



The changing face of meetings, from virtual to in-person.

What to expect?



As Singapore's leading meeting services provider that conducts general meetings for almost 47% of SGX-listed companies, we have harnessed our experience and collected data on meeting proceedings covering the April-May season for 2022 and 2023. These are some key insights and takeaways.

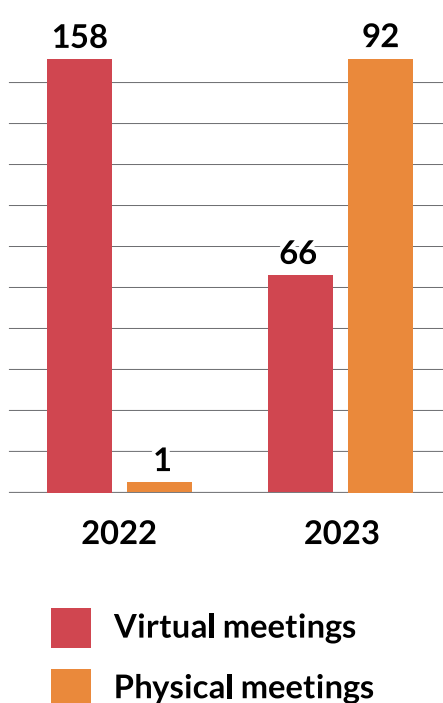
A WEALTH OF MEETING MODES

In-person meetings have returned after three years of virtual interactions. This is largely due to COVID-19 restrictions lifting, regulation changes and organisations' desire to connect with shareholders in person. Shareholders have also called for face-to-face meetings¹.

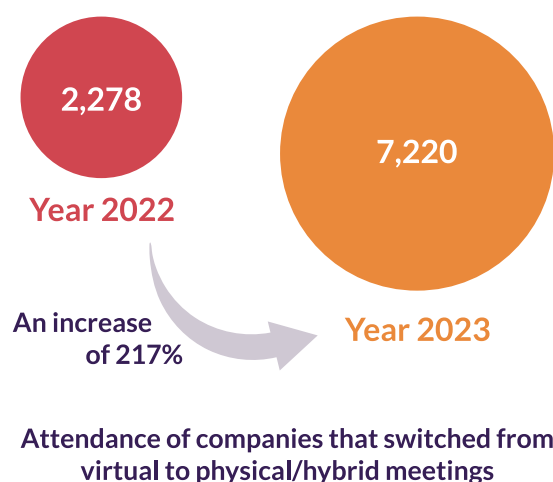
Virtual and hybrid meetings, however, are set to stay because of its inclusive format for overseas shareholders and board members, lingering concerns over the pandemic and the increasing convenience of technology.

The number of physical meetings increased from just 1 in 2022 to 92 in 2023 (A difference of 9,100%)

The number of virtual meetings dropped from 158 in 2022 to 66 in 2023 (A difference of 58%)



GREATER ATTENDANCE



A surge in attendance numbers has accompanied the return of physical meetings, with shareholders seeking face-to-face engagements with the Board and reconnecting with each other. It could be attributed to those who are not tech-savvy and prefer attending meetings in person, where they can engage more actively through voting and live Q&As.

MORE VOTING OPTIONS AT PHYSICAL AND HYBRID MEETINGS

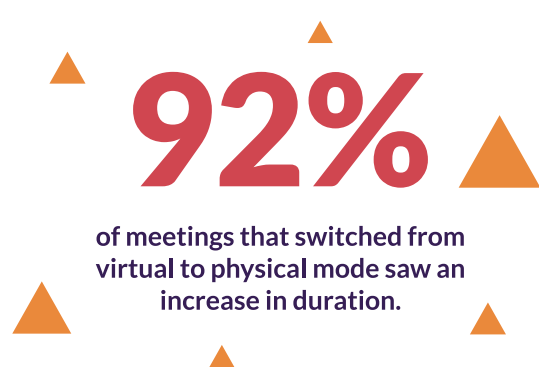
While voting can be done only electronically at virtual meetings, a physical format gives companies greater flexibility with both paper and electronic polls via provided handsets or BYOD (Bring Your Own Device). Conducting electronic polls with BYOD was not as favoured, as not all shareholders are tech-savvy and additional assistance could be required.

BYOD also pose some challenges, with devices sometimes incompatible or even outdated. Problems such as low battery power or weak WiFi signal could also cause hiccups during voting. Shareholder demographics should be a key consideration for companies to ensure maximum engagement at meetings.



For companies that conducted electronic polling at physical and hybrid meetings, 91% opted to use handsets.

LONGER MEETINGS IN-PERSON



With the return of physical meetings, in-person Q&As and paper polling are back too. This extends meeting durations as more questions are fielded from shareholders and longer time is required to count votes for paper polling. These, as well as logistical requirements, are some key considerations when companies are evaluating whether to conduct physical or hybrid meetings.

Technology partner



Notes

- (1) <https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/opinion-features/physical-general-meetings-resume-default-listed-companies>
- (2) All data was collated from meetings during the April - May Meeting Seasons in 2022 and 2023 by the same companies



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