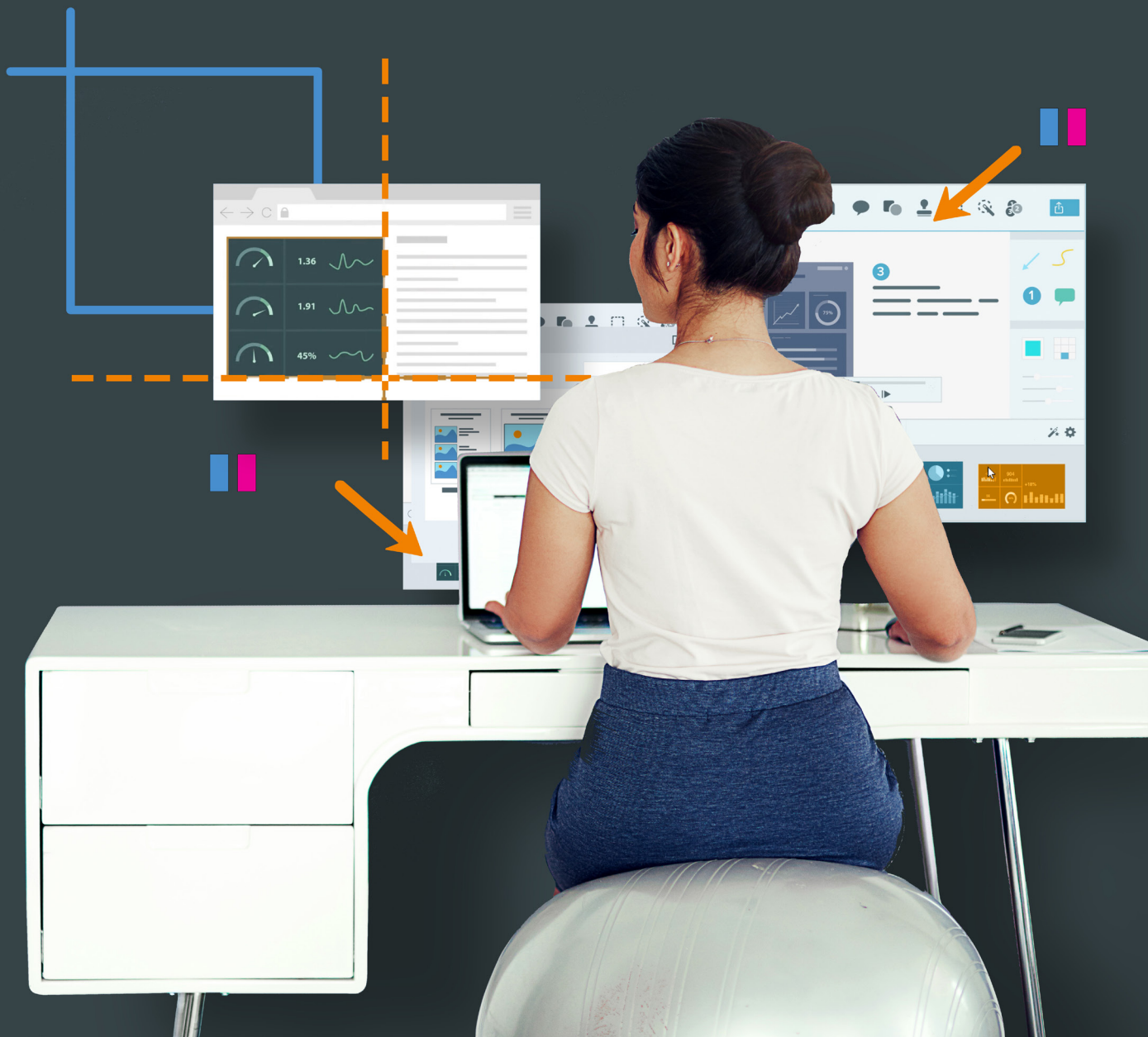
The future of communication is visual. Here are 6 ways your team can innovate.



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Most people understand information faster and better when it's presented visually.

It's why emojis, GIFs, screenshots, and videos have flooded our everyday communication. And it's true at work, too.

It was true when most of us worked in traditional office settings, and it's true now that so many of us work remotely and may be missing that true connection with coworkers.

That means it's even more crucial for companies to embrace images and videos.

So why do so many companies rely on long emails and endless Zoom calls for their remote communications?

For most organizations, CEOs, and managers, the answer is as simple as, "That's the way we've always done it, and it works fine!"

But here's the thing: What worked yesterday doesn't necessarily guarantee success today — especially when there are more effective options.

Companies that are slow to innovate or update procedures will be left in the dust.

Remote work requires finding new and better ways to connect online with coworkers — and visuals and videos are the keys to effective workplace communications (whether remote or in-person).

We get it. Change is hard. You're busy. Your team is busy. And the idea of learning to make images and videos is daunting (especially if you've never done it before).

But what if creating professional-quality visuals and videos to communicate was — in many cases — actually easier than typing out a long and boring email?

It is!

And, best of all, remote communication isn't just better for your employees — it's better for your business. You'll increase productivity, have fewer mistakes, and eliminate feedback loops.

Plus, your employees will be more engaged than ever.

Don't worry, we're not asking you to give up email entirely. We're just suggesting a better way.

And it's incredibly easy to get started.

We'll show you how.

Here's what you'll learn:

- Why exclusively using plain text communications (such as email) actually costs you time and money.
- How visuals and video enhance productivity and employee engagement.
- The three myths of visual communication and why they're untrue.
- Six ways you and your team can easily start using visuals and video for workplace communications — no pro skills required.

How visuals are better for remote communication (and your business)

We've all been there. You hear the little "ding" from your email inbox. You click over to check it, and right there staring back at you is a giant wall of text. Five paragraphs, six sentences each. No personality. No breaks. No images.

No thanks.

Spoiler alert: Your email did NOT find me well.

But let's be clear about something. We're not saying email is obsolete. Email is and will continue to be one of the backbones of business communications.

It's great when used properly. Unfortunately, we've come to rely on email as the end-all, be-all of workplace communications.

Email is perfect for quick updates or notes a few sentences long. Need to follow up on a request or check the status of a project? Email's your go-to.

Need to give instructions or deliver a lot of information at once? That's not really email's strong suit.

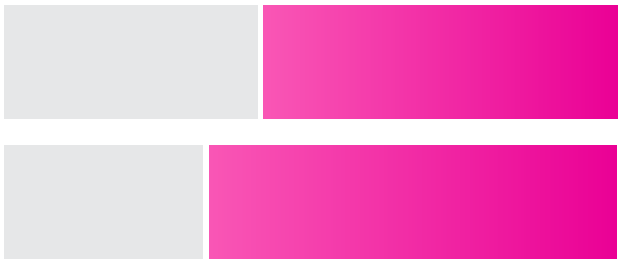
Chat applications like Slack and Microsoft Teams have become so popular at least in part because we've been abusing email.

When it comes to text-based communications, people want them short and sweet.

But don't take our word for it. We did the research!

What is the true value of visuals?

A couple of years ago, we did a pretty major research project called The Value of Visuals. We wanted to know if communicating with visuals and video actually was better than plain text, but we also wanted to discover if there was an economic benefit to visual communications.



58% believe they remember information longer when it's visual

67% complete tasks better when instructions are provided as marked up screenshots or videos vs just text alone

We tested 125 people performing real-world office tasks, such as updating a web page, filling out an expense report, and downloading and installing new software. For each person, the instructions for each task were randomly given as plain text, text with marked up screenshots/images, or video.

Then, we measured their performance as they completed their tasks.

The results were astounding.

In all, 67% of those tested completed tasks better when the instructions were provided as images or video. On average, they absorbed the information 7% faster and, when asked later about the tasks, they remembered the information better and for a longer period of time.

In fact, our research estimates that when companies use more images and videos in workplace communications, each employee could gain nearly seven minutes of productivity per day.

Companies could gain

$167 billion

in productivity globally each year by using more visuals in workplace communications

That's about

$1,200 more

in productivity per employee, per year by using more visuals in workplace communications

That's nearly 34 minutes per five-day work week and 2.25 hours per month — for each employee.

That means if your company has 100 employees, you could get back 225 hours of productivity every month. If your company has 500 employees, that's 1,100 hours of productivity gained.

In monetary terms, that's about $1,200 in productivity gained per year for each employee — just by using more visuals in workplace communications.

Employees want more visuals

If the purely economic benefits weren't enough, your employees crave more visual communication at work.

Our study found that 48% of employees consider video to be the most engaging form of communication. 37% consider text with images to be the most engaging.

Just 15% said email was the most engaging.

And yet, nearly 50% of businesses are actually increasing their use of email.

Engagement Matters

48%

consider **video the most engaging form of communication**

37%

consider text with **images the most engaging**

Just 15%

consider **email** the most engaging

Employees who are less engaged feel less connected to their work, their company, and their peers. And that's compounded by the feeling of disconnection that can already occur with remote work.

But truly engaged employees feel like they're a part of something bigger than themselves. They have motivation to do better work.

When they feel like their company cares for them, they care more for their company.

Six easy ways you can start using visuals at work right now — no pro skills required

Purely informational meetings shouldn't require everyone to be in the same place at the same time — even if that place is virtual.

If you have information to share with your team that doesn't require immediate feedback or brainstorming, try replacing that meeting with a video.

You can write out exactly what you want to say and share the info without interruption or without conversations digressing or running wildly off course.

If you have slides to show, use Snagit to record your screen while you narrate. No slides? No problem. Snagit can record your webcam to give your video a more personal touch.

This type of delivery is more respectful of your team's time. If it's not urgent that they know the information right this second, they can watch the video in their own time. And, if they need a refresher, they can always go back and watch again.

Plus, if you do need feedback or if they have questions, they can come to you individually.

In our experience, meetings that normally might have been scheduled for an hour can be reduced to a 20-minute (or less) video. That's a TON of time saved!

2. Provide visual feedback

- Much faster/easier than writing out text instructions
- Recipient can see exactly what you want
- Less chance something will be missed

SHOULDA BEEN A SNAGIT.

This is one of the best ways to get started using visuals in workplace and remote communications, because you're probably already doing something similar.

Nearly all of us have had to proofread and edit a document that someone else has created. We print it out, grab our red pen, and note on the printed pages where to make the requested changes.

Unfortunately, unless you then want to scan your pages and email them, that doesn't really work in a remote environment.

Snagit can help!

In this example, I used Snagit to grab screenshots of specific pages in an ebook and note where changes were needed. Just like with traditional document editing, the recipient can see exactly what I want and where I want it.

This took almost no time at all.

Plus, it works for just about any kind of similar feedback. Need to make changes to a website? Just grab your screenshots, note the necessary changes, and send them along to your web team.

You can also do this by combining images and video. Snagit customer Josh Ho, from Referral Rock — whose team has been remote since day one — told us he regularly grabs the screenshots he needs and adds the markup. Then, he'll make a quick screencast video walking his team through the changes so hecan add context where necessary.

Now, they understand what needs to be changed AND why.

It's quicker than writing and email — and much more engaging and personable.

3. Make evergreen onboarding and focused training content

- Better employee comprehension and retention
- Easily scalable
- Easer to review when a refresher is needed

SHOULDA BEEN A SNAGIT.

Great onboarding gives new hires the tools and information they need to succeed in their new roles. In a remote environment, getting face-to-face time for training isn't much of an option, but creating video and visual training content can go a long way in setting them on the path to success.

Whether it's first-day training stuff or ongoing employee improvement training, visual and video content makes so much sense.

It's great for things like how to use HR systems or log into the network. You can even make a quick video of answering four (or six or 10) most frequently asked questions from new hires.

And, it's easily scalable. Your how-to guides, job aids, or short training videos work for one, 100, or 1,000 people or more.

Even for smaller orgs, this makes more sense. Your training content can work for you even when you're doing other things. You'll spend less time away from your job and more time doing other work.

Whether you need to create job aids, software training microvideos, step-by-step guides, or more, Snagit is the perfect tool for creating training content.

4. Have more efficient software rollouts

- Puts a more human face on what can be a frustrating time
- Better comprehension and retention
- Visual training materials are less overwhelming

SHOULDA BEEN A SNAGIT.

Nearly every organization has to roll out new software at some time or another. It can be incredibly frustrating and disrupting to your employees — especially if not well-communicated.

Use screenshots and screencasts to show how to showcase software features during an internal rollout. Record a quick screencast that can be easily shared with team members or the entire company.

Short training sessions can help users maintain their skill sets while learning new features. Having employees train for software rollouts can help prevent productivity loss.

We recently went through a major software rollout at TechSmith. Our IT team used a combination of screenshots, short videos, and even email to help prepare us for what was to come, guide us through the rollout process, and follow up with us after the software was installed.

Rather than plowing our way through paragraphs of text (which most people won't do more than skim), we were able to see what was coming, what we needed to do, and provide feedback as requested.

5. Provide peer-to-peer training/help (aka social learning or informal training)

- Way easier than writing out an email
- Step-by-step instructions are better when they're visual
- Easier to review when a refresher is needed

SHOULDA BEEN A SNAGIT.

Most of us probably don't think of ourselves as trainers, but chances are if you work with other people, you've had to show someone how to do something at one time or another.

It can be anything from showing a colleague how to add an out-of-office message to their email to how to adjust the microphone settings in their virtual meeting application.

Instead of jumping in a meeting every time someone needs help, create a quick screencast video showing the process. Or, grab a few screenshots and use Snagit's step tool to make a step-by-step guide.

You'll save time in your day and give your coworkers a nice reference for when they need a refresher.

6. Answer technical questions faster

- Works for both internal and customer support
- Instructions are clear and easy to follow
- Can help put a human face on your support team

SHOULDA BEEN A SNAGIT.

Your IT staff can save considerable time and effort by creating how-tos and job aids for their most frequently asked questions. Then, when a request comes in, they have the answer at the ready.

Even more complex or less common questions will also benefit from visuals and videos. When one of your users has a problem or request, your IT team can grab screenshots of exactly where to go and what to do to fix the issue. Or, make a screencast video walking through various options or potential fixes.

This works for your users, too! Did someone suddenly get a weird new error message? Grab a screenshot and send it to your IT team. They can diagnose the problem and get you back to work.

Or, if a software application is repeatedly crashing, grab a screen recording of what steps you take before the crash to help your IT staff identify and rectify the problem.

Three myths about creating visual content (and why they're untrue)

So, you know that you should use more visual content in workplace communications, but isn't it way harder? It's just so much easier to write an email, right?

Let's look at that.

Myth #1: Creating visuals and video takes too long

Video and visuals CAN take a long time. But they don't have to.

Remember that perfect is the enemy of good. While many of us have no qualms about sending off a quick email without proofreading or making sure all our grammar and punctuation are perfect, for some reason we think visuals and videos have to be perfect before sharing.

Not so.

Embrace the imperfect. Champion the one-take screencast. Celebrate and use the quick screenshot with markup.

If you find yourself in a cycle of perfection, take a step back and think about the goal and audience. These two factors will help you determine how polished your video needs to be.

As a manager or CEO, boost your team's confidence by explicitly outlining what content is higher-priority and needs more polish. Most internal communication probably doesn't need to be perfect to be effective.

Myth #2: You need special skill sets

Switching to anything new can make some people feel uneasy. Whether it's nerves around being a first-time creator or uncertainty around the execution, many people have no idea how easy it is to create visuals.

Technology has brought a lot of ways to easily create really incredible visuals and videos without the need for professional skills.

Visual communication software like TechSmith Snagit makes it easy to create and share high-quality images and video that deliver messages more quickly than text alone.

In many cases, it's much easier and faster than writing a long and complicated email.

Myth #3: You won't know where to start

Finding new ways to incorporate visual content into your organization doesn't have to be overly elaborate or complicated — it's meant to simplify. There are lots of ways to use visuals to make communication easier and help get the point across.

First, determine what you are trying to achieve and how visuals can help with that. Then, empower your employees and guide them to make sure it actually gets done.

It may take some time to get out of the email habit, but you and your employees will be happier when you do.

Just like writing an email or putting together a meeting agenda, think about the purpose of the video or image and then what you want to accomplish with it. Then, create something that does that.

If you still need a helping hand, Snagit comes with professionally designed, easy-to-use templates for those times when starting from scratch just seems like too much. And, with a subscription to TechSmith Assets for Snagit, you'll get access to even more.

Companies that use more visual and video content for internal communications can gain productivity, reduce mistakes, eliminate feedback loops, and have happier, more engaged employees.

And, with software tools like TechSmith Snagit, it's never been easier to create professional-quality, highly effective content with just a few clicks — even if you've never made an image or video in your life.

Slay the unnecessary email monster and get on the path to engaging, effective communications.

Who is TechSmith?

TechSmith screen capture software and solutions are perfect for anyone who wants to create and share images and videos for better training, tutorials, lessons, and everyday communication.

Our flagship products Snagit and Camtasia are easy for anyone to learn. And with expert help content and support, you can quickly create visuals to show what you know.

Founded in 1987, TechSmith has a level of experience that startups lack. Snagit and Camtasia are market leaders in screen capture and productivity categories. That's why billions of images and videos have been created with our products by more than 50 million people across 193 countries.

TechSmith®

Show What You Know

TechSmith Snagit™ TechSmith Camtasia™

Contact TechSmith Sales:

+1.517.381.5901 | +1.888.750.0685 www.snagit.com