

A hybrid worker's haven: Could Apple's avatar webcam revolutionise video conferencing?

The Apple Vision Pro has certainly made headway in the corporate community. Introducing the idea of spatial computing to the workplace has not only revolutionised the future of remote work but has rendered collaboration a seamless experience.

Temps de lecture : minute

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“Today marks the beginning of a new era for computing,” says Apple’s CEO Tim Cook, on the back of the release. “Just as the Mac introduced us to personal computing, and iPhone introduced us to mobile computing, Apple Vision Pro introduced us to spatial computing. Built upon decades of Apple innovation, Vision Pro is years ahead and unlike anything created before — with a revolutionary new input system and thousands of groundbreaking innovations. It unlocks incredible experiences for our users and exciting new opportunities for our developers.”

Apple’s new mixed reality powered headset defies everything we once knew about the possibilities of XR. Rather than transporting a user to a new dimension, Apple is one of the first companies to show us that XR devices could one day become an extension of our current reality and blur the lines between virtual and physical communication.

“Through a tight integration of hardware and software, we designed a standalone spatial computer in a compact wearable form factor that is the most advanced personal electronics device ever,” says Mike Rockwell, VP of Apple’s Technology Development Department.

Remote video conferencing is just one of the many corporate challenges the Vision Pro could solve. From *eye tracking* to hands-free sensors, get ready to step into your next Zoom call as a fully-fledged, Photorealistic, 3D avatar. As the first piece of tech allowing us to enter the virtual conferencing room in a physical form, it's no wonder that corporate companies across the globe can't wait to get started.

Powering the future of remote working

Apple's Vision Pro could be the ticket to a more collaborative future in a remote working environment. As we continue to share virtual spaces with our colleagues, the demands for a more humanised approach to hybrid working are quickly growing post-pandemic.

According to Forbes, *53% of remote workers* feel disconnected from their colleagues in 2023, and a further 69% have experienced burnout when using digital collaboration tools. As geographical distance sets up barriers to communication, Apple's Vision Pro, however, hopes to knock them back down.

"The device redefines remote collaboration, according to Apple, by facilitating simultaneous tasking during calls within a shared virtual space," says Dr Gleb Tsipursky, founder of the Pro-Truth Pledge. "Whether it's reviewing a project proposal with your team, brainstorming innovative ideas, or conducting a training session, the Vision Pro simulates the experience of physical proximity, eliminating the constraints of distance."

This is a *game changer for hybrid companies*, especially in the design sector. Imagine employing architects in another country and collectively collaborating on a project model in a 3D virtual workspace. The Vision Pro not only has 12 cameras, a whopping 5 sensors and 6 microphones, but it is also hands-free and driven by eye movement and simple humanistic gestures.

Providing remote teams with new and exciting ways to interact with digital content, the options are becoming endless for a corporate sector that does not want to return to the office.

The birth of spatial video conferencing

So where does this leave video conferencing? We've already come on in leaps and bounds since the first Covid-powered Zoom calls in 2020. Connecting with clients and colleagues across the globe has never been easier, but could Vision Pro take it one step further?

Apple believes that they could pioneer a future of immersive video calls simply by employing front-facing webcams to scan a user's facial features before constructing a hyper-realistic 3D representation of a person.

Users sporting the Vision Pro are then able to tap into any Facetime call in their reflected persona, which not only looks as if they are physically in a digital boardroom but can copy their eye and hand movements.

The videoconferencing experience is also enhanced using spatial audio, according to developers at Apple.

“With Apple Vision Pro, FaceTime calls take advantage of the room around the user, with everyone on the call reflected in life-size tiles, as well as Spatial Audio, so it sounds as if participants are speaking right from where they are positioned,” says Cook.

Not only does this enhance the sense of presence in a video call, but could also reduce the need for in-person meetups.

The future of Zoom and Apple's Vision Pro

The question is, could we see a collaboration on the cards between

Apple's Vision Pro and popular video conferencing apps such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams?

According to Tim Cook, Apple's Vision Pro will support all iOS apps, including Zoom, and could enhance a 2D screen in a virtual collaborative space. Developers are even confident that Zoom's popular AR filters would also work when the headset was in use, presenting on an avatar's face rather than the user.

According to XR experts at [*Road To VR*](#), Apple's Vision Pro could enhance communication for all front-facing conferencing apps such as Zoom, Messenger, Discord and Google Meet.

"Instead of a live camera view, Vision Pro provides a view of the headset's computer-generated avatar of the user (which Apple calls a 'Persona'). That means that video chat apps that are built according to Apple's existing guidelines should work on Vision Pro without any changes to how the app handles camera input," Comments VR expert Ben Lang.

While some of the details of Apple's new VR baby are still unknown, one thing is for sure. The corporate sector continues to shift further towards a completely virtual future.