

White Paper

# Improve Employee Engagement Through Live Video



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## Introduction

While it's not surprising to businesses that a certain number of their employees are "disengaged," what is surprising is the size of that number: it's higher than most think. The Gallup survey, "State of the American Workplace," included several interesting statistics. For starters, the survey found that 70 percent (nearly three-quarters) of American workers are not engaged or actively disengaged.<sup>1</sup>

The results are observed directly in the bottom line, with the price tag for disengaged employees accounting for \$450 billion-\$550 billion in annual losses in productivity.<sup>2</sup> With so much at stake, how can businesses encourage higher levels of engagement while shifting employees out of this dangerous "disengaged" category?

## Finding a new way, connection with employees

The ways in which companies operate today changes rapidly, making it difficult for executives to ensure that employees are keeping up as the company's mission evolves. To reduce the growing challenges associated with disengagement in the workplace, it's important to find new ways to connect with employees.

Employees are no longer physically located at a single place — they're at many different sites, working remotely, and even spread across the globe. In fact, telecommuting rose 79 percent between 2005 and 2012, according to The New York Times.<sup>4</sup> When thinking about engaging employees, it's important to harness the ability to reach all everyone — on-site, remote and at the variety of locations where you operate.

The strategy should be focused on connecting employees with not only your message, but ultimately your brand. A surprising number of employees, 41 percent, admitted in the Gallup survey that they do not understand what their companies stand for or how they differ from their competitors.<sup>5</sup>

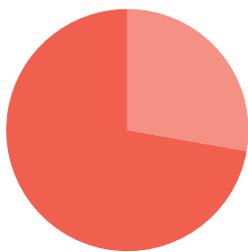


*The cost of disengaged employees accounts for \$450 - \$550 billion in annual losses of productivity each year.<sup>3</sup>*

In addition, IBM Watson Media conducted a survey, targeted at \$50K+ salaried professionals, and found that:

- 72 percent of employees do not fully understand their company's strategy
- 58 percent of employees wish they had better insight into the company's next steps
- 63 percent of employees wish they heard from company leadership more
- 54 percent of employees believe they'd be more productive if they had more access to leadership<sup>6</sup>

By aligning your teams worldwide with technology that closes this gap, you can raise engagement by reaching more employees on a broader and deeper level.<sup>7</sup>



**72%**

*of employees do not fully understand their company's strategy.*

### Expanding your strategic alignment, engaging your employees

Live video helps improve internal communication and can drive higher levels of engagement by broadcasting town halls. More employee interaction with senior management can translate into messages that are communicated more clearly, consistently and across all facets of the organization.

In the past, senior managers would travel — domestically and internationally — to communicate important messages to employees. But this is costly, with the average travel expense totaling \$1,000 for domestic trips and \$2,500 for international trips.<sup>8</sup> Once you add in time spent in transit and on-site, the cost can easily increase to \$2,000-\$2,500 for each senior manager. For a group of 10 managers, this could add up to \$20,000 or more.

**\$100**

*Spending about per employee by communicating in a more impactful way could yield a 50 to 1 return on investment.*

Productivity loss is also a consideration, since 72 percent of employees do not believe that they fully understand their company's strategy.<sup>9</sup> For example, assuming a productivity loss of 10 percent of an employee's time, and an average wage of \$50,000 annually, there is a significant opportunity to boost productivity by \$5,000 per employee, by simply clarifying a company's direction and objectives.

Live video can be a highly effective alternative, when you consider the fact that spending about \$100 per employee communicating in a more efficient way could yield a 50 to 1 return on investment.

### Do you want to extend your strategic alignment?

The popularity of live streaming video is growing quickly, because it's highly engaging, effective and scalable. If you're interested in adding live video to increase employee engagement, IBM Watson Media can help. Learn more about [IBM's Corporate Communication solutions](#), which can scale to deliver high definition video assets to large employee audiences on virtually any device.

## In Summary

Seventy percent of American employees are not engaged or actively disengaged<sup>1</sup>, resulting in a decrease in productivity. This results in annual losses that range from \$450 billion-\$550 billion<sup>2</sup>. Companies need to effectively engage these employees in a manner that can accommodate the sometimes vast geographic distances between staff.

- **PROBLEM**

Seventy-two percent of employees do not fully understand their company's strategy<sup>6</sup> and 41 percent do not understand how their company differs from their competitors<sup>5</sup>.

- **RESOLUTION**

One method to combat this issue is to make leadership more accessible. Sixty-three percent of employees wish they heard more from company leadership while 54 percent of employees believe they'd be more productive if they had more access to them<sup>6</sup>.

- **EXECUTION**

Live streaming executive town halls can bridge the gap between leadership and employees. It will allow leadership to convey their passion and vision for the company's direction, while also giving employees the competitive information they need to execute their job better. It's a cost effective solution by avoiding costs associated with travel while still giving a face to a company's leadership.

- **LIVE STREAMING CHECKLIST**

- Make sure to have a fast, reliable connection to broadcast your content.
- Check encoder settings when using third party products (H.264 for video codec and AAC for audio codec are optimal).
- Test equipment prior to live streaming.
- Utilize an adaptive bitrate solution that can deliver high definition video to viewers with a fast connection and lower quality to those on slower connections.

## Footnotes

1. "State of the American Workplace"; Gallup Report, 2012; <http://www.gallup.com/services/178514/state-american-workplace.aspx>
2. Ibid, 2012.
3. Ibid, 2012.
4. Tugend, A.; "It's Unclearly Defined, but Telecommuting is Fast On the Rise"; The New York Times, March 7, 2014; <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/08/your-money/when-working-in-your-pajamas-is-more-productive.html>
5. Gallup Report, opt. cit., 2012.
6. IBM Watson Media conducted a survey in October of 2014 that was targeted at \$50K+ salaried professionals to determine how well they understood their organization's strategy and gauge employee engagement. Twelve questions were asked. One hundred out of 268 professionals responded and their responses were captured and used in this paper.
7. Ibid, October, 2014.
8. "Average Trip Costs Incurred by Travel Leaders Corporate Clients During the Second Quarter Declined Versus the Prior-year Period"; Business Travel News, 2013; <http://www.businesstravelnews.com/Business-Travel-Agencies/Average-trip-costs-incurred-by-Travel-Leaders-Corporate-clients-during-the-second-quarter-declined-versus-the-prior-year-period>
9. Ustream, an IBM Company; survey, October 2014.



## About IBM Watson Media

Created in January 2016, IBM Watson Media brings together innovations from IBM's R&D labs with the cloud video platform capabilities of Clearleap and Ustream. Through the unit, IBM delivers a powerful portfolio of video services that spans open API development, digital and visual analytics, simplified management and consistent delivery across global industries. IBM Watson Media supports top media and enterprise companies with reliable video on-demand and streaming services.

For more information on IBM Watson Media, please visit [www.ibm.com/watson/media](http://www.ibm.com/watson/media).

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