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To learn more about the study or groups involved visit the following websites:

Desktop Video Collaboration
<http://umgroups.memphis.edu/meet>
Advanced Learning Center
<http://alc.memphis.edu>
Fogelman College of Business & Economics
<http://fcbe.memphis.edu>

Look, Listen, Learn: Collaboration in the 21st Century

a study conducted by the
Advanced Learning Center and the
Fogelman College of Business & Economics



By Joanne Gikas , Corey Ray
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Imagine if you could . . .

- Discuss research progress with colleagues from around the nation without leaving your desk
- Facilitate collaboration between your students and their peers at institutions around the world
- Enable your class to communicate with subject matter experts at work in the field
- Add multiple dimensions to your students learning and move them beyond traditional learning environments



Study Summary

Members of the Advanced Learning Center and the Fogelman College of Business & Economics at the University of Memphis researched desktop collaboration software for use in the academic environment. The goal was to identify an easy, low cost software and hardware desktop collaboration tool that would allow for real time communication to support teaching, learning and research.

Consideration was given to ROI (Return on Investment) by analyzing current campus network and server infrastructure, end user hardware requirements, ease of installation and use of software. Both quantitative and qualitative data were captured on user experience. This data provided a foundation for the needed training and support strategies to pursue the current collaboration tool.

Throughout the pilot year surveys were conducted with users to evaluate the selected tool and the effectiveness of participant interactions. From this data we were able to identify different types of collaborations (i.e. one-to-one collaboration, multi-person collaboration or one-to-many collaboration) that illustrated potential obstacles and provided suggested strategies for conducting these collaborative sessions effectively.



Using a desktop collaboration tool can provide the opportunity for academics and professionals to share experiences and knowledge. For example, this can be done by bringing in subject matter experts, providing collaboration opportunities for students in an online learning environment and connecting researchers at different institutions.

User Experiences . . .

Faculty members who normally met with their students face-to-face have also been able to set up a desktop conferencing session for students to meet for advising, collaboration, and dissertation defenses.

“I truly believe that tools such as inSORS are needed to provide a competitive educational environment at the University of Memphis. I have used inSORS in several classes where team based projects are central where video conferencing enables [distant] students to be meaningful participants on group projects. It can also be a very valuable tool to utilize in comprehensive exams enabling them to be conducted over the Internet and to include dissertation committee members who may be away from campus when the dissertation is defended.”

James Penrod: The University of Memphis
Prof. of Leadership: College of Education
AT&T Fellow: Advanced Learning Center

The University of Memphis’ Groundwater Institute collaborated with colleagues from around the globe to assist in the writing of a National Science Foundation (NSF) Grant.

“In scientific investigations that require collaboration between a number of academic institutions, inSORS proved to be a very valuable tool for communicating in real-time with scientists during the planning period. Video conferencing using inSORS allowed team members nationwide to play an active role in local meetings that, because of cost and travel time, would have prohibited them from attending. The compatibility of inSORS with other video conferencing hardware/software allowed our constituents abroad to also be in attendance. inSORS is certainly an instrumental tool in our research efforts.”



Brian Waldron: The University of Memphis
Assistant Research Professor: Civil Engineering
Associate Director: Ground Water Institute

The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR), The University of Memphis and other TBR institutions (from across the state) collaborated with the desktop tool to formulate the RFP (Request for Proposal) for the course management system contract renewal. By removing the need for travel, saving both time and money, this allowed for a cost effective solution for the necessary individuals to participate in the RFP process.

“[In a state with numerous geographically dispersed institutions,] inSORS has been invaluable in reducing travel and the costs associated with travel for our planning exercises between the University of Memphis and the Tennessee Board of Regents located in Nashville.”

Tom Danford: Tennessee Board of Regents
Chief Information Officer