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ITV Insight

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Supporting the 2-year college Interactive Video Community

Welcome and thanks for reading!

This is the first issue of a new quarterly bulletin intended to keep the interactive video community informed about current technical and operational developments within the 2-year college and K-20 systems. We will strive to keep articles brief and to the point. We also welcome your feedback and ideas.

What is happening with the ISDN to IP transition?

Many of the questions we receive about the network and the future of ITV in the K-20 network relate to the forthcoming transition to IP video and the timeline for the transition. There are many variables and factors influencing this timeline, but please read on in order to obtain a better idea of the current status of the transition process.

The two new MGC-100 MCUs purchased by K-20 are currently being installed and will be tested over the new few months. These MCUs will offer greatly increased IP capabilities as well as continued support for ISDN video services. The MGC-100s also have modern enhancements and greater

compatibility with many of the Polycom systems now in use throughout the K-20 network.

K-20 has also been swapping out old routers with new ones capable of supporting Quality of Service (QoS) and this project is well on the way to completion.

Here at the SBCTC, we have been assisting with the process of developing a dial plan and gatekeeper hierarchy that will be both standards-based and scalable to allow for future upgrades and expansion. Currently, the plan is to operate the K-20 dialing plan and gatekeeper structure under the auspices of the ViDeNet hierarchy. ViDeNet, a global network created under the authority of the Video Development Initiative, connects a number of research and educational institutions together to facilitate the use and development of IP-based voice and video communications technology in the educational realm.

Another aspect of the transition currently in the works is the development of documentation regarding setup and usage of equipment as we enter the world of IP video together. You can expect

to see additional updates about all of these issue in future editions of this bulletin.

Recent modifications to KORRS!

A few minor changes have been made to the K-20 Online Resource Reservation System (KORRS) recently, and we want to let you know about them! (The web site is <http://www.k20.ctc.edu/default.asp>) First of all, the default bandwidth setting for audio-only resources has been changed to display the audio 64K rate correctly, mainly to help our friends at K-20 MCU support spot phone audio-only resources in the reservation lists more easily. Secondly, a resource has been added for Off-Net IP Non-Specified to provide more concise event information when schedulers add an off-net site that requires IP capability. Please also remember that even off-net sites need to register with the K-20 gatekeeper in order to connect to the K-20 bridge using IP. The web address for the gatekeeper registration information page is <http://www.wa-k20.net/services/h323guide.html>.

April tech tip - no foolin'!

Have you ever worked on documentation for the ITV equipment and wanted to obtain decent pictures of specific pieces of equipment? Some good photos of Polycom systems and remote controls as well as other A/V devices can be located using a Google image search or by browsing vendor websites. Here at the State Board we were able to use the Polycom equipment itself in order to obtain JPEG images of some of the A/V equipment. The steps are as follows:

-Press the **SNAPSHOT** button on the Polycom remote

-Select the camera that will take the snapshot
Position the camera, then press **SNAPSHOT** again

-Using a PC, browse to the ViewStation IP address and select **View a Presentation**

-Snapshots will show up in the browser as they are taken with the ViewStation. Right-click an image and select **Save Picture As** to save the image. Choose the location you want to save the file in, give the image a name, and click **Save**. That's it!

Note: This procedure works best if you have a PC in the same room as the Polycom equipment. Also, having more than one camera often helps with getting good quality images, because of the ability to get a variety of camera shots within the room.

Thinking about purchasing a new ITV system? Here are some points to consider before buying the new Polycom VSX-7000:

The Polycom VSX-7000 represents the first of a new series of interactive video systems that will probably replace the existing ViewStation line in the future. The Polycom VSX-7000 has some great features that establish it as a system capable of improved video and audio quality, as well as having state-of-the-art IP conferencing support. However, we want to remind you that this is an entry-level system, and there are a few things you should keep in mind when considering buying the VSX. Some of these limitations won't matter to many K-20 users, but we thought it was important to point them out so you can decide whether or not they are important in your environment. Here is the list:

- 1) The VSX-7000 only supports 1 monitor in its basic configuration. The special adapter required to support dual monitors costs about \$699.
- 2) The VSX-7000 does not have a POTS line port, so adding phone audio to your calls can't be done on the local interactive video system as with the older Viewstation models.
- 3) Visual Concert PC is not supported in the VSX-7000 – You'd have to add a standalone unit, such as a Visual Concert FX to your system to obtain similar capabilities.
- 4) We've been informed that the VSX-7000 doesn't support loading PowerPoint presentations into the system as the older Viewstation models do.
- 5) Lastly, for those who purchase the \$2499 multipoint upgrade, the multipoint option supports only voice-activated switching and does not include continuous presence as an option.

For more information about Polycom systems and solutions, visit the web site at <http://www.polycom.com/home>