



What every CEO should know about the conference marketplace & how to prepare for 2006

By next year, your staff may unknowingly overload your network with inefficient strings of non-targeted communication, by misusing audio, video and/or web conferencing. With a little planning, you can increase their efficiencies, reduce current expenses, and avoid any technical difficulties.

Facts every CEO should know about the conference marketplace

How to prepare your company for 2006

Summary

If it hasn't already happened, your staff may soon unwittingly overload your network with inefficient strings of non-targeted communication such as email and instant messaging. Unfocused communication is also notorious for wasting resources – often gobbling up entire annual communication budgets in a matter of months.

By 2006, most leading companies will be relying on conferencing and other collaborative technologies to stay ahead of their competitors. With integrated audio and web conferencing, companies can avoid any network issues while also reducing expenses and boosting productivity for both staffers and executives.

But beware: many conferencing providers do not provide the services and features that make conferencing the incredible productivity tool it should be.

How many times in the past year have you been interrupted by seemingly endless email conversation strings that either do not concern you or are too difficult to follow? If you're like most C-level executives, probably more times than you would care to remember.

These email strings, with their rambling messages that never seem to resolve the issue at hand, waste more than everyone's time – they can overload your networks by wasting valuable disk space and open them up to malicious viruses brought in by attachments and the insecure connections of those working outside of the office. Moreover, they also can confuse and infuriate the recipients.

Fact:

Non-targeted communication wastes time and increases network vulnerability

Fact:

Proper conferencing use lowers costs and increases efficiencies

The fact is, many companies are struggling to keep up with the onslaught of new technologies that are supposed to make our lives easier and our productivity greater, but often fall short. Web cams, streaming media, higher bandwidths, IM, and many other technologies are rapidly converging on the desktop, increasing the relevance of collaboration in users' day-to-day business processes. The collaboration market is being driven by the integration rate of web-based communications into a wide range of applications and business processes. While it's great that workers are trying to increase efficiencies, they need to be guided and trained on how best to leverage these devices.

Audio, web, and video conferencing have become mission critical tools for all businesses-second only to email in productivity enhancements. Conferencing is a successful tool because it increases how people get connected to information and processes. And the more people collaborate within a company, the healthier that company will be.

One way to use these tools successfully is knowing when to use each type of conferencing:

Reservationless Audio Conferencing (BT MeetMe)

| Meeting need | Benefit |
|--------------------|---|
| Impromptu meetings | Communication remains fluid when crucial participants are off-site. |
| Crisis resolution | Enables group problem solving. |

Operator-assisted Audio Conferencing (BT Event Calls)

| Meeting need | Benefit |
|---------------------------|---|
| Earnings Calls | Operator involvement ensures that all elements of call, such as Q&A run smoothly. |
| Companywide announcements | Allows a message to be broadcast to a large audience. |

Web Conferencing

| Meeting need | Benefit |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Meetings that require shared visuals | Allows participants to present and share any visual elements in the meeting, such as websites, PowerPoint presentations, Excel sheet, and digital photographs. |
| Training | Saves the time and cost of travel. |

Video Conferencing

| Meeting need | Benefit |
|--|--|
| Mergers and acquisitions | Builds trust by allowing for face-to-face communication and interactive dialog. Ideal for overcoming cultural and linguistic barriers. |
| Executive broadcasts and corporate conference meetings | Allows for complex and sensitive message delivery. |

Fact: The Knowledge Worker Infrastructure (KWI) is greatly enhanced by conferencing technology

Giving your knowledge workers access to the information, coworkers, partners, and customers they need when they need it is a surefire way to give your company a competitive edge in the marketplace. Collaboration technologies such as conferencing lets all workers get connected to information, people, and processes to make the entire company more productive.

“By 2004, we believe only 15% of Global 2000 companies will have developed an enterprise-wide strategy for pulling together diverse KWI activities. By 2006, 50% of G2000 enterprises will have a strategic plan to address KWI needs, growing to 80% in 2008,” writes Mike Gotta, a senior vice president at the Meta Group.

How to prepare for 2006

By 2006, over half of global companies will have strategies for effective KWI activities. Will your company?

We’ve shown that conferencing is a critical part of an organization’s collaboration and KWI strategy. But technology is only one part of what makes conferencing such a successful tool. In order to realize the full potential of conferencing in 2006, your organization should choose a provider who can give you:

- Dedicated 24x7x365 account and service support
- The expertise that can only come from having conferencing as their core competency
- Highly-detailed reports to effectively track usability and reliability
- Secure expertise to demonstrate where you can save now , plus projected usage in 6-12 months
- Effective companywide implementation strategies and internal marketing support

Here is how one major Fortune 500 company leveraged our expertise:

| | |
|----------|---|
| Customer | Leading global manufacturer, marketer, and distributor of nonalcoholic beverage concentrates and syrups |
| Issue | 80% of all teleconferences were operator-assisted, an expensive form of conference calling |
| Solution | BT Conferencing actively educated conference users on available conferencing methods and their best application |
| Result | 60% reduction in conferencing costs within 90 days |

Conclusion

By putting your company’s collaboration strategy in motion now, you can dramatically increase your workers’ productivity and cut down on non-targeted communication waste in 2006.

Conferencing has advanced rapidly in the past decade, fueled by technical advances like VoIP that have enabled conferencing tools and technologies to be embedded within business culture. But the future of conferencing is not so much about the tools or technologies as it is about improving productivity and expanding the way we work together.

