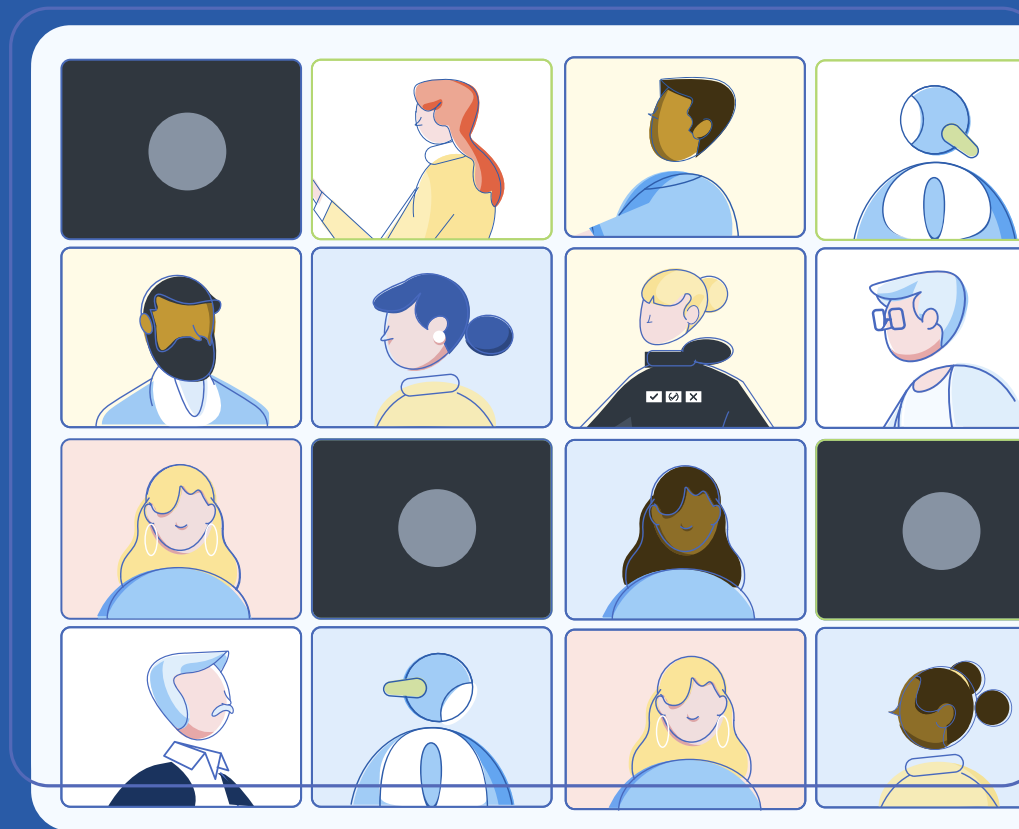


Doodle

# STATE OF MEETINGS 2020



An analysis of meetings and how they changed  
in 2020.

APRIL 2021

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## What Type of Meetings will we be having in the Future?

When it comes to what COVID 19 has done to the future of meetings, describing it as a catalyst feels like the only logical answer. Meeting digitization, video conferencing and the development of new technology to make meetings easier was already happening, but has likely jumped about five to ten years forward because of the pandemic.

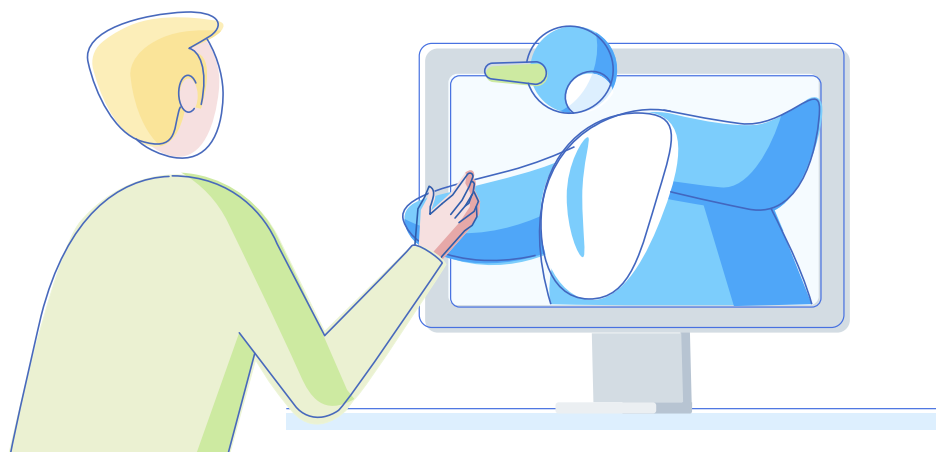
Remote working means more meetings have to happen online. From catch ups between managers and employees to sales pitches - that necessity to be there in person is gone. This is also likely to affect other ways businesses work too. Take recruitment, evidence shows that more companies are moving to a remote working model, allowing employees to work from wherever they want. Streaming giant, Spotify, is a good example of this. It announced its developing a 'work from anywhere' model. This means that not only can you work remotely, but choose what country you want to work in too. This means more virtual interviews and onboarding.

It's also not just how we meet that will change. Expectations and structures will be different too. We might still call our meetings the same thing, but more and more it's likely meetings are going to adopt a 'hybrid' model. Research by technology company, Barco, found that 85 percent of people want a combination of working from home and in an office environment. Something that could go

a long way to alleviating Zoom Fatigue as well as other problems caused by virtual meetings.

This will create a need for a more clearly defined structure to a meeting, likely with a set agenda or reading material distributed beforehand. In a recent Doodle survey, 31 percent of people said that when a meeting involves a virtual element they are more likely to send an agenda ahead of time to ensure everyone is prepared. This becomes even more important when some participants will be there in person and others are dialling in.

Meetings will be shorter. We've seen from this report that there has been a rise in shorter 1:1 meetings. Our data also suggests that, to a lesser extent, a similar rise is happening in other meeting types too. A growing body of evidence is pointing towards shorter meetings being more productive and helping to reduce the chances of burnout among employees. COVID 19 has forced businesses to experiment with this. Richard Holden, a professor of economics, has reviewed data released by the Harvard Business Review. It shows that although people met more often during lockdown - they met for shorter amounts of time. These shorter, more focused meetings could be one of the reasons some people say they feel more productive when working from home.



## Notice: Did we give more of a heads up about a meeting in 2020?

- On average 27 days notice was given for meetings in 2020. This is a decrease from 36 days in 2019.
- There was an 18 percent increase in the amount of meetings booked with less than five minutes notice.
- The vast majority of meetings had over five days notice (75 percent). 54 percent had more than ten days notice and a little over 40 percent had 15 days notice.

There is clear evidence that an increase in remote working has caused a reduction in the amount of notice given for meetings. Our data suggests that although people still expect notice for a meeting, there's now more of an expectation that meetings can occur ad hoc.

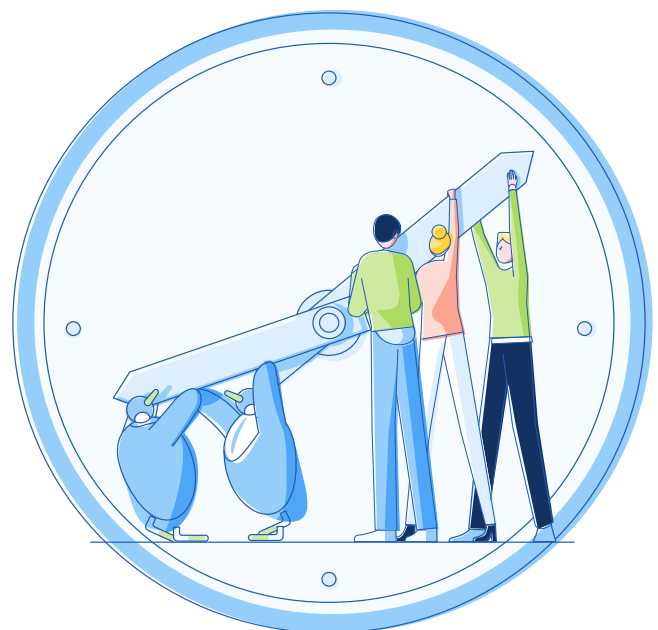
There can be a variety of reasons for this. For instance, working remotely means that there's not the same opportunities to drop by a colleague's desk, so jumping into a quick virtual meeting may be necessary to get a problem solved quickly.

**“We’re needing to have more meetings because we don’t see each other for those impromptu conversations.”**

Don Shortslef, practitioner for Duke Learning & Organization Development

Even though there has been a reduction in the amount of notice given for a meeting, the data shows that the overwhelming majority of people are still getting at least five days notice of the event.

The likelihood is that for larger group meetings people are getting enough notice to read notes and prepare what they need to. This is something a survey by Doodle confirms. When asked about preparing for meetings in 2020, 34 percent of people said they spend more time practicing. Meetings that occurred with little to no notice are overwhelmingly 1:1s that last for around 15 to 20 minutes. Group meetings that occurred at short notice were much rarer and suggest that some sort of time sensitive or emergency situation has arisen.



## The growth of technology in arranging meetings

It's fair to say that the rapid development of technology over the past few decades helped many businesses cope with the sudden changes they needed to make in order to survive 2020. Cloud-sharing platforms, video conferencing and the ability to work nearly anywhere have allowed so many organisations to continue functioning where only 20 years ago there is a strong possibility they would have had to close.

Even when it comes to meetings, the developments in technology have been a game-changer. Tools like Doodle, for instance, turn planning a meeting into a task that takes seconds not hours.

Despite all these advances it still tends to be the case that most people work from a desktop or laptop. It's practical. They can process more, store more and generally cope with multiple tasks much better than a phone or tablet.

That would leave us to believe that despite the trend towards mobile, when it comes to booking meetings we still do that via our desktops. That however, doesn't seem to be the case.

### Are we booking more meetings on the go?

It would seem that despite being stuck at home and generally arranging meetings when we're in front of our computers, we're still booking more meetings via mobile and tablet devices. In 2019, a little under half of all the meetings we booked were via a mobile. One year later, that had increased to over 60 percent.

Booking meetings via a tablet also increased from 12.6 percent in 2019 to 16.9 percent in 2020. Unsurprisingly, this rise in mobile and

tablet usage saw a sharp drop in those booking meetings via a desktop. In fact, it almost halved from a little over 38 percent in 2019 to 21.3 percent in 2020.

There are a number of reasons why this change occurred - despite more people that ever working remotely.

More devices that ever now enable syncing between their desktop apps and a mobile or tablet device. Take your calendar for instance, when you confirm a meeting on your computer, the calendar on your phone is automatically updated. It makes sense then that if you're on your phone and an invite pops in - you'll just confirm it.

There's also the way we're meeting that has to be considered. Years ago, video conferencing could only happen with expensive technology that required its own phone line and space. Now, the likes of Zoom and Microsoft Teams can fit seamlessly into your phone or tablet. In 2020, daily downloads of Zoom increased from 56,000 in January to 2.13 million by March. Using a video conferencing tool on your mobile or tablet means meetings can take place anywhere - employees aren't tied to their desks anymore.



## About Doodle

Doodle is one of the world's leading scheduling technology platforms, helping some of the largest brands instantly meet with clients, colleagues and teams. It is used by over 30 million active monthly users around the globe to provide a smart alternative to endless back-and-forth emails.

Doodle integrates effortlessly with calendars and various communication tools to truly simplify meeting organization for companies, the self-employed and private individuals.

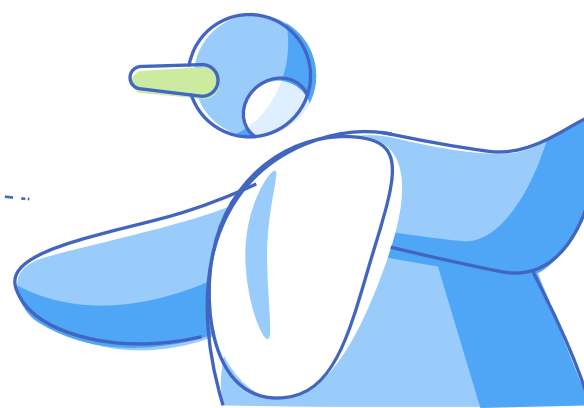
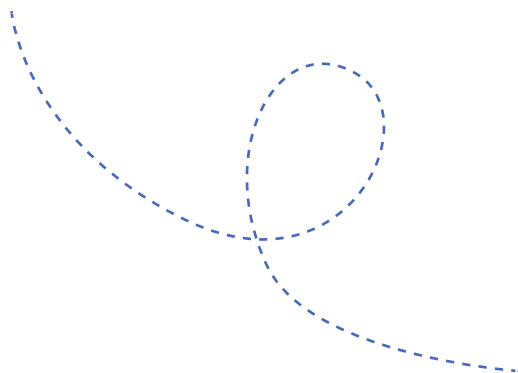
Part of the Swiss media company, TX Group, Doodle AG is headquartered in Zurich, with offices in Berlin, Atlanta, New York and Belgrade.

## Contact Us

To learn how Doodle can help you get meetings scheduled quickly and effortlessly, contact our sales team for a product demonstration.

If you would like to test out Doodle before committing long-term, you can get started with a 14-day trial.

If you're a journalist or analyst and would like to request more information about this report or speak with Doodle CEO Renato Profico, please contact our corporate communications/PR team at [press@doodle.com](mailto:press@doodle.com).



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