

How to Implement Teleconferencing in the Office and at Home

The benefits and drawbacks of desktop videoconferencing was discussed; its cost and applications were demonstrated; and the hardware and software that is needed was reviewed.

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Presenter

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Highlights

Dr. Poe discusses technology issues for Internet teleconferencing in a nontechnical way. As compared to commercially available videoconferencing, which, at around \$250 an hour, is expensive, Internet teleconferencing has become a viable economic alternative. Commercial videoconferencing also requires advance scheduling and reservations and travel both to and from the location.

- Desktop videoconferencing using basic hardware requirements is comparatively inexpensive but has some minimum requirements and software that should be compatible with H.323, which is the standard for most software today.

- Current hardware requirements include a Pentium II or III, AMD K2/K3, or Cyrix 686 with at least 200 mhz speed, 64 megabytes of RAM, and at least 100 megabytes of available hard-drive space.

If your computer does not have a sound card, one will cost about \$20. Full duplex external speakers with external volume control also are recommended at around \$40, and a microphone is about \$20. The microphone should be hooked into the "line in" not "mic in" for videoconferencing.

Also required are a color videocamera in the range of \$50 to \$150, and, at the very least, a 56K modem, which is standard in most computers today.

- The videocamera purchased should include three specifications: color, image size in CIF and QCIF, and a speed of 15 to 30 fps (frames per second). The camera should be



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hooked to either the parallel port or, in newer machines with *Windows 98*, to the USP (universal serial port). A camcorder could be used, but would be more expensive. A good video capture card can run from \$100 to \$400.

- At a minimum, the modem should be 56K. Faster is

