We offer a range of Unified Communications and audio, web and video collaboration solutions, as well as virtual events. These are delivered in the Cloud for fast, scalable deployment. Our mission is to lead companies to increased growth and success by delivering positive collaboration experiences.



Countries and cultures that are part of our growing corporate infrastructure



Languages covered by our global customer service teams and end user communications



Offices in strategic locations to give a global perspective with local understanding