

2022 state of human connections at work

A new study reveals employees crave connection and better communications tools can help.



Table of contents

The way we connect has changed drastically 3

Human connection is a need, not just a want 4

Employers have done a good job strengthening employee trust 7

Communications tools are key to building human connections 8

The future of work is wherever you are 12

Bridge the disconnect with RingCentral 14

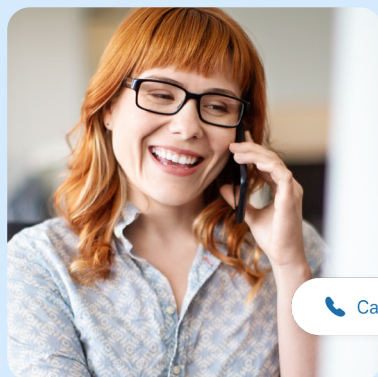
Methodology 16

The way we connect has changed drastically

The global pandemic of 2020 ushered in sweeping changes to almost every aspect of our lives, affecting the way we connect both personally and professionally.

Most US full-time workers worked in person prior to COVID, regardless of their company size. 89% worked full-time in person (three or more days) before COVID. Now, the work environment is quite different, with small and mid-sized businesses increasingly shifting to a hybrid or remote work model. Having a hybrid or full-time remote work arrangement jumped from 11% pre-COVID to 39% during COVID, and that shift seems unlikely to change any time soon.

Remote and hybrid work models altered workers' perceptions of human connection.

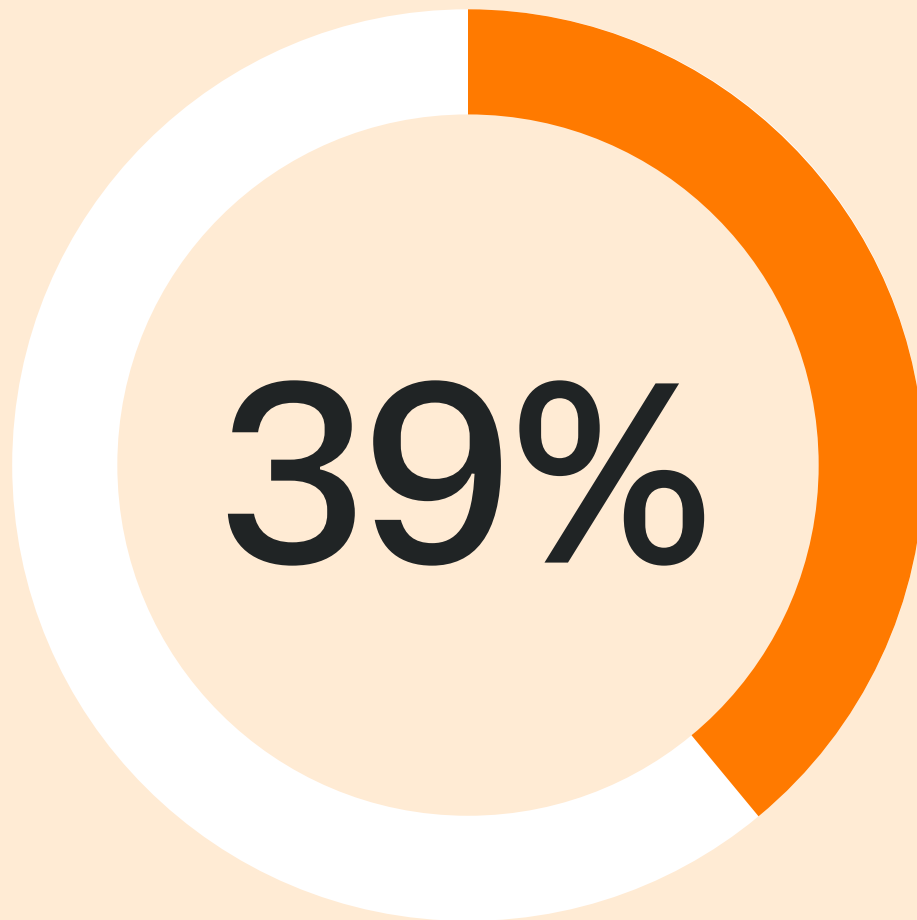


 Call in progress

74% say what it means to be connected to another human changed over the course of the COVID pandemic.

What does human connection mean in this new work landscape? To find out, we surveyed 3,000 people in small and mid-sized businesses to better understand how employees currently feel about work, communication styles, and their employers. In this report, we uncover key findings from our human connections survey and share tips on how to build stronger connections today.

Human connection is a need, not just a want

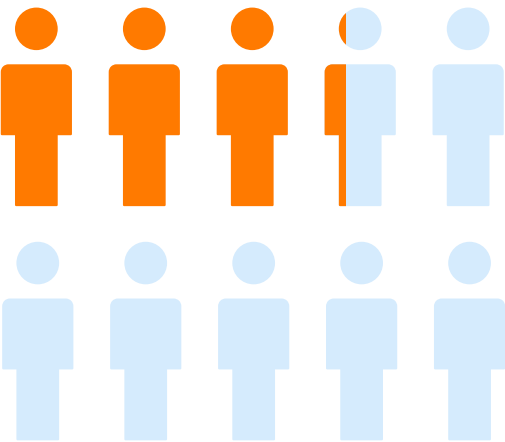


say working hybrid or remotely
during COVID has made them feel
more lonely and isolated at work

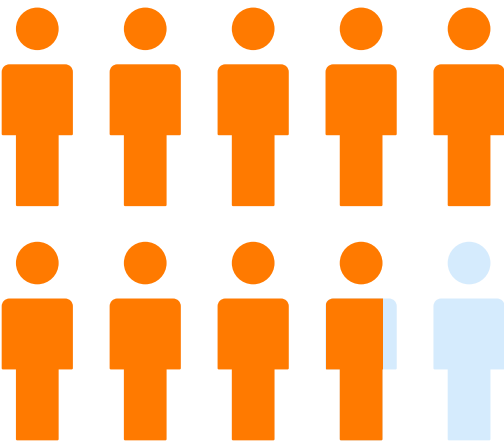
Feelings of isolation or loneliness at work have an impact:



33% want to connect more with people at work



88% say they perform better when they get along with their colleagues



Key takeaways



Put your people first

With the sudden shift to remote work due to COVID-19, it's no surprise that people are feeling lonelier at work. With that in mind, put your team first and explore ways to enable better connections in your workplace. Get creative with virtual team bonding events like a lunch pizza party, museum tour, or game night.



Connect in new ways

Encourage your teams to care for themselves by caring for others. Arrange volunteer opportunities for your workers. Angela Thoreson, a clinical social worker with the Mayo Clinic¹, notes that three main benefits of volunteering are:

- Improving physical and mental health
- Providing a sense of purpose and teaching valuable skills
- Nurturing new and existing relationships



Spread appreciation

Show your appreciation for your team with added perks like an extra vacation day or a hosted team lunch with a gift card for a delivery service. Set up an internal communication channel that spotlights team successes and individual stories to help your teams build strong connections with people they might not have ever met in person.

1. [Helping people, changing lives: 3 health benefits of volunteering.](#)
[Mayo Clinic Health System](#)



Employers have done a good job strengthening employee trust

67% say supervisors were supportive of their needs during the pandemic

82% have belief in employers to make work environments as safe as possible to reduce the risk of contracting COVID

83% say their employer considers their personal physical health when making return to work plans

67% are “very confident” or “confident” in their employer’s plan for a post-COVID return to work

Key takeaways



Keep employees in the loop

Let workers know what steps you're taking to ensure their physical and mental safety as you make plans for at least a partial return to the office.



Communicate personally

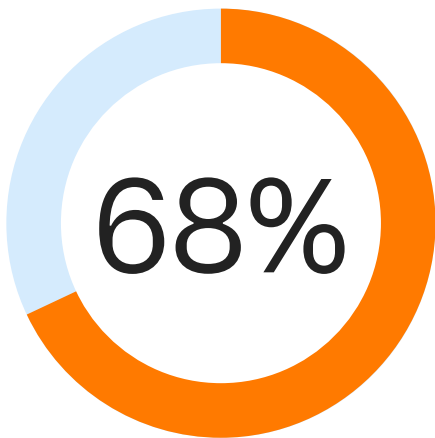
Have honest conversations with each of your employees, and take into consideration their fears or concerns about returning to a shared office environment. Where possible, allow employees to choose their preferred work model.



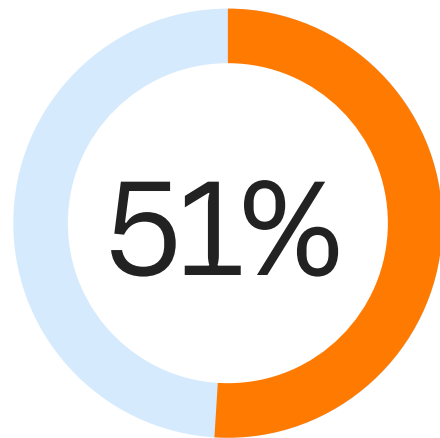
Rethink your workday schedule

Consider staggering weeks in office and at home among team members. If you intend to offer a hybrid work model permanently, invest in new tools to facilitate your new normal work environment.

Communications tools are key to building human connections




say they rely “much more” or “somewhat more”
on business communications and collaboration
tools since COVID




say business communications and collaboration
tools have “greatly improved” or “somewhat
improved” communication





Daniel Silva
📞 00:03





76%

believe colleagues that use voice communication are more connected to each other

43%

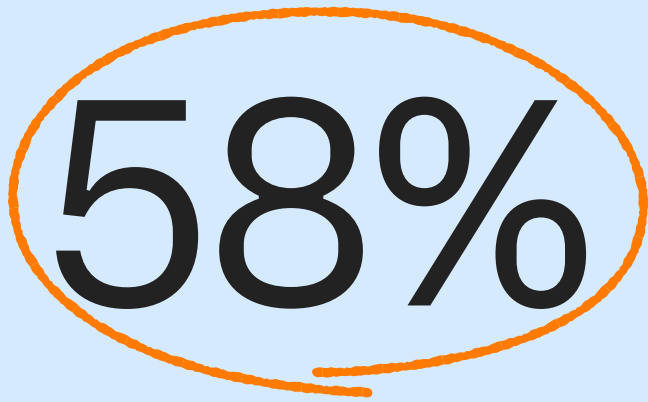
believe voice communication is the best communication mode to address loneliness at work

68%

say yes to “connecting online through voice or video calls is as good as in-person for work-related tasks”

69%

believe people that make phone or video calls have better personal relationships with coworkers



58%

believe colleagues that rely on team messaging are better communicators



57%

say voice calls through an app (like [RingCentral](#)), team messaging, video calls, and phone calls are the best ways to communicate to provide a way for multiple people to connect at the same time

79%

currently use more than one communications and collaboration tool, and

50%

would rather use just one tool

83%

agree having access to a messaging platform, voice calling, and video meetings all in one app is ideal

Key takeaways



Double down on a key staple: voice communication

It's clear voice communication is here to stay. Whether your team is working remotely, in the office, or both, encourage them to use voice communication more—that means picking up the phone instead of sending another email. Find a complete phone system (with global calling, SMS, fax, voicemail, and immersive video meetings) that's accessible on a single app for mobile, desktop, and tablet.



Get a single vendor for all your communications needs

Given 83% of workers want an all-in-one communications app, simplify your team's workstreams and keep an eye out for one vendor that can serve all your communications needs. Not only will you increase return on investment (ROI) and reduce total cost of ownership (TCO) by bundling phone calls, video conferencing, fax, SMS, chat, and contact center together, but you'll also reduce your paperwork stack with just one bill. One vendor, one tool, one bill—sounds nice, doesn't it? Think about how much money and time you'll save to focus on what matters to you most: your business. And the best part of having one vendor is you'll get a dedicated account manager to ensure you're getting the most out of your service.



Prioritize mobility

Choose a communications tool built for anywhere and anytime mobility. An all-in-one communications app built for mobility keeps you connected to employees, vendors, and customers—no matter where you are. Think of a world where you can easily switch between devices (phone, tablet, or laptop) on the go and manage your business from anywhere. And employees will be able to do the same: stay productive and work from anywhere. Imagine—no more being tethered to a desk. Now, that's freedom.

The future of work is wherever you are

75%

believe the freedom to work from anywhere
is the norm for all relevant industries

53%

prefer working from home vs the office

72%

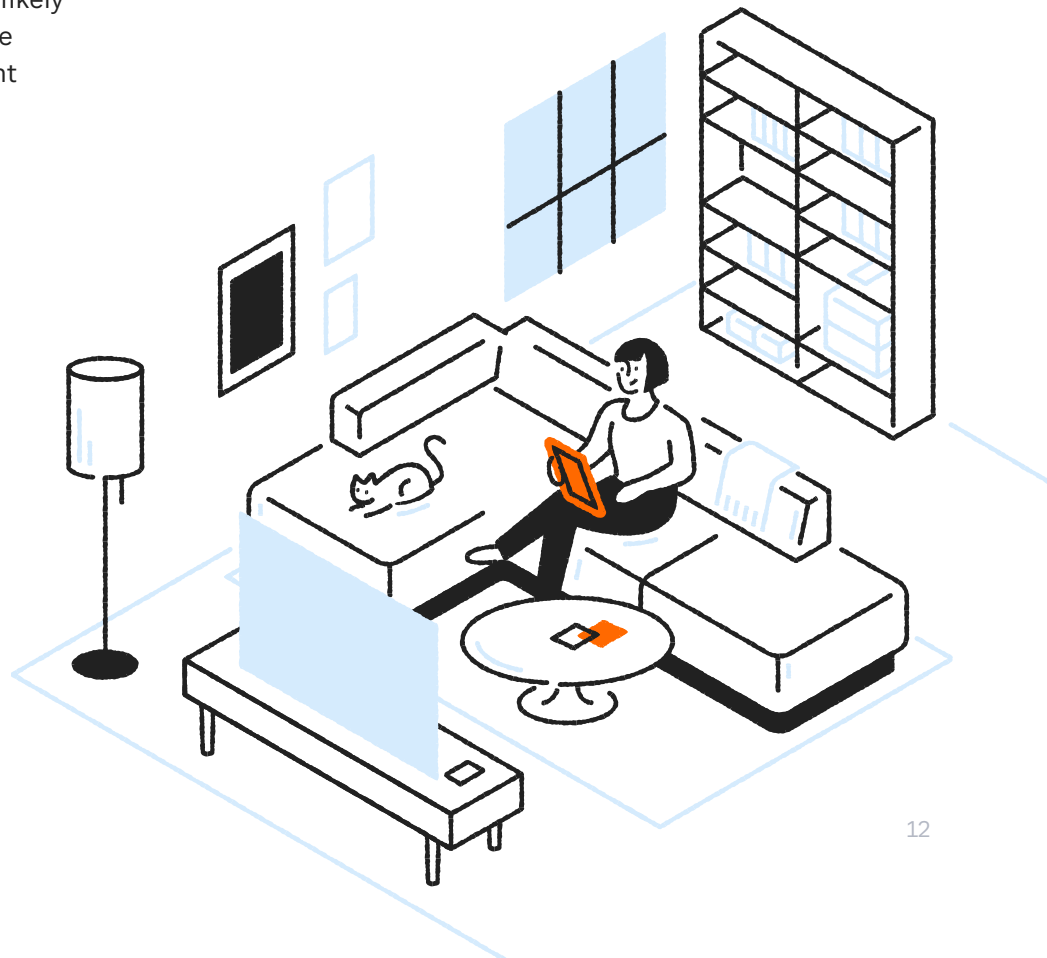
believe video conferencing will replace
in-person meetings

63%

believe they can build personal relationships with
coworkers without ever physically meeting them

68%

are “more likely” or “somewhat more likely”
to consider an employer with a remote
working model due to the Delta variant



Key takeaways



Embrace the future of work

Set up your business to fully support remote and hybrid work models with a flexible communications platform that evolves with your business; one that makes it possible to scale phone lines, users, and devices up or down in a matter of clicks. And don't forget to look for an open platform that easily integrates with your favorite apps like Salesforce, Microsoft 365, and Google Cloud to simplify workflows for everyone—end the tedium of jumping between multiple screens each day.



Don't make business decisions in the dark anymore

Turn to advanced analytics to build confidence in your business decisions. Find clever ways to increase productivity across your organization, whether it's using data insights to lift sales or allowing employees to use business phone numbers on their own cell phones.



Bulletproof your business

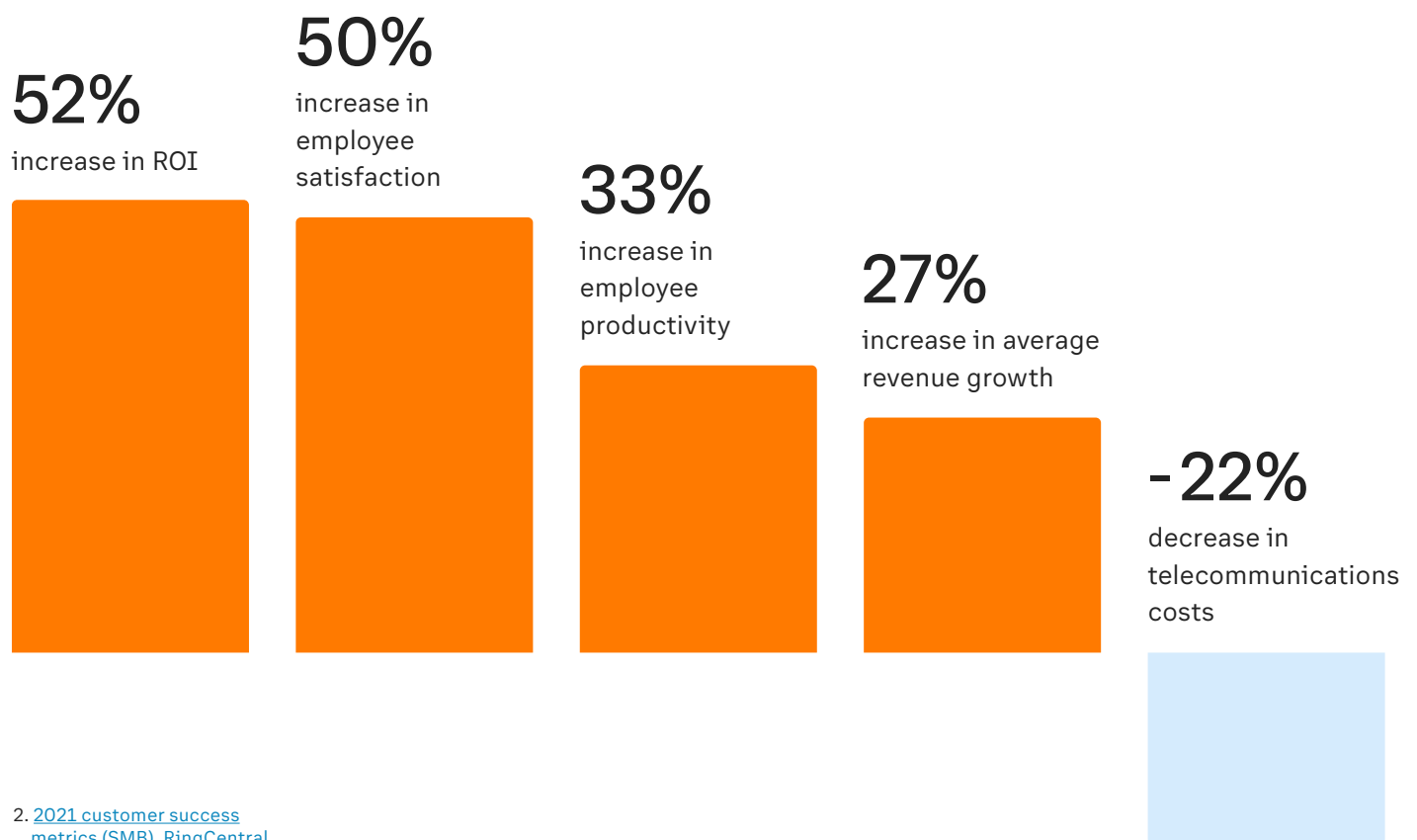
Protect your business with real reliability you can trust. For example, look for a communications tool with 99.999% uptime that keeps you connected during outages and disasters. Ditch those dropped calls once and for all. Look for a solution already trusted by thousands of small businesses to deliver 24/7 support by phone, chat, or email. Most importantly, look for a solution that provides enterprise-grade security to protect your data and all your communications against fraud and abuse.

Bridge the disconnect with RingCentral

Despite the urgent need for communications tools that can bridge connections in the new world of work, 17% of workers say that their organization still doesn't use digital communications and collaboration tools today. If your business is part of that 17%, it's not too late to go digital.

Now is the time to get a unified communications platform that puts the power of human connection in your hands.

RingCentral helps small to mid-sized businesses reach new heights and strengthen human connection at the same time. On average, businesses that partner with RingCentral for their communications and collaboration needs see the following:²



2. [2021 customer success metrics \(SMB\), RingCentral](#)

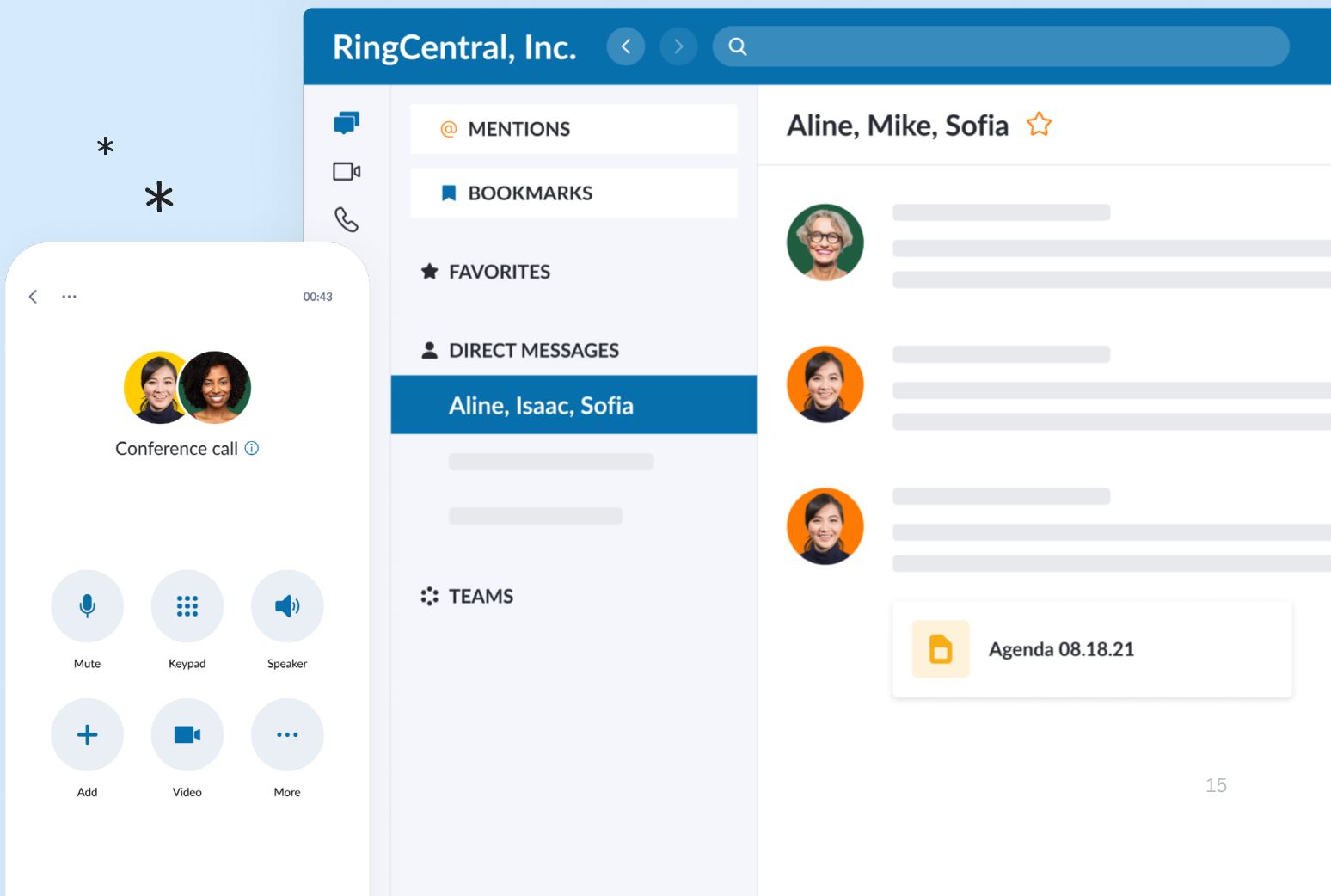
With RingCentral MVP™, you'll power your business with an award-winning unified communications platform that's easy to use and can grow with your business.

Ditch the extra headaches that come with multiple vendors and turn to RingCentral for phone, video, messaging, and much more in a single app.

Not only will you be able to work from anywhere, but it can connect with all your favorite business apps and systems—tap into 250+ integrations in the [RingCentral App Gallery](#) and open APIs through the [RingCentral developer portal](#) to customize your workflows.

RingCentral grows right along with you so that you're never alone. Why not say hello to growing your business right now?

Learn more about RingCentral MVP by visiting ringcentral.com/office/how-it-works.



Methodology



RingCentral and Ipsos surveyed the following:

- 2,000 Americans, British, French, and Australians aged 21–65
- 1,000 Germans aged 21–65

Characteristics of survey respondents:

- Small and mid-sized businesses with 1–399 employees
- Employed full-time or employed part-time and worked two jobs before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Audience includes business decision makers, non-business decision makers, frontline workers, and information workers

For more information, please contact a sales representative. Visit ringcentral.com or call 855-774-2510.

RingCentral, Inc. (NYSE: RNG) is a leading provider of business cloud communications and contact center solutions based on its powerful Message Video Phone™ (MVP™) global platform. More flexible and cost effective than legacy on-premises PBX and video conferencing systems that it replaces, RingCentral empowers modern mobile and distributed workforces to communicate, collaborate, and connect via any mode, any device, and any location. RingCentral offers three key products in its portfolio including RingCentral MVP™, a unified communications as a service (UCaaS) platform including team messaging, video meetings, and a cloud phone system; RingCentral Video®, the company's video meetings solution with team messaging that enables Smart Video Meetings™; and RingCentral cloud Contact Center solutions. RingCentral's open platform integrates with leading third-party business applications and enables customers to easily customize business workflows. RingCentral is headquartered in Belmont, California, and has offices around the world.

RingCentral

RingCentral, Inc. 20 Davis Drive, Belmont, CA 94002. ringcentral.com

© 2022 RingCentral, Inc. All rights reserved. RingCentral and the RingCentral logo are registered trademarks of RingCentral, Inc. Other third-party marks and logos displayed in this document are the trademarks of their respective owners.