

CFM Ad Hoc Committee on Blended Meetings

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Mark Barker
James Farquhar
Richard Kleinschmidt
Michael Evans

In anticipation that the pandemic and its aftermath will call for blended/hybrid Meetings well into the future, the Meeting wishes to develop recommendations for the systems and protocols that will facilitate those Meetings. The Ad Hoc Committee was formed to research options and develop those recommendations.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Blended Meetings met on July 30. We are moving toward the following recommendation for a system to support hybrid/blended Meetings. When we get closer to actually starting these meetings, we will put into place some of the more specific protocols (signage, handwashing recommendations, etc.).

We are considering a two (or more) phased approach:

Phase One

- We will control the meeting via a laptop. We need a computer with enough ram and connectivity to handle the streaming and accessories well. This example from HP costs \$611: <https://www.bestbuy.com/site/hp-15-6-touch-screen-laptop-intel-core-i5-12gb-memory-256gb-ssd-16gb-optane-natural-silver/6378015.p?skuId=6378015>
 - We will need to consider the noise created by the laptop fan.
 - If we decide we want a second laptop for the host to use to greet people and usher them into the Meeting, we will at first ask the host to bring their own laptop.
- We will use a large-screen TV, so people in the Meetinghouse can see the remote Worshippers. This example is 70 inches and costs \$600: <https://www.bestbuy.com/site/samsung-70-class-led-6-series-2160p-smart-4k-uhd-tv-with-hdr/6395915.p?skuId=6395915>
- We will mount the TV on a mobile cart. This example is about \$75: <https://www.walmart.com/ip/Adjustable-Modern-Mobile-TV-Stand-Cart-for-32-65in-Screens-Rolling-TV-Cart/600639588> It has a shelf for a laptop, and the TV is mounted to the cart.
 - We'll want locking wheels, and wheels big enough to handle bumps.

- We will use the speakers built into the TV. Mark reports we have some additional audio equipment if needed.
- We will need an external camera for adequate quality. This Logitech camera costs \$60: <https://www.bestbuy.com/site/logitech-hd-webcam-c615-black/2588445.p?skuId=2588445>. We'll want something with a fairly wide-angle lens to get everyone into the picture.
 - We'll mount the camera on a stand, so we can move it to the best location.
 - Rich has asked whether a ceiling-mounted camera, looking down on the semicircle of Friends, would help.
- We will use an external microphone.
- We will put the microphone on a fixed stand that is positioned directly in line with the camera. People who wish to speak may walk to the stand to share their Testimony. The microphone will be removeable; we will designate someone to take the mic to people who are unable to walk to the stand.
- We will use the wifi hotspot for now.
 - Mark has repeater equipment, which could help.
 - If the hotspot is inadequate, we might need to invest in direct wifi connection.

Phase Two

- We may add external speakers if needed.
- We may add a second laptop for the host to use.

Notes

- We'll want to assemble the ultimate system and test it so we can make any needed adjustments.
- Many thanks to Mark Barker for a great deal of this research. I wasn't able to find all of the specific items Mark recommended; some of the examples above are similar.

Early suggested protocols:

- After Rise of Meeting, everyone should introduce themselves. In the Meetingroom, this could mean stepping to the microphone stand so the people at home can see and hear well.