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TANDBERG ups Ante in Room Video Systems

TANDBERG MXP
Profile Series



Long known for their stylish products, TANDBERG has introduced a new line of systems based on the T6000 MXP and T3000 MXP codec platforms. The new systems, dubbed the Profile Series, takes advantage of the new generation of large, wide screen, flat screen displays (plasma and LCD). The systems feature stereo-quality sound in a space-saving package. Internal speakers and a PC input cable with integrated audio input allow for all participants in a conference to experience the richness of stereo sound and the large, wide screens.

The 6000 MXP Profile includes the 6000 MXP codec with a 50- or 43-inch plasma flat-panel display, WAVE II camera, integrated 250W amplifier and five internal speakers. The 3000 MXP Profile includes the 3000 MXP codec with a 43-inch plasma or 32-inch LCD, WAVE II camera, 60W amplifier and two internal speakers. A separate package is available for those who want a Profile package for their TANDBERG set-top system. The Profile series is more than just a new display; TANDBERG has designed in a special wall mounting system (hides the codec but leaves it accessible) and integrated in many new multimedia capabilities provided by the 16:9 displays. Get ready for HD.

POLYCOM Introduces HD Video Bridging (and more)

At this week's Polycom User Group (PUG) Annual Meeting, Polycom made two announcements – one on HD support on MGC video bridges and clarifications to the VSX 8000 HD announcement made months earlier, and a second on their Microsoft integration project.

Polycom announced the availability of HD video conferencing support, enabling users to connect up to 90 simultaneous HD video calls (at 2 Mbps) on a single MGC-100 bridge. The support is available through a software upgrade for existing MGC customers. The MGC now supports CIF, SD, ½ SD, and HD (1280 x 720) on the same bridge.

Polycom also announced details of an upgrade announced months earlier to take the VSX 8000 codec to HD capabilities (1280 x 720 x 30 frames/sec). The VSX 8000 HD upgrade, priced at \$5999, will include “all the necessary hardware, software, cables and instructions on upgrading a VSX.” The VSX 8000 HD upgrade will also include enhanced audio, video and content sharing functionality. Polycom is still a little vague on exactly what will be in the box delivered to customer's doorsteps. But, since you can't do HD without an HD camera, we have to assume that that will be one of the components inside the box. Cables too. And we believe there will be new microphones as well. Other hardware? We'll have to wait and see. The HD capabilities for the VSX, due in Q2-06, will be added to the current capabilities described by Polycom as 2CIF or ½ SD (shipping now).

Less than a month after showing off phase 2 of its integration strategy with Microsoft, Polycom announced phase 3 with on-click collaboration for LCS 2005. This is about tighter integration of the MGC bridge with Communicator 2005. The phase 3 announcement simplifies the operation and passes control of conferences back to the meeting manager who, through a single mouse click, can invite multiple users or schedule a future conference using Microsoft Outlook. Outlook then schedules users and populates the meeting across participants' calendars. The latest integration also takes advantage of Communicator's support of multi-party instant messaging chat sessions to escalate up to 32 participants in an IM chat to a video call through the single click of the Conference button. Invitees are asked not only if they wish to join a conference; but also, which device they want to use. The MGC bridge then sends the conference number to the chosen device.

SAVE THIS DATE (October 27)

October SpotLights Webinar – Americas and Europe



The Great Debate: Are Video Managed Services for Real?

Moderator: Andrew Davis, Senior Analyst and Managing Partner, Wainhouse Research

Date: 27 October

Time: 11:00am EDT (New York)

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Jeff Prestel
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Wire One

Managed services seems to be on everyone's hot list these days. Hosted conferencing service providers, resellers, integrators, and even network providers all seem to be getting into the Managed Service Provider (MSP) game. Hence, our October SpotLights session will feature an interactive discussion/debate with four panelists representing diverse views of managed video services. Moderated by WR, this webinar will explore the differences in philosophy, strategy, and tactics expressed by executives from AGT, IVCI, Virtela, and Wire One, all of whom claim to be experts in the managed video services space. This unusual SpotLights webinar will explore:

- What are managed services anyway?
- Which offerings from MSPs are credible and which are vaporware?
- What are the real differences between various providers?
- Why bother with managed services, lots of software is available?
- Who should and should not consider using managed services?
- Do MSPs provide worldwide support for global companies?

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News in Brief

- Arkadin raised a new round of funding of \$6.2 MUSD to support expansion plans in North America and Asia. The four-year old company now has presence in 13 countries.
- Vistula Communications Inc. has signed an agreement with Saigon Post & Telecommunication for the first installation of a large-scale VoIP offering with a national PTT in the Asia region.

This latest VoIP deployment comes on the heels of recent deployments with Telstra in the UK and BrainWare in South America.

- Media server vendor Convedia Corporation announced it has partnered with application infrastructure software developer BEA Systems to develop an IMS-compliant SIP application deployment architecture. Convedia media servers are designed to provide powerful IP multimedia processing capabilities controlled by BEA's WebLogic SIP Server, a component of the BEA WebLogic Communications Platform
- Aethra announced a reseller agreement with the UK videoconferencing specialist, Questmark Ltd. Questmark is part of the new Aethra UK sales strategy, initiated in March of this year when Aethra opened its first ever UK office.
- Web collaboration software developer Marratech, has introduced a new version of its Internet based application with built-in support for the H.323 audiovisual conferencing standard.
- SiteScape announced that Mercuri Teleconferencing of Burlington, Ontario, an application services provider (ASP), has selected SiteScape Zon to offer its hosted-services customer base the ability to conduct real-time audio and web conferencing in addition to instant messaging and contact management.
- Reporting in from the 3G wireless space, iPoint-media announced Vitrage O2m, a hosted live & Interactive one-to-many distribution product that allows multiple callers to subscribe to live content value added services, which involve distribution of video and audio streams from a single source to multiple destinations. iPoint-media also announced an agreement with Techno-Trends, a Spanish video communications systems integrator and Applications Services Provider under which Techno-Trends will use iPoint-media Vitrage platform to operate as a host and aggregator of 3G video callings services.
- VitalStream announced the next generation of its Streaming Service for Windows Media, providing customers with enhanced load-balanced traffic management, authentication of live and on-demand events and advanced business intelligence tools. VitalStream supports the latest versions of Windows Media and is compatible with any Web-services authentication system, including .NET and SOAP-based verification systems.

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