



Laptop and Mobile Connectivity in the Modern Workplace

Organizations today share more rich media content than ever before. Connectivity between rich media and the hardware devices that deliver it—laptops, tablets, and mobile devices—is constantly evolving to support it. Here's a look at key trends in connectivity and its two core pillars: Technology and People.

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Technology: Connectivity

As technology evolves, so do the trends in connectivity; most notably, the convergence of power, data and source. Our analysis shows that device connectors have changed drastically in the past two years (2017–2019).

Our study of connectivity on the most popular brands of laptops revealed the following:

- Inclusion of a VGA port has decreased from 32% to 7%
- Inclusion of DisplayPort has decreased from 21% to 8%
- 59–65% include HDMI connectivity
- Presence of USB-C connectivity has increased from 60% to 79%, and we forecast this number will go up every year

We also studied laptop brand preference and their standard connectivity:

- **Lenovo:** HDMI and USB-C predominate
- **HP:** HDMI and USB-C predominate
- **Dell:** HDMI and USB-C predominate
- **Apple:** Thunderbolt and USB-C exclusively
- **ASUS, Samsung, Acer:** Mix of USB-C, HDMI, and Mini DisplayPort
- **Microsoft Surface:** USB-C and Mini DisplayPort

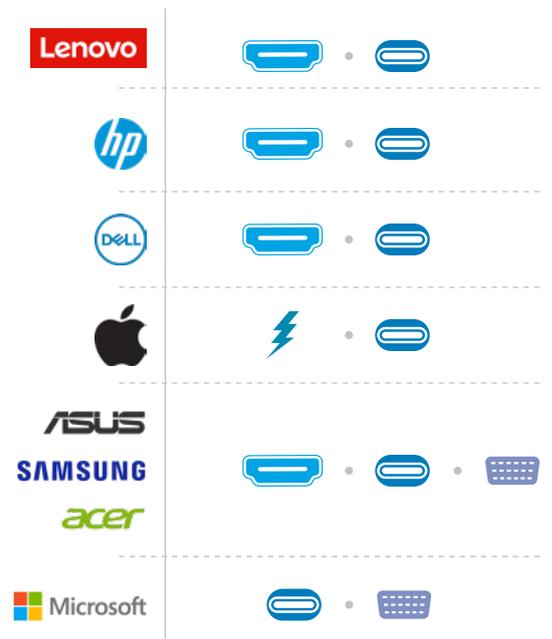
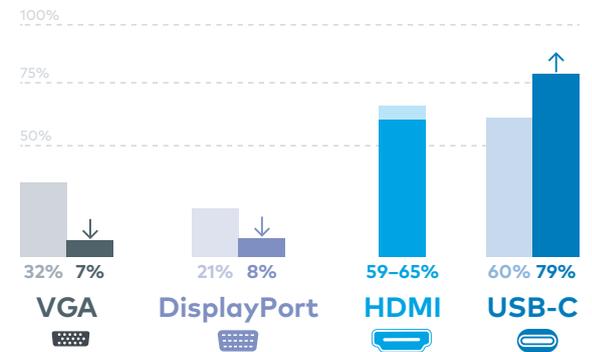


HDMI



USB-C

Different industries and business segments have different connectivity needs. But what we are seeing is the inclusion of USB-C and HDMI connectivity provides 100% coverage for all laptops, regardless of brand.



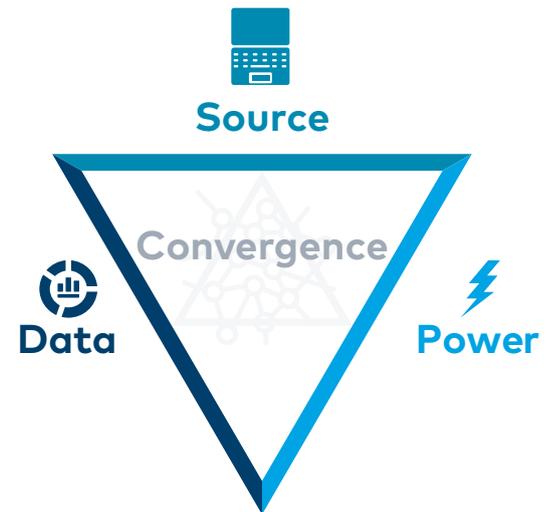
Technology: Consolidation

Traditionally, connectivity in the enterprise was separated into three distinct categories: **Source** (Audio/Video), **Power**, and **Data**. However, a revolution is under way in which these three categories are converging into one connection. Further, we are seeing a shift in the enterprise to seamless integration of all digital tools.

Source: The most popular connector used in the modern workplace for a long time has been HDMI. In its native form, HDMI will remain the most popular wired interface technology used to transfer video.^[1] However, the fastest growing connector now is USB-C, being integrated into devices at a growth rate of 30% annually.^[1]

Power: Until recently, power delivery has always been separate from Source and Data. Now, with the introduction of support via USB-C, it is becoming more popular for devices to be simultaneously powered and able to transfer data and/or video.

Data: Wired interfaces used to transfer data have grown in significance while wireless and cloud technology have become the primary driving force behind enterprise products. Wired data has taken on new forms with the introduction of USB-C and Thunderbolt (speeds up to 40 Gb/s) connectivity. Data is still a niche application in many cases, however. As wireless and cloud technologies improve, the expectation for wired capabilities will need to be many multiple times faster than wireless speeds.



People: Generations and Expectations

The modern workforce comprises four to five different generations, including: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and now Gen Y. Each generation has experienced different technological revolutions and, therefore, are more accustomed to different types of connectivity.

Gen Y, Millennials, and Gen X: These generations grew up with online technology. They expect to be wirelessly connected while using multiple devices. This group prefers texting over phone calls and are always searching for more ways to be efficient.

Baby Boomers and Traditionalists: These generations are usually stereotyped as novices in tech, but studies show that this generation is tech-savvy. However, their communication preference is very different; they highly value face-to-face interaction and conversation via phone call.

Different generations also have different communication preferences in the modern workplace. However, one truth cuts across all generations: connection is paramount to everyone. Therefore, the modern workplace needs new digital connectivity options – wired and wireless – that will accommodate all generational preferences, while also being easy and intuitive to use.



Gen Y, Millennials, and Gen X



Baby Boomers and Traditionalists

Benefits to Upgrading Connectivity

Now that we have examined connectivity trends in relation to technology and people, let's look at the benefits of upgrading connectivity technology and how to go about it.

Benefits: Upgrading and evolving workplace technology will help an enterprise accomplish two critical goals:

- **Future-proofing** (connecting the user)
- **Simplification of legacy technology** (saves users time and businesses money)

New technology is not about adding more; it is about needing less. It must be functional and fit space requirements. Instead of having three different connectivity devices, new technology allows you to consolidate all connectivity on just one, while supporting everything from legacy devices to the newest interfaces.

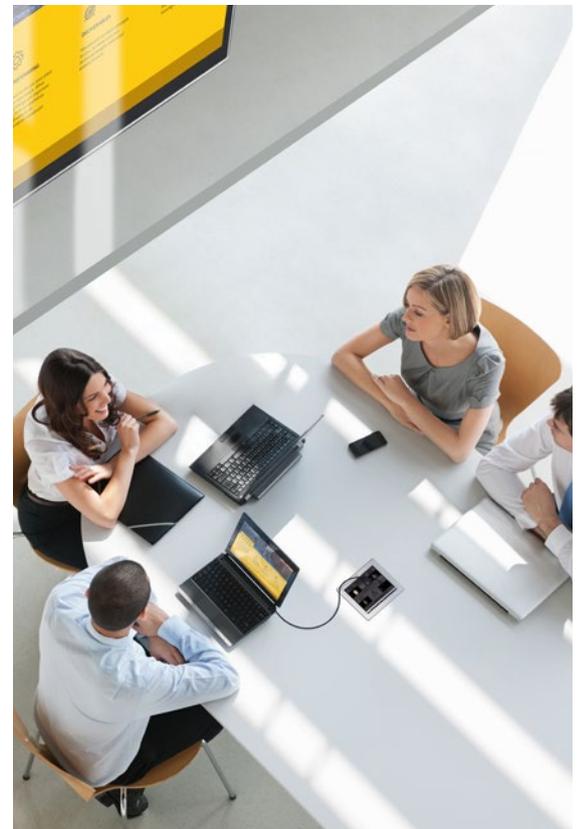
Asking the Right Questions When Upgrading

Choosing the right technology for any business can be tricky, but answering these questions will help get you started:

- Up to how many people will typically be in your meeting spaces?
- What type of meetings will be conducted in the space? (huddle, collaborative, board meetings)
- What type of enterprise are you serving? (For example, creative agencies prefer Apple laptops; software developers and manufacturing companies prefer Windows based machines, such as those from Lenovo and Dell)
- What is the generational age range of employees using the space?
- Will you be staying in the current building or relocating to another one in a few years?
- How will your connectivity be mounted? Is design a consideration?
- To which platform would you like all of your devices to connect?

All of these factors require consideration and will shape part of your connectivity upgrade plan.

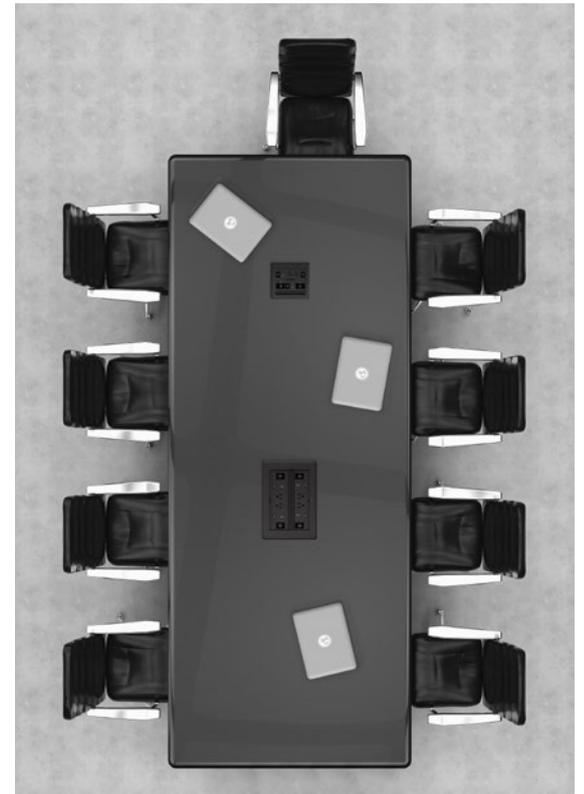
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Summary

Today's workplace needs to support evolving rich media technologies and hardware devices to meet the connectivity and communication preferences of multiple generations of people. The trend toward combining separate data, source, and power connections into just one connection, has simplified matters and made it possible to consolidate on one hardware platform. Determining which one best meets your needs requires thoughtful analysis of a wide array of factors.



References: ^[1] <https://technology.ihc.com/598651/usb-type-c-footprint-expands-across-market-segments>

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