



## **Video Conferencing and Eller**

### What is Video Conferencing?

Video conferencing is not a new concept or technology. It has seen resurgence in usage due to changes in the technology and accessibility.

So what is video conferencing? Video conferencing is the use of visual and audio technology to communicate with one or more remote locations. The objective is to come as close to an actual meeting as possible without physically being there. These virtual meetings can vary in quality depending upon the technologies used at both ends and on the network connections between the locations.

For many years, video conferencing was only available through special network connections or ISDN type connections. Today's video conferencing is occurring over the same internet on which you browse the web. Newer video conference equipment uses a unique internet number (IP number) to identify itself (just like your desktop PC). While many of the older point-to-point video conference setups are still in use, the growing trend is towards equipment that uses the internet. Today's video conferencing is really nothing more than communicating using a web cam. However, above and beyond the home web cam market, video conferencing equipment is more robust and capable of higher quality video and audio.

Video conferencing can be accomplished via a wide range of mechanisms with each having concomitant pros and cons. In a nutshell, there are solutions for desktop video conferencing and there are solutions for conferencing in larger group or conference rooms. The quality of the equipment for each of these solutions varies. More expensive group and conference room solutions deliver more bells and whistles and overall better voice and video resolution. No solution is perfect.

Many desktop video conferencing solutions are used throughout the Eller College including Breeze, Microsoft NetMeeting and Polycom. Desktop solutions provide a cost effective mechanism for individual users to conduct personal video conference sessions.

Conference room and classroom solutions are generally more expensive and require a greater technology investment in order to provide appropriate quality video and audio coverage.

### Examples of How Video Conference is Used

#### Example-A:

An Eller professor in Marketing has a colleague at the University of Mexico and would like to hold a remote session between their two classes. Since both classes are relatively small class size, both instructors feel that multiple discussion sessions would provide good interaction on various international marketing topics.

The Eller Marketing professor and the professor in Mexico exchange their video conferencing information. Each exchanges the internet number of the other's equipment. A test is conducted to verify that a conference connection can be made. The test is successful. The sessions are scheduled. The Eller Marketing professor uses a Mobile Video Conferencing Cart in a small conference room to host the sessions on the Eller end. The Mexico professor uses a larger classroom video conference setting at their main facility. No expensive connection costs. The interactions are successful!

#### Example-B:

Several MBA students need to conduct initial interviews with a particular company. The company will not be able to have a representative on the UA campus for three to four weeks. Upon inquiring, the company actually has IP Video Conferencing capability which the interviewers agree they'd be happy to use. Eller IT obtains the IP address of the company's facility and conducts a test. The tests are successful. Dates for the interviews are set and the MBA students use the Mobil Video Conferencing cart to fulfill the interviews. The results on both sides are good.

#### Example-C:

An Eller department head has discovered overlapping important meeting conflicts. One is in Phoenix and the other in Tucson. Because of travel time, he cannot attend both meetings. He cannot provide a proxy for the meetings and due to their nature they cannot be postponed. The department head inquires and verifies that the individual's in Phoenix can conduct an IP Video Conference to include the department head. The department head obtains the remote end's technical details and IP address and the connection is tested in advance of the scheduled meeting. The tests are successful. On the day of the meeting, the department head attend the Phoenix meeting "remotely" while still making the important local meeting shortly thereafter. Mission accomplished.

## Eller IT and Video Conferencing

Eller IT provides video conference facilities supporting the H.323 protocol which delivers video conferencing over Local Area Networks using IP numbers. Eller IT *does not* provide support for H.320 ISDN based video conferencing.

Currently, Eller IT *does not* provide origination support for “multi-point” video conferences. This means that, at this point, if you intend to include more than one remote location in on a video conference, you must find some site that can host all the video conferences together. All conferences are based on a point-to-point conference connection. However, any video conference facility within McClelland Hall may participate as a site in a multi-point video conference hosted externally. Eller IT anticipates the addition of multi-point conference management in the near future. For a brief power-point slide deck of the different connection approaches in video conferencing, see:

<http://it.eller.arizona.edu/services/video/videodeck.ppt>

For a list of video conferencing areas within McClelland Hall and for information on the Mobile Video Conferencing cart, visit:

<http://it.eller.arizona.edu/services/video>

To request a reservation of the Mobil Video Conference Cart, please visit

<http://calendar.eller.arizona.edu/>

and select the Video\_Cart calendar.