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STUDY GROUP SPECIAL G – CONTRIBUTION 33**Source:** Greece**Title:** Decision-making when there is remote participation in any meeting**Abstract**

This report proposes the setting up of software based meeting system that authenticates members before attending a meeting and allows for in-built, time bound voting system for decision making.

Introduction

In order to achieve a cost effective global meeting mechanism, the use of electronic conferencing systems have been proposed. Yet again, the use of this technology poses unique challenges such as inability to synchronize the time zones and a complex decision-making process.

Discussion

Introduction of a new technology should always be accompanied by a change management plan because a change in an already functional system always faces resistance from existing users of the system due to the challenges it brings along. It is, however, ironic to note that a new member who joins after the change has taken place can easily adapt to the changed system.

One challenge posed by introducing e-meeting tools is the lack of ability to make decisions online. The current decision-making system caters for the identification of intended participant and decision-making based on consensus. The current system also has several features and ability to judge the “mood of the room” and assumes in the fact that “silence is agreement”.

It is therefore proposed in this report that meeting software could be deployed which authenticates the users by means of password, voice or facial recognition. Once authenticated, the participants would be able to contribute to the meeting and vote on the specific issues of the meeting. The voting process would have a time window and the participants would have to vote only within the specified period. While the meeting proceeds, the list of online members would be available to all the members and any member would be able to initiate a call with the other member to have offline discussions during or after the meetings.

An e-meeting system that mimics the features of the physical meeting would have a higher chance of being adopted by the existing members. It is needless to say that every aspect of a physical meeting can't be replicated. However, the aspects necessary for decision-making can be replicated accurately. It is believed in this proposal that better decisions can be made via

e-meetings as the remote members would think more independently and can't be influenced by the other members.

Conclusion

The important conclusions of this report are to develop e-meeting software that mimics the features of a physical meeting and proposes a change management plan for easy adoption by existing members.
