
UNIT 3 COMMUNICATING THROUGH WEB TOOLS

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Warm Up
- 3.2 Readings
- 3.3 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.4 Answer Key

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit you will learn:

- Different kinds of web tools used today
- What is video conferencing / teleconferencing
- Types of video conferencing, its benefits and protocols
- Web publishing tools / Public speaking systems
- Chat Rooms
- Discussion Forums
- Instant Messaging
- Blogs
- Social networking
- Vocabulary associated with web technology



3.1 WARM UP

You have learnt about e mail as a web tool in the last unit. What are the other web tools that you are familiar with? Make a list and then see how it compares with what you will learn about in this unit.

3.2 READING

3.2.1 Video Conferencing

The more recent and radical development that has taken place in communication technology is video conferencing or teleconferencing. It allows two or more people to connect with each other not only through audio but also through video. It is as good as face-to-face conversation



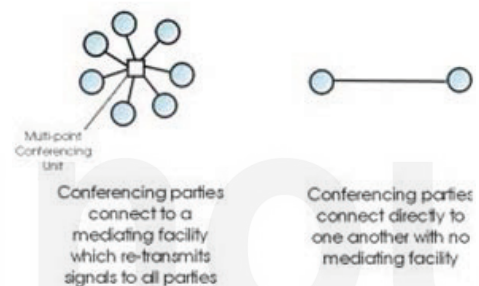
where two people or two groups located in different places can participate in natural conversation observing each other closely. This new technology is highly successful in all the fields as it allows people from far off places to participate in any important meeting or gathering without having to travel.

Each user or group of users who are participating in a video conference typically must have a computer, a camera, a microphone, a video screen and a sound system. Another requirement is a connection to the communications system that is being used, which in the 21st century usually is the Internet but might also be a satellite-based a broadcast signal or other communications technology. It may also need a software i.e. computer program to establish connection between users and system.

A conference between two or more participants at different sites by using computer networks to transmit audio and video data can be –

- Point-to-point video conferencing
- Multipoint video conferencing

Multi-point vs. Point-to-point



A **point-to-point** (two-person) video conferencing system works much like a video telephone. Each participant has a video camera, microphone, and speakers mounted on his or her computer. As the two participants speak to one another, their voices are carried over the network and delivered to the other's speakers, and whatever images appear in front of the video camera appear in a window on the other participant's monitor.

Multipoint videoconferencing allows three or more participants to sit in a virtual conference room and communicate as if they were sitting right next to each other. Until the mid 90s, the hardware costs made videoconferencing expensive for most organizations, but that situation is changing rapidly. Many analysts believe that videoconferencing will be one of the fastest-growing segments of the computer industry in the latter half of the decade.



Check Your Progress 1

Read through the above passage again and then complete the sentences that have been begun for you. This will help you to strengthen your understanding of the concept of videoconferencing. Now compare what you have written with the text above.

- 1) Videoconferencing allows
- 2) For videoconferencing you must have
- 3) The two types of videoconferencing are
and

Benefits

This technology has played a very important role in bringing the world together. It has led to creation of virtual offices where people are connected with each other online even when their real locations are thousands of miles apart. Its predecessor was videophone, which was available in 1970s. However, it was very expensive and therefore unsuccessful. With the arrival of internet and broadband in 1990s, the scene changed. Now people are able to talk to each other through the internet free of cost. As this technology improves, it will be accessible to a wider range of people.

- Almost any organization that holds meetings for people from different locations, whether across town or around the world, can make use of video conferencing.
- This technology is especially popular in the field of business because it allows meetings or conferences to be held without the need for all of the participants to travel to a single location.
- It is also useful in the fields of academics and medicine. Experts can be consulted online and they can administer a student or patient virtually.
- It is extremely helpful in governance. Central or state government can direct the subordinate or local authority online. Local authorities can also seek timely guidance directly from the highest source.
- It saves time and money.
- Its usage can be helpful in saving the energy resources like petrol and diesel as one can do the work from his home without commuting to other places.
- It helps build relationships
- Family members and relatives can use them to see and talk to each other especially if they live far away

Check Your Progress 2

Based on the information above, make a list of places where videoconferences can be used and for what purposes. Match your response with what is given in the Key.

Places	Purposes

Service providers

You may wonder how you can use this technology personally or in your office. Here is some information of who makes this possible and how.

- 1) Free video and audio calls can be placed with the help of internet. There are a host of service providers like Google voice and video chat, Skype, Yahoo messenger and others that can connect people in real time.
- 2) With the advent of 3G and 4G phones, free teleconferencing has become accessible to everyone. Nokia, iPhone and other mobile models support video chat and provide video chat applications in their different models.



- 3) There are professional teleconferencing service providers who provide the setup for larger events or big occasions organized by bigger organizations.

Check Your Progress 3

So which one of the above services do you think is the most expensive and why?

Video conferencing Protocol

Video conferencing serves as virtual meeting point for its users. It calls for some preparation from the participants as they might do for an actual meeting. Since it has emerged as a valuable tool of communication for business organizations, it is more important for people to follow some basic etiquettes or guidelines so that it becomes a productive experience.

Check Your Progress 4

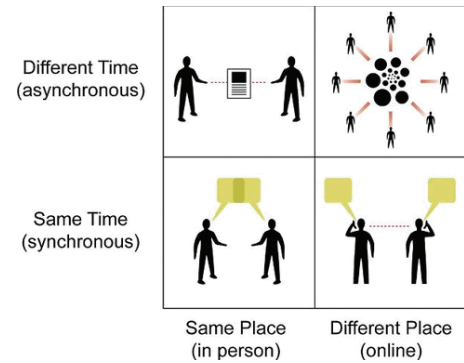
Given below are some tips and guidelines. But these have important words missing. Can you first fill up the missing words and check the answers with the Key. Once you have done that, go through the points again and remember to use these when you take part in a videoconference.

- Be 1 _____ with the equipment and setup. In case of business meetings, the participants should 2 _____ about the session beforehand.
- Participants should pay 3 _____ to their appearance as they would do in case of an actual meeting
- Seek 4 _____ of the person with whom you wish to talk
- Lighting should be 5 _____. 6 _____ mike and sound system
- 7 _____ loudly and clearly
- 8 _____ background noises
- 9 _____ eye contact with the camera and not with the image on screen
- In case of group meetings, 10 _____ specific names to direct your queries
- 11 _____ track of time in case of a business meeting

3.2.2 Web Publishing Tools/Public Speaking Systems

So now you have some idea of the extent to which Internet technology has facilitated e-correspondence. You also need to understand that owing to the

numerous e-correspondence means made available by the web world, public communication has changed drastically not only in nature and form but also in volume. Conversation and exchange of ideas was never so easy and affordable before. Internet and broadband has made it possible for a person to connect with multiple people in just one click.



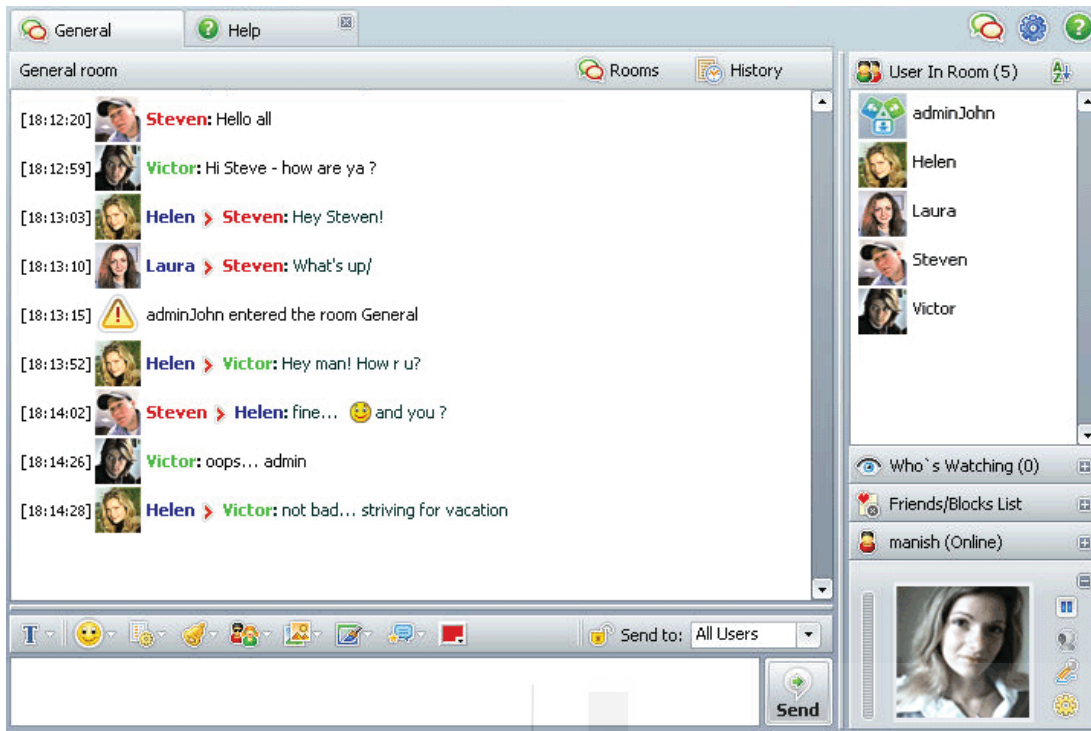
Over the years, it has led to tremendous boost in the increase of social interaction and public speaking. People are now more connected and open in voicing their opinion. They are now involved in multiple activities like networking with selected people, forming groups and interacting with them, giving feedbacks and keeping updates. Besides exchanging emails, people are now 'chatting', 'messaging', 'blogging', 'scrapping' and 'posting.'

3.2.3 Chat Room

A chat is a real time online conversation between many computer users. All participants must be in front of their computer at the same time. The chat takes place in a "chat room", a virtual online room also called a channel. Users type their messages, and their messages appear on the monitor as text entries that scroll many screens deep. Anywhere from 2 to 200 people can be in a chat room. They can freely send, receive and reply to messages from many chat users simultaneously. It is like instant messaging, but with more than two people, fast typing, fast scrolling screens. These chats can be about anything that interests the participants - sports, politics and entertainment. Most of the people are strangers to each other, yet they enjoy exchanging ideas and learning about other people's views, pastimes etc.



Chat rooms came into existence with the expansion of web and websites. Chat rooms began as a text based environment for people to communicate with each other. Now they have expanded them to include the voice of the speakers. These days, basic text based Chat Rooms are largely being replaced by more exciting text based Chat Rooms, which feature picture avatars or various games one can play while chatting. Some latest types of Chat Rooms allow the user to enroll in an entire virtual world. These new virtual Chat Rooms feature a 3D or 2D environment where people are free to make their own characters or avatars, which represent them in the virtual world. Many of these virtual Chat Rooms are free of charge.



Sample chat room

Chat Room Etiquette

Chat Rooms are places where different types of people come together to communicate with one another, certain rules need to be followed. Since it allows any person to join and express, support or contradict any one in formal/informal language, participants can sometimes be abusive and vulgar. Therefore, nearly all of the larger chat rooms are constantly moderated for any offensive activity. However, few smaller chat rooms lack such moderation and it is therefore up to the users to be sure that no offensive activities take place. Here are some tips you can follow:

- **Choose your words.** Many chat rooms restrict offensive language including obscenities, racial comments, and sexual terms that may be offensive to certain users.
- **Avoid promotion or campaigning.** Any type of advertising, flooding the same word or words repeatedly, and spamming are also frowned upon. Most users will be banned from the chat room for doing such activities.
- **Do Policing.** If you are visiting an online chat room that is not moderated, report any of the above activities to whoever runs the site you are using. If you are active in a chat community, it is important to be proactive with policing the rules.

Sample of Chat Room on Global warming

Nancy: I think it is the cumulative effect of pollution, CFC and deforestation that is responsible for GW...

Robin: I couldn't agree more with you Nancy.

Praia: But I think deforestation and mining work are also responsible for increasing GW...

(Manish joins the room)

Manish: Hi everyone!

Robin: welcome Manish!

Priya: I think we need a strict global policy on the matter...

Manish: What about the responsibility of individuals like you and me? After all no policy can be effective without awareness in individuals about their responsibility...

Nancy: earthquakes, tsunami, ozone depletion...OMG...it's time to wakeup guys...

Robin: let's face it, it's now or never situation...

Speaking Practice

Activity 1

Contact a friend or a group of friends who use the Internet and practice chatting by using one of the online chat rooms. You could discuss any topic of common interest. Remember to follow the tips on chat etiquette.

Chat used to be very popular in the late 1990's, but has fallen out of vogue lately. Fewer people use chat, instead, instant messaging, discussion forums and blogs are far more popular these days.



3.2.4 Discussion Forum

Discussion forums are a slow-motion form of chat. Forums are designed to build online communities of people with similar interests. Also known as a "discussion group", "board" or "newsgroup", a forum is a service where you can also exchange non-instant messages with other members. This means that the other members of the group for whom you post the message may not be online when you post it. They can reply according to their own convenience and time schedule, and do not need to be present when you are sending the

message. Almost all forums are dedicated to some specific community or subject, such as travel, gardening, motorcycles, vintage cars, cooking, social issues, music artists, and more. Forums are very popular, and are renowned for being quite addictive because they put you in touch with many similar-minded people.

Activity 2

Think about a forum you would like to join in keeping with your interests. Surf the net to find out about existing forums in your area of interest and try joining one. Not only will you enjoy the experience but also benefit from it.

3.2.5 Instant Messaging

It is a real-time messaging format. IM is really a specialized form of 'chat' between people who know each other. Both IM users must be online at the same time for IM to fully work. IM is not as popular as email, but it is popular amongst teenagers and people in office places that allow instant messaging.

3.2.6 Blog



The word blog is condensed form of words web log. It is a personal journal published on the World Wide Web. You can create your own 'BlogSpot' on the web and start airing your opinions. People who regularly blog are called bloggers. Blogs are usually the work of a single individual, occasionally of a small group. It consists of separate entries called "posts" which are often written on a single subject. These posts contain the views and opinion of that person on the subject. It appears date wise and is typically displayed in reverse chronological order so the most recent post appears first.

The emergence and growth of blogs in the late 1990s coincided with the advent of web publishing tools that facilitated the posting of content by non-technical users. Previously knowledge of such technologies as HTML and FTP was required to publish content on the Web but not any more. Now even you can create a blog for yourself!

Blogspots are free for visitors. Everyone is free to read and comment on the posts. Although not a must, most good quality blogs are interactive, allowing visitors to leave comments and even message each other. This interactivity distinguishes blogs from other static websites. In this sense, blogging can be seen as a form of social networking. Bloggers not only produce content to post on their blogs but also build social relations with their readers and other bloggers. Hence, blogs facilitate communication, freedom of speech and self-expression.

Many blogs provide commentary on a particular subject. Others function more as personal online diaries. Yet others function more as online brand advertising of a particular individual or company. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. Most blogs are primarily textual. Other variants of blogs are-

Types of Blogs	Usage	Common Websites
Text blog	showing textual posts	Wordpress, Blogger
Photo blog	based on photographs	Google Picasa, Flickr,
Video blogging or vlogging	focusing on videos	YouTube
MP3 blog	based on music	
Podcasting	based on audio	YouTube, Audacity,
Micro blogging	featuring very short posts	Twitter
Art blog	focusing on art	Creative Commons

Pointers for Blogging

- Blogs can be written in any kind of language- formal, semi-formal, colloquial or slang
- Since blogs contain your views and opinion on any topic which concerns you, the language should be persuasive and clear
- Length of the post should be checked as extra lengthy or wordy blogs discourage readership
- Abusive or foul language should be avoided
- Blogs are unique platforms provided by the internet to voice your sentiments on a global platform, the entries or responses to any entry should be constructive and meaningful.
- Language should be chosen according to the need of the topic. If the topic is serious and business related, the language should be formal and vice versa.
- Supplying personal information and passing personal remarks should be avoided.

Activity 3

- 1) **Would you like to create a blog for yourself? If so, think about the theme or topic. Alternatively, visit a blog on the area of your interest and make a posting on that blog. After sometime check to see**

whether you got a response. This will also give you a first hand experience of a blog.

2) Let us also do a vocabulary exercise on the text on “Blogging’ given above. Find words in the text that have these meanings:

- a) Shortened
- b) Make
- c) Arranged in the order of time
- d) Happen at the same time as
- e) Enable
- f) Sets apart
- g) Convincing
- h) Feelings and emotions

3.2.7 Social Networking

Social networking simply means meeting of people at one place for general chitchat. There are several social networking sites that offer this meeting place online. These sites aim at giving platforms for building relationships among people who share a common interest or activity or background. These websites serve as a common community for internet users. They meet with each other, talk about day to day things, share information ranging from current affairs, sports, politics to common interests and hobbies.



You need to register on these websites and create your profile. This profile discloses your identity on the net for other users, your friends, who might be interested in connecting with you. You can search for your acquaintances in the same way and can see their profiles and links.

Activity 4

Benefits of social networking sites

I. The sub headings for the points enlisted under benefits are missing. Can you fill them in as you go down the sequence of points? If you need help, look at the box below. Match your answers with the key.

- 1) _____: the very basic function of these sites is to enhance social interaction. You can remain in touch and

updated with your old friends. At the same time, new friendships can be formed easily.

- 2) _____: unemployed can network directly with the professionals and can make presentations online. This increases the job opportunities.
- 3) _____: the networking sites sell online spaces for advertisement to the companies.
- 4) _____: students and teachers form forums and discuss classroom topics. Teachers post assignments and students submit projects on these platforms. These sites also foster parent-teacher association.
- 5) _____: these sites offer strong platform to mobilize like-minded people towards constructive objectives.
- 6) _____: you can share your personal information- videos, photos, experiences and other unique things with your near and dear ones through networking sites.

Sharing Social interaction	Business platform Mobilizing people	Job opportunities and employment	Education
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Pointers for Posting Comments on Social Networking Sites

- Language can be informal as the conversation is done most of the time in an informal manner
- In case of serious posts, the language should be precise and relevant
- Your comments reflect your personality. Hence, comments should be in range of decency and propriety
- Posts can be personalized depending on the topic
- Vocabulary, tone and expression depend on the intention of the speaker
- Abusiveness should be curbed

Activity 5

Imagine that your friend has been promoted in her / his job. Congratulate her / him on her/ his Facebook account.

3.3 LET US SUM UP

This unit has introduced you to the various types of web tools viz video conferencing/ teleconferencing; Web publishing tools / Public speaking

systems; Chat Rooms; Discussion Forums; Instant Messaging; Blogs; Social networking and Vocabulary associated with web technology. Hope you have enjoyed reading this unit.

3.4 ANSWER KEY

Check Your Progress 1

Do it yourself.

Check Your Progress 2

Places	Purposes
Companies / business organizations	Meetings with people and organizations around the world
Hospitals	Consultation with experts and online treatment
Educational institutions	Consultation with academicians and online tutoring / learning
Government offices – Central and State	Governance and direction
Homes	Talking to and seeing family members living far away

Check Your Progress 3

The third option. These services are provided by professionals and experts at a charge. The quality of these services is usually of a high standard. These are usually used for large scale and big events.

Check Your Progress 4

- Be 1. **familiar** with the equipment and setup. In case of business meetings, the participants should 2. **know** about the session beforehand.
- Participants should 3. **pay** attention to their appearance as they would do in case of actual meeting
- 4. **Seek** permission of the person with whom you wish to talk
- Lighting should be 5. **Adequate**. 6. **Check** mike and sound system
- 7. **Speak** loudly and clearly
- 8. **Minimize** background noises
- 9. **Make** eye contact with the camera and not with the image on screen
- In case of group meetings, 10. **Use** specific names to direct your queries

- **11. Keep** the track of time in case of business meeting

Activity 1

Do it yourself.

Activity 2

Do it yourself.

Activity 3

1 Do it yourself.

2

- a) Shortened – condensed
- b) Make – create
- c) Arranged in the order of time – chronological
- d) Happen at the same time as – coincided
- e) Enable – facilitate
- f) Sets apart – distinguishes
- g) Convincing – persuasive
- h) Feelings and emotions - sentiments

Activity 4

1. **Social interaction:** the very basic function of these sites is to enhance social interaction. You can remain in touch and updated with your old friends. At the same time, new friendships can be formed easily.
2. **Job opportunities and employment:** unemployed can network directly with the professionals and can make presentations online. This increases the job opportunities.
3. **Business platform:** the networking sites sell online spaces for advertisement to the companies.
4. **Education:** students and teachers form forums and discuss classroom topics. Teachers post assignments and students submit projects on these platforms. These sites also foster parent-teacher association.
5. **Mobilizing people:** these sites offer strong platform to mobilize like-minded people towards constructive objectives.
6. **Sharing:** you can share your personal information- videos, photos, experiences and other unique things with your near and dear ones through networking sites.

Activity 5

Do it yourself.