

Glossary of Videoconference Terminology

Videoconference	A rapidly growing video compression standard that allows videoconferencing systems to communicate over the internet using IP .
Bandwidth	Messages are divided into packets before they are sent. Each packet has a head and tail and is transmitted individually. Once all the packets arrive, they are recompiled into the original message.
Codec	Registers information about users which then enables it to look-up users and connect them.
Latency	When multiple sites are participating, the person currently speaking is viewed by all participants.
Multipoint	Many networks now have these to protect internal data from internal and external hazards. In order to videoconference over an IP network with a firewall, ports are assigned to handle the video.
Point to point	Videoconference between two sites.
Muting	The amount of information that can be transmitted over an information channel.
Gatekeeper	Communication across long distances with video and audio contact that may also include graphic exchange.
Gateway	Videoconference with more than two sites.
ISDN	Internet protocols are used to communicate across any set of interconnected networks. Internet protocols can be used to specify common applications such as electronic mail, terminal emulation, and file transfer.
Packet	Used by videoconferencing hardware to code the outgoing video and audio signals and decode the incoming signals.
Protocol	The number of data bits per second that can flow in a communications circuit. Some common speeds are 56K (for dial up modems), 384K (for most video conferencing) and 10 Megabits (for a low-speed Ethernet).
Presets	A high-quality, switched digital communications service that gives your standard phone line the ability to transmit voice and data simultaneously.
Cascading	A standardized format for transmitting data between two devices. The protocol determines error checking, data compression, and the formal beginning and end of messages.
Firewall	Allow you to pre-define camera angles, locations, and distances and store them into a videoconferencing system.
H.323 Standard	Cascading is a method of allowing the number of participants to expand beyond what a single MCU can support. Cascading allows one MCU videoconference to join or be invited into another MCU videoconference.
IP	Turning off the microphone when not speaking.
MCU	The length of time it takes a packet to move from source to destination; delay.
Voice Activated Switching (VAS)	A network point that acts as an entrance to another network. Provides the protocol translation allowing H.323 endpoints, H.320 systems, and others to participate in the same videoconference.
Bit rate	Also called a bridge, a component that manages videoconferences of three or more participants.