

Overview

Lightworks Workspaces is Virtual Office software that crosses organisational boundaries so your colleagues and dispersed teams can work together and manage projects as if they were in the same physical location. This revolutionises the way you can work with your remote colleagues, clients & partners – to work together as one team, deliver a better service at lower cost and build stronger working relationships; and the way you can run projects – to bring everyone together on the same page and working to the same ends.

Lightworks Workspaces is built on peer to peer networking technology and is unique in that, unlike previous web or client server based systems, you can –

- **Effortlessly bring together your whole team, wherever they are** – the ability to securely bridge company firewalls and work offline means that everyone (your clients, partners, subcontractors etc) can work together, including those with only occasional online access such as colleagues 'on site' or 'on the road', with no need for concern about servers, security, network access or IT support. Presence awareness & automatic synchronisation ensure that everyone is kept up to date and on the same page.
- **Actually work together in real time** with easy to use tools for co-editing documents, communication (speech, messaging & discussion threads), holding virtual meetings or presentations, project management, file sharing etc, you no longer need to travel to be able to work together effectively.
- **Implement your own systems and business processes** within workspaces to extend them beyond your organisational boundaries to work with your dispersed colleagues, clients, partners or supply chain. Use your existing files and documents within workspaces (Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Sharepoint, Project etc) so they can be used collaboratively with your far flung workspace members. Customise your workspaces to the specific needs of each of your users and clients.
- **Keep all your information securely under your control** - unlike email where once you click send your information has 'gone', or a web service where you entrust your data to a third party, or a network where you rely on having a network connection; with Workspaces all communications, data and files remain securely encrypted within your workspaces and always available even when working offline.
- **Make working together a joy** with everyone able to work together, whenever and wherever they want to, in a secure, transparent environment. Workspace messaging, activity awareness and alerts create a sense of presence and shared focus amongst dispersed team members. With an always accessible place to contribute ideas, raise issues, ask questions, get answers, share information and support each other, it's possible for commitment, responsibility, creativity and morale to soar.

Lightworks Workspaces removes the barriers to effective collaboration so you can build closer relationships and deliver great service. It lets you bring everyone together, wherever they are, to work as one team and harness the full potential of your people to solve problems, innovate and drive success.

The Problem

Over the last few years there has been a growing need to support a more connected way of working. There is a growing willingness to work more collaboratively with partners, clients, contractors or service providers. Companies have become more and more decentralised. Professional people want to be able to work where and when it is best for their organisation and themselves.

The internet has helped facilitate this more decentralised and collaborative way of working. There are now web based application for teleconferencing, file sharing, project management, knowledge management and distributed business processes. However, there are major problems and limitations with these existing technologies and applications. For example, -

1. They all rely on being able to get a reliable network connection. People who spend a lot of time 'on site or 'on the road' still have limited access to their corporate resources, often when they most need them.
2. Corporate networks are designed to lock people out; consequently it is cumbersome and costly to set up cross-organisational solutions to enable people behind different firewalls to work together. (*Web-based portal solutions are an alternative but they require high maintenance server installations or entrusting your data and files to a third party, and they can't use powerful interactive tools such as Gantt Charts or White Boards*).
3. Existing technologies still suffer from reliability and availability problems. Wherever there is a server or network infrastructure there is the potential for failure and the need for expensive support services.
4. They allow people to share information and common business processes but they don't allow people to actually work together in real time - users can't talk to each other, work on the same document at the same time, be aware of what each person is working on, or interact with each other as if they were in the same office.

There is a solution.

The Solution

First and foremost, Lightworks Workspaces has a set of core capabilities that can be applied to content, projects and processes throughout your organization. These as: Awareness, Conversation and Synchronization (see diagram below).



- **Awareness** capabilities that alert your users to the presence of team members and of new information and project status
- **Conversation** - a variety of communication media, including instant messages, real-time and persistent chat, Voice over IP and discussion threads.
- **Synchronization** capabilities ensure that a complete and consistent copy of the team's work is locally available at each team member's desktop, enabling off-site and off-line working. All information and activity flows effortlessly across firewall boundaries, taking care not to hog limited bandwidth and remaining fully encrypted.

Lightworks Workspaces is built on top of the Groove peer to peer communication platform, designed for the most inhospitable environments. Peer to peer technology enables computers to communicate directly with one another rather than through a server or web site and gives you the following benefits that are not available with traditional client server or web-based technologies:

- **The ability to work together rather than just share information** - peer to peer networking allows you to co-edit documents in real time, talk to each and text-chat, 'see' each others presence and what each person is working on, share large files instantly and work together on a project or piece of work as if we were in the same office.
- **Reliability, resilience and security** - with peer to peer there is no single point of failure as there is no 'server' or website that could go down. A peer to peer network has built in redundancy and is self-healing as all the data is replicated at every user's computer. Unlike hosted web based systems your files and documents are never trusted to a third party, they reside entirely within the secure confines of your workspaces under your control.
- **Offline working** - many people work on-site or spend time travelling and therefore have limited access to a network or internet connection. With this technology your people are able to work wherever and whenever they want, online or offline, with the same rich tool set. Their work is automatically synchronised with other workspace members whenever they re-connect, even if other users have gone offline in the meantime.
- **Faster response times** - local resources and large files are synchronised directly between computers rather than being routed through the bottle neck of a server. Intelligent routing capabilities allow traffic to transparently cross any firewall or network address boundary. Only the changes made to a file or other object are packaged and transported across the network making the most of limited bandwidth.

What is a Workspace

A workspace is an instance of the software set up for a particular purpose, with a specific set of invited workspace members and each with it's own set of 'tools' selected to add the specific functionality required for that workspace (for example a 'document management' tool, 'noticeboard', 'whiteboard', 'discussion tool', customised 'business process tool', a 'Gantt tool' etc.).

You create as many workspaces as you need, each for a given purpose and with the relevant workspace members from your organisation or another – so, users are typically members of multiple workspaces. For example, you might have some client relationship workspaces for work with your major clients, a workspace for your whole organisation or department as a knowledge base and to share news, ideas and stay connected wherever they are, workspaces for each of your key subcontractors to automate enquiry, quotation & valuation processes, workspaces for each of your functional teams and a workspaces for each of your projects.

A workspace can be set up in 5 minutes and will last for however long it's needed - a few hours in the case of a workspace set up to hold a management meeting with users from around the country, or many years as in a workspace for a major contract, for a director who wants to be able to work effectively whilst working from abroad or a workspace to set-up and run a new site or branch office.

This is an example of a workspace with a 'project management' tool being used -

The screenshot displays the Harbor Consulting - Marketing Planning workspace. The main area features a Gantt chart for '2004 Marketing Programs' with various tasks and their durations. A 'Details' panel for the 'Web' task provides specific information such as start and finish dates, duration, and priority. On the right side, a 'Workspace Members' list shows the status of various team members, including those who are 'In Workspace', 'Online', or 'Offline'. A 'Chat' window is also visible, showing a conversation between Greg Jones and Andrew. At the bottom of the interface, a taskbar contains icons for 'Discussion', 'Files', 'Marketing Projects', and '(old) Discussion'.

Alerts showing data that you haven't seen before

Workspace tools – tells you who is working where

On going chat session

Workspace members - showing if 'online', 'offline' or 'in workspace'

All workspaces are robust and secure. Unlike email with its back-and-forth messaging or hosted web services where you entrust your files to a third party, Lightworks Workspaces provides a secure, flexible way to bring people, communication and information together all in one place, allowing discussions to take place in context with the data. Only those team members explicitly invited to a workspace even know of its existence. All content and activity is encrypted in the background using military grade 192 bit encryption - over the network and on your user's personal computer.

A far better way of working together

No process can go any faster than its slowest bottleneck - and so it's the bottlenecks, or constraints, that determine the rate of progress of the whole project. ^{1, 2}

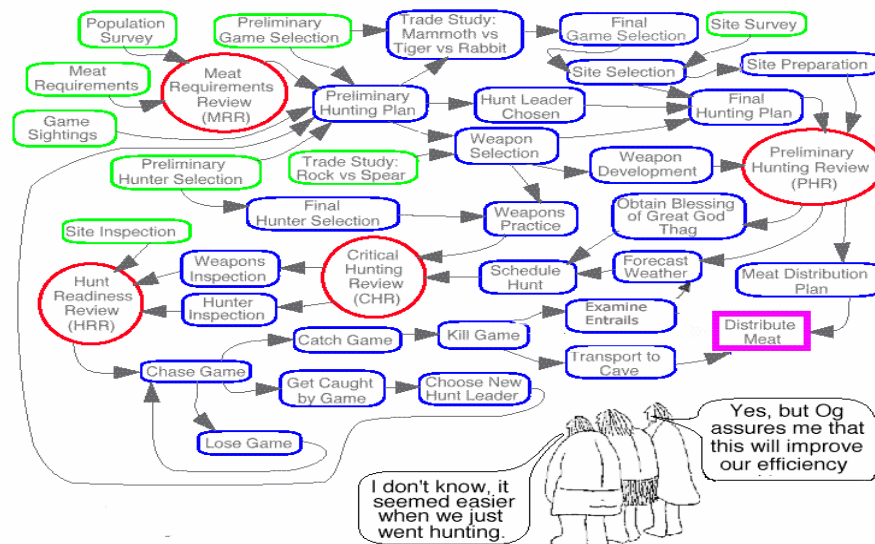
So what are these constraints? In any project that involves a dispersed team the big ones are:

1. the dissemination of timely and useful information to those who need to know
2. the ability of team members to make informed, effective decisions together
3. the commitment of the different parties to the common goal

In the conclusion to "Achieving Change in Construction" ³ the authors argue that, **"a new big idea for managing construction has to be found"**. We believe that removing these three constraints can transform all project management as we now know it, not just in construction.

Workspaces remove all three of these bottlenecks to project success allowing you to radically shorten schedules, reduce costs and delight your clients & stakeholders. Here's how -

1. Lightworks Workspaces connects your whole team and makes all information instantly available to everyone at all times, wherever they are. Your team members can relax and get on with their jobs knowing that the alerts and notifications keep them up to date with any relevant or important new information - they don't have to look for it, it will find them.
2. There has to be a better way than this -



Most of the best practices, tools and systems used in business and project management are geared towards helping us to manage tasks well. The problem is they overlook the fact that tasks are carried out **as a result of** dialogue, ie. it's the network of requests, questions, issues, proposals and commitments that form our conversations that are the instigators, or **cause** of action, and determines what and how things are carried out. Therefore, we believe, it's this very natural, creative process of dialogue that we need to work with, if we are to be truly successful in our teams and projects. The 'Forum' tool in Workspaces enables this powerful 'dialogue' approach to getting things done together.

3. Working from the principle that "people support their own creations", a workspace puts everyone on the same page (ie. supply chain, professional services, outside stakeholders etc), letting them see and participate in the creation of the 'big picture' – so they can think and act for the good of the whole and have everyone pulling in the same direction. Your users are free to work whenever and from wherever is best for them, and have all the resources at hand as well as the support of the whole team.

Lightworks Workspaces connects everyone securely, removes the physical and technical barriers to effective collaboration and then provides the tools to work as one to run successful projects, taking the brakes off decision-making and making progress everyone's responsibility.

1. "The Goal". E. M Goldratt, Gower. 1989

2. "Breaking the Constraints to World Class Performance". H.W.Dettmer, ASQ Quality Press. 1998

3. "Achieving Change in Construction" white paper. Kosela, Ballard and Howell. 2004

Having Workspaces work for you

It takes only a few minutes to set up a workspace to connect your remote team members (from both inside and outside your company) and be working together productively. Here are three common uses: -

Team Workspaces - bring together dispersed colleagues and partners to work together on the same page. For example, you could have a workspace to bring together the management team of your geographically dispersed group of companies, another workspace for a functional team (eg. sales, surveying, production or accounts) and perhaps workspaces to enable you to work together with key partners, contractors or consultants. Your users 'see' each other online, encouraging them to take advantage of the real-time connectivity to interact. They can work together as if they were sitting right next to each other to co-edit documents, view a presentation, browse together, brainstorm using a shared whiteboard or note pad and share other common desktop software such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Project and Sharepoint.

Users are alerted to new activity that is important to them so they have complete visibility into what's going on among all current work - they know when a file is added or updated in a workspace, when a colleague has entered into a particular workspace, when a real time conversation is taking place or can catch up on a conversation that has already taken place while the user was offline or away from his desk.

'Knowledge tools' allow your team members to capture and share knowledge, learn from their collective experience and support each other. Rather than just creating a library of information, workspaces become a fresh, active resource of your teams shared knowledge & competencies by -

- providing a forum for dialogue, feedback and learning
- enabling the capture and sharing of good practices in a simple and engaging way

Project Workspaces - secure and simple cross-firewall reach makes it straightforward to include everyone in the team – subcontractors, customers, partners and professional services, right from the start, or incrementally as your project unfolds. Workspaces provide the two things a team need in order to gel, common ownership of the work product and a sense of community that fosters trust. They allow you to utilise the full potential of your project team to drive progress and minimise risk using simple but powerful tools for real time, collaborative project management. Everyone is able to see the issues, risks, opportunities and constraints as they arise and take responsibility for what needs to be done. Your team members are able to contribute to the planning process and monitor/update their own progress leading to increased commitment as project management becomes an active, ongoing process rather than the more common 'plan, delegate, file and forget'. Team members who don't currently use workspaces can be automatically kept up to date via Email or Text Messages to their mobile phone.

You save time and money by holding meetings in the workspace - no one needs to travel anywhere, if anyone drags a drawing or document into the 'files tool' it is immediately available to everyone else and users can browse or co-edit a document in the workspace easier than if they were sat round the same table. This ability to really work together, no matter where we, mitigates contract risks and can result in a dramatic improvement in project costs, schedule duration & team morale.

If someone on the team opens a drawing or file from the Document Library and marks it up or edits it, everyone who needs to know is automatically informed of the change, the edited document is saved as a new version and all previous versions are locked for editing, without any user input. Apart from the ease & simplicity of having this fully automatic version control, this guarantees there are no mistakes, everyone is kept up to date, and all previous versions of any document are always available.

Client Relationship Workspaces - give you the means to build strong, trusting relationships with your clients. Far better, we think, to have a secure 'open space' for dialogue and sharing, and to take away all the barriers to communication and work flow between you and your client, than to try to impress them with slick marketing or to try and second guess their issues and needs.

By effectively removing the barriers (such as travel, post, presence awareness, firewalls, incompatible business processes) between your two organisations you make the process of doing business with your company incredibly easy. Workspaces are easily customised to give your clients a secure personalised experience that demonstrates your organisation's visibility, credibility and integrity.

Your good practices and business processes can be implemented within workspaces to extend their reach beyond your organisational boundaries to include your clients and partners, so that you can seamlessly work as one team. These cross-organisational, tailor made 'applications' within workspaces can be as simple or sophisticated as you like, for example – sales and enquiry processes, account management, facilities management, applications for payment, 'help desk' & support applications, project management etc.

The Benefits

Benefits for the organization:

- Connects people in different companies and locations with no IT intervention needed. You can easily include external partners and customers in core business processes.
- Setting up a new site or branch office, with full comms. and access to all your main office resources and files is as easy as adding a new user in a new location, it takes minutes.
- Your far-flung teams have complete visibility into project or process information and events, can effortlessly coordinate to make quick and accurate decisions and respond rapidly to emerging problems and opportunities.

Benefits for the end user:

- Users can work where they want, when they want, remaining productive both on and off-line. Getting work done is not limited to 'being on the network'.
- Users always have access to all the team's resources and an open forum to interact and get support from team members wherever they are. In built synchronisation ensures they always have the latest data.
- For the first time ever users can you have spontaneous, secure, no hassle, real time collaboration with anyone inside or outside your organisation - ie. work on a proposal, negotiation, give client support.

Benefits for team leaders:

- Able to assign access and usage privileges to each user within each tool, ie. who is allowed to invite, view, edit, update, delete etc.
- Lead using 'collaborate & innovate' rather than 'command & control' yet maintain structure and order by implementing your good practices & business processes within workspaces.
- Hold highly productive virtual meetings. By comparison, having to get everyone to leave their work to meet at a fixed time and place is cumbersome, expensive and highly ineffective. Free of these restrictions, workspace meetings are a breath of fresh air, - there are no longer any barriers to participation, you no longer have to 'wait your turn to speak', you no longer have the time pressures to press-on & wrap-up and everyone can contribute from where they are most productive, enabling 'the meeting' to have full access to all the files and resources at each participants home base. Free of these pressures and constraints, issues and proposals in workspace meetings flow easily and naturally towards agreement, resolution and action.

Benefits for IT management:

- Incredibly secure, cost effective and effortless way of networking anyone, anywhere. No need for servers, network hardware, website or expensive support.
- Works on most existing desktop hardware configurations using Windows desktop OS, from 2000 through XP. Works with installed versions of Microsoft Office, from 98 to 2003.
- Unlike email attachments where as soon as you click the send button your data is gone, or a hosted web application where you entrust your data to a third party, all files and data remain in the workspace safely under your control.
- All activity, content and communication is secured using military grade encryption, without any end user or IT set up or intervention. Works over any Internet or Network connection (more secure than any VPN). Users are as safe exchanging critical data from an internet coffee-shop in Beijing as they would be behind their own corporate firewall.
- Integrates with your existing data and business processes.

Who benefits from Lightworks Workspaces

Some examples –

- **Dispersed teams** who want to work together and share knowledge as if they were in the same office.
- **Companies** that want a way to offer a unique 'high touch' personalised service to their clients and open up a secure, cross-organisational bridge for dialogue and collaboration. This gives your company transparency and credibility whilst offering your client the benefits of convenience, much reduced costs of doing business, and confidence in your ability to respond effectively to their issues and needs.
- **People on the road or on site** to stay connected - to have all their organisations resources with them and full access to their team at either their clients' offices or on-site, wherever that may be.
- **Organisations** that want a way to deliver a 'high touch' personalised service to their customers and provide a shared place for dialogue and collaboration.
- **Management teams** that want an 'always open' forum to develop ideas, support each other and respond to issues and opportunities as they arise.
- **Project managers & team leaders** – bring together the whole team without them having to travel to meet, so that everyone's talent and creativity is enlisted to ensure success. Provides a transparent collaborative environment which is accessible to everyone; for co-ordinating activities, resolving problems, raising issues, managing risks and sharing ideas.
- **Professionals Service Providers** who want to create an open secure channel to interact with their clients, share confidential documents and information, and create a unique way of delivering exceptional service and support.
- **Task forces** who need to come together quickly, often **in austere conditions**, to create a secure environment to co-ordinate their activities and communicate, ie. construction & engineering personnel, NGOs, security forces, relief agencies etc.
- **Human Resources** to have a powerful way to deliver interactive training, mentoring and support services to far-flung employees with all content/resources available offline. Information can be delivered confidentially to each member.
- **Individuals** who want the freedom to work away from their base but still have access to all their organisations resources and the ability to play a full part in their team.
- **Creative teams** to have an 'always open' place with powerful collaborative tools for sharing and developing ideas, rapid prototyping, presenting and getting feedback from clients.
- **Professional associations & communities of practice** to create a shared place for co-ordinating activities, community, support, sharing information, discussion and a variety of ways to interact with each other (voice & text chat, discussion boards, video links, instant messaging).

Lightworks Workspaces in our daily lives

Most of us have multiple roles in our lives. Lightworks workspaces reflect this fact by enabling your users to have as many different workspaces as they like, each with a different purpose and with the members who support or share that role. This 'multi-purpose' nature of workspaces with their in-built capability to connect everyone no matter where they are, can have a profound enabling effect in our lives, to:

- **connect** & work with people across organisational boundaries where before it wasn't possible
- **build closer and stronger relationships** with distant colleagues, clients or friends with rich tools for awareness and communication
- **work where and when we want** and still have access to all our resources & the support of our team
- **be more creative & productive** with everyone connected on the same page wherever they are
- **save** an enormous amount of **time and money** by not having to travel or post in order to work together effectively

Our Service

We provide you with a complete managed service, for your remote users or clients so they can be confident using the system; and for you, so you realise the full benefits of having the system work for your organisation. Workspaces can be customised to the specific needs of your business and workgroups, so they work the way you want to work and provide your people, partners or clients with a meaningful, personalised environment.

Lightworks Workspaces are designed to leverage your existing software and IT investment - to implement and extend your existing files and documents beyond your organisational boundaries so they can be used collaboratively with all your far flung colleagues, clients or partners.

Apart from a small initial set-up fee our service is provided on a 'per user, per week' basis but only on the number of users you currently need (ie. you only pay for the number of users you will actually need in the next quarter) so that you have no business risk, the system is always creating you value and you get a great return on your investment.

Lightworks Workspaces are an extremely cost effective way of connecting users wherever they are, as you need nothing but the software itself – no server, network infrastructure, website or IT support to set them up and maintain them. These workspace networks can be created in a few minutes and are far more secure and robust than any client-server network, VPN, website or hosted service.

A major benefit of the system is the ability to model and implement your business processes within workspaces so they reach out and work with your clients, contractors, partners or remote colleagues. These 'custom applications' enable you to work exactly how you want to and can be customised for your different clients or workgroups. We provide a service to work with you to implement these applications quickly and cost effectively.

Please call us at any time if you have any questions or would like to talk about your specific needs.

If you would like to see a demonstration, have the system on a no-obligation trial to evaluate the benefits for yourself or would just like to talk, please email Nick Smith at nick@lightworks.fsworld.co.uk