

# Deploying AV Solutions in a Crisis and Beyond

Building a 30, 90 and 120 Day Plan



# Mobilization During Covid-19

The global COVID-19 pandemic is testing communication capabilities like no other event in history. Whether it's government agencies that need to clearly and efficiently share information with the public, healthcare organizations that need to connect providers to patients, educational institutions that need to connect teachers to students and parents, or corporations that suddenly find their entire workforce is now remote, they all need to quickly and easily communicate with any audience no matter where their circumstances require them to be.

The rush to implement remote collaboration and video conferencing solutions puts many internal AV, IT, and facilities teams in a tough spot; the scale and scope of the demand is new territory for everyone. But the solutions it requires are not new. Audio visual integrators have been connecting people and enabling remote communication for decades.

Experts forecast that a significant number of companies around the world will increasingly shift on-site employees to remote positions in an effort to manage costs and keep staff reductions and layoffs to a minimum. It's also predicted that corporate real estate space for personnel will decrease over time in the new economy. But remote working comes with new challenges and hidden costs of human isolation—psychological and physical—that weigh heavily in a company's decision to encourage and support remote work. The right collaboration technology can help minimize the risk and promote team engagement and productivity.

This guide will share recommendations from experienced PSNI members who can help you develop a 30, 90, and 120-day plan to deploy the solutions the current situation demands while also preparing for your future needs.

# Contents

## The First 30 Days

- > Slow Down to Speed Up
- > How AV Integrators Can Help Now
- > What to Look for in an AV Integrator

## The Next 60 Days

- > Prepare for the New Normal
- > How AV Integrators Can Help Now
- > The Importance of Conferencing and Collaboration

## 120 Days and Beyond

- > Navigating Uncertainty
- > How AV Integrators Can Help Now
- > Planning for Disasters



# Slow Down to Speed Up

## The First 30 Days

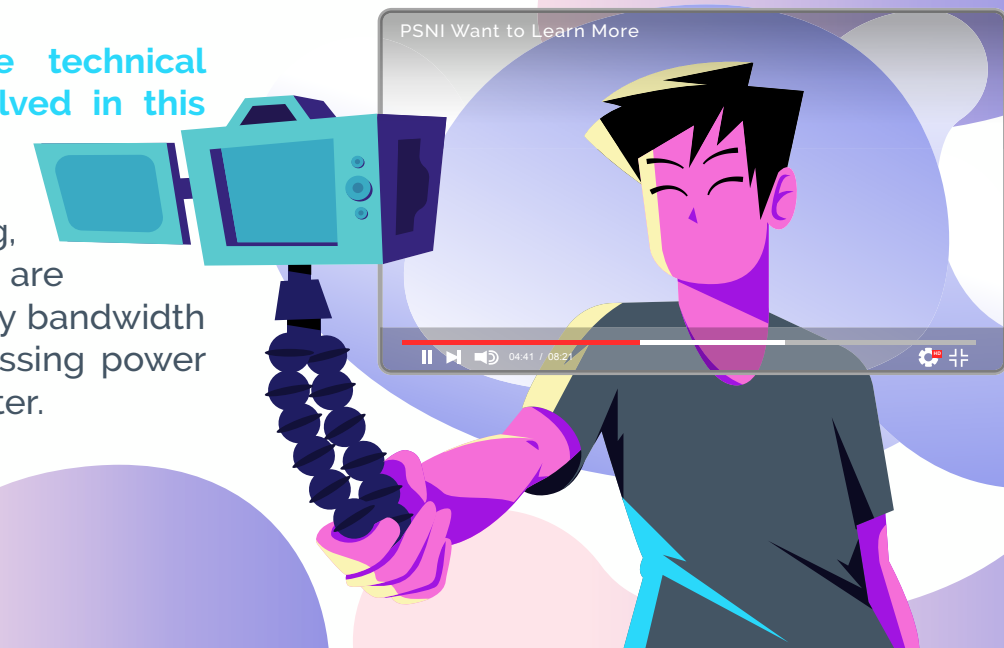
### Take a breath.

In this crucial time, the demands are high and the timelines short. And while the overall goal for this period is to do what you need to do to get by, slowing down for a moment to plan and organize can help you speed up the delivery of a better solution. You'll come out on the other side of the crisis in a much stronger position to execute your long-term strategy.

We understand you, and your IT and AV colleagues, are under enormous pressure to put solutions in place right now. But the risk of an all-reactive approach is high. You could end up investing in a solution that employees won't use or doesn't allow for future proofing and expansion, which may negatively impact any future rollouts.

The trick is to develop a strategy that meets your immediate and unique needs but also aligns with your longer term technology and collaboration goals. Here are a few recommendations from the PSNI Global Alliance group.

- **Ask stakeholders;** both those who are new to working remotely and those who have years of experience in remote work, to identify the real needs of the remote worker. Consider that working from home goes beyond technology—it's a mindset. It takes discipline and a proper environment where employees can work with little distraction.
- **Remember that whatever short-term solution you implement will likely need to be incorporated into your long-term strategy.** If it doesn't work, user adoption will be a problem now and in the future. And scrapping the short-term technology entirely will be hard on budgets.
- **Getting by doesn't have to be expensive.** Look at solutions you may already have such as MS Teams on Outlook 365 or Zoom. Just add web cams for now and you've kept your expenses low while creating a new video culture. Check for web cams on Facebook Marketplace – you may be surprised at what you find.
- **What's considered "good enough" has changed.** Your users are not expecting high production quality. Even news broadcasts are airing contributor content using Skype or iPhone footage because it gets the job done and is inexpensive and easy to capture. Everyone is now a content contributor.
- **Accept that some technical issues can't be solved in this "get-by" phase.** For example, dropped video calls, buffering, freezing frames, etc. are very likely caused by bandwidth issues or the processing power of the user's computer.



## How AV Integrators Can Help Now

AV integrators in most areas around the world are considered essential workers. No one has had to navigate a global pandemic like what we're facing, but PSNI Global Alliance integrators have significant experience providing cloud-based, standardized, simple solutions that can be deployed locally, regionally, or globally. Working with skilled professionals who have deployed scalable communication solutions thousands of times, who are in touch with manufacturers around the world, and who can access the right products matters now more than ever.

There are many inexpensive—and free—solutions out there to help individuals and companies meet their new remote collaboration needs. But an experienced professional can help you pull all those tools and platforms together, creating a unified and comprehensive solution that is more than the sum of the individual applications and products. AV integrators can help ensure your interim fixes are a steppingstone to your long-term solution – designed to expand and grow when time allows.

PSNI Global Alliance integrators have capacity now and stand ready to mobilize the solutions you need to address this current emergency.



## What to Look for in an AV Integrator

In 2019, PSNI Global Alliance surveyed IT and AV managers and end users from around the world to learn their perspectives on AV solutions, integrators, and priorities. The survey found that **when it comes to selecting an AV integrator, experience with specific applications, and service and support capabilities were most important.** For end users, the most valuable type of assistance was knowledge about technology solutions and integration.

Talk to a PSNI integrator near you



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# Prepare for the New Normal

## The Next 60 Days

No one knows when a crisis or disaster will end, but we do know it will end. And your needs once we move through the current situation will continue to evolve. The experience of having so many employees working from home will influence where you go from here. Because of this crisis, we all now understand the power of communication and how to stay in touch with each other in new and unexpected ways. Once this critical time has passed, we don't expect everyone to continue working from home. But not everyone will return to the office either. The new normal will likely be somewhere in between.

This crisis has introduced a whole new group of companies and individuals—including leadership, management, and direct reports—to remote and collaboration tools, resources, and new ways to conduct business that they never would have explored or chosen under different circumstances. For AV and IT leaders, navigating this crisis provides an opportunity to learn more than we ever could before about remote work and its challenges. We can emerge stronger, more engaged and collaborative than before. Here's what you can do to put yourself in the best position to move forward when we come out on the other side.

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- **Listen to your people.** During this phase, collect as much feedback and input from your users as possible. Ask them to make notes or keep a digital diary of their work-from-home experiences to fully understand their challenges.
  - **Think about support options going forward.** Many of the virtual work and learning tools you implemented to get by are intuitive, allowing most remote users to get up and productive relatively quickly. But what will the long-term strategy be as we move into a new normal which may see new work styles and preferences emerge?
  - **Determine how to incorporate current solutions with future solutions.** For example, you may be using outside resources to enable live streaming such as video conferencing rooms, streaming studios, and mobile studios. Will these services be part of your new strategy?
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## How AV Integrators Can Help Now

Once you have collected insights from your managers and remote workers, be prepared to share that feedback with your AV integrator. The more they know and understand your challenges, goals and objectives, the more likely your PSNI Global Alliance integrator can design a solution that will help you achieve those objectives. If you start collaborating now, your qualified integrator can help you start engineering a solution that is guided by user feedback and in line with your long-term goals.

This should be the solution for your new normal—not the current crisis. As users become more comfortable with remote collaboration technology, they will start to expect higher quality solutions that are flexible and easy to use. And with more people working remotely—not just from home but anywhere—the limits of your current, reactive or short-term solutions will start to be tested. A PSNI integrator brings years of experience to help you maximize and visualize long-term solutions that will keep you on the leading edge of collaboration tools both now and in the future.

Some of these new tools can be deployed virtually, a bonus while access to many physical spaces is restricted. If you can access your building, now is a great time to integrate projects with minimal disruption to employees. You can also work with your integrator to determine which support options make the most sense -- [fully managed](#), [hybrid](#), or [self-managed](#).

There is no industry that hasn't been impacted by this crisis and that means even your integrator has shifted to a more work-from-home model and hosting/attending events online. We're all standing in the same virtual shoes and that enables integrators to bring insights from their own experiences as well as their customers'. Whether your new normal will include a mix of open space, remote space, and/or meeting/office space, your integrator can help you design the right solution.

## The Importance of Conferencing and Collaboration

Before the current crisis, we asked IT and AV managers and end users how important the role of audio and video conferencing was in their company. Fifty-five percent rated it extremely important. How would you rate it today? Fifty percent were also somewhat satisfied with their current AV technology solutions. **Has your satisfaction changed in the past 30-60 days?**



# Navigating Uncertainty

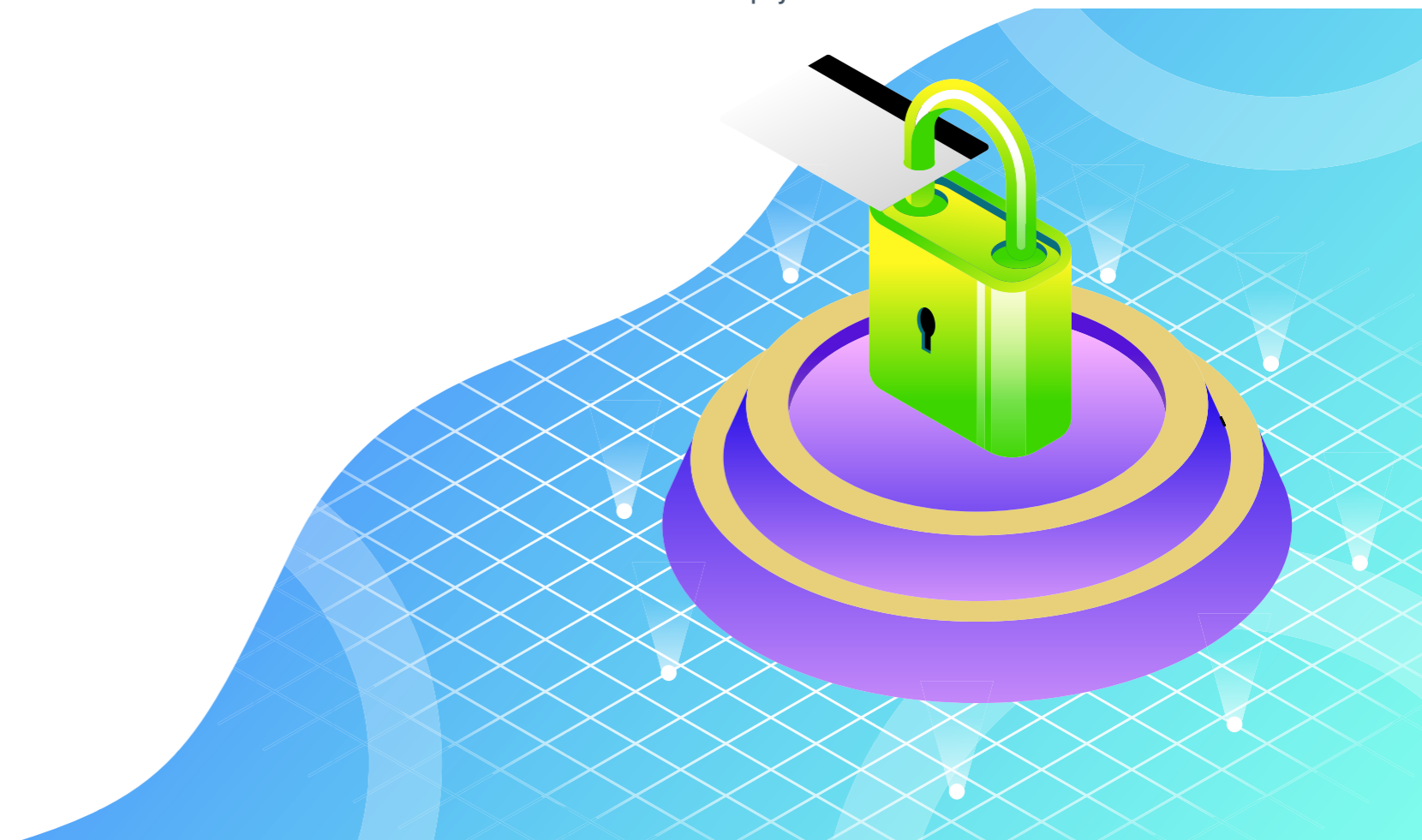
## 120 Days and Beyond

We are living through unprecedented times, and when things return to “normal” it will be a whole new day. As we move out of this crisis and find our footing in the new normal, an economic recalibration is almost certain. Facilities will reopen, the workforce will migrate back to the office, students and teachers will head back to the classroom, and healthcare workers will get a much needed break (we hope). Projects that went on hold due to the crisis will start moving again. But all this good news could surface two new challenges:

1. How will I pay for these projects?
2. How can I make sure we're not caught in an endless backlog?

Here are a few ideas to consider:

- **Schedule now for upcoming projects.** If you know you'll need to roll out solutions in the fall, talk to your integrator now and get on their schedule. If you wait, you could have a 6-9 week lead time in procuring products and scheduling resources.
- **Talk to your integrator about financing options and different buying models.** Audio Visual as a Service (AVaaS) can ease your capital outlay with solutions that are managed and maintained by your integrator. Some integrators may be able to extend payment terms or negotiate with the manufacturer for even longer terms.
- **For US businesses, the CARE act and SBA loans may offer some relief.** Read the eligibility guidelines carefully or work with a banker/business advisor who can help you.





We are all in this together.

## How AV Integrators Can Help Now

Stay in communication with your integrator. No concern or conversation is off limits. If there is anything this crisis has taught us, it's that we're all in this together. Whether it's helping you find the best delivery model and finance terms or getting your project scheduled in advance, your PSNI integrator will do everything they can to help your business move forward even when it feels like the world has stopped.

## Planning for Disasters

You can't predict what types of crises or disasters will occur—or when they'll hit. When we asked IT and AV managers and end users in 2019 what challenges their company would likely experience, none anticipated a global pandemic. Forty-eight percent thought their AV spending would remain the same as previous years and 53% believed that capital and operational expenditures were equally important. How have your budgets been impacted by the pandemic? Has this changed your company's position on CAPEX vs OPEX?

## Looking for a Place to Start?

PSNI Global Alliance members are the best in the business and stand ready to advise or deploy your current audio visual needs. Tap into their knowledge and expertise by:

1. Finding your local [PSNI Global Alliance integrator](#)
2. [Subscribing to the PSNI blog](#) for regular insights delivered right to your inbox
3. [Contacting us](#) any time

## About PSNI Global Alliance

PSNI is a global alliance of top technology integrators, manufacturers, distributors and service partners. Our network helps magnify each member's capabilities and expands the services they can provide. Clients can enjoy a wide variety of standardized solutions and support no matter where they are in the world.

A standardized, documentable approach across the network also means a PSNI Global Alliance integrator can deliver results faster, and you spend less time researching and coordinating with multiple vendors and integrators. Because of the power of the PSNI Alliance, you can even keep your local or regional PSNI technology partners while receiving global support.

PSNI's global reach also assures that you get service delivered the way you want it—including in your own language and according to the rules, regulations and requirements of your location. The PSNI Global Alliance expands and improves your options for AV integration and support no matter where you are—and no matter what you need.





[www.psni.org](http://www.psni.org)