

# A First Look at the Meeting Owl<sup>®</sup> 3

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**OWL LABS**

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## A New Meeting Owl

Owl Labs manufactures market-leading center-of-room cameras for hybrid video meetings. The initial Meeting Owl proved that a center-of-room perspective is powerful whenever there's in-room conversation. Building on the approach, Owl Labs introduced the Meeting Owl Pro to enhance performance and expand the capabilities of the device. Among these expanded capabilities was the industry's first over-the-air video meshing, known as Owl Connect. Owl Labs has been expanding the portfolio to include both a Whiteboard Owl for digital capture of analog whiteboards and a Meeting HQ device for enterprise room systems.

As an organization that continuously pushes the limits of innovation, Owl Labs is now introducing the Meeting Owl® 3 as the next generation of Meeting Owl. The Meeting Owl 3 leverages Owl Labs' latest proprietary AI-powered Owl Intelligence System™ featuring improved speaker transitions, improved zoom and accuracy for active speaker tracking, and better recognition of quiet speakers, or those wearing masks. To extend active speaker pickup, the Meeting Owl 3 now features an optional expansion microphone that increases the audio range from 18ft to 26ft in the direction of the microphone. The latest Meeting Owl also includes a USB-C cable for easy connectivity within bring-your-own-device (BYOD) environments.

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## The Meeting Owl® 3

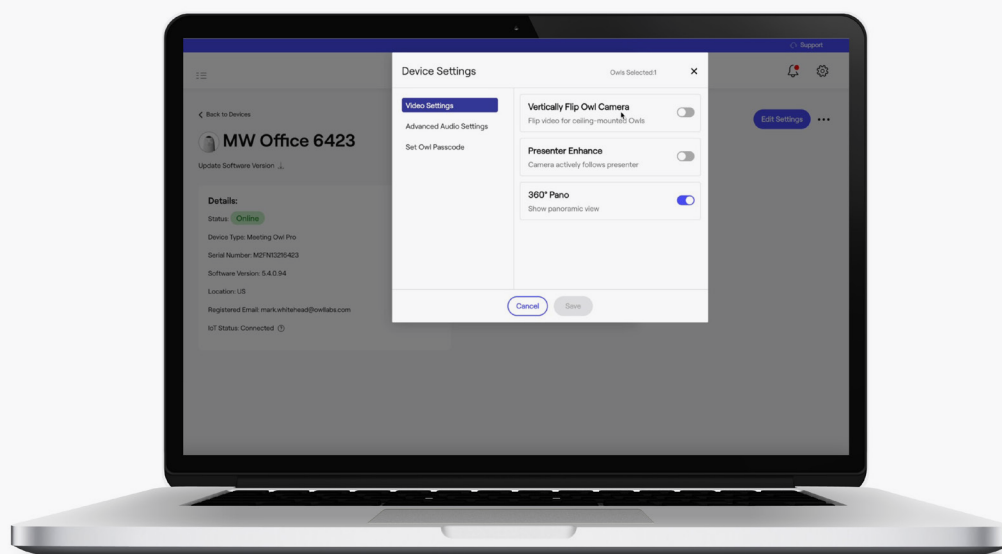
As Wainhouse explored in [our recent evaluation of the Meeting Owl Pro](#), the capabilities of the device already rank among the top performers in the industry, with the shortest time to install and best framing and accuracy scores — so why introduce a new version? The Meeting Owl 3 includes critical ease-of-use updates such as the switch to USB-C connectivity, which has quickly become the standard across personal devices. In addition, the introduction of the Expansion Mic enables clear audio from participants who may be farther from the device. These hardware changes will prove to be essential for continued growth of the Meeting Owl product portfolio in the coming months and years.

The Meeting Owl 3 also features improvements within the software leveraged for in-meeting AI. The proprietary Owl Intelligence System drives the camera to enable an immersive hybrid experience. Enhancements to this software frame and track active speakers more quickly, and



with more consistency to the rate of zoom. These improvements translate to a more predictable experience for the in-room speaker while concurrently providing less of a “whiplash” effect when multiple speakers are participating within the meeting room.

The management software has similarly been updated for this new Meeting Owl, making it easier for IT managers to deploy and manage a fleet of Owls. Management updates aren't only for IT managers, as the desktop app also receives expanded functionality, working to create parity with the mobile app for device control. While the management updates are ancillary to the Meeting Owl 3, they serve a critical purpose in the end-to-end experience of both end users and IT managers alike.







## The Challenges of Today

While the enhancements found in the Meeting Owl 3 make it easier to deploy and use across meeting rooms of all sizes, it's the feeling of being immersed in the conversation instead of a fly on the wall that improves remote participants' experience. In a world where regional health concerns are driving workplace policies, it's nearly impossible to create a one-size-fits-all approach for in-office work. This means the majority of meetings will be hybrid moving forward.

The impact of this shift to perpetual hybrid work will manifest in the technology found in our meeting spaces and workstations. In assessing what's needed to enable a perpetual hybrid workflow, organizations will likely gravitate to devices tailored to enhance eye-contact and in-meeting experiences. To accomplish this, many organizations will look to alternative placements for camera technology, including the center of the table. By aligning the cameras in the room to the types of meetings taking place, the remote participants are given a virtual seat at the table, and brought into the meeting in a more immersive way. The result is a

“With over 50% of respondents expecting a hybrid work environment through the end of 2022, the need for hybrid meeting technology has never been greater.”

– Steve Vonder Haar, Sr. Analyst, Wainhouse  
Wainhouse's recent survey of 2,000+ Executives



more engaging meeting experience for remote participants, in addition to less fatigue throughout the call. This is especially true whenever there's a presentation taking place within the meeting room, as traditional front-of-room devices fail to capture the movement or face of the presenter as they speak to in-room participants.

Adding to the complexity of outfitting meeting spaces with immersive hybrid-enabled devices is the fragmentation of meeting room design. As meeting rooms become tailored to the meeting workflows taking place, room designs are becoming less cookie-cutter. This adds a challenge for IT decision makers, as the management of in-room devices is critical to adoption across the enterprise. If each room features a different camera, different AI experience, and a different meeting experience, it increases the challenges around training colleagues and the complexity of managing the fleet.

Taking the complexity and making it simple is where the Meeting Owl 3 rises to the top of the pack. By providing a single device that addresses all types of room designs and AI

functionality that optimizes to either presentations or in-room meetings, the latest Meeting Owl is well suited for the enterprise. IT managers will enjoy the ease of installation and registration, and the users benefit from a consumer-grade software experience on par with that of Apple or Samsung, making adoption and use simple.

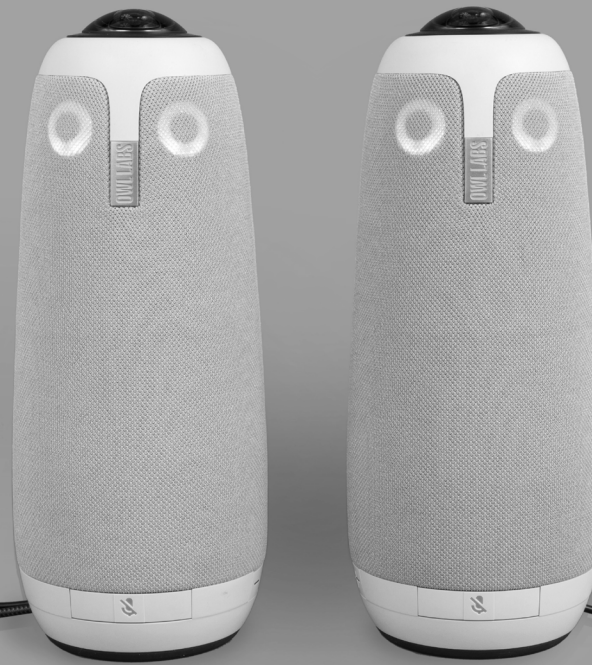
When a meeting room is too large for a single Meeting Owl, the proprietary Owl Connect functionality allows for additional units to be wirelessly connected for expanded audio and video pickup. This approach to scale is straightforward and simple for both IT managers and users alike. Under this expanded solution, two Meeting Owls work together to deliver the best on-axis facial capture of in-room speakers without changing the underlying AI experience. The result is a better far-end view of in-room movement, while retaining the in-room tracking experience that participants are familiar with. The Meeting Owl 3 is one of the few devices that offers the same AI experience across BYOD rooms, room-based systems, and scaled solutions for larger spaces, making it an easy choice for IT decision makers.



**When using the Meeting Owl 3, remote viewers see a 360-degree view of the room and up to 3 active speakers.**



## Stand Out with the Meeting Owl 3



As we've discussed, the latest Meeting Owl has many differentiators that set it apart from its predecessor and other devices in the market. Some of the most crucial points of differentiation revolve around the next-generation proprietary Owl Intelligence System, which underpins every Meeting Owl experience. The reason why this latest software is so important comes down to the consistency that the experience provides both in-room and for remote meeting participants. Through auto-focus, auto-zoom, and sound equalization, the Meeting Owl 3 ensures that meeting participants are seen and heard regardless of location.

Combine the next-generation Owl Intelligence System with a second Meeting Owl through Owl Connect to achieve the ultimate scale for larger rooms. In doing so, the experience that colleagues become accustomed to in a BYOD room is brought into IT-managed rooms, with no discernible changes for the meeting participants. The enhanced capabilities of Owl Connect ensure that speakers are captured on-axis and from the best perspective within the room, as Wainhouse discovered when evaluating this functionality. Alternatively, the Meeting Owl 3 has an Expansion Mic for

longer tables, or audio-challenged spaces, ensuring that participants are seen and heard regardless of the surroundings.

The most unique aspect of the Meeting Owl portfolio remains consistent across all camera offerings: the 360-degree center-of-room positioning. All Meeting Owls are designed to capture participants from the center of the conversation instead of from the wall, enabling more natural interactions that immerse remote participants in the meeting.







## Wainhouse's Conclusion on the Meeting Owl 3

Based on Wainhouse's review of the Meeting Owl 3, in addition to our recent evaluation of the Meeting Owl Pro, it's clear that the next-generation Meeting Owl is well positioned to solve the challenges of hybrid work environments. Through consistency of experience and ease of use, the Meeting Owl 3 should address the toughest challenges of IT managers by reducing the learning curve of users while concurrently simplifying the management of the fleet. Through powerful and accurate AI, the next-generation Owl Intelligence System addresses the needs of immersive and dynamic video in a consistent manner. The resulting experience is a more natural and immersive meeting, with a device that users gravitate towards regardless of room type or size, making it an easy choice for the enterprise.



## ABOUT OWL LABS

Owl Labs is the first company to build AI-powered, 360-degree video conferencing solutions for hybrid organizations. Its suite of products makes meetings more inclusive and collaborative by leveling the playing field between remote and in-room participants. The company's flagship product, the Meeting Owl® 3, is the first WiFi-enabled 360-degree camera, microphone, and speaker that automatically zooms in on whomever's speaking. Owl Labs has raised \$22 million in funding and is based in Boston, with remote and hybrid employees all over the world. To learn more, visit [OwlLabs.com](https://OwlLabs.com).

## ABOUT WAINHOUSE RESEARCH

[Wainhouse Research](#) provides strategic guidance and insight on products and services for collaboration and conferencing applications within Unified Communications. Our global client base includes established and new technology suppliers and service providers, and enterprise users of voice, video, streaming, and web collaboration solutions. The company provides market research and consulting, produces conferences on technology trends and customer experiences, publishes a free weekly newsletter, and speaks at client and industry events.

## ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS

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