



ScreenMeet

Cobrowsing vs Screen Sharing: The Differences and How To Choose What's Right for You and Your Customer

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ScreenMeet specializes in providing interactive tools for organizations to provide better support for their customers. Our products include screen sharing, cobrowsing, and device takeover technologies. Our goal is to deliver these products using a standard web browser, reducing or eliminating the need for the client to download additional software onto their computer or mobile device.

We are often asked to define the difference between screen sharing and cobrowsing. After all, the effect appears similar: An agent can view a client's screen and help them resolve their technical issues.

However, there are significant differences between the two services. In this blog, we will cover some of the uses for each product and discuss which product is best suited for a particular job.

What Is Screen Sharing, and What Is It Used For?

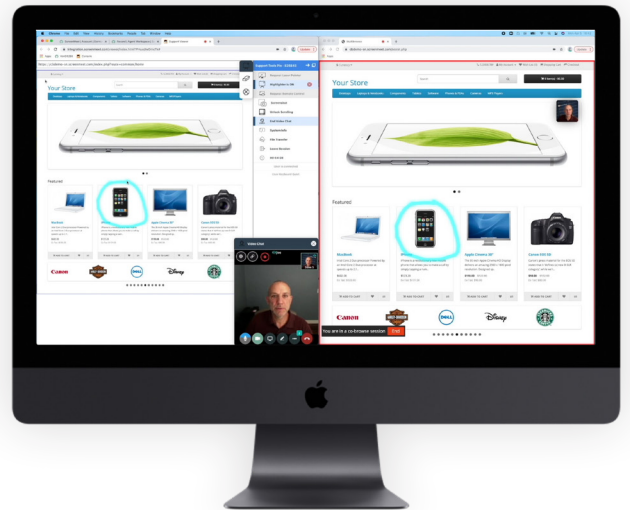
Screen sharing is the ability for a client to share their screen with a remote agent, allowing the agent to view the client's entire screen. Often used in [Help Desk](#), [eCommerce](#) or Support Desk applications, this allows the agent to view areas of confusion and advise on next steps for the client to take.

ScreenMeet Live is a screen sharing product that allows an agent to view a client's entire screen and provide two-way audio and video interaction between the agent and the client. All transaction data is stored for later reference.

One aspect of screen sharing is that the agent sees all information on the client's screen, including any personally identifiable information (PII) such as social security numbers, credit card information, date of birth, etc. Masking specific fields from being shown to the agent is generally not included in screen sharing products.

Instead, the typical use case for a screen sharing solution is for the agent to help the client configure or navigate problem areas of configuration, walking through how to locate a product online where PII is not going to be required, or software setup and use.

For example, screen sharing is often used for [internal IT Support](#) and even to onboard remote employees, helping them configure their company-issued devices.



Cobrowsing vs Screen Sharing

Another use for screen sharing technology is for software companies to support users of their products. When users call the Help Desk requesting assistance, screen sharing allows the agent to view the user's actions when using the software. In this scenario, the agent can assist the client, for example, by advising the client on how to use the software or how to set up the software configuration properly.

What is Cobrowsing, and When Do You Use It?

Cobrowsing is specifically sharing the content of the website the client is viewing. Here, the cobrowsing software will only stream information from a specific website.

ScreenMeet CoBrowse is a product with cobrowsing capabilities along with two-way audio and video between the agent and the client.

Unlike screen sharing technologies, cobrowsing offers the capability to mask personally identifiable information (PII) from view by the agent, whether that's an input field or a field already containing data. This is determined by code added to the website, meaning the client is not required to take any action to secure their personal data.

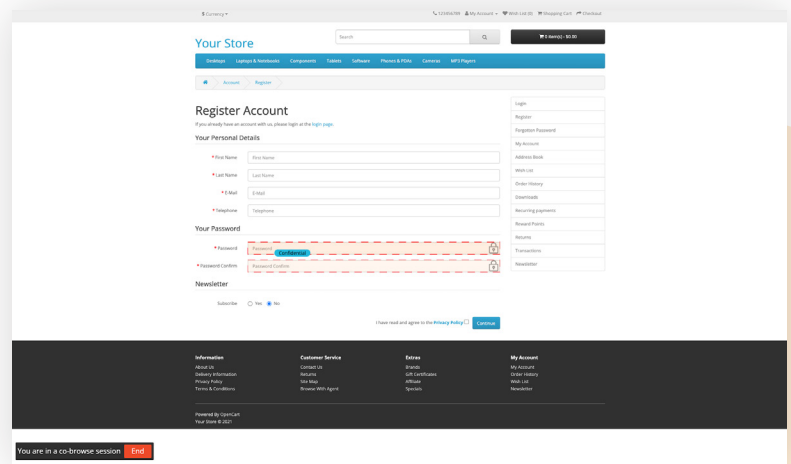
Generally implemented by Enterprise organizations, cobrowsing is used to support a particular website. Typically, the use case involves a client that requires assistance on a website or web portal and has gotten confused or lost in the site and needs assistance navigating to their desired location.

One use for cobrowsing is for companies to support users of their eCommerce websites. If users have problems locating the items they want to view or purchase, an agent can help them navigate to the desired screen or selection, and then walk the client through the purchasing process where PII would need to be masked.

Cobrowsing is also a proven solution in the financial and insurance sector where client privacy and masking PII is essential. Agents can assist clients submitting applications, questions about their account, and even filing taxes.

How To Choose Between Cobrowsing and Screen Sharing

Companies should choose the right product for the right use case. The main reason to use cobrowsing technology is to prevent the agent from viewing information that can occur in a screen sharing session, such as mistakenly showing the wrong window or application.



Cobrowsing vs Screen Sharing

Cobrowsing is specifically targeted to support web pages and only those websites that need to be supported. Any time a company has a customer-facing website where the customers might need support or have questions about site navigation, these would be candidates for cobrowsing. Examples include helping somebody trying to purchase a product on your retail website or applying for financial or tax preparation help.

Cobrowsing is ideally suited for Enterprise organizations that have clear guidelines that agents should only be able to see pages from the company's website. If the customer navigates away from that website or if a message from another application should appear on the customer's screen, the agent would be prevented from seeing them.

Since the company owns the website, they can also mask sensitive information from the agent's view, such as social security numbers, credit card details and account information.

If hiding sensitive client information is not a requirement, or if allowing the agent to view all open applications on the customer's screen is important, then a simple screen sharing application is all that is needed. In addition, screen-sharing is a much simpler deployment and avoids the need for the company to involve their web development team. Agents only need to provide a link to the customer, and both the agent and the customer can join a screen sharing session.

For example, suppose an agent is helping a customer navigate the company's retail site. If the customer wants to review a product data sheet pdf with the agent, the agent would not be able to view the pdf using cobrowse but would using screen sharing.

There is also a question of resources. If the company decides on a cobrowsing solution over a screen sharing solution, it will need to have the resources required to make the changes to the website to accommodate the cobrowsing solution.

Conclusion

There is little difference from the customer's perspective between the two service offerings. ScreenMeet screen sharing and cobrowsing technologies do not require the customer to download external software. Rather, the driver for selecting the appropriate technology depends on the use case for the business providing the help desk agent.

Some companies choose to start with a screen-sharing solution first to verify that the solution will solve the business problem for them, allowing both the agents and the customer to get used to the technology before committing to a full cobrowsing solution.

Ultimately, the choice between cobrowsing and screen sharing comes down to whether it is important to hide PII from your help desk agents. The essential questions are: What data is being entered or shown on the screen? Who can see this data? Where is this data being stored? and Should my customer be protected from sharing that data with an agent?

If hiding the information is important, you should consider using a cobrowsing solution. If not, you can use a more straightforward screen sharing solution.



ScreenMeet

Next Steps

To learn more about ScreenMeet CoBrowse and Live for screen sharing, please [visit our website](#), and contact us for a customized [product demonstration](#).

About ScreenMeet

ScreenMeet delivers better real-time online experiences, with easy, secure, and reliable voice and video calls, chat, cobrowsing, and remote support. ScreenMeet customers around the world use it to drive best-in-class customer, employee, remote work, and remote support experiences. Founded in 2016 by cloud, online meeting, and customer support veterans to build solutions to support better real-time online experiences, ScreenMeet delivers those customer, employee, and remote-support experiences for hundreds of customers worldwide.