

Webcasting Benefits – *It's easier and less expensive than you think.....*

When people communicate electronically, they can use text (email), audio (telephone) and video (television). Various studies have shown that message comprehension increases as you add the audio and even further if you add the video component. Streaming video (webcasting) allows business people to communicate with their co-workers, customers, or suppliers more effectively than they can via standard email or voice.

Webcasting has been around for several years but has been slow to gain acceptance for several reasons: Poor video quality, network bottlenecks, lack of standards, and high cost. But new equipment, techniques, standards, and services have emerged to make streaming video an excellent tool for enterprise communications. Market studies have shown that streaming is forecasted to grow at double-digit rates through 2007.

Applications

Before purchasing and installing a webcasting solution, companies need to determine both the nature of the application and the benefits they seek. Let's look at a few scenarios where streaming video has had a major impact.

Training

Imagine being able to tune in to a DVD quality video about enhancing presentation techniques right at your PC. Just a click of a mouse and you're viewing a 20 minute video. Pause and replay the video at will. There's nothing better than getting your own private tutorial at your desktop.

Product Introduction

Businesses introduce new products all the time. How do you brief your sales force or resellers on these products? That's simple: Just have your product

manager get in front of a camera, connect the camera to a webcasting appliance, and have your remote audience tune into the broadcast from their PCs. What could be easier?

Event Broadcast

A company wanted to webcast an employee award ceremony to the staff at field offices around the world. What better way to improve morale and honor the recipients than streaming the event live—not only to co-workers but also to the employees' families at home?

News Distribution

Many large companies make frequent company announcements to their employees.

Why not have your CEO get in front of a camera and stream the message simultaneously to all employees, whether they are at their PCs or in a common area such as a meeting room or cafeteria? Imagine the powerful impact the news will have if provided visually vs. standard email or memo.

Videoconference Distribution

Currently, many companies have standard ISDN-based videoconference systems.

These typically are referred to as group systems that allow two or more parties to communicate. Now, take the video feed from each endpoint and connect it to a streaming appliance. All of sudden, anyone located anywhere can view the videoconference live at their desktop.

Savings

Where are the savings and how fast can we get a payback on the system? Typically the savings will come from several areas:

- *Travel savings*—train employees and partners remotely.

- *Time to market*—better information distribution allows companies to design and launch new products more quickly, getting a jump on competition

- *Employee morale*—more personal communications with employees leads to happier employees and therefore more productive employees

- *Informing Customers*—announce new products using webcasting and reach your audiences quicker and with more effective messages.

Conclusion

Streaming video systems are a valuable tool for organizations to improve communications, which results in faster growth and healthier bottom line. New techniques have made webcasting a low-cost, easy-to-use alternative to non-visual methods. It's easy to see why major financial institutions, aircraft manufacturers, pharmaceutical companies, government agencies, and educational institutions have implemented these types of video solutions.

