



Conference Calling 101

A breakdown of audio/video conferencing options, pros, cons & recommendations for Community Associations.



Audio conferencing is easy! Let's take it... *one step at a time*

STEP #1:

Select the conference call service. Below is a link providing the 8 top picks for services. However, it is important to pick a service that is geared for business meetings so the necessary host controls are included. Popular choices are Vast Conference, GoToMeeting, and Zoom.

STEP #2:

Select the plan. The cost of conference call service is very inexpensive. Most services are in the range of \$12 to \$20 per month. The main factor for price variation is how many participants you can have join your conference. Make sure you select a participant number that would accommodate the size of your community to avoid the issue of a member not being able to join the meeting due to the maximum number of participants being reached.

STEP #3:

Select audio conference or video conference. Most services include the ability to offer either type of conference.

helpful link

<https://www.quicksprout.com/best-conference-call-services/>



Now let's consider the...

Pros and Cons

PROS OF AUDIO CONFERENCING:

1. Simple sign in. Dial phone number, state name, enter code when prompt – You're In!
2. Only equipment needed is a traditional phone except Host "President" will need device with screen to control meeting
3. No one can see you (maybe good or bad depending on your view)
4. Extremely affordable
5. No invite link needed – dial in phone number and code never need to change

CONS OF AUDIO CONFERENCING:

1. Keeping people's attention. Without visual, meetings may get boring.
2. If President does not establish rules for meeting, meeting can get out of control.
3. Participant background noise can interfere with clarity of meeting
4. Features like screen sharing to display a document are not available

PROS OF VIDEO CONFERENCING:

1. Visually can see speakers making it easier to know who is speaking
3. Screen sharing feature allows documents to be viewed by participants
4. Participants less likely to be bored or distracted and can see body language of speakers
5. Accessible to anyone with a device that has internet connection (i.e. cell phone, ipad, laptop)

CONS OF VIDEO CONFERENCING:

1. More likely to have connection problems
3. Common for audio to be delayed and doesn't match the video
4. Equipment purchases needed for computers without webcams or microphones
5. Traditional phones will not work

Our recommendations *for Board Members*

STEP #4:

President “Host” must learn the conference service selected. In addition to tutorials with selected service, don’t forget about YouTube. Lots of really good YouTube videos out there.

STEP #5:

Set up account login for use by President to host the meeting.

STEP #6:

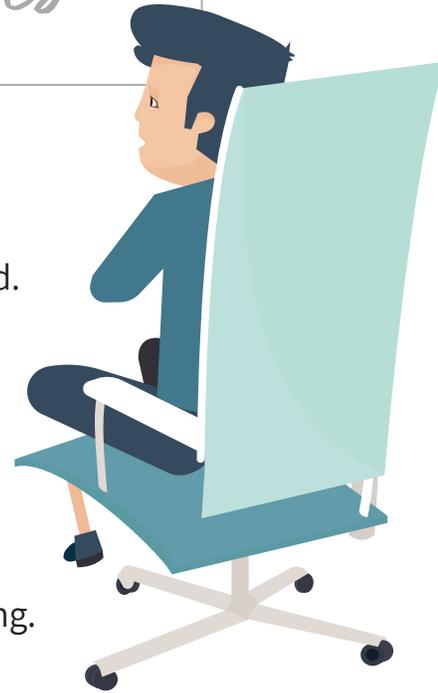
To start meeting, President simply dials in like everyone else but puts in a unique host code. Host code can always stay the same but should be private to members. President then logs into the online account with computer and clicks a button that would say something like “Manage Meeting.”

STEP #7:

Once logged in online, President will then be able to see in real time as people join the meeting. If select option to require people to state name when they join meeting, the participants name will automatically populate with their phone number on President’s screen.

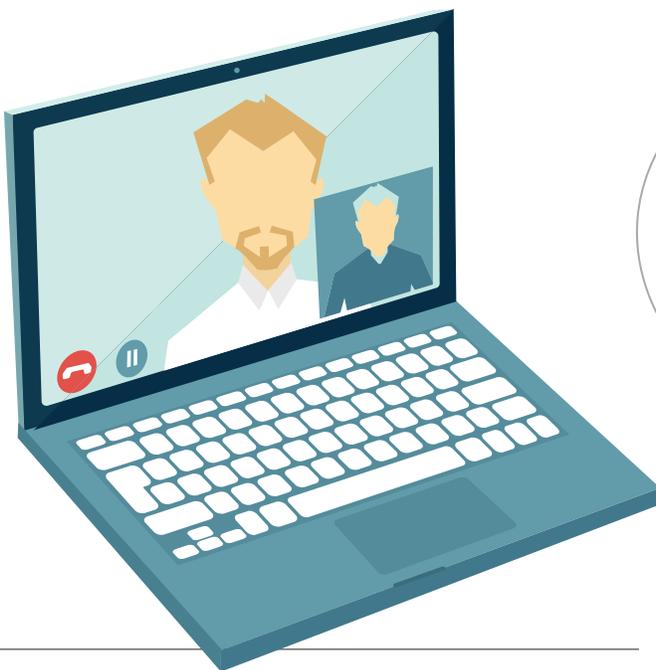
STEP #8:

Other Board Members, attorney, and manager joining meeting will be given a separate code so when President hits “mute all”, it only mutes the members.



Overview of the basic controls *given to the Host*

- Host can mute and unmute members
- Member can simply use phone keypad to alert Host of request to comment during owner forum
- Member's name on host screen will display icon like a question mark to alert host of member's request
- Host can unmute member to speak and mute once comment is completed or time allotment expired
- Host can disconnect all members with the click of a button
- Host can record the meeting by the touch of a button on the login screen. Audio files can be saved for future use if needed.
- Service will retain details of meeting including number of participants attending
- Host can put members on hold during executive session. Once executive session is concluded, host can permit members to rejoin meeting.



Questions?
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