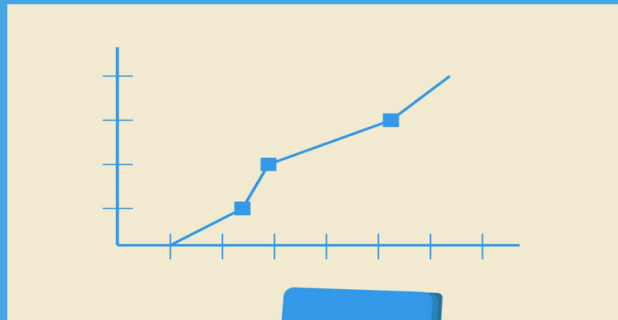


# The Definitive Board Meeting Software Buyer's HandBook



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Edition*

**SQLView**  
Making Enterprises Smarter

# **Board Meeting Software**

## **The Definitive Buyers' Hand Book**

Taking minutes in a board meeting is an integral part of the overall business lifecycle and the person taking those notes cannot possibly make a mistake. Not only the highest level of accuracy is required, but now security, privacy and confidentiality have become essential in the corporate world. Even losing a single key fact can lead to problems and even catastrophe in the future.

Unfortunately, there are some misconceptions about minutes taking and people confuse it with note taking; however, both are drastically different tasks and need different type of tools and skill set.

### **What is the Difference between Note Taking and Minute Taking?**

The major difference between minutes and notes is the incentive to do that in the first place. Notes are taken for references to get the essence and meanings of the conversation as well as of the remarks made during a meeting or other similar event. For example, a student takes notes but he/she doesn't write the exact words of the lecturer but instead he/she only writes the reflection of the statements.

On the other hand, minute taking is a delicate matter where every word should be captured accurately for future references. Sometimes minutes become a part of the company and executives take specific actions based on the minutes taken during a meeting. The added benefit is the elimination of chance of misinterpretation.

### **Why Paper Based Board Meeting Solutions are Not an Option Anymore?**

In this modern era, where everything has gone digital, paper based board meetings are not an option anymore. There are many reasons to make this transition and some of them are given below. Interestingly, different organization might have different reasons to do that.

## **Lack of Security**

Security and confidentiality of the board meetings is one of the top priorities of the organizations. Still in many organizations, printed papers are used to convey documents and information to top level executives. Regardless of the security measures taken, paper based documents are not as secure as the digital ones. Automation made it possible to automatically lock down information and inform the security in case a security breach is detected.

Paper documents could be misplaced and a competitor can get access to confidential information. Also, a culprit (which is not a distant possibility) can steal sensitive information or decide not to shred the documents as instructed. Digital minute taking tools come with proper logging mechanism as well as level based access where users with no authorization cannot access that information.

## **Painful Updating Process**

How can you possibly update a document already printed on a paper? That is not a possibility and it can affect the productivity within an organization. Even if someone manages to update the document and send the updated version to all of the recipients of the previous document as well, there is still possibility that some people would get the older version while some people would get the updated version.

This kind of conflict can create confusion among executive and affect their decisions making process. Digital board meeting solutions allow secretaries to share the key facts of the meeting with everyone at the end so people can confirm all the things they agreed on.

## **Remote Meetings**

Directors and executives are busy people; sometimes they cannot attend an already scheduled meeting because of some other urgency. A meeting without an important company's executive would not be fruitful and productive. Also, meetings where executives and other key people fly from other cities and even countries to attend a few hour meeting, it could be very expensive for companies.

In such situations, digital board meeting solutions come in handy because of their remote meeting feature. An executive with an iPad and internet connection can participate and collaborate in a meeting from anywhere in the world. Also, directors and executives don't want to be slave of their schedules. They want to increase the productivity and profitability of their companies. These digital solutions offer freedom to executive to attend meetings as they please.

## **Digital Presentations vs. Charts**

This is no brainer; the use of charts in organizational culture is almost obsolete and digital presentations have taken their place. Although digital presentations could be presented without a board meeting solution but it would put extra burden on the secretary because he/she would have to use different interfaces or worse multiple computer simultaneously.

Digital board meeting solutions allow secretaries to use a single platform and manage everything from there; that includes, minute taking, presentations, share comments and even take notes for references.

## **What are Some Benefits of Digital Board Meeting Solutions?**

We have talked about the lack of compatibility between traditional board meetings and the modern corporate culture. Paper based meetings might still work somewhere but they have lots of limitations. Following are some benefits of digital board meeting solutions.

### **Easier Management**

One of the biggest advantages of using digital board meeting solutions is easier management as compared to traditional meetings. Based on the meeting and its agenda, you might need a handful of documents or hundreds of papers. Not only they are hard to carry but distributing them to the relevant participant is also a painful job. Either you need to spend lots of time managing those papers before the meeting or you would be juggling with them in the meeting.

With digital board meeting system, everything would be delivered to the relevant person whether an employees, manager or CEO smoothly.

### **Stronger Security**

Misplacing important and even confidential documents is not a rare occurrence and organizations often suffer from such incidents. This could be intentionally or unintentionally yet a misplaced confidential piece of document could prove to be a catastrophe for the company if wrong hands access it.

Web based meeting solutions address the security issues thoroughly and they take reasonable security measures to mitigate the risk of any data leakage. For example, only the participants of the meeting can access the resources available to them. If a device gets lost or stolen, it takes few seconds to wipe out its data remotely and change its authorization status.

## **Better Collaboration**

Not only digital board meeting solutions but almost every other digital tool used in corporate world allows organizations and their employees to collaborate in better way. For example, surveys and studies have proved that an average worker spends more than two and a half hours every week in meetings.

With digital solutions, it is possible to reduce this time significantly while increasing the overall productivity. Because of the technological advancements, participants of a meeting can use digital tools and arrive at resolutions faster as compared to traditional meetings. There is no need to work on presentations, file sharing and making charts and diagrams manually.

## **Synchronized Progress**

Boarding meeting apps and digital tools keep everyone updated all the time. Let's clear the concept with a simple example. Suppose in a paper based meeting, participants are given paper documents and it would be almost impossible to update those documents in a timely manner. On the other hand, digitally it takes few seconds to update something and as all of the devices would be synchronized, the documents would automatically update on those mobiles, laptops and tablets.

## **Note Taking**

There are many ways to take notes in a meeting; the traditional way is to use pen and paper but it would be hard to manage them later. Also, as most of the business activities are done digitally, you would need to digitalize those notes. Another smarter way is to take notes on phone or tablet but synchronization and collaboration of those notes would be difficult.

Digital board meeting solutions come with built-in note taking tools that allow users to comment and take notes in real time and link them with other parts of the minutes. This way, secretaries can track back everything for references.

## **How to Choose The Best Board Meeting Solution?**

Unfortunately, choosing the best board meeting solution might take some time and efforts from your end because it mainly depends on your organizational needs. Different companies might have different needs for their minute taking tools and boarding meeting solutions. If a specific solution works best for a company, it does not guarantee that the same tool would be suitable for another company.

Usually companies face three challenges while making a decision of selecting a board meeting solution.

1. They don't know which board meeting tool would be suitable.
2. There are too many choices for them and they are confused.
3. The executives are divided on different solutions.

However, optimal results could be achieved by selecting the most suitable and most relevant board meeting solution that fulfills all organizational needs. In other words, a suitable board meeting solution would offer a higher return-of-investment than a solution that doesn't fulfill all the requirements. Following are some most common requirements that companies consider while choosing a board meeting solution.

- Remote meeting feature so executives can join the meeting from anywhere in the world. Although a company's policy might require the physical presence of all the attendees in a meeting, yet remote meeting feature has become a must-have feature nowadays.
- The platform must allow secretary to set up the meeting with all the participants by contacting main attendees and get a suitable date from them.
- The digital board meeting solution must have built-in support for presentations as well as other presenting material so secretary as well as attendees can smoothly see them on web interface, phones and tablets. The point is to reduce the cluttering on mobile devices so executives can only see the information that is relevant to them.
- Secretaries also have to take notes during the meeting for later references. It doesn't seem logical to use two different platforms for board meeting management and note taking. That's why the digital board meeting solution must have built-in note taking feature to make the secretary's job easier.
- The "minutes vetting" feature allows secretaries to present minutes to all the participants at the end of meeting so they can confirm the items that are agreed on. This is quite similar to presenting the summary of the meeting and the idea is to ensure everyone is on the same page.
- Unfortunately this particular feature is not present in most of the digital board meeting solutions yet some latest and advanced tools have it. This feature allows secretaries to track back minutes to their original references to ensure people those items were agreed upon.
- The board meeting solution must take minutes seriously as they are the essence of any meeting. The platform must be able to manage minutes reasonably so the important things discussed in the meeting are not distorted.

- The last but not the least is the security of digital board meeting platform. Regardless of the size of the company, organizations wouldn't want to reveal their corporate secrets out in the open. Also, as the studies have shown that in most of the cases, information leakage occurs because of an insider culprit, board meeting solutions must have robust security features to control the flow of information and the data should be accessible by relevant and authorized employees and executives.

## **Bottom Line**

Digital board meeting solutions have been revolutionizing the way companies conduct meetings for years. However, up until this moment, these solutions weren't available for small to midsized companies because of their cost and scale. As mentioned above, the whole idea of using a digital platform is to make things easier, secure and smoother for all the entities. However, choosing the right platform is the key element here and that is described in details above.

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