

# Business Instant Messenger and Features: When Do You Have Too Many?

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One of the major arguments against using instant messengers for business is the potential for distraction. Managers have visions of their employees using company time to send videos of funny faces to each other. Not exactly the intended use of the video conference feature. Of course, the likelihood of that happening depends greatly on whether or not your business instant messenger has a video conference feature. That begs the larger question, what features do you really need in a business IM?

Before you rush to answer, realize that this is an organizational wide question. One person should not, and really can not answer it effectively. In order for any groups to answer a complex question they need to have common ground. In this case, that is a common set of questions to answer. Some of the questions you may want to consider for deciding on necessary features in a business instant messenger include:

#1 - How will we be using this business instant messenger? Will it be in house, with external vendors or with our clients?

#2 - Will the IM be used near or far? The needs of a local project team will be much different than they will be if you are using a business instant messenger for long distance conferences.

#3 - What features will our systems be able to support with no extra investment in hardware? What kind of an investment are we willing to make in order to support these features? Remember, that doesnt just mean server space. This also accounts for tools like webcams if you choose video conferencing or microphone for audio chat.

#4 - What will our employee population really use? This comes down to knowing your staff. Are they a group that enthusiastically embraces new technology, or are they slower to adopt? If you have a techno-phobic group you may want to limit features.

Now, go and start a serious discussion. Once you have a clear case for each business instant messenger feature, those visions of wasted time will fade.

Business Instant Messenger: What makes it secure?

IM's and Start Up's

Business

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