How to use videoconferencing

... in education

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HRVATSKA AKADEMSKA I ISTRAŽIVAČKA MREŽA

Q & A

- Do you really-really need VC
- What kind of VC do you need
- What kind of VC can you have
- How to prepare yourself
- How to give best of yourself
- How to run VC
- How much does it cost – in time/money/nerves

Outline

Part one: Tech mumbo-jumbo ...

› Welcome to any-conferencing

› VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations

› Get your resources together

Part two: How to present yourself

› Prejudices and misconceptions

› Good preparation is a mother of all successes

› Technology is your friend

› You gonna be a star!

Part I: Tech mumbo-jumbo ... (&1/3)

Part one: Tech mumbo-jumbo ...

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Welcome to any-conferencing

What is teleconferencing

- › transmission of image (video) and speech (audio) back and forth between two or more physically separate locations
- › use of cameras, video displays, microphones, speakers
- › standards, openness, interoperability
- › currently almost '*plug and play*'

Welcome to any-conferencing

- Past
  - two groups:
    - those who could afford technology and network to establish meeting rooms
    - those who are able to travel to teleconferencing enabled location
- Today
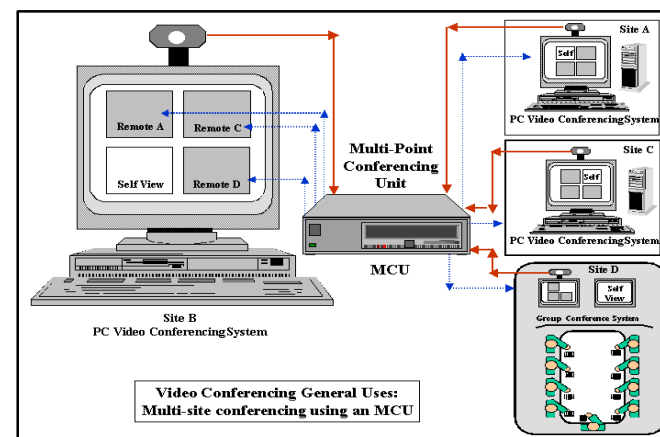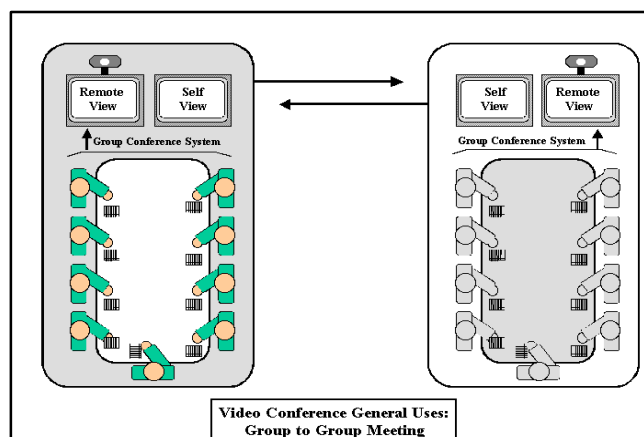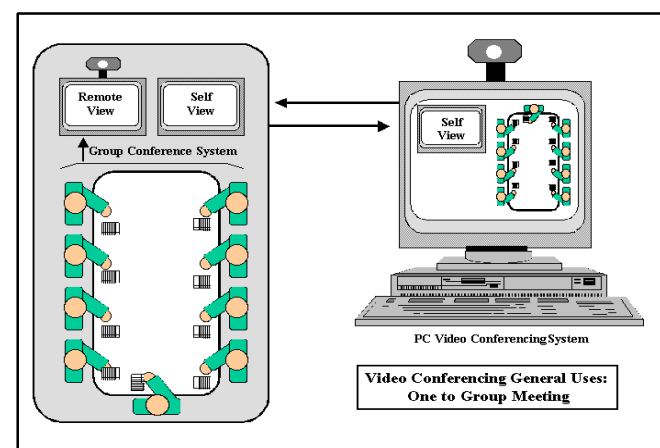 - less expensive, more flexible technology
  - 1996. - H.323 standard

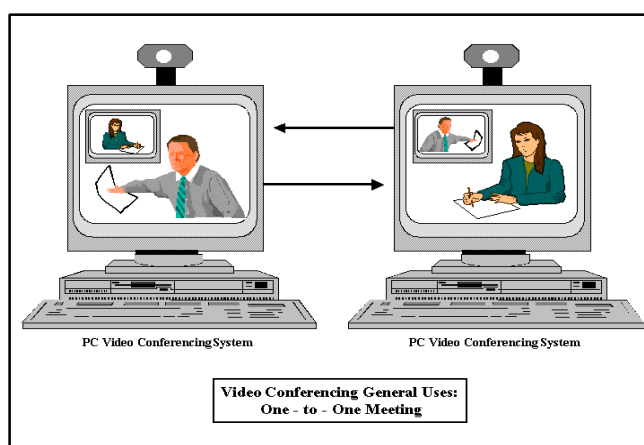# Welcome to any-conferencing

▷ Why and where teleconferencing

- economy
- industry
- medicine
- justice

- and of course ... education
  - distance lectures
  - critical places
  - collaboration
  - multiple sites meetings

Welcome to any-conferencing

> Videoconferencing in education – distant lectures

Welcome to any-conferencing

What to expect from teleconferencing

> from top audio and video …
> *(Wow, it's like you're sitting right here with me!)*

> … to good audio with poor video
> *(Is that a new hair or is something wrong with your camera !?)*

Part one: Tech mumbo-jumbo ...
(&2/3)

Part one: Tech mumbo-jumbo ...

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VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations

Types of teleconference (&1/6)

- According to interactivity
  - Conference
    - two-site or multi-site active communications

  - Streaming (!)
    - plus: less bandwidth, cheaper equipment, adjustable
    - cons: one-way communication, low(er) quality

VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations

Types of teleconference (&2/6)

- › According to tools used (&1/2)
  - ‣ audioconference
    - • audio, application and data sharing
    - • vs. videoconference: less bandwidth
    - • minus: visual communication
    - • vs. phone: multi-site, quality, application and data sharing, logistic, etiquette

VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations

Types of teleconference (&3/6)

› According to tools used (&2/2)

▸ videoconference

- video, audio, application and data sharing
- minus: bandwidth

▸ webconference

- video, audio, application and data sharing
- server based, software codecs
- plus: desktop requirements
- minus: quality

VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations

Types of teleconference (&4/6)

- According to number of participants (&1/2)
  - Desktop conference
    - few participants per site
    - from PC
    - web cam, headset
    - hardware or sotfware

VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations

Types of teleconference (&5/6)

▷ According to number of participants (&2/2)

  ▸ Room conference

    • 'unlimited' number of participants

    • hardware

    • TCR - Teleconferencing Room

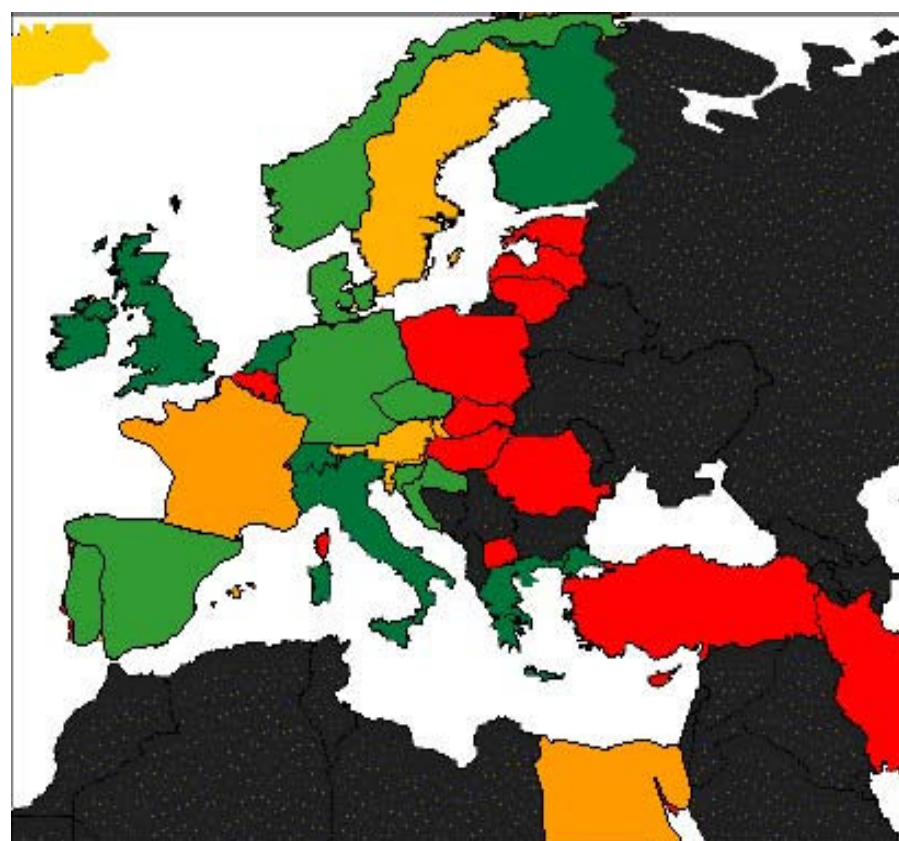# VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations

TCR – Teleconferencing Room
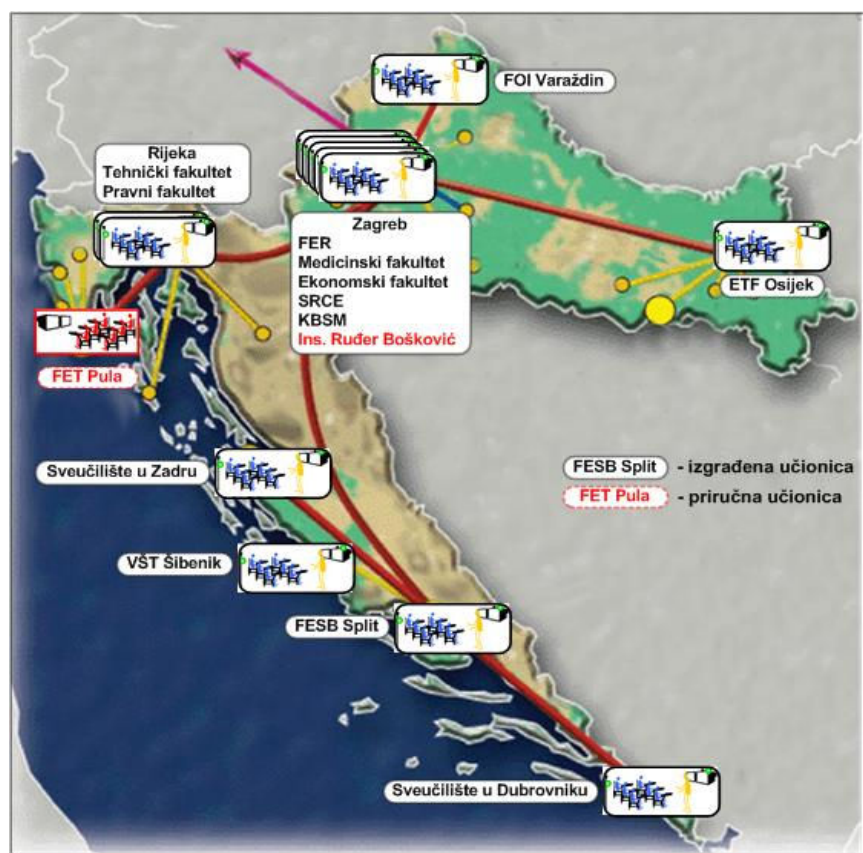
- Specialised room
  - technical requirements
  - comfort requirements
  - acoustics, light
  - location

- non-mobile equipment
  - infrastructure – network, power
  - audio equipment
  - video and presentational equipment
  - computing and communications

VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations

Academic videoconferencing infrastructure in HR and EU

©E. Verharen@SURFnet

VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations
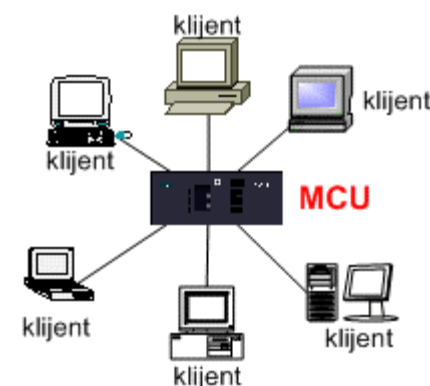
Types of teleconference (&6/6)

› According to infrastructure used

‣ IP – H.323 standard
‣ ISDN – H.320 standard
‣ ATM – many standards – M-JPEG, MPEG-2, H-310

› According to connectivity

‣ Point-to-point
‣ Multi-point

Part one: Tech mumbo-jumbo ...
(&3/3)

Part one: Tech mumbo-jumbo ...

› Welcome to any-conferencing

› VC, TCR, H.323 ... and other (un)useful abbreviations

› **Get your resources together**

Part two: How to present yourself

› Prejudices and misconceptions

› Good preparation is a mother of all successes

› Technology is your friend

› You gonna be a star!

Get your resources together

Do you need videoconferencing at all?

- define your organisational needs
    - dislocated departments?
    - guest lecturers?
    - member of international institutions?
    - project collaboration with international teams?
    - critical places?
    - ... or you'd like just to send a message

Get your resources together

So, you need it ... but, do you need your own system?
(&1/2)

- big investment – evaluation needed
- define your technical needs
  - potential number of participants
    - room system?
    - maybe is desktop enough
  - potential number of sites
  - degree of interactivity
    - single speaker
    - multiple speakers
  - importance of voice, video, data
  - place and team needed

Get your resources together

So, you need it ... but, do you need your own system?(&2/2)

> pick a technology and demonstrate it
> train your team
>> technicians - how to handle it
>> users - how to use it

> "... and why don't you just walk up to the closest TCR and use it?"

Part two: How to present yourself...
(&1/4)

Part one: Tech mumbo-jumbo ...

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How to present yourself

> how individuals appear, perform, leverage their time

> once failed on VC or poor experience – no more VC?

... but! ...

VC industry state today = HQ, almost as F-t-F meeting

... therefore ...

> new habits are needed – hardest thing to change

Prejudices and misconceptions

Misconceptions

> same as in-person meeting, but from distant locations

> use it because you have it

> preparation is the same as for in-person meeting

> just show up and work effectively with equipment

> what I hear/see is just the same on their monitors

Prejudices and misconceptions

Tips & ideas to treat them ... (misconceptions)

- think twice
  - 'to use it or not to use it, that is the question'
- NNNI – an old YU saying 'ništa nas ne smije iznenaditi'
  - think your actions in advance
- know your enemy
  - get friendly with technology
- I'm the man!
  - maximize your presence

... and it's easy, just ...

Prejudices and misconceptions

Important statements ... before we go on

> never out of view in VC – exhausting

> negative expressions and body language – amplified

> meeting cyberspace is not a success simply because it took place – brutally true

> holding VC in not necessarily better than no meeting at all – brutally true again

> face-to-face meetings remains here for ever!

Prejudices and misconceptions

No, really ... when videoconferencing?

> no need to shake everyone's hand

> same informations on different locations in real time

> save time and travel costs

> in-demand speaker difficult to get here

> necessary to see peoples expressions

> you would like to record it

> publicity and press likes it!

Prejudices and misconceptions

But what remains to face-to-face then?

> - security and privacy
> - critical issue
> - dialogue is important
> - 'I'd prefer to see you in person'

Part two: How to present yourself...
(&2/4)

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Good preparation is a mother of all successes

You better be prepared

> what is the purpose of my VC? -> I need 'this' equipment

> what equipment is available? And other side?

> is it available when I need it? ... schedule it!

> any tech support?

> how many participants? experienced?

Good preparation is a mother of all successes

Interesting agenda

- VC = borrrrrring!

- use more than one camera, if possible

- do not speak for too long – 5-7 min

- presentation – divide into short segment, 15 min

- use graphics – WB, etc.

- set your personal agenda - prioritize!

Good preparation is a mother of all successes

Get a great start

> wave hello, complement other side

> have well-thought-out intro – grab attention

> introduce <u>everyone</u>, no matter time spent, including those off-screen

> in streaming – greet all distant sites

> spell agenda and time frame

Good preparation is a mother of all successes

Moderator – in general

> do not dictate – lead protocol

> follow the rule of the group

> mark all sites

> introduce the rules at the beginning

- ‣ length of speaking time allowed
- ‣ timing and breaks, if any

> take notes

Good preparation is a mother of all successes

Moderator – question handling

> loud and clear, repeat if necessary
>> poor audio, accent, translation

> hostile question
>> repeat it, minus hostility, without comment

> accept it via e-mail, messanger, ...

> give people a task

> involve other sites

Good preparation is a mother of all successes

Moderator – watch your time!

- everything takes longer in VC
- spontaneity is lost
- use/be time keeper
- start on time
- do not put it at beginning of the day – traffic, latency
- important things first
- do not review for those who are late
- leave enough time for reactions and feedback
- be scrupulous

Good preparation is a mother of all successes

International meetings

> check local times

> acknowledge those who are there in non-office time

> allocate more time then usually

> respect the culture ... you're on camera!

Good preparation is a mother of all successes

Strong closing

- › do the summary or ask someone to do so

- › summary – what, who, when, how

- › thank everyone

- › say goodbye and leave – do not wait for disconnection

- › follow – up

- › solve unanswered question – right after a meeting

- › add a human touch – e-mail or phone after VC about summary

Part two: How to present yourself...
(&3/4)

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Technology is your friend

Speaking about technology ...

Murphy's law:

'If anything can go wrong, it will'

Equipment is your friend, but also enemy

Technology is your friend

Sound and microphones

> many types of microphones

> smaller ≠ less volume!

> multi-directional – every (EVERY!) sound is picked up

> transmission delay

‣ 'I'll conclude...',

‣ 'I'll end here'

Technology is your friend

Microphones – how to use it

› test it ... gently!

› reduce background noise ... every noise! (ball-pen, paper ...)

› do not lean over it – ask about power ... ('p', 's')

› speak in your normal voice – do not shout

› place lapel model ('bug') correctly

  ‣ do not wear it into the bathroom!

› mute it when out of air

Technology is your friend

Picture and cameras

- look into camera!!! - 'eye contact'
- where is your camera?
- adjust camera in advance – no pan-zoom-tilt
- document camera is a great help
- voice-activated camera – reaction/switching delay
- local-distant audience – speaker should see auditorium
- mark your 'on-camera' zone
- never watch yourself on the monitor!

Technology is your friend

Lighting

> camera adds 5 kilos ... to <u>everyone</u>, so watch the light

> head-down light only is bad! ... have some upward
>   ‣ nose, double-chin, eyes

> avoid large white background – face should be the lightest

> windows
>   ‣ keep curtains, blinds ... closed
>   ‣ if any, sit facing the window

> adjust contrast and brightness on camera

> check your image on the monitor

Technology is your friend

Documents in VC

> VC requires different graphic for presentations

> use big type, font 36

> limited amount of information per slide – 5-6 lines

> keep it simple, no animation

> careful with colours – dark letters on light background

> ALL CAPITAL LETTERS ARE HARD TO READ

> use simple fonts – sans serif, Arial

Technology is your friend

Back to Murphy ...

- › if anything can go wrong – it will!
- › system can go down on one side
- › no visual or no audio
- › insufficient bandwidth on one side
- › out-of-sync voice and video
- › firewalls

Technology is your friend

... but can Murphy be beaten!?

> When in doubt – reboot!

> have a 'Plan B'

> patience and humor helps!

Part two: How to present yourself...
(&3/4)

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› **You gonna be a star!**

You gonna be a star!

Behave your self!

> **everything** gets amplified!

> framing

> do not eat or chew – take a break

> do not hold a glas ... glas = alcohol = you are not working!

> do not smoke

> sit up taller, lean forward, do not move your legs

You gonna be a star!

Patterns and colours

- › patterns
  - ‣ no fish-bones, close stripes, Hawaiian
  - ‣ moire effect and strobe effect
- › colours
  - ‣ avoid red, blue is beautiful
  - ‣ white only partially
  - ‣ dark colours fade in, light come forward
  - ‣ clothing colour different from the background
- › jewellery
  - ‣ avoid bright and shining

You gonna be a star!

Control your emotions

> emotions – amplified!

> avoid anger and negative emotions

> control nervousness

‣ visit VC room in advance

‣ prepare for presentation

‣ look 'through' camera, not 'at'

‣ relaxing exercises

‣ be yourself!

You gonna be a star!

Additional add

> use plants and flowers – it softeners

> declare off-camera distractions (someone opens doors, etc ...)

> assume you're <u>allways</u> live – watch your actions and remarks

> be on time – no power on being late on VC

You gonna be a star!

How can it look like ... in real life

http://mediaserv.unc.edu:7070/ramgen/telability/videos/bestPracticesT1.rm

... and remember:

In case of <u>any</u> situation concerning
<u>any</u> technical matter of <u>any</u> part of videoconferencing,
as very first and very important thing:

DON'T PANIC!

... HHGTtG

Go and have videoconferencing!

Thank you!

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http://www.carnet.hr/videokonferencije

Would you like to teach others about how to use VC?

Experienced or willing to learn?

BECOME AN EDUPOINT TEACHER!

http://edupoint.carnet.hr/