

FROST & SULLIVAN

*SYNERGY SKY*

**2022**  
**NEW**  
**PRODUCT**  
**INNOVATION**

*GLOBAL VIDEO CONFERENCING*  
*INTEROPERABILITY INDUSTRY*

## Best Practices Criteria for World-Class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each award category before determining the final award recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated company. Synergy SKY excels in many of the criteria in the video conferencing interoperability space.

| AWARD CRITERIA                |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>New Product Attributes</i> | <i>Customer Impact</i>        |
| Match to Needs                | Price/Performance Value       |
| Reliability                   | Customer Purchase Experience  |
| Quality                       | Customer Ownership Experience |
| Positioning                   | Customer Service Experience   |
| Design                        | Brand Equity                  |

### Match to Needs

Enterprise video conferencing technology has advanced dramatically in recent years. Cloud-based video conferencing services, such as Google Meet, Microsoft Teams Meetings, Webex by Cisco and Zoom Meetings, have lowered the barriers to adoption for many organizations that seek to outsource the complexity of ownership to trusted providers and receive predictable monthly subscription invoices. These modern services are easier to deploy, use and manage. Integrations between hardware and cloud

*“Synergy SKY CONNECT retains the video meeting workflow that users expect from their native service, and does so without the compromises of cloud video interoperability.”*

*- Robert Arnold, Principal Analyst, Connected Work*

services continue to enable ever greater functionality on user desktops and meeting rooms.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and new work-from-home realities brought unprecedented levels of demand for cloud meetings services. Leading cloud meeting services providers have reported up to 4x growth in usage in the months since the pandemic’s onset. Video conferencing utilization rates will remain high going forward with the number of post-pandemic work-from-home individuals estimated by Frost & Sullivan to settle at 4.5 times the pre-pandemic levels. In order to better connect and engage the

distributed workforce, many organizations are upgrading or newly equipping their meetings rooms with cloud-connected video collaboration endpoints.

The explosive growth, however, does not come without its challenges. Services from different vendors

do not natively integrate, leaving users of disparate systems unable to easily collaborate with one another. To address this, technology providers have developed cloud video interoperability services, enabling Microsoft Teams users to join meetings hosted by Google Meet users, for example. Still, the current Cloud Video Interop Service (CVI) for Microsoft Teams leaves gaps in the user experience and functionality.

- CVI providers introduce their own user experiences, such as the layout of video feeds, creating a disjointed experience between the CVI users and users of the native experience.
- Presentation sharing is possible across all CVI services, but again under the CVI's unique user experience. However, certain differentiated and value-added native presentation functionality, such as the recently introduced PowerPoint Live in Microsoft Teams, simply does not work with CVI.
- CVI must be enabled at a meeting organizer-level to support interoperability for meeting participants joining from other services. Without a CVI license in place, the meeting host cannot invite participants via SIP URI, which is the standard by which meeting room video endpoints join video conferences.

Oslo, Norway-based video conferencing service provider Synergy SKY has recognized these issues with CVI and has developed a solution to more thoroughly democratize video conferencing, starting with the very popular Microsoft Teams. The new patent-pending Synergy SKY CONNECT offer is a video gateway service that enables SIP-based endpoints, including those registered to most cloud-based video services (Zoom, Webex, Lifesize, BlueJeans, Google, StarLeaf, etc.) as well as deployments on customers' premises, to connect via audio and video into the Microsoft Teams platform. It does so by performing media translation between the SIP endpoint and Microsoft Teams using WebRTC technologies.

Besides the gateway functionality Synergy SKY CONNECT has a management suite for videoconferencing and meeting rooms, which also has features such as enablement of one-touch-dial, conference control and reporting. It is designed for video conferencing interoperability across technologies, protocols and brands, Synergy SKY CONNECT retains the meeting workflow from the invitation through to feature functionality that preserves the experiences users expect from their native service without the compromises of CVI.

### **Design**

Importantly, Synergy SKY CONNECT does not introduce new work flows for users. In contrast to CVI, which delivers the CVI provider's experience to users, CONNECT does not leverage a plug-in or apps. This enables delivery of a native Teams meeting experience on any SIP endpoint.

Synergy SKY delivers a server-side integration to calendars, which allows use of existing Microsoft 365 and Exchange and Google Calendar tools for all video meetings and eliminates the need for user training on new applications. Users simply access their familiar calendars to book and forward meetings. When a user books a meeting, Synergy SKY CONNECT will provision a gateway call and serve-up a single-touch start button on room controllers for intuitive session initiation in the meeting room.

Native workflow experiences for Webex Meetings are preserved as well. For example, single-touch join from Webex room controllers or Webex voice control of the meeting (e.g., start, lock, record, end), and

the ability to book a Teams meeting from a Webex SIP endpoint are all supported.

### Quality

Synergy SKY CONNECT gives the estimated 6 million SIP endpoints deployed worldwide renewed relevance by making them ready to fully participate in any Microsoft Teams meeting. Enterprises with legacy Tandberg, Cisco, Polycom, Huawei and other endpoints no longer have to rip and replace their

*“Synergy SKY Suite does not introduce new workflows to users, which drive adoption, utilization and, ultimately, ROI.”*

**- Robert Arnold, Principal Analyst, Connected Work**

investments to utilize the increasingly popular Teams Meetings platform. Not only is Synergy SKY CONNECT a green and less expensive solution in this sense, it is also highly appealing to large organizations that have acquired video conference endpoint environments over time that are multi-vendor and of disparate technologies. In fact, Synergy SKY CONNECT offers enterprises opportunities to homogenize disparate environments and gain greater benefits, thanks to

the functionality of the Synergy SKY CONNECT that has been designed at its core to facilitate multi-vendor video conferencing.

Synergy SKY CONNECT enhances the value of existing video conferencing investments through:

- Integration with Microsoft and Google calendars
- Integration with room presence and occupancy sensors
- Support for existing on-premises video conferencing infrastructure
- Room monitoring and usage reporting and analytics
- Scaling existing environments by adding and integrating new Microsoft Teams-certified endpoints

Synergy SKY CONNECT resolves several key issues that enterprises face as they strive to create more inclusive and collaborative business cultures. It breaks down the silos of communications across users of disparate endpoints and services, modernizes legacy meeting rooms with new capabilities, and extends the usability of existing investments.

### Positioning

Synergy SKY CONNECT is positioned to give enterprises more autonomy over their video conferencing environment. The solution empowers IT staff to migrate users to Microsoft Teams at their own pace. Or to utilize their existing endpoints in multi-vendor video conference service environments, which prevents lock-in and enables best of breed choices.

Synergy SKY CONNECT, is sold through Synergy SKY's extensive network of channel partners, offering customers a broad selection of providers with varying vertical expertise, experience with certain video platform and endpoint brands and technologies, as well as a support footprint spanning Alaska to New Zealand and everywhere in between. It is channel partners who know the end user organization's current environment and goals best. Accordingly, they incorporate Synergy SKY within their portfolios alongside additional services that address each customer's specific requirements.

### **Customer Impact**

Synergy SKY CONNECT is included for a single price with the overall functionality of the Synergy SKY Suite of software. Starting at \$49 per-room-per-month, Synergy SKY CONNECT is price-competitive with CVI services and is available at volume-based discounts for large-scale deployments.

In addition to modernizing existing video meeting rooms, Synergy SKY CONNECT offers functionality that is essential to understand and optimize usage of high-value meeting room real estate.

Unique features include:

- No-show detection for rooms that are booked but no meeting takes place
- Auto room release that updates calendar reservations for rooms that are booked but go unused
- People count to report on the number of seats vs people in rooms

As organizations strategize the return to the office and how to support hybrid work, new insights are required to plan optimize real estate and comply with new health and safety protocols. Synergy SKY offers essential functionality to address these challenges.

### **Conclusion**

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Synergy SKY has identified the video conferencing interoperability challenges that enterprise face in the Microsoft Teams environments. The company has taken action to tackle the functionality gaps that existing CVI solutions leave unaddressed. Overall, Synergy SKY CONNECT, enable customers to modernize and open up their video conferencing deployments to create a path forward in the new era of work. For its strong overall performance, Synergy SKY is recognized with Frost & Sullivan's 2022 Global New Product Innovation Award in the video conferencing interoperability market.

## What You Need to Know about the New Product Innovation Recognition

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Frost & Sullivan's New Product Innovation Award recognizes the company that offers a new product or solution that uniquely addresses key customer challenges.

### Best Practices Award Analysis

For the New Product Innovation Award, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

#### *New Product Attributes*

**Match to Needs:** Customer needs directly influence and inspire product design and positioning

**Reliability:** Product consistently meets or exceeds customer performance expectations

**Quality:** Product offers best-in-class quality with a full complement of features and functionality

**Positioning:** Product serves a unique, unmet need that competitors cannot easily replicate

**Design:** Product features an innovative design that enhances both visual appeal and ease of use

**Price/Performance Value:** Products or services provide the best value for the price compared to similar market offerings

**Customer Purchase Experience:** Quality of the purchase experience assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution for addressing their unique needs and constraints

**Customer Ownership Experience:** Customers proudly own the company's product or service and have a positive experience throughout the life of the product or service

**Customer Service Experience:** Customer service is accessible, fast, stress-free, and high quality

**Brand Equity:** Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty

## About Frost & Sullivan

Frost & Sullivan is the Growth Pipeline Company™. We power our clients to a future shaped by growth. Our Growth Pipeline as a Service™ provides the CEO and the CEO's growth team with a continuous and rigorous platform of growth opportunities, ensuring long-term success. To achieve positive outcomes, our team leverages over 60 years of experience, coaching organizations of all types and sizes across 6 continents with our proven best practices. To power your Growth Pipeline future, visit Frost & Sullivan at <http://www.frost.com>.

## The Growth Pipeline Engine™

Frost & Sullivan's proprietary model to systematically create ongoing growth opportunities and strategies for our clients is fuelled by the Innovation Generator™.

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### Key Impacts:

- **Growth Pipeline:** Continuous Flow of Growth Opportunities
- **Growth Strategies:** Proven Best Practices
- **Innovation Culture:** Optimized Customer Experience
- **ROI & Margin:** Implementation Excellence
- **Transformational Growth:** Industry Leadership



## The Innovation Generator™

Our 6 analytical perspectives are crucial in capturing the broadest range of innovative growth opportunities, most of which occur at the points of these perspectives.

### Analytical Perspectives:

- **Mega Trend (MT)**
- **Business Model (BM)**
- **Technology (TE)**
- **Industries (IN)**
- **Customer (CU)**
- **Geographies (GE)**

