

WORLD VIEW

SYMPOSIUM 2007

Best Practices in Global Education from Around the United States

Global Connections through Video Conferencing

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Agenda

9:15 - 9:20	Introductory remarks	Björn Hennings
9:20 –9:30	Examples of relevant video conferences	Björn Hennings
9:35-9:40	Brief explanation and demo of a video conference codec	Tom Cox
9:40- 9:55	Video conference with Rural Hall Elementary School, with remarks by Linda McDermon, Distance Education Specialist	Tom Cox
9:55-10:10	Helpful links for getting started, explanation of some technical terms, and discussion of important human factors considerations in video conferencing	Tom Cox
10:10-10:25	Questions and hands-on tours of the equipment	Tom Cox
10:25- 10:30	Closing remarks	Björn Hennings

To download this handout please visit: <http://www.unc.edu/world/2007Symp/Program.htm>

What is video conferencing?

A real-time, two-way exchange of information between two or more geographically disperse locations using audio, video and sometimes data.

It is not web conferencing, video chat, web casting, or streaming.

Examples of video conferences with student involvement

Video conference between a traveling group and the students who stayed at home

Connecting Smith Middle School in Chapel Hill (CCEE) with the traveling students in Brussels (FedEx Kinko's)

Problem: ISDN connection

- needs bridge (IP to ISDN)
- very expensive (\$670 per hour for the telephone line)

Website: http://soe.unc.edu/news_events/news/2007/teleconf.php

The Exchange: National Conversation about School Violence

Students participating in this project

1. had access to and interacted with their peers through a specially set-up virtual on-line classroom,
2. held smaller Exchanges/discussion about the assigned topic within their classroom and school building,
3. participated in a 2-hour interactive video conference Exchange via Internet2 with peers across the country and with experts in the field,
4. reflected on their experiences through a follow-up activity designed by The National Constitution Center.

Schools participating in this project:

5. Bethlehem Area Vo-Tech School (Bethlehem, PA)
6. Chapel Hill High School (Chapel Hill, NC)
7. Cobourg District Collegiate Institute East (Ontario, CAN)
8. Constitution High School (Philadelphia, PA)
9. Glencoe-Silver Lake High School (Glencoe, MN)
10. Lafayette High School (Red Lake, MN)
11. Northern High School (Dillsburg, PA)
12. Wallenpaupack Area High School (Hawley, PA)
13. West Philadelphia High School (Philadelphia, PA)

Website: <http://www.magpi.net/programs/exchange.html>

Stand Up. Speak out. Lend a Hand

Students involved will hear from Gerda Weissmann Klein, renowned motivational speaker and Holocaust survivor, during a special interactive video conference event and then embark upon their own service learning projects.

Each participating school will be tasked with designing and implementing a service learning project that combats social issues in their community.

Students will then reconvene via video conference to share their service learning projects with Gerda and the Klein Foundation during a celebratory "Project Collaboration Video conference" in March.

Website: <http://www.magpi.net/programs/onesurvivor.html>

Digital Flat Stanley Project

Targeting Grade Levels 1-3

What happens when a normal boy finds himself flattened by a bulletin board and is sent through the mail to places all across the country? Your students can find out during this fun project, based on the 1964 book written by Jeff Brown! Classes across the country will participate in this project and send their Flat Stanleys around the USA to visit different students. Every month, one school's Flat Stanley will visit another partner school. Students will take their new flat friend on different adventures near their school and record the adventures in a journal. At the end of each month-long period, partner schools will meet via video conference for 30 minutes to greet one another, discuss their hometown and experiences with their flat friends. At the end of the project, Flat Stanley will have visited 6 places and - - and so will your students!

Website: <http://www.magpi.net/programs/flatstanley.html>

Milwaukee Public Museum

The nearly 125 years of research, collections, exhibit and educational resources of the Milwaukee Public Museum are not limited to the physical constructs of the building itself. Through interactive video conferencing, a resource-laden website and well-trained professional education staff, the Milwaukee Public Museum can come right to your classroom.

Explore natural and cultural history in an exciting video conference format with the Passport Distance Learning Series. Mix live interaction between students and Museum educators with a detailed, content-rich curriculum that can't be found in textbooks. Students can see artifacts and collections unavailable to the public and ask questions during real-time learning sessions.

Live, interactive video conferences allow students to see rare artifacts and objects and talk to Museum educators and experts during real-time learning sessions.

Website: <http://education.mpm.edu/distance/>

Megaconference Junior

Megaconference Jr. is a project designed to give students in elementary and secondary schools around the world the opportunity to communicate, collaborate and contribute to each other's learning in real time, using advanced technology. Presenters design and conduct video conference-based presentations and activities focused on both academic and cultural issues. They show cultural traditions, play games or interact with guest speakers via an Internet2 video connection. Participants are able to address questions to presenters and to collaborate with geographically diverse peers in collaborative learning activities, thus building international cultural awareness.

Website: <http://www.megaconferencejr.org/>

Rural Hall Elementary, Forsyth County, NC

An exemplary school around the corner.

Website: <http://ruralhallschool.org/>

Getting Started: First Technical Steps

- Talk to your school's networking person – this is a very important first step:
 - Bandwidth issues
 - Firewall
 - Private IP
- Work with your colleagues to choose the best room for the job:
 - Mic placement (can you run wires to student locations?)
 - A small room is much easier than a very large one
 - Power requirements
 - Data jack(s)
- If possible, try to borrow a codec for a short amount of time to try a test.
- Or, try Polycom's PVX software on a non-mission critical computer (free download).
- Try to attend a video conference series you know to be good.
- Identify an assistant to help run the equipment – it's a win-win.

Human Factors:

The Most Important Ingredients for Successful Video Conferencing

- Single most important – choose video conferencing only when it's needed, i.e when both sides will very likely contribute meaningfully (interactive vs. one-way).
 - “If I had this technology tomorrow morning, how would I use it?”
 - Video conferencing excels in on-going collaborations, not as good in one time only.

- Works best when driven by a real, existing need.
- For you to be successful, the students at the remote site (i.e., wherever the presenter's *isn't*) should feel equally enfranchised.
 - The only thing they should have to give up is the ability to high five their counterparts.
 - Try very hard to put yourself in the shoes of students at the far side (not so easy).
- Video conferencing is really audio with “video added”.
 - It's surprising how many video conferences end up being non-interactive.
 - It would have been better for these to have been off-line/blended.
 - Good communication can still take place if you lose video; not the other way around.
 - Location, location, location – the placement of microphones near the person talking, or moving the person talking to a mic is crucial, yet often ignored in the interests of saving time.
 - You'll need to figure out how to share data.
- Interaction is widely pursued, rarely achieved, but it can be done.
 - Build the community on the very first day with introductions.
 - Relentlessly observe where the mic is.
 - Wait longer for answers to your questions.
 - Draw in the other side, gently but firmly.
- Try starting small: Small group work is exponentially easier to successfully achieve than large group work.
- Human factors problems are harder to solve than engineering problems - they're non-linear.
- Laughter after something humorous is a very accurate indicator of success.

Helpful Video Conferencing Links and Websites

Content specific

<http://www.cilc.org/>

The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) supports and advances education through video conferencing and other collaborative technologies. CILC offers access to quality professional development and student educational content, as well as consulting and technical assistance.

<http://www.illuminate.com/>

Illuminate is a leading provider of live Web conferencing and eLearning solutions for the real-time organization. Serving corporate and academic sectors, the company ensures the best user experience through superior quality VoIP, communications that are in-sync regardless of connection speed, broad cross-platform support, and advanced yet easy-to-use moderator tools.

http://www.dlt.ncssm.edu/distance_learning/links.htm

Many useful links to content providers, conferences and affiliated organizations

<http://www.magpi.net/programs/>

Video conferences for K-12, Higher Education and Professional Development

<http://www.ncih.net/>

The North Carolina Information Highway (NCIH) provides data services such as access to the Internet and to state computer systems and video conferencing for Distance Learning.

<http://www.vide.net/cookbook/cookbook.en/>

Video conferencing cookbook to familiarize readers with the concept and uses of video conferencing. Many useful hints and tips.

Technical terms

<http://www.vbisd.org/techserv/DistLearn/Terminology.htm>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_conferencing

<http://www.twice.cc/glossary.html>

<http://www.oit.duke.edu/dms/IPVC/faq.html>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H.239>

Currently available equipment, ease of use, and cost

<http://bcisdvcs.wordpress.com/2007/03/15/getting-started-with-videoconferencing/>

www.polycom.com

www.tandberg.com

www.picturephone.direct.com