SILEX

20 reasons
why the Silex PTE adds value
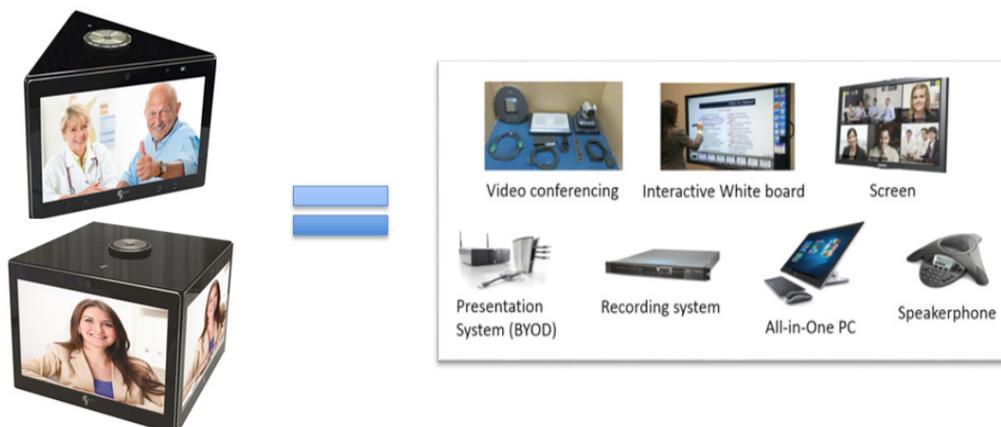## to your collaboration environment

The Panoramic Telepresence Experience (PTE) from UC innovator SilexPro is a unique product concept with multiple benefits in terms of convenience, usability and cost. No other product combines its all-in-one simplicity with its breadth of connectivity. Here we look briefly at some of these advantages, creating a simple checklist for Centre of Table video collaboration.

We should also consider that the PTE is designed to be deployed in meeting rooms, huddle spaces if you prefer, suitable for up to 8 participants. Meetings requiring higher numbers are moving away from the collaborative mode and into the training and presentation mode. A different style of room, and a different technology, is appropriate for these environments. As with any task, it is about selecting the right tool for the job.

1- All-in-One Device

One, simple device and nothing else to worry about. The cameras, screens, microphone, speakers and CPU are all built into the unit. The only cable required is for power. By having the one unit, users save time and effort in deployment, as well as reducing frustration.

Video conferencing   Interactive White board   Screen

Presentation   Recording system   All-in-One PC   Speakerphone
System (BYOD)

2- Natural experience

For millennia, humans have sat around the campfire, or the table, or huddled out in the field in order to chat, to negotiate, to communicate. In short, to collaborate better, we like to gather around in a circle. Thus, putting a UC collaboration device into the centre of the table, enables the innate gathering experience to continue around it. A more natural experience leads to a more productive collaboration.

3- Codec Agnostic

The PTE runs Microsoft Windows 10 Pro on its powerful CPU. This means that any soft codec which will run in a Windows environment, will run on the PTE, and this includes pretty much all of the commercial and domestic applications available today. As a result, deploying the PTE does not require any change to a current UC strategy. UC Administrators can be sure it will integrate seamlessly into their existing infrastructure, saving time and effort. Simple, yet powerful.
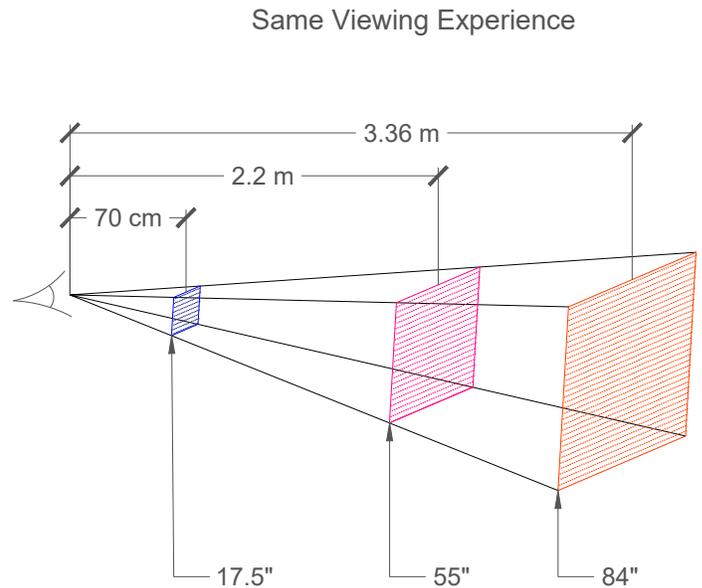
4- Mobility

As an all-in-one, WIFI supporting, device, it is easy to pick up the PTE and move it to another location. The PTE weighs between 10 - 14KG, depending on the version. Less than the baggage allowance for most airlines. This means that rooms no longer need to be specially fitted out for AV capabilities, saving time, effort and cost, as the PTE can be moved in and out as required. Moreover, it is not necessary either to have large screens precariously attached to stands and trollies, the movement of which always requires a lot of care.

5- Screen size (i)

The screen size of the PTE (17.5") dictates the height of the unit. At 30cm high, the unit still allows a full view of the participants opposite, enabling a full conversation across the table to continue as normal. There is no "restaurant flowers" effect, where an item needs to be moved in order to see others around the table. The ability to see all participants comfortably adds to the convenience of the system and its effectiveness as a collaboration device.

6- Screen size (ii)

At 17.5", the PTE screen size may seem at first to be a little small, being little larger than a laptop. But when viewed at 70cm, the optimum distance (about an arm's length away), this is equivalent to a 100" screen placed on the wall 4m away. Compared to the cost, time and incredible effort required to install a 100" screen onto a meeting room wall (assuming the wall can even support it), this makes the PTE a powerful, but lower cost, alternative option.
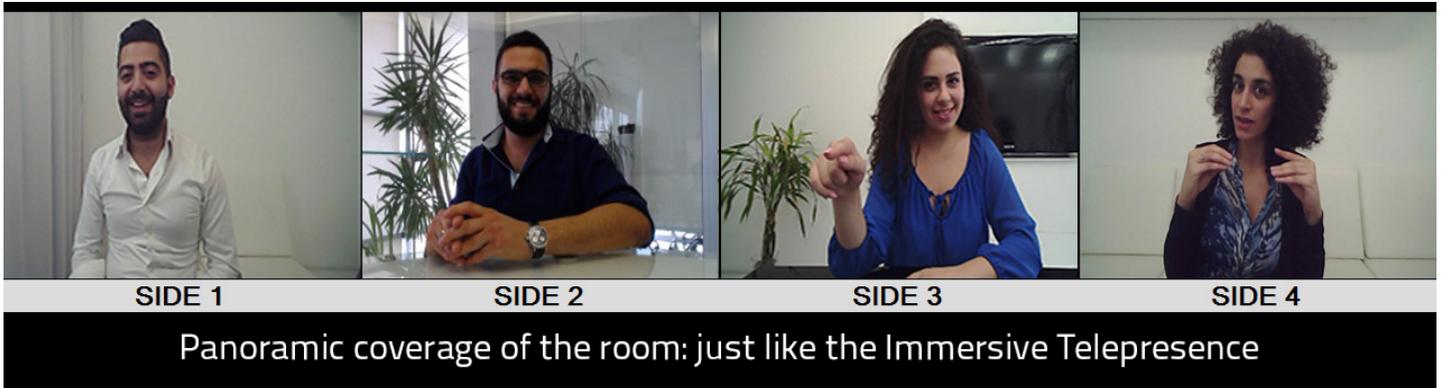
Same Viewing Experience

7- Touch Screens

Touch screens are now a ubiquitous feature of our everyday lives. We instinctively know how to use and drive them. The PTE screens are all touch screens, and this makes the device easier to use. Everyone around the table can control the PTE, and therefore the call, without needing access to a keyboard, mouse, stylus or remote control. It also means that anyone can use a whiteboarding function, or content sharing, without having to leave their seat. From the master screen, the touch capability of the other screens can be disabled, if deemed necessary.

8- Eye Contact

The HD cameras are located in the top centre of each screen. As a consequence, when looking at a local participant across the table, it seems to the remote participant(s) as if you are looking directly at them. This engages them further into the meeting and improves the overall levels of collaboration. Furthermore, the camera location helps avoid the unflattering facial images so often transmitted from personal UC devices.

SIDE 1   SIDE 2   SIDE 3   SIDE 4

Panoramic coverage of the room: just like the Immersive Telepresence

9- No Cables

OK. One power cable, but nothing else. And this is connected to the bottom of the device so potentially invisible. Think about VC installations you may have seen: power cable to the codec, to the screen and sometimes to the camera as well, network cable to the codec, microphone cable(s), codec to camera cable, codec to monitor cable, content sharing cable. That's a lot of wire! A good AV installation can hide all this, but that costs extra time, and a lot of money, and usually restricts the mobility of the system. No such issues with the PTE.

10- Real Estate

The recommended standard viewing distance for a Full HD screen is 3x the monitor height. For a 75" screen, this is, on average, about 93 cm which means the nearest participant should be 279 cm away from the screen. Assuming a 3m wide room, that is almost 9m2of unused space. Obviously, prices per m2 vary enormously around the world, but in expensive city centre locations, this can equate to a huge cost saving potential. In some offices, lack of collaborative space is an issue, so using the PTE, with its lower room footprint, can actually increase the collaborative facilities available.

11- Content Sharing

Aquality content sharing capability is a key function of any collaboration system. Many codecs have a content sharing capability built in, and these are, of course, fully supported by the PTE. But what if there is no such feature? Or it is limited? The PTE has a content sharing capability which is independent of the codec. This allows documents and presentations to be shared to all participants. Files can be accessed across the network, by connecting a device, or from one of the USB ports on the PTE. In addition, the PTE transmits content at 30 fps, meaning that video content can be shared effortlessly and without the interruptions sometimes associated with T.120 or H.239 protocols. Thus, flexible and quality content sharing is always available with the PTE, regardless of the codec used.

12- Whiteboarding

The PTE has a built-in whiteboarding capability, improving the overall collaborative experience. Participants can, using the PTE's touch screens, draw and highlight over documents and files displayed on the call. All markings can be saved for future use if required. Given that many, if not most, collaborative meetings today involve some form of documentation (graphic, spreadsheet, presentation, etc), the powerful whiteboarding capability, regardless of codec, is a major benefit in terms of time saving, efficiency and understanding.

13- Recording

The PTE can record a call, including any contents displayed (with whiteboarding additions) and then save the recording for future use. Whether used as part of compliance processes, or as an aide-memoire for future meetings, the ability to record calls on the PTE, as opposed to using an external recording system, can be a major cost saving.

14- Connect Your Own Device

Many of us have one or more portable devices which also contain data which may be useful for a collaborative meeting. An obvious example would be photos taken on a smart phone that then need to be discussed. The PTE supports Apple AirPlay, Android Miracast and Bluetooth for wireless communication between smart devices and the PTE. In addition, there is one HDMI port and 2 USB ports that can be used for a physical connection. All built into the system, there is no need for additional CYOD technology to be deployed, saving costs and simplifying the connection process.
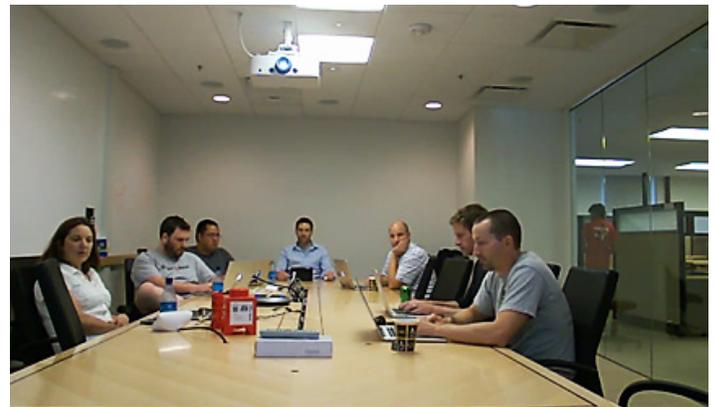
15- Video Layouts

With three or four sides to a PTE device, there can be 3 or 4 windows to be displayed to the far end participants. These windows are transmitted as one composite video stream. However, the layout of these windows can be controlled by the main PTE user. This user can choose from a panoramic layout (all windows in a line), a squared layout, a circular layout similar to participants' respective positions around the table or a voice activated option with the active speaker taking a larger window than others. A selection of different layouts helps aid the efficiency of the meeting, allowing the appropriate layout to be used for the particular meeting.

16- Participant Equality

As well as avoiding the classic "bowling alley" view seen in many traditional video conferencing set-ups, the PTE introduces a degree of "participant equality". All participants appear the same size on the screen (unless active speaker mode is engaged) and this, together with the facial recognition feature mentioned below, can really help with the flow of the meeting. No-one is hidden behind others, no-one is a small face at the end of the table. As King Arthur observed, a round table ensures equality amongst participants and the PTE replicates this process!

Participants around a Silex PTE Quattro system

Participants in a traditionnal setup

17- Facial Recognition

New technology added to the PTE allows the system to recognise participants using it and display their name automatically in the window they are using. This clearly aids the efficiency of any meeting, as it ensures everyone is aware of all participants.

18- Sit to Start

Starting a VC has notoriously been a difficult process. The PTE has the ability to facilitate the start of calls by recognising a VC call in a user's schedule. Not only can the system recognise a call, it can also recognise which codec should be used. Thus, the call can be started automatically at the appropriate time, making the call process much easier for the user. Not only easier to use, but potentially saving a lot of time as well.

19- Multi-Codec

One device, many codecs. As the PTE uses MS Windows, and can support multiple codecs, it is of course possible to have multiple codecs loaded on the same device. Thus, for users who wish, they can use the same codec as their counterpart, rather than relying on the protocol integration properties of the respective codec manufacturers. In some cases, using the same codec can be seen as a mark of respect for the other participant(s).

This facility can also act as an easy backup, should one service not be available.

20- Custom Table and Motorized Lift

As indicated before, the PTE can be deployed on any meeting room table. There is a recommendation that there be 70cm from user to screen, and a maximum of 2 participants per side. In order to assist customers further, SilexPro has introduced custom tables (3 and 4 sided) which fit the PTE, and its recommended dimensions, perfectly. These tables come with a motorized lift, so that the PTE can be lowered out of sight for those meetings where it is not required. Sensors ensure that any cables or USB keys connected to the device do not get damaged when lowering the unit. The motorized lift can also be supplied separately so that customers can install the unit into their own tables. A template for the correct hole to be cut is available from SilexPro. By using the lift, customers can get maximum usage out of the room(s) where the PTE is deployed: system available when needed and clear tables when it is not. The ultimate in collaborative convenience.