

# BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY SURVEY REPORT

THE BENEFITS OF IMPROVED BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY TO DELIVER INCREASED TIME EFFICIENCY, INNOVATION AND COST SAVINGS FOR LEADING COMPANIES

IT'S NOT  
WHAT  
YOU DO...  
IT'S  
THE  
TIME  
WAY  
PLACE  
THAT  
YOU  
DO IT.

**THIS IS BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY**

TECHNOLOGY WITH PURPOSE

steljes®

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2011, Steljes Limited and SMART Technologies conducted research into the benefits of improved business productivity to deliver increased time efficiency, innovation and cost savings for leading companies.

The Business Productivity Survey report is based on the findings of a ten question survey completed by over 200 business decision makers at leading companies.

This report seeks to discover whether businesses are taking the right decisions in order to achieve greater productivity and ultimately competitive advantage. Another goal of the survey was to find out if businesses do appear to be moving with the pace of technology in order to increase their overall efficiency. Is productivity regarded as a core strategy to achieve results, and if so, are businesses using the right technologies and strategies in order to maximise and fulfil this strategy to its full potential?

The full findings look at fundamental areas of business productivity; from key objectives, to whether organisations are prioritising their time profitably in light of beneficial tools and working options (i.e. flexible working reducing travel), through to the uptake of the available technologies that boost collaboration and communication, which in turn can enrich and develop productivity levels.

## INTRODUCTION

This is the second survey that has been conducted by Steljes and SMART this year, with the first successfully gauging the current use of collaborative technologies in leading companies to develop and enhance staff productivity and company cost efficiency. Building upon the first, the results of this second survey on business productivity suggests that there still appears to be a gap that the collaborative technology industry could fill and, in doing so, bring significant improvements to the way that companies communicate, collaborate and strategise in the future in order to cultivate their productivity levels and gain competitive advantage.

Steljes is the leading distributor for innovative technologies that improve the way we live, learn and work and provides a range of solutions that can improve productivity in a range of business areas. Steljes is also an authorised distributor for SMART Technologies, the leading provider of collaboration solutions that transform the way you work.

As the global leader in interactive whiteboards, SMART Technologies brings more than two decades of collaboration research and development to a broad range of easy-to-use, integrated solutions that free people from their desks and computer screens, so collaborating with digital resources is more natural.

We would like to thank everyone that has participated and we hope that by using this survey you can now benchmark your own business productivity levels and consider adopting new innovative technologies to improve productivity across your organisation.

## METHODOLOGY

This survey is published by Steljes Limited and SMART Technologies. There were more than 200 respondents to the survey, which took the form of an online questionnaire. Information about the questionnaire, including the link, was emailed to a list of pre-targeted senior business decision makers. The incentive for taking part was access to a complimentary copy of this report and the opportunity to be entered into a prize draw.

## BUSINESS SECTOR

The survey was sent to senior decision makers, who were all identified as working for organisations with more than 250 employees, within specific site locations across multiple industry verticals. Examples of specific business sectors include Financial Services, Construction, Publishing, Real Estate and Computing. The majority of company respondents were UK based.

# ANALYSIS

## 1. Improving business productivity - is it a key business objective for your organisation?

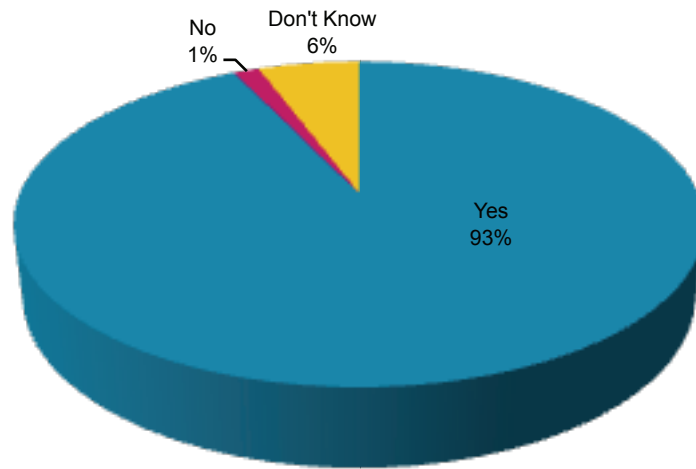


Figure 1

With 93% of survey respondents stating that business productivity is a key business objective for their organisation, it is clear that this is believed to be at the core of business success. For the 1% who said no, it would be interesting to find out whether this is due to the term used rather than the attributes that it consists of.

## 2. Do you believe that better business productivity will give you a competitive advantage?

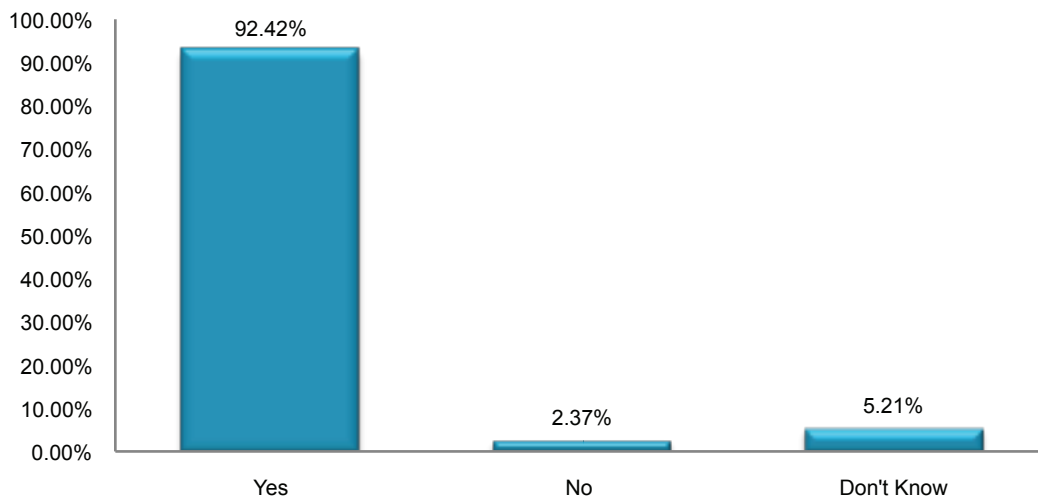


Figure 2

At the crux of business productivity is not only the evident internal efficiency increase it entails, but the indirect impact of giving a business competitive advantage, which in turn results in internal time and cost savings alongside revenue growth. 92.42% of survey respondents agreed that better business productivity would give them a competitive advantage. In the current economic climate, competitive advantage is crucial to business success.

3. When considering communication and collaboration tools for business productivity, which areas have the highest priority for you?

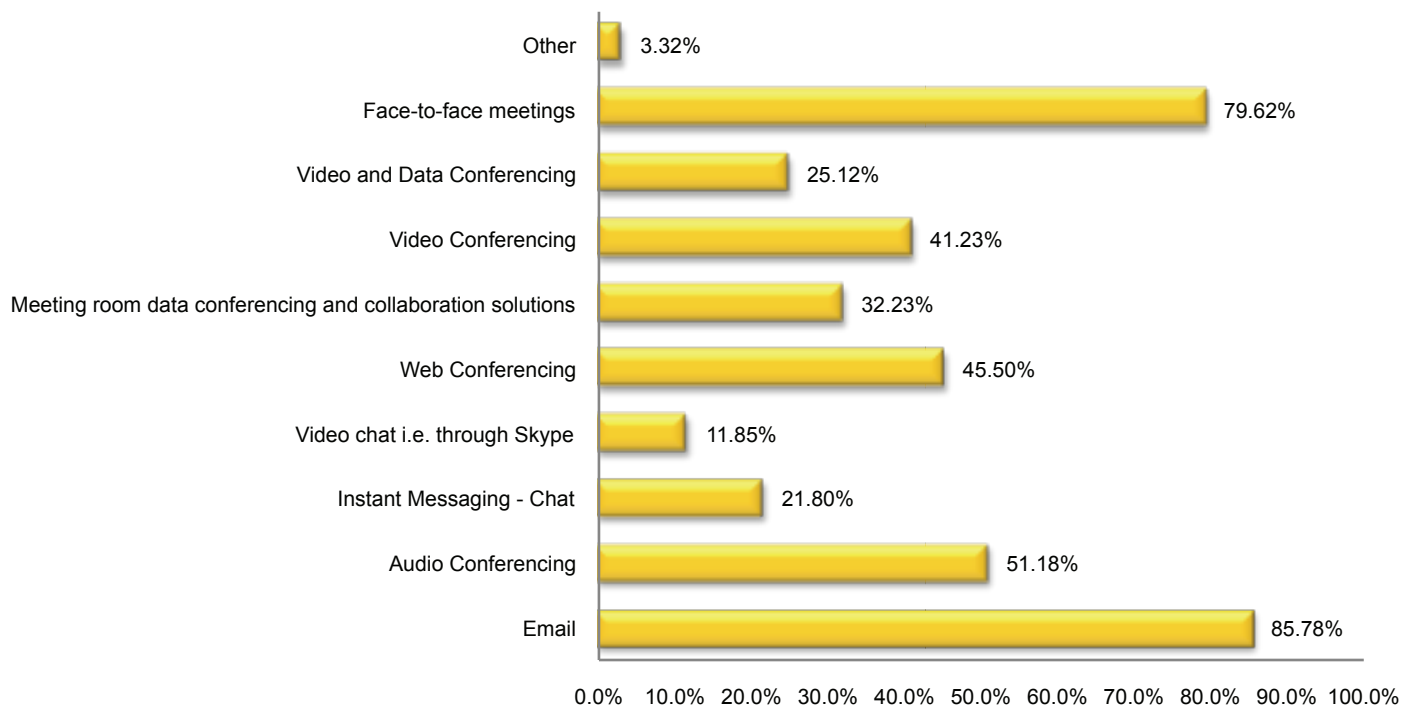
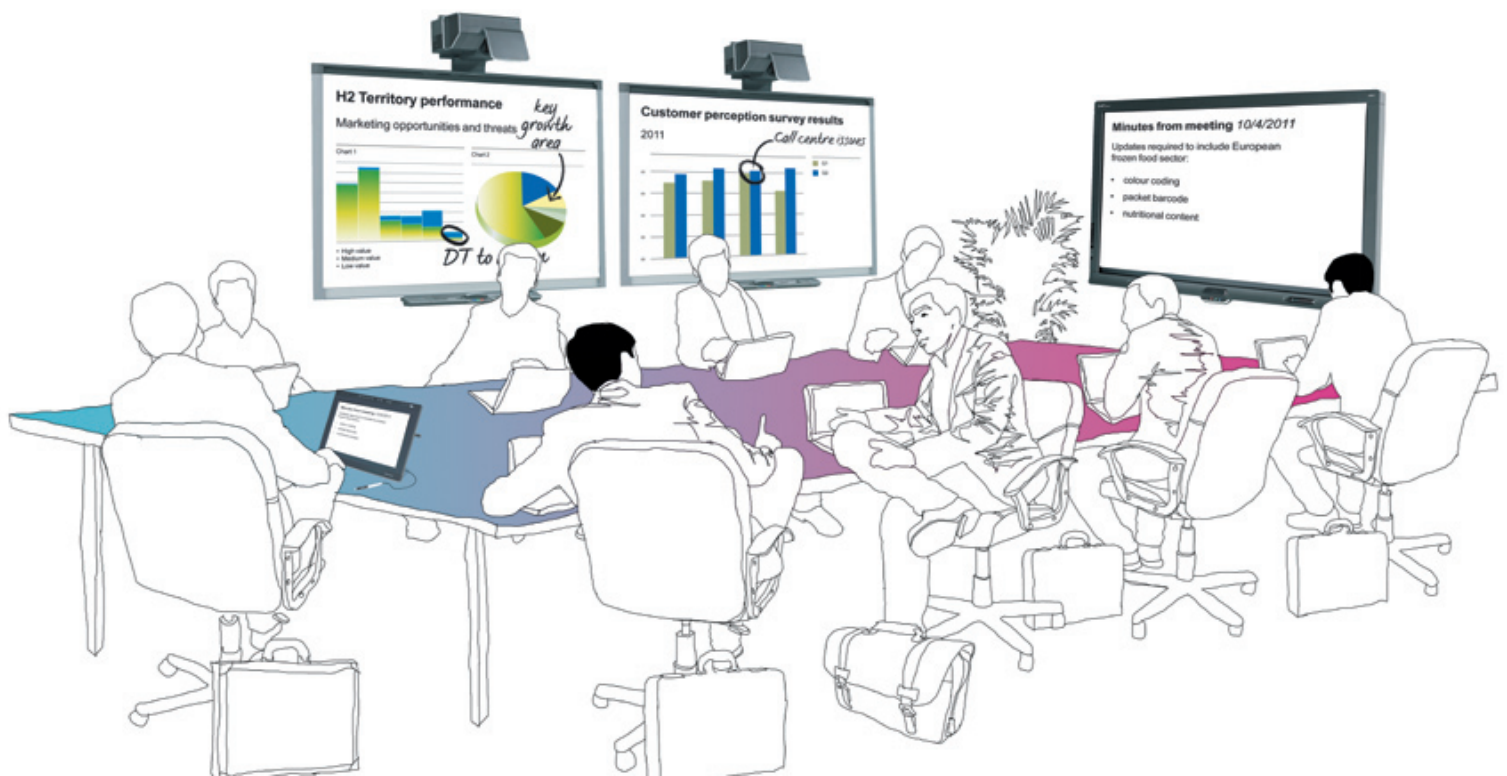
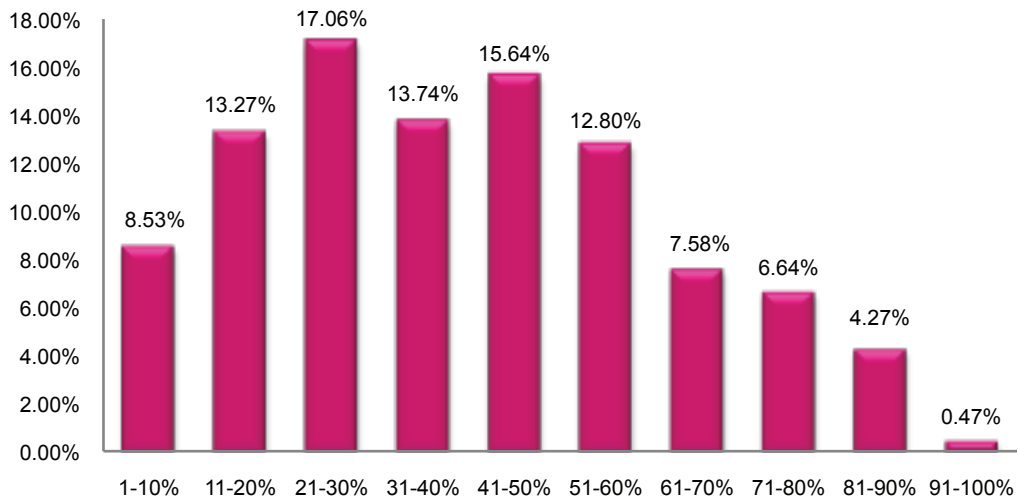


Figure 3

Email and face-to-face meetings came out top as the prioritised communication and collaboration tools for business productivity. It is no real surprise that face-to-face meetings are prioritised highly, yet it is worth considering that the time and cost involved could potentially outweigh the gains made from meeting in person if not strategised and calculated correctly. Again, it is not surprising that email is the most popular communication and collaboration tool, largely due to attributes such as ease of remote and location based use, but also due to the familiarity with this technology – most businesses are comfortable and acquainted with email and have grown to rely upon email to correspond and get things done. Although this technology clearly has its immense assets in relation to productivity, it would be a shame for businesses to get stuck in a rut with relying on established and habitual technologies rather than branching out to include new technologies. With survey respondents also listing audio conferencing, web conferencing and video conferencing as popular tools for business productivity, it is clear that newer technologies are being embraced to a certain degree. 32.23% of those surveyed said they would prioritise meeting room data conferencing and collaboration solutions as a communication and collaboration tool - this is definitely a new and growing area where there is room for business productivity to be increased further.



4. When collaborating, how much of your time is spent per week with colleagues, customers, partners and suppliers both internally and externally in meetings?



The most popular response, 17.06% of survey respondents, said that they spend 21-30% of their week collaborating with colleagues internally in meetings in the same office. Nearly half of the respondents spend between 21-50% of their time per week collaborating in meetings in the same office with internal colleagues. 11.38% of respondents said that they spend a staggering 71% or more of their week in meetings with colleagues internally in the same office.

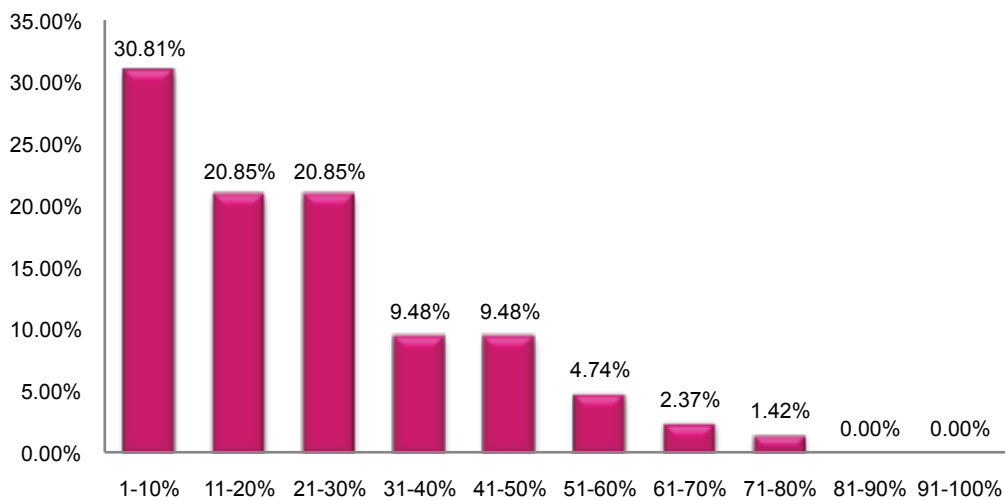
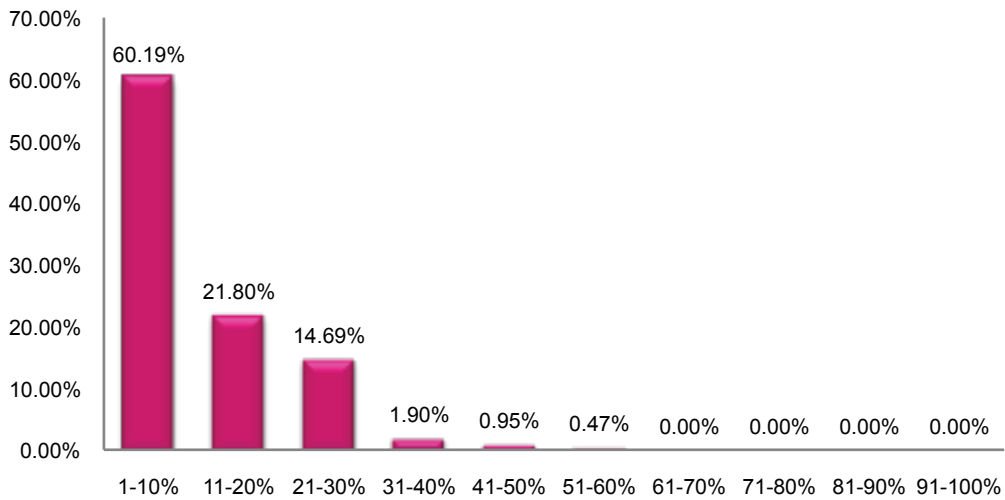
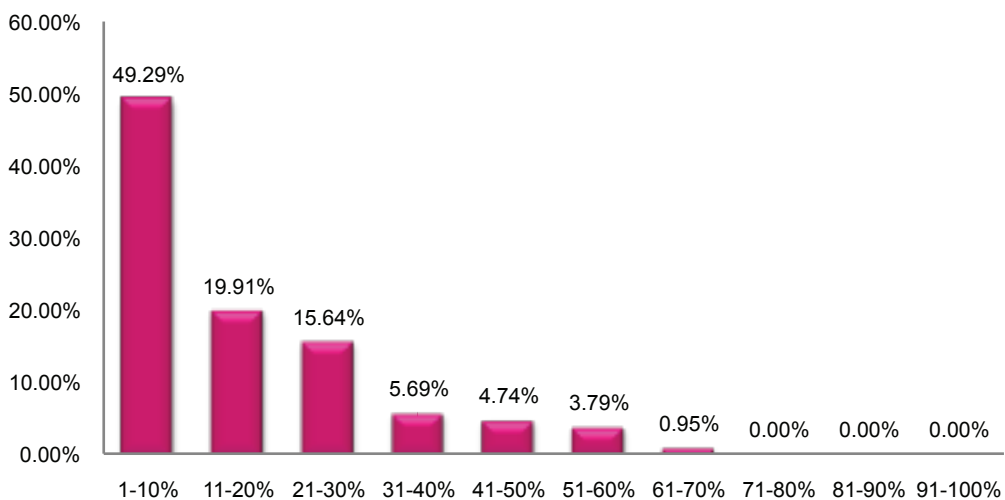


Figure 4b. Colleagues internally in different offices

Almost a third, 30.81%, of survey participants spend between 1-10% of their week in meetings with internal colleagues across different offices. Over a quarter, 26.07%, of respondents spend between 31-70% of their week in meetings with internal colleagues across different offices – it is this group of respondents, in particular, that need to ensure that the collaborative technologies being used are at a level that can enable the best business productivity levels possible during this valuable allocated time.



A relatively large percentage of respondents (60.19%) allocate very little of their week (1-10%) to collaboration with customers, partners and suppliers internally in meetings. However, 36.49% of survey respondents spend between 11-30% of their week with customers, partners and suppliers internally in meetings. No participants spend more than 61% of their week in internal meetings with customers, partners and suppliers.



Nearly half of the survey respondents stated they spend between 1-10% of their week collaborating externally in meetings with customers, partners and suppliers. Furthermore, 35.55% of respondents spend between 11-30% of their week with customers, partners and suppliers externally in meetings – these survey respondents could reduce the time spent out of the office, as well the money spent on travel, accommodation and other costs associated with external meetings, by incorporating collaborative communication tools and technologies, meanwhile boosting overall business productivity.

## 5. What are the issues you are discussing that are driving business productivity currently?

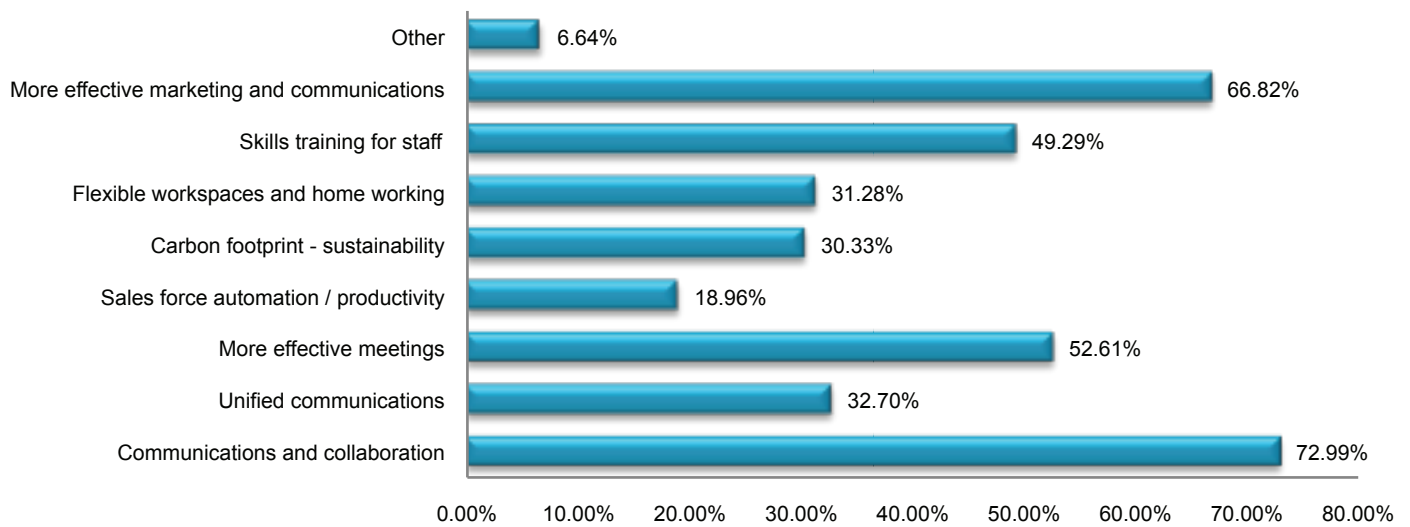
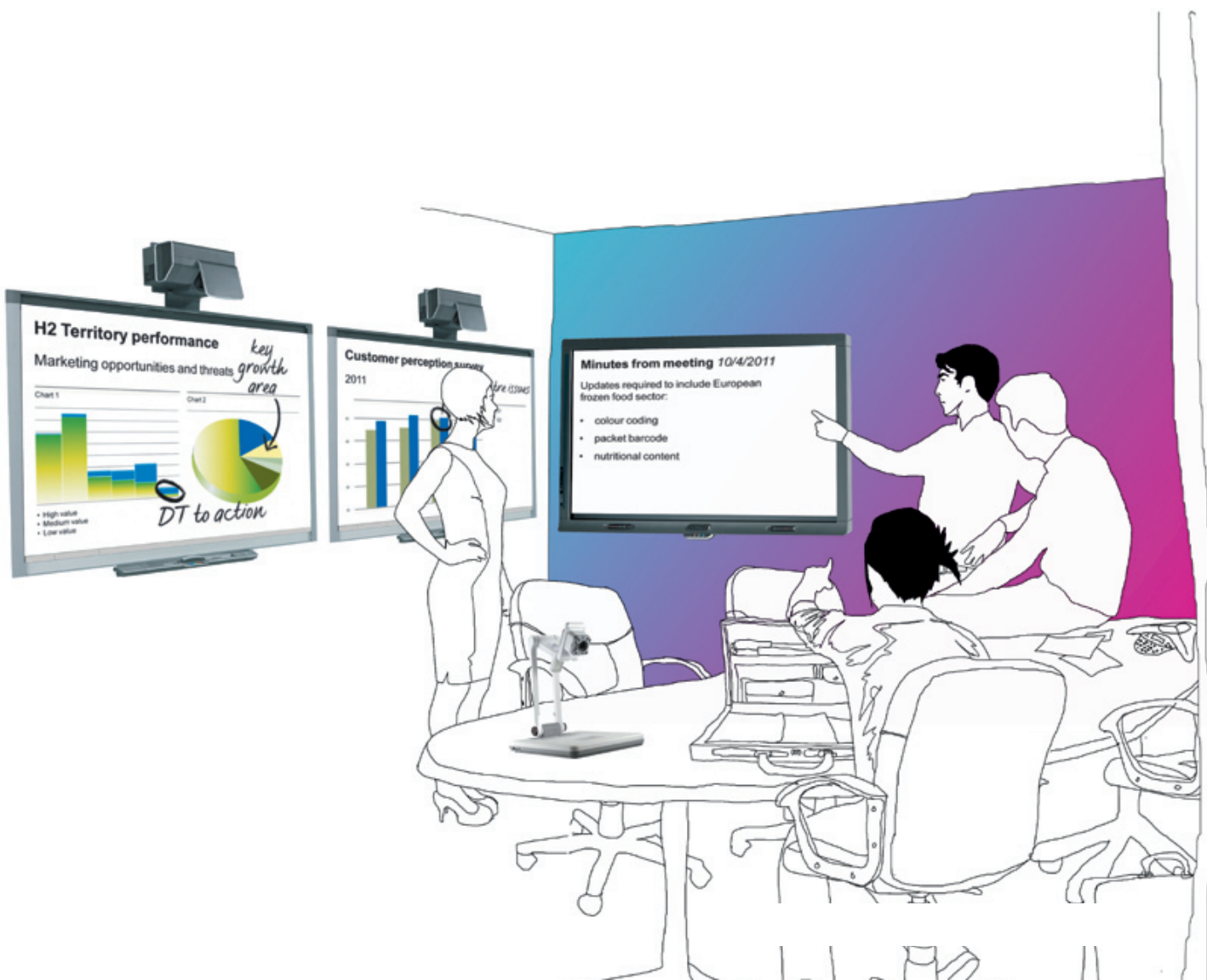
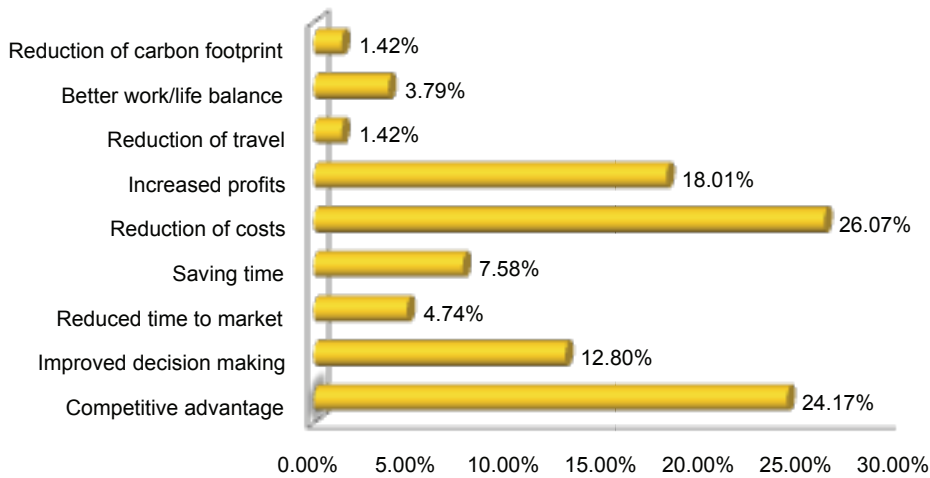


Figure 5

Almost 73% of those surveyed regard communications and collaboration as an issue that is currently driving business productivity. Also high up on the list of talked about trends is more effective marketing and communications, as well as more effective meetings and skills training for staff, all of which can be improved by adopting efficient communication and collaboration technologies. The key word of choice here is, quite noticeably, efficiency, which goes hand in hand with productivity. An holistic approach is essential in order to recognise, adopt and achieve this.



6. What would be the key benefits from better productivity? Please rank in order of priority.



Reduction of costs was ranked as first priority by over a quarter of survey respondents (26.07%) as a key benefit from better productivity. A further 24.17% ranked competitive advantage as their top priority, whereas 18.01% of participants regarded increased profits as their most important key benefit.

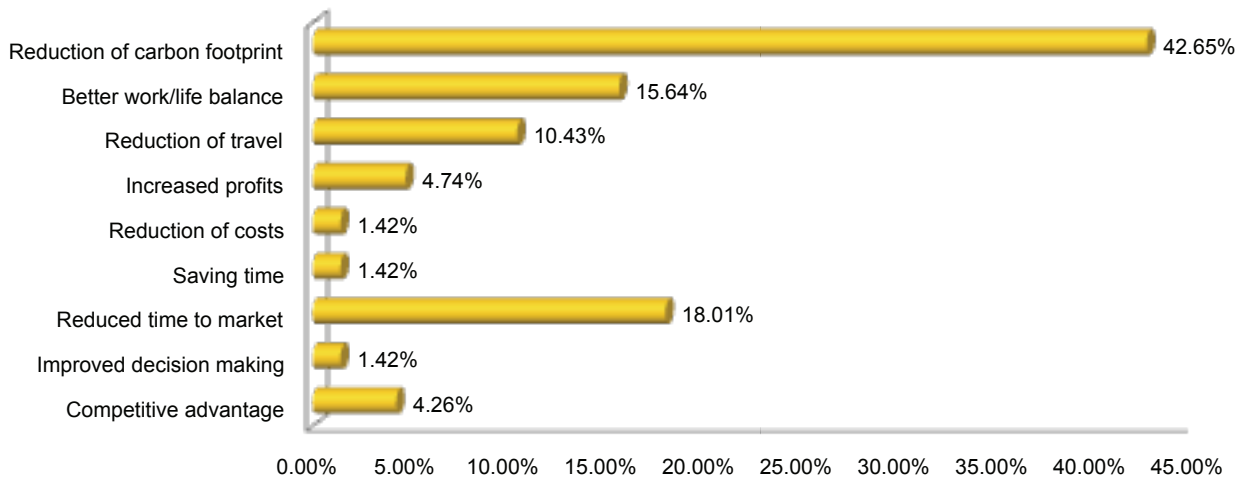


Figure. 6b Key benefits from productivity – ranked last as priority (shown in %)

Reduction of carbon footprint was ranked as last priority by a large percentage of survey respondents (42.65%) as a key benefit of better productivity, indicating that environmental considerations do not trump more short-term issues such as reduction of costs, saving time and competitive advantage, particularly at a time of such current global financial problems.



7. If you want to reduce travel to face-to-face meetings what are the key features that a technology solution for productive meetings should give you?

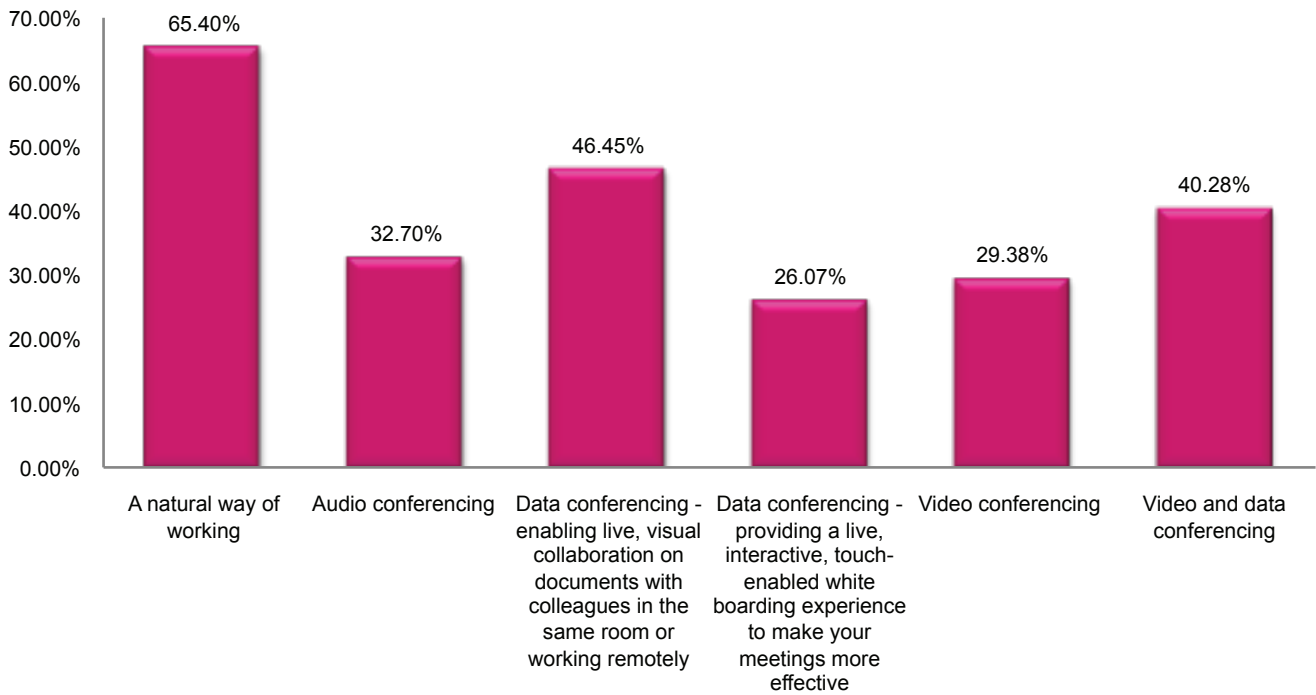
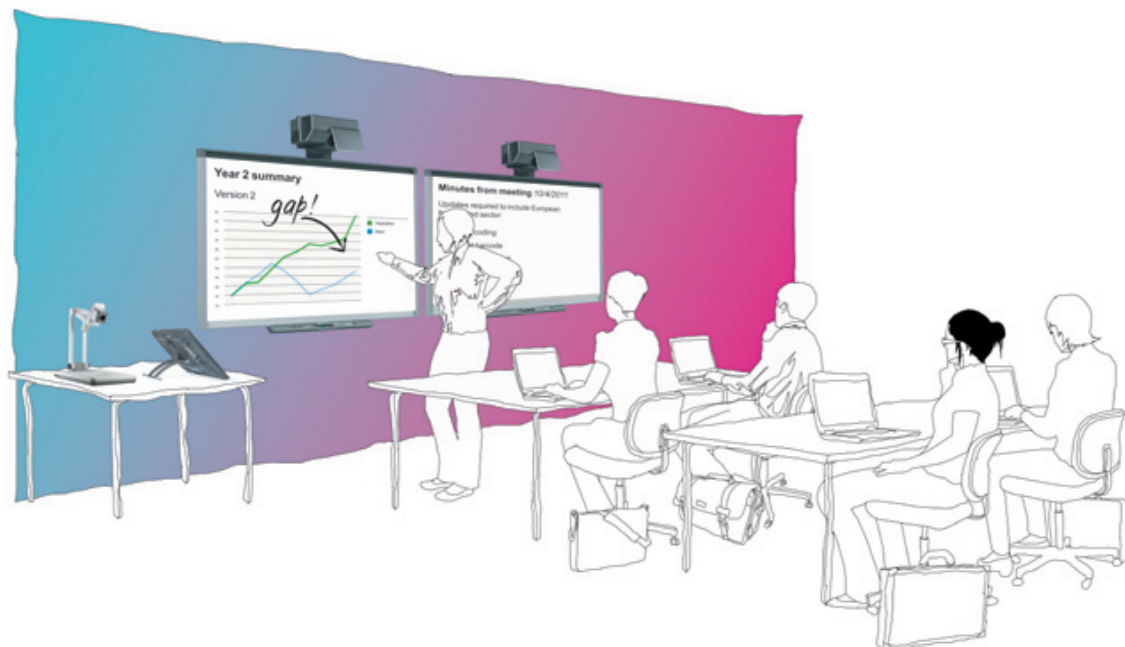


Figure. 7

If survey respondents were to reduce travel to face-to-face meetings, there are some key features they believe a technology solution for productive meetings should provide, the most important of which being a natural way of working (65.40%). The word 'natural' induces associations with being able to achieve the human rapport and communication advantages that often come hand-in-hand with meeting someone face-to-face. Easy-to-use collaborative technologies such as touch-enabled interactive whiteboards, LCD displays and desktop displays from SMART Technologies can support this more relaxed, natural and often more productive way of working so desired by businesses.

Other popular key features for a productive non face-to-face meeting include data conferencing – enabling live, visual collaboration on documents with colleagues in the same room or working remotely; this is most likely to ensure that all are working from the same page, can contribute inputs and responses as ideas spring to mind meanwhile allowing the meeting to hold a certain pace and lively dynamic. Video and data conferencing was also high up on the list of key features, demonstrating an open-mind to using various mediums in order to create as productive a meeting as possible.



8. Flexible working can increase productivity, staff retention and motivation. What do you consider to be the key issues or requirements for flexible working?

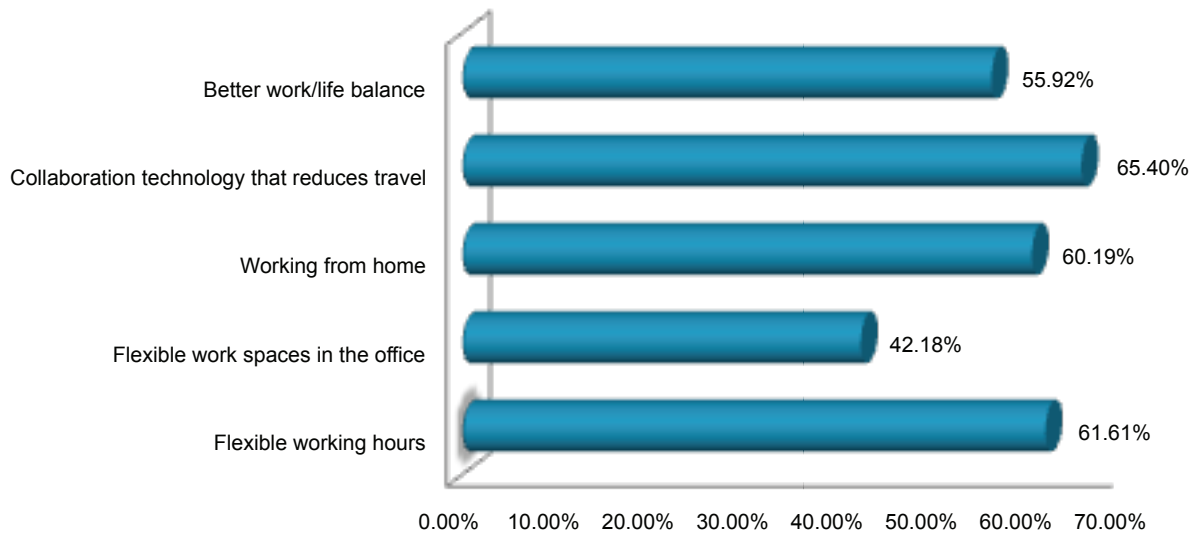


Figure. 8

For the survey respondents, the main requirement for flexible working (65.40%) is collaboration technology that reduces travel – tying in greatly with enhanced business productivity due to parallel cost savings. Not far behind follow the requirements of flexible working hours (61.61%) as well as working from home (60.19%). A positive approach to flexible working hours conveys, in particular, its popularity as a benefit to many companies, especially in light of the current economic climate. Accommodating employees personal situations and capabilities - for example, childcare needs or even, if possible, times of day when staff believe they work at their most efficient level – can therefore result in higher business productivity in the longer-term.

Over half of the respondents (55.92%) felt that flexible working required, or perhaps resulted in, a better work/life balance, which is often linked with reducing stress and illness – factors that can result in decreased business productivity if not monitored carefully. Perhaps this overall response relating to flexible working indicates a potential desire to move away from the conventional way of working in order to boost overall levels of productivity.



9. If you were to implement a collaboration technology solution, over what period would you expect to get an ROI to cover the capital costs?

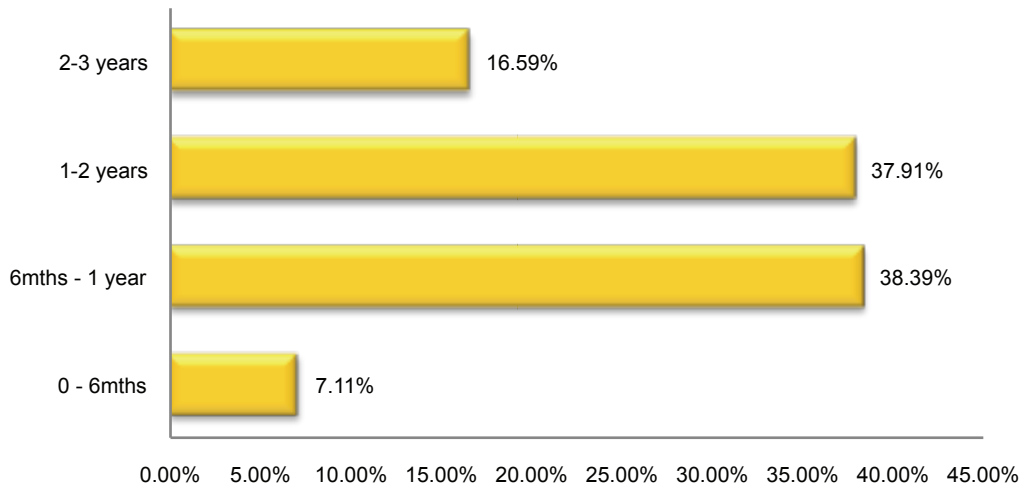


Figure 9

With nearly 40% of survey respondents expecting that it would take between 6 months to 1 year to achieve an ROI (return on investment) to cover capital costs of implementing a collaboration technology solution, it is evident that there is an understanding that such technologies can reap financial benefits within a very reasonable amount of time.

10. Would you be interested in finding out how Steljes and SMART can improve productivity and efficiency for your business?

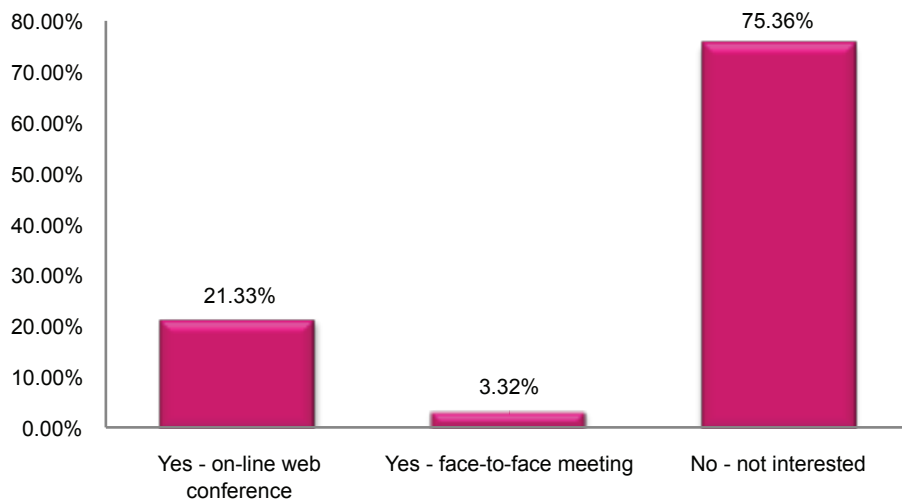


Figure 10

Almost a quarter (24.65%) of survey participants requested an on-line web conference or face-to-face meeting to find out how Steljes and SMART can improve productivity and efficiency for their business, indicating a demand for further information about collaborative technologies, such as SMART Business Solutions, which can boost their business productivity levels.

# CONCLUSION

The survey findings demonstrate a certain amount of awareness of the importance of business productivity.

The results give a valuable understanding of the way businesses are striving for ways to implement efficiency gains within the day-to-day of getting business done, as well as highlighting the trends towards technology solutions to enable productive meetings both internally and externally.

Delving deeper, the survey results also identify the most popular issues currently being pinpointed as driving businesses productivity, alongside finding out the most prioritised collaborative tools when a face-to-face meeting is not an option as well as the ROI time scales predicted after allocating capital to such tools.

Despite this, the benefits that business productivity holds, such as increased innovation, cost savings and better work/life balance, can be lost if not understood and harnessed with the correct tools on offer. There is an element of contradiction in some of the survey respondent's answers – they want face-to-face meetings, most likely because they find them a more 'natural' way of communicating and relationship building, yet they also want to save money and reduce time spent travelling.

Productivity enhancers, such as collaborative technologies offered by Steljes and SMART, can offer a solution to bridge this gap – the opportunity for more flexible working, higher productivity levels and retaining as natural a form of live meeting format as possible, without being face-to-face, meanwhile reaping the benefits of saving money on rising fuel, train and airfare prices and helping employees to achieve a better work/life balance.

The findings hint strongly at the need to not only implement the right tools, but to provide tools that offer a natural way of working. Alongside this, in order to embrace these new technologies companies need to consider change programmes and cultural shifts in their way of working that will enable them to reap the benefits that these technologies offer.

Companies are keen to discover more about how to improve productivity and efficiency in their business, with almost a quarter of respondents requesting a meeting with Steljes to find out more. By doing so, this quarter are already placing themselves ahead of the game and increasing their competitive advantage – another issue that took prominence as a priority to participants of this survey.

The opportunity to move with the advances of technology and radically alter the way they go about increasing business productivity through informed strategy building, harnessing innovative communication and collaborative tools and technologies and, in turn, making better decisions faster is there for companies to embrace. The results of this survey, alongside the first, continue to serve in highlighting the need to build awareness of this.

# ABOUT US

## ABOUT STELJES

Steljes Limited is an innovative technology distributor that sources products from around the world, working with manufacturers to customise and bring their solutions to the UK market through its specialised channel network. The company's innovative solutions enable people to interact and communicate more effectively while working and learning. The company has been sourcing products from around the world for over 20 years, introducing LCD panels, projectors, plasma displays and interactive whiteboards to the UK market. Steljes Group is a privately owned company and has helped companies, such as SMART Technologies, to become market leaders in the UK.

[WWW.STELJES.COM](http://WWW.STELJES.COM)

## ABOUT SMART TECHNOLOGIES

SMART Technologies is the leading provider of collaboration solutions that transform the way the world works and learns. As the global leader in interactive whiteboards, SMART Technologies brings more than two decades of collaboration research and development to a broad range of easy-to-use, integrated solutions that free people from their desks and computer screens, so collaborating and learning with digital resources are more natural.

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