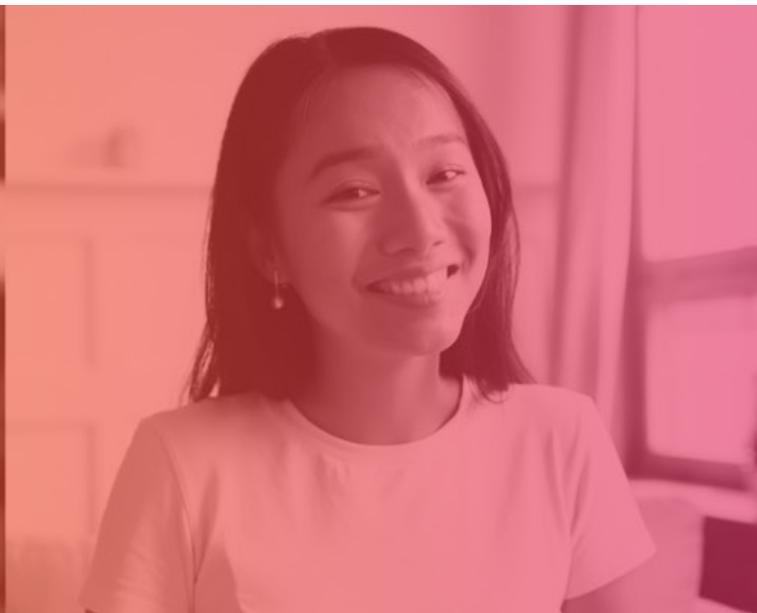


## New Consumer Survey on Video Conversations: Trends, Fails & Wins





Since the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, the world has seen increased adoption of video calling in nearly every area of life.

Consumers' reactions to more video calls are mixed but also show a strong interest in conducting more everyday conversations via video and in using technology to drive improvements in user experience (UX).

For organizations, the potential business value of conversational AI makes it an attractive decision. But how do consumers really feel about conversational AI and about using video conferencing? What, from a user perspective, are the advantages and disadvantages of video conversations? If emotion AI can make the video call experience better for customers, are they interested in these benefits?

Our research sought to better understand these questions and provide guidance for organizations considering conversational AI. By taking a close look at the data and interpreting it within your business context, you can more confidently explore the potential of conversational AI for your organization.

## I. Introduction: Video Fatigue Crisis and Frustration in the Video Call Era

### Our Survey Methodology

Through an online survey conducted for Uniphore by Researchscape International, a market research consultancy, we asked 1,000 Americans and 2,100 consumers across Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, UAE and Vietnam via a survey platform Zoho about their video call habits.

The research, which was conducted online aimed to explore people's experiences, beliefs and preferences in order to discover how companies can improve video conversation experiences for consumers.

In responding to the survey, users provided insight into how they use video calls, what they like and dislike about the UX of video conversations and how open they are to using video calls enhanced by artificial intelligence technology.

The majority of US respondents have used video calls before and were able to speak from personal experience with the technology. Over the past 12 months, 69% of US respondents spent more or significantly more time on video calls compared with only 12% claiming less video call time.

Survey conducted across USA, Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, UAE and Vietnam

Since we wanted to know how consumer responses to technology impact the potential value of conversational AI adoption strategies, this representative survey was weighted using demographic and firmographic data in order to ensure that it accurately reflects what people actually think about video calls.



## Core Takeaways From Our Surveys

In answering these surveys, consumers revealed a mix of both frustration and appreciation for what video conversations have to offer. Respondents shared concerns about the inability to connect with others on calls and even some awkward experiences they've had with video calls in the past. They also shared their positive experiences, though, providing more insight on what consumers find particularly valuable about video natural language processing.

Among other interesting results from this study, we found that 77% of all survey respondents are open to video AI call enhancement. This demonstrates that many people around the world are open to using tools that improve user experience with video calls. Throughout our research, users outside the US indicated a greater willingness to embrace conversational AI, although there are significant proportions of American consumers who also believe they can benefit.

We asked participants about awkward activities they intentionally did while on a video call and discovered that large portions of video call users have gone to

the bathroom, watched online videos, gone shopping online and cleaned their homes.

Multitasking also appears to increase with the number of weekly work calls participants have, which perhaps shows a higher level of comfort, interest or need for remote technologies such as video conferencing.

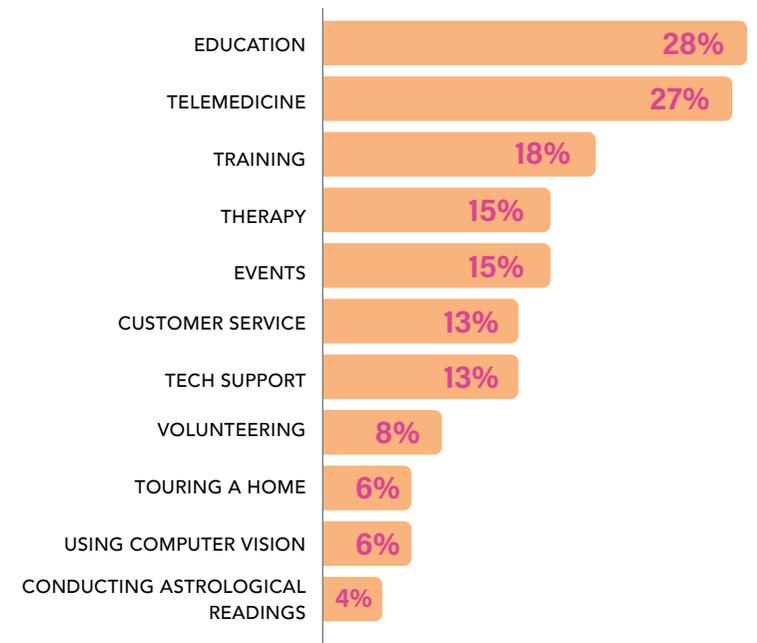
### Why Video? Reasons Video Callers Connect

There's no question that many users value video calling for its strengths. For some, video surpasses everything else. Users are finding a wide variety of different reasons to connect via their favorite video conferencing platforms.

For instance, 62% of US respondents cite keeping in touch with friends and family as a significant reason for using video calls.

Although remote work became a significant use case for video calling during the Covid-19 pandemic, only 34% of respondents said they've used video calls for work or professional reasons. These two uses were the biggest reasons people participated in video calling.

Other reasons people participated in video calling included:





Given that other results of the survey show significant overlap between groups of people who use video calls for work or education and for less common reasons such as touring a house to buy or rent, remote work and schooling may be a gateway to other online video experiences for some people. As they use video conferencing in their professional lives, they may start gaining the skills and comfort level with the technology needed to benefit from video conferencing in their personal lives.

Nevertheless, it's important to note that video's disadvantages can be a turn-off to some callers. Many people said they didn't "feel heard" or "understood" during video conversations. We believe that AI could be the answer, providing users with a more positive experience by offering live feedback, tips and other in-call features that help callers connect more effectively.

### What Does This Mean for Organizations?

Despite the challenges associated with video calling, video still offers more for consumers and businesses. Many users look forward to finding other ways to integrate video into their lives, providing an opportunity for businesses to connect directly with their customers. From a business perspective, video conversations play an important role in meeting customer needs and expectations.

Having an action plan that reflects customer needs before leveraging video in your business will likely be vital to using video successfully in the future. Visual AI can be part of the solution by helping create a more human-friendly video call experience using the latest customer service automation tools to make sure that people feel heard and recognized during video interactions.

## II. Key Video Conferencing Wins and Fails

Video calling use, although greatly accelerated in the past year, has UX disadvantages that may prevent some potential users from making the most of it. This survey is providing us with an important window into customer experience (CX) with video conferencing, including the most significant wins and failures organizations should watch out for.

### The Good and the Bad

Users enjoy being connected and participating in activities that are otherwise harder to accomplish without video calls. They participate in video conversations while also highlighting the problems associated with them. Given that many video conferencing activities still have relatively low participation rates, it's entirely possible that these video disadvantages are holding many users back from full video call adoption in other areas of their lives.

Some participants appreciate being able to see who they're talking with on a video call (**51% US,**

**53% all respondents**) and feel like they understand others better when they can see them (**43% US, 62% all respondents**).

For these reasons, survey respondents believe that every call should be a video call (**49% US, 45% all respondents**). Meaning, half of the participants strongly approve of the technology and believe it adds value to their lives.

Consumers frustrated by having to see themselves on camera, the need to "get ready" before a meeting and an inability to effectively multitask are among other concerns the video communication survey results uncovered. These and other challenges arguably reduce audience engagement, undermining the goals many organizations have for video conversations.

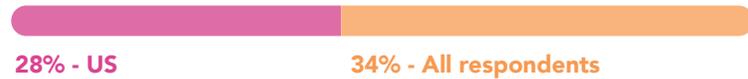
Video meetings, for all of their advantages, are not the same as face-to-face meetings. This leads users to behave differently during video meetings than they otherwise would.



## Awkward Video Conversation Moments

Some participants are more comfortable with video calls than others. A significant percentage of survey respondents said they've multitasked or done something awkward on purpose during video meetings:

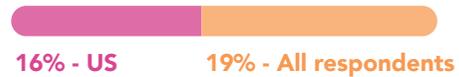
### GOING INTO THE BATHROOM



### READING THE NEWS OR SURFING SOCIAL MEDIA



### FAKING A BAD INTERNET CONNECTION TO LEAVE EARLY



Asking consumers about their awkward video call moments does have relevance for businesses. As brands seek to understand their own audiences better, determining their experiences with professional calls may provide clues to how to improve video call UX.

Since video calling makes it possible to appear at a meeting while also having your video turned off and your microphone muted, many users feel comfortable acting as they might with complete privacy. It's possible that using video calls more often builds user comfort levels (although correlation doesn't necessarily mean causation).

## Challenges of Video Communication

Our participants were open about their video communication challenges. Generally speaking, these factors represent four different categories:

- 1 Feeling understood
- 2 Conveying nonverbal communication accurately
- 3 Preventing on-video & off-video distractions
- 4 Maintaining motivation & engagement

We believe that addressing these video communication challenges may be an important and effective way to build rapport with customers and encourage more positive engagement with brands through video calling. Each of these areas shows that there are potential improvements that customers are likely to notice.



### *Feeling Understood*

Not “feeling heard” is a disadvantage of video calls, according to respondents (**22% US, 26% all respondents**), as is feeling misunderstood by others (**17% US, 18% all respondents**).

Since a significant proportion of users aren’t sure if they feel understood enough during video conversations, it is possible that this discomfort could carry over into consumers’ brand perceptions and may hurt overall CX and UX.



### *Conveying Nonverbal Communication Accurately*

26% of US respondents chose “people misinterpret my facial expressions” as a response, demonstrating that even video calls are at least somewhat prone to missing out on nonverbal communication.

Compared with in-person interaction, video conversations may actually have less nonverbal communication – possibly because participants can see themselves on video and deliberately choose to avoid nonverbal cues ([Professional Communicators, 2020](#)). Video also only displays a two-dimensional view, reducing how effectively some users can use nonverbal communication.

Particularly in situations where a high degree of trust is essential, such as telemedicine, having weaker nonverbal communication may make consumers less likely to use video conferencing. It is important for brands to be aware of how nonverbal communication may impact UX and customers’ perceptions of the organization.



### *On-Video Distractions*

Video callers are a distracted group. In our survey, participants admitted to doing a wide range of nonprofessional multitasking, personal tasks and other projects during their calls. It's no wonder then that callers also cited on-screen distractions such as seeing themselves on camera **(39% US, 31% all respondents)**.

Respondents don't like having to "get ready" for video calls **(28% US, 28% all respondents)** and claimed it's very difficult to follow conversations by watching a screen **(18% US, 17% all respondents)**. However, some prefer multitasking while in a meeting **(25% US, 27% all respondents)**.

A tendency to seek out distractions on purpose in order to multitask, stay engaged or avoid boredom appears to be significant for some people. As you plan your video call strategy, you may need to account for on-screen distractions such as other users' appearances or off-screen distractions such as cleaning during the call.



### *Motivation and Engagement*

During calls, 35% of US and 32% of all survey respondents can't tell how engaged or interested other participants are. This challenge highlights the uncertainty many people feel about video calling's value. Respondents also admitted to finding it difficult to pay attention and stay motivated while on a video call **(29% US, 28% all respondents)**. **27% of US respondents** said video calls are more exhausting than audio-only calls, as did 25% of all survey respondents.

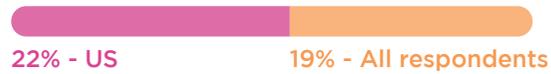
Although these findings have implications for just about every video call use case, employers, educational institutions and other organizations interested in participant productivity may want to take note and identify ways to help callers stay focused and interested.

## Advantages of Video Communication

In spite of the drawbacks our participants cited, there are plenty of positive results, too, particularly when consumers are asked to compare video and audio calls.

Users who present during video calls with others often cited high engagement rates:

### EXTREMELY ENGAGED



### VERY ENGAGED



### SOMEWHAT ENGAGED



A full 57% of US participants said video calls provide them with a more meaningful connection with others, versus 43% who said audio provides more meaningful connections. 69% of all respondents said video helps them feel connected with others.

Importantly, our respondents also indicated that they're interested in increasing their video call usage. Video call use may provide other brands with new opportunities to reach consumers using video conferencing

as participants continue building their trust and experience with video technologies.



Organizations will need to be prepared in order to take advantage of these trends while also minimizing any downsides for brand perception. Planning carefully before launching into new technology is beneficial and may prevent missteps during the implementation process.

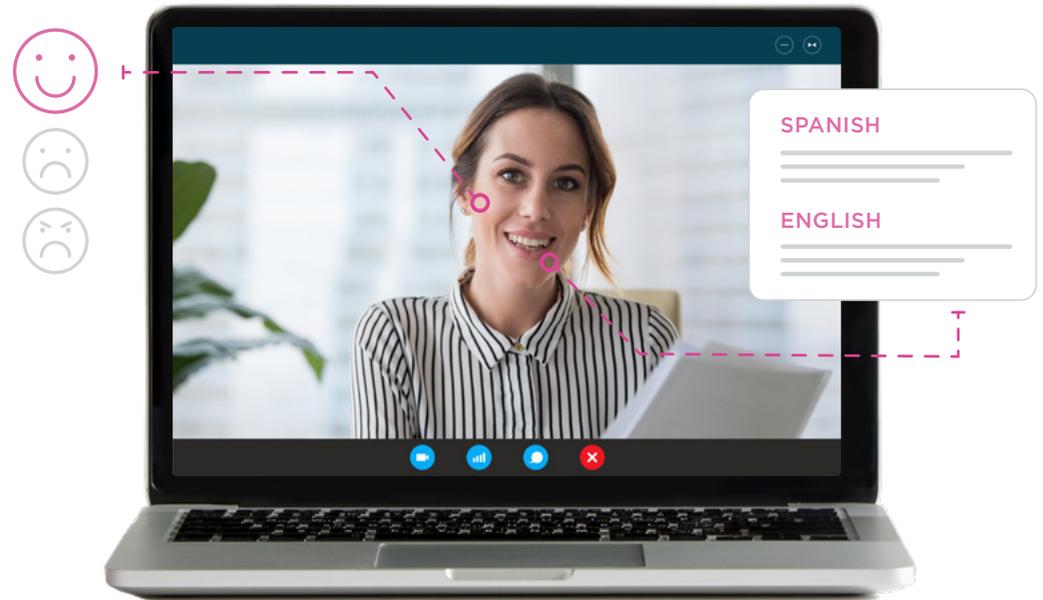
### III. Developing a Conversational AI Action Plan

Based on the findings in our research, we've identified areas where AI might be acceptable or even welcomed by consumers. Organizations adopting conversational AI to improve customer experiences may be able to mitigate or even avoid the negative experiences consistently cited in this survey.

A plan to adopt conversational AI should start where customers are likely to see a difference and where they're interested in AI enhancement. When asked about AI enhancements for video calling, only 18% of US respondents said outright that they don't trust AI on calls. This means that there's likely to be more potential for AI usage. Existing technologies are largely focused on audio analysis, but upcoming technologies that analyze emotions through facial recognition software, provide customized interaction tips during the call and offer other features for callers are another possibility.

#### Consumer Openness to Conversational AI in Video Calling

Understanding consumer reactions to conversational AI can help organizations plan for AI adoption. In our survey, we asked video callers about their attitudes toward AI technologies and for information about any features they believe could enhance their video conferencing experiences.



#### Popular Conversational AI Features

For the most part, consumers said they are open to using AI to improve their video conversations. Many users reported specific improvements to the video experience that conversational AI can provide or will soon be able to do. Since these ideas connect well with video call users, they represent a logical first step for organizations that want to significantly improve video conferencing CX.

During our survey, 61% of US and 77% of all respondents said they are open to AI-enhanced video conversations. 22% of US users were interested in AI technology that assists with an improved ability to interpret the mood or interest of people they converse with, while 21% wanted on-screen transcription during the call. 42% of all respondents said they'd be interested in tips for improving engagement during the call.

## Getting Started with Conversational AI

Given the feedback consumers provided during our survey, organizations would be best off if they thoughtfully implemented conversational AI following a tailored approach. The technology you use may depend on your industry, customer location, type of service and consumers' previous experience with video calling.

Use cases for conversational AI in customer service, service delivery, support, training and a variety of other possibilities show the potential for further engagement with customers as they are comfortable and confident connecting with brands via video.

Before embarking on a conversational AI journey, organizations should seek out experienced guidance and do their homework on how to delight customers while also getting the best return on investment.

Business

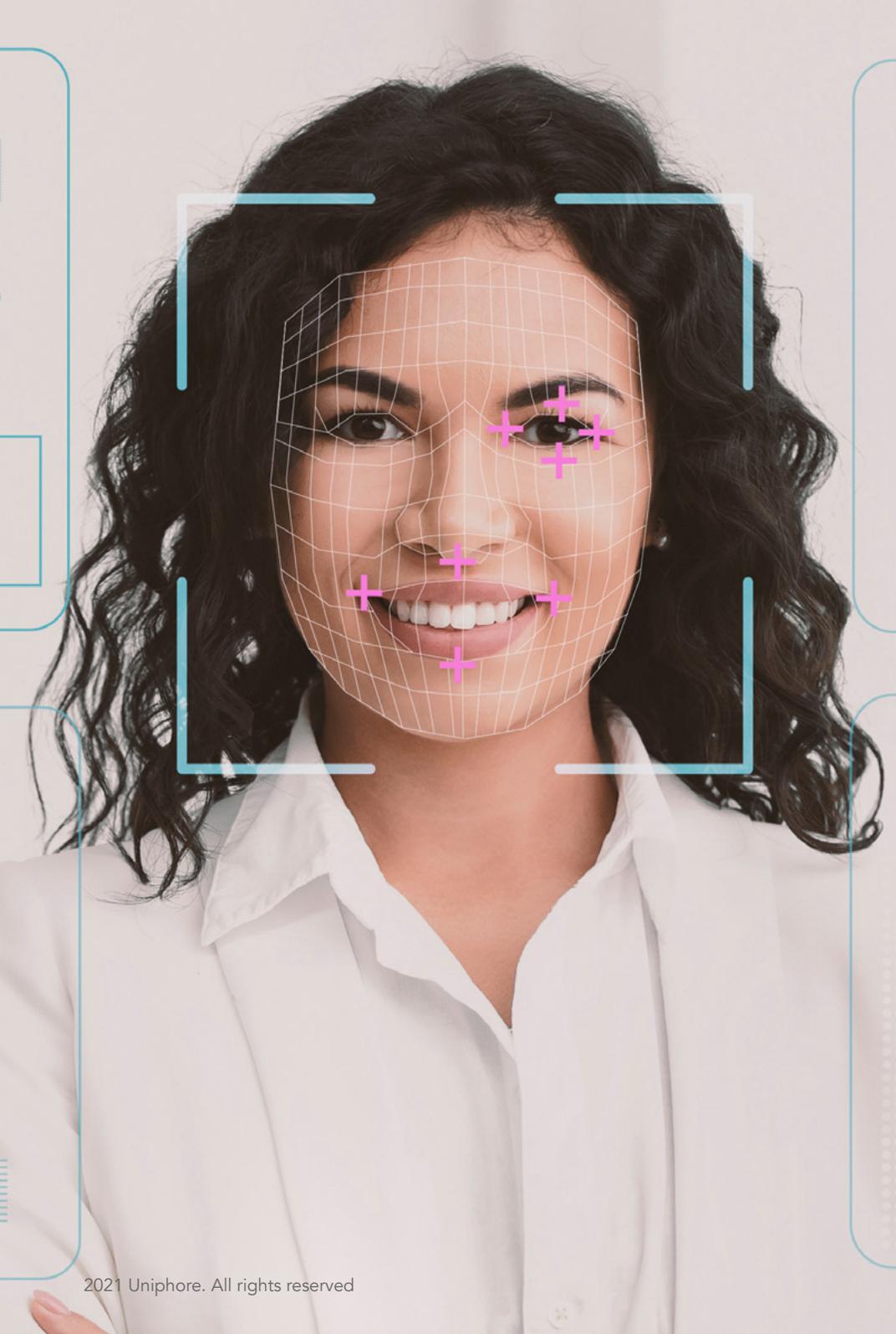


Healthcare



Education





## IV. Conclusion

Through research both in the US and other parts of the world, we've identified significant interest from consumers in leveraging video calls. Customers already benefit from video conversations, but many are discovering that the video call experience also has drawbacks and disadvantages. Some or all of these disadvantages could be reduced with conversational AI, which many consumers indicated they'd be open to considering. Customer concerns about comfort with technology may be addressed with the right approach and user-focused benefits.

For many organizations, the potential business benefits of conversational AI and a willingness to use the technology (particularly if it shows a clear consumer benefit) mean that AI technologies represent the future of video conferencing. With the opportunity to improve UX insight, this should mean further improvements in customer satisfaction with video experiences. Brands should develop their understanding of what their customers value and respond to in order to customize the video calling experience.