NAME:

Zoom

LOGO:

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

On the right side of this page, you will see a list of topics covering this software from multiple angles. These aspects are common to all the apps we have studied and described in detail in the following pages.

You will need a basic knowledge of the software to understand some of the points made in this document.
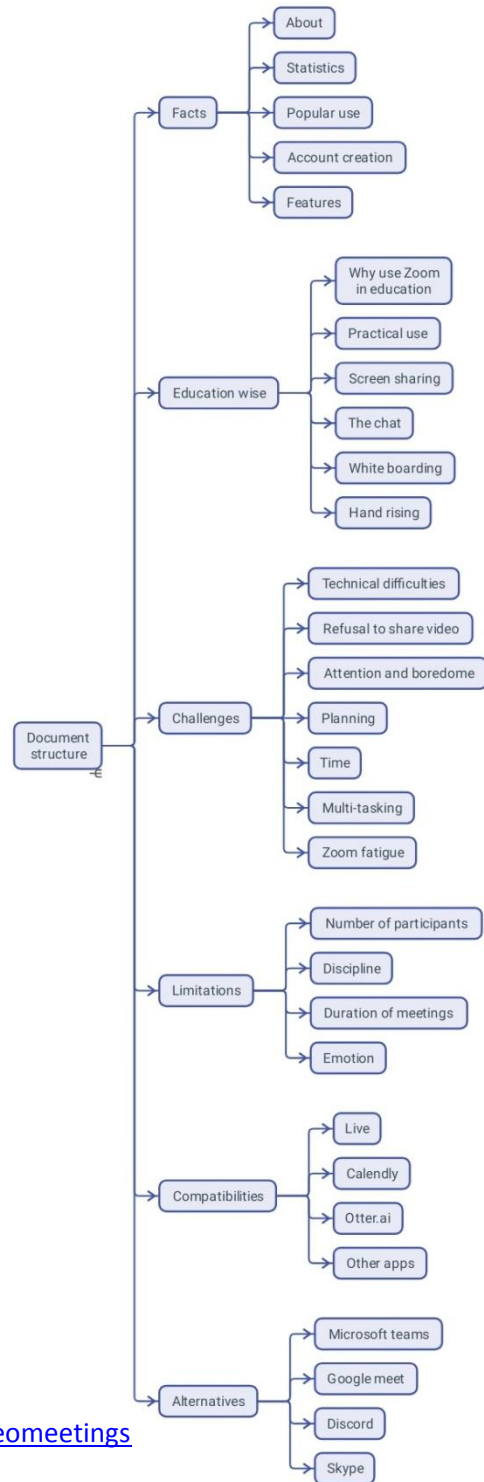
We have analysed five more online software whose reports are available on our website: www.trendss.eu

USEFUL LINKS:

WEBSITE:
https://zoom.us/
PLAY STORE:
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=us.zoom.videomeetings
WIKIPEDIA:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoom_Video_Communications

ABOUT

Zoom is a cloud-based video conferencing platform used for video conferencing meetings, audio conferencing, webinars, meeting recordings, and live chat. Usage is free for video conferences of up to 100 participants at once, with a 40-minute time limit if there are more than two participants. Paid subscriptions with additional features are available for longer or larger conferences.

STATISTICS

Some interesting stats about this app:

- More than 300 million people around the world are using Zoom
- The largest age group to download the Zoom app is between 35 to 49 years old
- Over 90,000 schools used Zoom at the height of the pandemic
- Zoom usage is the highest in companies with 10-50 employees
- Zoom uses anywhere between 540 MB and 1.62 GB per hour, depending on streaming quality.

POPULAR USE

Zoom is being used extensively by different types of users to meet with their colleagues, friends and family. Since the pandemic, schools, trainers, and businesses started migrating some of their activities online via Zoom.

ACCOUNT CREATION

It is not required to have a Zoom account if you only want to join other people's meetings as a participant. If you want to host your own meetings and send invitations, you will have to sign-up for an account. You may also need a Zoom account if you get an invitation to a meeting that is restricted by authentication profiles used by the host. You can create an account by registering with an email address and a password. After confirming your credentials, you can tweak your profile to have access to the software features and organize the meetings you hold.

FEATURES

Zoom offers several features that improve the participants' experience in a group meeting or a presentation: polling, screen sharing, whiteboarding, annotations (or co-annotations), and virtual hand-raising are among the most useful. It is also easy to schedule meetings, set reminders, and record them.

As a host, you can assign permissions and define administrative controls, like enabling a waiting room where the participants are funnelled to after logging in. You can also split your Zoom meeting into breakout rooms with up to 50 separate meeting sessions.

Due to its popularity, various third-party apps have been developed to improve the experience of meeting over Zoom.

Zoom apps are extensions that add to the video conferencing platform's functionality by expanding Zoom's capabilities and taking remote meetings to the next level. These extensions save time, increase impact, and help remote workers become even more efficient with minimal effort.

EDUCATION

WHY USE ZOOM IN EDUCATION

Initially, Zoom wasn't an app designed for teaching. It was created to provide a simple, more direct way of communicating over the internet for two or more people at a time. Also, this app was not the first or the only video calling software on the market. However, certain circumstances have pushed it ahead of the competition and made it even more popular.

Education, being one of the branches of human development particularly crippled by the pandemic, was seen by the team at Zoom as an opportunity. Thus, the software features were adapted to address the needs of the teacher-student relationship.

Remote education conducted over digital tools like Zoom might feel a bit alienating at first, as you:

- sit in front of a computer/device
- use a camera and microphone to communicate with others
- meet each other virtually on a screen.

These new behavioural changes can be reminiscent of familiar situations like sitting in a classroom, being more aware of your body, and interacting differently with people. While the limitations of communicating over Zoom pose a challenge to the humane side of education, adapting to digital transformation also opens a new discipline that a contemporary educator needs to address. It is bound to shake up the vocational core of teaching as it is shaping up after the pandemic.

PRACTICAL USE

Zoom meetings or sessions are shared as weblinks, accessible either in a web browser or in the Zoom app installed on your device.

Sessions can be secured with a password or left open, but new participants that join first arrive in a 'waiting room'. This place is limbo without any audio or video. The session host can opt to let the participant in or not. Once they enter the meeting, they can view, listen, talk and interact with the other participants.

Every participant will appear in a small window alongside their name. If a participant's webcam is not shared, a small black window with the participant's name will be visible instead.

There is no "one size fits all" approach to using Zoom in remote meetings. Some of the most popular utilities in Zoom are as follows:

Screen Share – a feature that displays to the other participants the screen information of the device with which you have logged on to Zoom. It is helpful when you want to deliver PowerPoint-like presentations or demonstrate how you work on something using your device.

Chat – Zoom provides a chat that allows its users to communicate more efficiently during meetings without disturbing the other participants. Messages can be broadcast to the whole group or sent privately. The Chat window also serves as a sidebar to share links and additional resources.

Whiteboard – a tool for visual note-taking that is visible to all participants. It is particularly effective in theoretical classes where students may need visual aids to follow along. You can use it to make drawings, write text, erase, undo/redo and save. It is located right under the Share Screen button at the bottom of the Zoom window. It works best with a graphics tablet (if you are on the PC) or with a digital pen paired with your phone or tablet device.

Virtual hand-raising – a tool to graphically signal to the host and other participants that someone wants to say something.

It is also easy to schedule meetings, set reminders, and record them.

As a host, you can assign permissions and define administrative controls, like enabling a waiting room where the participants are funnelled to after logging in. You can also split your Zoom meeting into breakout rooms with up to 50 separate meeting sessions.

CHALLENGES

1. **TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES**
   A good internet connection is crucial to avoiding technical glitches in video conferences. Generally speaking, lower upload speeds negatively impact the quality of virtual meetings. However, good bandwidth alone does not protect you from having problems while video conferencing. Misconfigured webcams or microphones can also lead to a faulty experience while you are in an online meeting. Testing ahead of time, relocating, and asking participants to log in from a well-configured device could help resolve some of these issues.

2. **UNWILLINGNESS TO SHARE VIDEO**
   Participants who do not want to show their faces could make you feel like talking to a black wall. Instead of forcing them to turn on their cameras and aggravating their anxiety, you can see this behaviour as an opportunity. Thinking of something in your course that might encourage participants to engage visually could lead to a solution. For instance, the Virtual Background feature in Zoom has been thoughtfully developed for participants who are not comfortable with visually sharing their personal space.

3. **ATTENTION AND BOREDOM**

   Remaining present and alert throughout a meeting can be a challenge to some. Participants do get bored sometimes when a class isn't so engaging. It is not unusual, so you should be prepared for such a scenario; but first, you have to learn to recognize and acknowledge it. There are apps, like Hypersay, that can be used alongside Zoom to "distract the distracted" through engagement and interaction.

4. **PLANNING**

   Planning your meeting is as important, if not more important, over the internet as it is face to face. Knowing the features of Zoom can help but knowing your audience can help even more. Having an agenda for a meeting is good; sharing this agenda with participants, if you call on them for specific tasks, is even better.

5. **TIME**

   Rushing participants might cause some to fall behind, not complete tasks and miss understanding what to do next or at home. Also, dragging could prove less engaging for some. Keep in mind that everything takes longer in online meetings. While planning your meeting, it is important to estimate the time required for different tasks.

6. **MULTI-TASKING**

   There are several things that you have to manage at the same time. It is alright to ask for help if something appears overwhelming. You could ask a tech-savvy assistant to take care of things you will need during a remote session. It might free your attention to engage more with your audience. Zoom has a co-hosting feature that you could use. Remember to test and assure yourself that the other person understands what they need to do.

7. **ZOOM FATIGUE**

   In the event of a pandemic, when you are required to work online, attend classes or meet friends virtually, the time you spend connected can leave a mark on you. Having regular breaks is as important as the time you spend in meetings so you can recharge and perform better.

LIMITATIONS

1. **NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS**
    The basic paid plan can host up to 100 participants. An upgraded business subscription allows you to host meetings with up to 300 or 1000 participants.

2. **DISCIPLINE**
    As the number of participants in a Zoom session grows, it can become more challenging to perform some tasks, and the meeting can be harder to moderate. Thus, the need for clear instructions becomes paramount.

3. **DURATION OF MEETINGS**
    In the free version, you get only 40 minutes in meetings with more than 2 participants. The session ends automatically when the 40 minutes run out. In this event, the host and the participants can rejoin the meeting by clicking on the link again. Signing up for the paid version prolongs the meeting time by setting no limits to the duration.

4. **EMOTION**
    When we speak and meet people face-to-face, we learn much about what they think or how they react from their body language, facial expressions and voice tonality.
    But body language also helps the brain remember these interactions by attaching emotion to them. In a virtual setting, as we receive far less information, there appears to be much less emotion for us to decode the intention of others and solidify memories. The result is that we don't remember as much from virtual meetings.

COMPATIBILITIES	
NAME	**DESCRIPTION**
LIVE	Helps broadcast meetings live on social media channels. Making your meetings public like that can help you reach a bigger audience, collect questions and feedback from them and engage in different ways.
Calendly.com	This app helps schedule your remote sessions. It works best for one-on-one meetings and lets your participants pick a time that you have set as an interval in advance to meet with you. Once the connection between the two apps is synced it will automatically create the meetings in your zoom app.
Otter.ai	This app transcribes the audio recording of your meeting so you can browse through it faster if you need to revisit your Zoom meeting.
3rd party apps	**Google Drive** The Google Drive extension for Zoom allows meeting organisers to automatically upload meeting recordings and transcripts to folders. **Trello** The Trello app enables meeting hosts and participants to connect to and organise Trello boards from within Zoom meetings. Attendees can also add comments and import content onto the board via the Zoom chat channel.

ALTERNATIVES NAME	**Gmail** The Gmail extension allows users to schedule, start, view, and change Zoom meetings without exiting the inbox. **DESCRIPTION**
Microsoft Teams	Microsoft Teams is cloud-based team collaboration software that is part of the Microsoft 365 and Office 365 suite of applications. The core capabilities in Microsoft Teams include business messaging, calling, video meetings and file sharing.
Google Meet	This is a video-communication service developed by Google. It is one of two apps that constitute the replacement for Google Hangouts, the other being Google Chat.
Discord	Discord is a VoIP, instant messaging and digital distribution platform. Users communicate with voice calls, video calls, text messaging, media and files in private chats or as part of communities called "servers". A server is a collection of persistent chat rooms and voice chat channels which can be accessed via invite links.
Skype	A proprietary telecommunications application operated by Skype Technologies, a division of Microsoft, best known for VoIP-based video telephony, videoconferencing and voice calls. It also has instant messaging, file transfer, debit-based calls to landline and mobile telephones (over traditional telephone networks), and other features. Skype is available on various desktop, mobile, and video game console platforms.