

Corporate Conferencing

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INTRODUCTION

Today's corporate need for manpower is growing—the number of remote relationships, mobile workers, and virtual teams. The efficiency and effectiveness of manpower is real success of the corporation, which largely depends on collaborative work. The difficulty faced by the organization is in the scheduling and execution of meetings, conferences, and other events.

The work becomes easier and simpler by using Corporate Conferencing (CC) today. Corporate Conferencing is used in the delivery, control, and execution of scheduling of work/event effectively. It optimizes conferencing services quality and costs by increasing an organization's flexibility to deliver services that suit the end user/customer needs. It removes obstacles between organization and virtual teams. It keeps track of mobile workers by improving accessibility of conferencing technologies. It enhances facilities and organizations' capabilities by providing corporate conferencing. It reduces capital cost of administration. It improves utilization and conferencing space and resources like 3Ps (People, Process, and Problem).

BACKGROUND

As more and more organizations compete globally and/or rely on suppliers throughout the world, the business need for enhanced communications capabilities and higher availability mounts steadily. The third major driving force for the movement to interactive corporate communications is the need for additional and more frequent collaboration. There cannot be a better two-way communication system for a group of users across a small geography (Saraogi, 2003). Many organizations are finding that collaborating using interactive devices, along with document sharing, streamlines their business activities by de-

creasing time to market and by increasing productivity. Meanwhile, reductions in business travel since the tragedies of September 11, 2001, are placing more demands on corporate conferencing to manage 3Ps. If education is conceived as a way of changing students, then educators should accept that they cannot be culturally benign, but invariably promote certain ways of being over others (Christopher, 2001).

Based on data of Wainhouse Research, it determined that almost two-thirds (64%) of business travelers considered access to audio, video, and Web conferencing technologies to be important to them in a post-work environment. The World Wide Web, fax, video, and e-mail enable the quick dissemination of information and immediate communication worldwide. The inclusion of women will require a concerted effort to overcome the gender bias and stereotypes that have haunted those wanting to become involved in aspects of the field on a managerial level, such as conferencing.

Certainly, teaching in an online environment is influenced by the absence of the non-verbal communication that occurs in the face-to-face settings of conventional education, and the reduction in the amount of paralinguistic information transmitted, as compared to some other modes of distance education such as video or audio teleconferencing (Terry, 2001). To attend meetings personally is very important for the effective performance of business today. But attending in person is not always possible. There are several reasons for this, most of which are:

1. **Time:** To travel long distance and attend meeting is very difficult.
2. **Cost:** The cost of the travel for attending meeting personally.
3. **Workload:** Difficult to attend because of some other work/duty.
4. **Stress:** Too much stress on employees/staff.
5. **Decision:** Too much delay in decision making.

METHODS OF CONFERENCING

To overcome these problems, we can better choose one of the methods of corporate conferencing. These methods are as follows:

Video Conferencing

It delivers and provides live session in true fashion in the world. Video conferencing allows a face-to-face meeting to take place between two or more geographical locations simultaneously. This is the advantage over an audio conference or normal telephone call. In this method, we can observe performance as well as reaction of people. It is possible to take decision in time. It also defines to engage communication and transmission between two or more persons/parties in different geographical locations via video and audio through a private network or Internet. It allows face-to-face conversations.

Video conferencing means greatly increased bandwidth requirements. It requires high bandwidth. This is one of the drawbacks of this method. Video is somewhat complex to access, as there are several choices to be made. Required bandwidth is massively influenced by the size of the video image and the quality. Quality is determined by the compression rate (how good is the image) and the update rate (how many images are displayed per second). Typically, video conferencing requires between 200kb/s and 1,000 kb/s per user. Please note that this means neither full screen nor TV quality video. The implication is that even small and not very fluent video requires significant bandwidth, both at the user's end and even more at the server's. Large groups require a dedicated broadband network (Wilheim, 2004).

TV companies typically compress to around 24 Mbps to 32 Mbps. However, this still results in higher transmission costs that would normally be acceptable for any other business. The coder takes the video and audio and compresses them to a bit stream that can be transmitted digitally to the distant end. With improved coding techniques, the bit stream can be as low as 56 kbps, or up to 2 Mbps. For business quality conferencing, 384 kbps is the industry standard. The decoder extracts the video and audio signals from the received bit stream and allows for the signal to be

displayed on a TV and heard through the speakers. In addition to video and audio, user data can be transmitted simultaneously to allow for the transfer of computer files, or to enable users to work collaboratively on documents. This latter area has become increasingly important with the availability of effective data collaboration software (e.g., from entry level to performance, Polycom Group Video Conferencing Systems offers a wide range of choices to suit any application environment, from the office to the board room, the courtroom to the classroom).

Web Conferencing

Web-based collaboration offers definite benefits: it is easy, it is cost-effective, and it allows companies to do multiple activities in a seamless fashion. But virtual teams are not without disadvantage. For one thing, virtual teams must function with less direct interaction among members. So, virtual team members require excellent project management skills, strong time management skills, and interpersonal awareness. In addition, they must be able to use electronic communication and collaboration technologies, and they need to be able to work across cultures (Bovee, 2004). A communication is conducted via the WWW between two or more parties/persons in different geographical locations. It is in the form of synchronous real time or in an asynchronous environment (at our convenience and our own time).

Web casting allows greater access to significantly extend the reach of the meeting, far beyond the attendees to a much wider audience. The event was Web cast live and is also available for on-demand viewing, enabling the employees/public to view at their convenience (Greater, 2004). Furthermore, recent research has shown that an overlaid network may cost up to 20% less to operate, compared to deploying rule-based (Internet protocol) communications internally over the corporate network (WAN) (Brent, 2002). Traditional video conferencing solutions tend to be overly expensive and very bandwidth hungry. Existing Web conferencing solutions lack rich media support and shared applications (e.g., MeetingServer is a carrier-grade, high-function, Web conference server solution that allows service providers to deploy a robust, scalable, manageable Web conferencing service to consumers, enterprises, and virtual ISPs.

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