Can’t travel?
Stay connected and productive, despite disruptions
‘The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry.’

This well-known saying adapted from an 18th Century Robert Burns poem ‘To a Mouse’ – reminds us that no matter how carefully we plan, things may well go wrong, and often due to circumstances beyond our control.

Extreme weather, travel delays and disruptions, and illness can all make it hard for people to get to work. Quite aside from the effect on individual lives, when large numbers of people are unable to attend their workplace, or offsite meetings and events it can also dramatically affect businesses and the wider economy.

However, just because you can't travel, it doesn't mean you can't adapt. There are still many ways to stay connected and productive, despite disruptions. What's more, they can help reduce travel time and expense - and reduce your carbon footprint too.
Online communication and collaboration – keeping you connected

So, what to do?
‘There cannot be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full.’

This famous quip from Henry Kissinger wryly pinpoints the inconvenience of unexpected events when already overloaded. Of course, doing nothing is not an option. The fact is, whatever the issue, business continuity, connection and clear communication are vital during times of disruption and uncertainty.

As a business that enables other organizations to communicate and collaborate, there are two observations we can make from the conversations we are having with clients. Those businesses who have already begun their digital transformation journey are keen to accelerate the process. It could be onboarding a new team or division; enabling new or untapped features; or enhancing their capability with an additional service or solution such as cloud-based telephony. For others – those earlier in the digital transformation process, and perhaps yet to finalise their roadmap – there are still easily deployed, quick-wins that can be made using readily available cloud communications tools.

With the right stakeholders engaged – be it operations, IT, or HR – organizations can ensure that employees can still communicate and collaborate with clients and colleagues, even if – for whatever reason – they can’t physically attend their usual place of work.

The technology is certainly here and available: to host online collaborative meetings, to enable remote working, to streamline file sharing and editing, and unify messaging, voice and video calls. Not only are the tools mature and credible, but they can enable transformative journeys that can reduce the need for real-life journeys!
For many businesses, digital events – hosted online – offer another outstanding solution when travel is not an option. They can be used for external or internal purposes and deliver engaging and interactive events. Sales and marketing presentations, training and continuing professional education sessions, and seminars and conferences can all be delivered via webcasts as can virtual conferences, programmed across several days with multiple presenters all contributing to a cohesive schedule. Not only can this cut down on all the hassle and uncertainty of travel, and the expense, the content can also be repurposed for on-demand access.

Digital events work incredibly well for corporate communications and internal communications too. These can range from senior management ‘town-hall’ broadcasts from the central HQ, to summits featuring multiple guests presenting from different locations – again without any travel involved. There are a wide range of possibilities and capabilities, but for immediacy, visibility and engagement, digital events shrink the world, bringing together far-flung divisions. They offer the means to bring teams together, ensure consistent messaging, give opportunities for employee interaction and engagement, and solid metrics to measure each event’s success. Again, the ability to make content available on-demand, or to repeat the event at different times of day, means that colleagues or other stakeholders unable to join an event live, won’t miss out.

Online events – removing the uncertainty of travel
Overcoming unforeseen challenges

Of course, back in the days of ‘Rabbie’ Burns, there wasn’t this type of technology. The mouse he was addressing in his poem wasn’t the kind you can point with, or click, or which enabled digital interactions. The world has changed in so many ways since then, but his words are just as apposite today.

Somewhat less poetic – but perhaps equally worth bearing in mind – is this saying, attributed to Benjamin Franklin.

‘If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.’

It’s a well-worked turn of phrase, but it serves to remind us that – whether it’s the weather, illness, or other circumstances we cannot foresee or control – there will always be challenges that as businesses we must meet, adapt to, and try to overcome.

‘If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail’

— Benjamin Franklin
About Cloud Communications, a division of NTT Ltd.

Cloud Communications is a division of NTT Ltd., a global technology services company. Focused on delivering smart communication to enable smarter workspaces, our mission is to provide world-class cloud communication solutions that enable dynamic collaboration interactions for improved workforce efficiency, productivity and engagement. We specialize in unified communications, cloud voice and digital events, delivering tailored end-to-end consulting, value realization services and change management to empower businesses and enable their digital workplace transformation. Together we enable the connected future.

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