

What's Ahead for Your Digital Board? Predictions for the Coming Year

What changes can you and your board expect?

By *Jeb Banner*

The COVID-19 pandemic transformed the adoption of board-management software from a slow, many-years-long procedure to an overnight process (boardable.com). Many organizations implemented these digital solutions as their main way to communicate, collaborate, and keep things moving during the pandemic.

Now, as a new year begins, what can we expect? Here are three predictions:

Boards will embrace hybrid approaches.

Board members all have their own comfort levels when it comes to meetings and whether they prefer in-person or virtual attendance. Organizations will accommodate these preferences with hybrid solutions as alternatives to traditional in-person requirements.

As organizations adjust to a hybrid mix, meeting approaches and board-management software will help ensure that every

person feels like an active participant. When one or two team members were remote, their participation may have inadvertently gone unnoticed. Now, as boards accommodate both in-person and virtual meetings, they'll need to adapt their meetings to engage everybody.

We'll see many technology solutions implemented to help organizations embrace this hybrid approach. For example, meetings will likely require every member to appear on screen, even if some of them are meeting in person. This will allow for collaboration and engagement without remote attendees feeling excluded from discussions.

New intentional tools will arise.

Constant remote work has been wearing people out. As organizations and people adjust, we'll see new tools to encourage better virtual communication and collaboration. These solutions will more intentionally gather feedback from volunteers, employees, and board members to truly





understand what's happening in an organization and how to change procedures to encourage camaraderie.

Important practices like whiteboarding ideas and discussing next steps require human interaction. However, remote operations have hampered the human aspect needed for great collaboration. In response, organizations will further invest in board-management software to provide an all-in-one solution for collaborating while remote.

For example, a two-screen approach to meetings could provide a one-stop-shop for virtual and in-person attendees: Remote participants can be on one screen, while the other screen shows the agenda or highlights someone's presentation. Everyone gets the most updated information while at the same time being involved in discussions.

Board member opportunities will expand.

Remote meetings have lowered the geographic barriers that once prevented distant members from joining organizations they love. Board opportunities once out of reach to far-flung individuals are limited no longer. This means boards of directors can – and should – reach untapped populations when recruiting new board members.

Alongside more opportunities for others to serve, those already involved can expand their board service capacity, too. Participating on a board was traditionally a significant time commitment, due in part to meeting commute time and transitioning from board duties to work duties. With remote work, we'll see more people expanding their service capabilities because they can spend their valuable time engaged with the duties at hand rather than driving to and from a meeting place.

Overall, boards will further adapt their digital solutions and remote approaches to accommodate their people's needs.

This new year will bring new practices, board-management software, and tools to encourage these changes and help boards communicate, collaborate, and keep operations moving forward. 

Jeb Banner is CEO and co-founder of Boardable (boardable.com), a board-management software company serving nonprofits around the world. Boardable is an online board-management portal that centralizes communication, document storage, meeting planning, and everything involved with running a board of directors. Founded in 2016 by nonprofit leaders and founders, Boardable has a mission to improve board engagement for nonprofits.

Keep Your Board Engaged & Connected

Be sure your board is informed, involved, and productive. See articles such as these at NonprofitWorld.org:

Twelve Ways to Liven Up Your Board Meetings – And Your Board (Vol. 36, No. 3)

Connecting through the Camera & Keyboard (Vol. 38, No. 3)

Build a Team, Not Just a Board (Vol. 31, No. 3)

Improving Board Meetings: Three Steps (Vol. 24, No. 6)

From Bored to Blazing: Fire Up Your Board (Vol. 37, No. 3)

Why Feedback Is the Key to Your Success (Vol. 35, No. 3)

Using Board Portals to Keep Directors Connected (Vol. 29, No. 3)

Make Your Meetings Productive (Vol. 25, No. 1)

How to Create a Strong Board-CEO Partnership (Vol. 27, No. 1)