



5-Point Guide to Choosing and Using Audio Conferencing

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WHY USE AUDIO CONFERENCING

The benefits to using audio conferencing are to cut down on travel time and be able to easily hold meetings on an impromptu basis. Your organisation will reduce not only travelling time and the cost of travel but be more productive in that these calls can involve between 2 and 100 people and saves the complex problems of planning diary movements.

There is no need to book a time slot and the service is available from any touch phone anywhere in the world. It is also available on a 24 hour 7 day a week basis. You can alert meeting attendees at the meeting start time and the access number via an on line SMS text facility.

When you have had the meeting a record can be played back and made available to parties that were not present at the conference. If necessary an operator can assist your meeting and help the conferences run smoothly. This is all provided via one consolidated bill for your entire organisation broken down by an individual account holder.

TYPES OF AUDIO CONFERENCING

Telephone systems normally have the ability to audio conference between four and eight people depending on the type of telephone system you purchase. The typical number of conferences that can be held for most telephone systems is four. This means that four people at any one time mainly three external and one internal can be in a conference. This can be limited when you have groups of salesman on a Monday morning wanting to participate in a conference at distances.

Consequently, some manufacturers supply hardware called conference bridges, which can be attached to the telephone system. To make this work you also require ISDN30 lines to dial in on. This can be quite a cost effective solution particularly if you are using audio conferencing on a regular basis as once you have paid your capital equipment cost the service will cost literally a few pence per minute to organise and the large bills that can come in for multiple participants can be eliminated.

The other option is to use networking audio conferencing. A number of network service providers have purchased their own audio conferencing equipment, which is similar to the products that can be brought commercially to put onto a telephone system and because this cost is shared over a large variety of users, the price per user comes down. Typical prices are 15 pence to 20 pence per minute and this is easy to subscribe to and also easy to use.

If your use is less frequent or you have a lot of people that need to audio conference on an infrequent basis, then network studio conferencing is probably the better choice. If you have a small number of users that want to conference every few days then a conferencing bridge is probably the better choice. A conferencing bridge can be connected to any telephone system and network audio conferencing can be used on any telephone system.

HOW TO USE AUDIO CONFERENCING

Most audio conferencing services work the following way:

An account holder is provided with an account card, which contains the numbers used for conference calling, the host pin number and the participant pin number. The account holder (host) emails or sends by SMS the conference number, start time and the pin number for the participant. The host dials the number, enters their pin number and states their name. The participant then enters their pin number, states their name and the call commences. When the conference is complete the host and participants hang up. This is a very simple process.

A similar methodology works for audio conferencing bridges, which are connected to the telephone system. The only real difference is that the host owns the equipment and the participants dial in on normal numbers or they can dial in on non-geographic numbers if required.

WHERE DO I SUBSCRIBE?

Audio conferencing network products are available from most network providers such as BT or Telstra. Audio conferencing bridges are normally purchased from telephone equipment suppliers, if you already have a telephone equipment supplier please ask them for details of either of these methods of audio conferencing. If your existing supplier does not supply these methods please call Actimax on 0800 0567575 and we will be pleased to give you more details of both products which we supply.

PRICING

Telstra Service Provider Conferencing Services Tariff Schedule – October 2005

Access Method	Price Pre Minute
0870	10.00
0845	12.00
0800	14.00
020	12.00
INT +44 20	12.00
ITF (per min + ITF charge (see separate sheet))	12.00

Dial Out call charges

Conference Bridge Charge	14.00
+ UK / Eire	14.00
+ UK Mobile	35.00
+ Europe	24.00
+ Europe Mobile	35.00
+ North America	18.00
+ Asia / Pacific	24.00
+ Asia / Pacific Mobile	40.00
+ Rest of World	80.00

Additional Features

Operator Assistance	15.00
Glance	22.00
Playback	15.00
SMS (per message)	28.00
Recording (per incident)	£12.00
Download (per incident)	£12.00

Business Rules

- The above charges apply across all time bands.
- Access Method is pence per participation per minute.
- Calls are billed in 60 second increments, with a minimum charge of 1 minute.
- All prices are quoted in UK pence per minute excluding VAT, unless otherwise stated.
- Dial out charges are borne by the Conference host in addition to the access method charge.
- Start times of calls are dependant on method of access.

ABOUT ACTIMAX

Actimax, established in 1997 has a firm track record of proven results and satisfied customers in the telecommunications market. Our core business is the supply, installation and maintenance of communications systems, and our strength is in the technical background of our team of 38 employees.

With a management team that have worked together for a combined total of over 75 years, we are a hard working company that knows where it is heading. The experience of John Massey Managing Director who's background in the communications industry goes back over 30 years is invaluable in the company being one step ahead of the competition. Actimax invests over 50k per annum on training it's team, including technical engineering courses, management courses, sales and marketing seminars and we also recently offered Learn Direct courses to the whole company, which saw a good up take. The company ethos is to keep our team, happy, motivated and interested, that way they are more likely to stay with us. This has proved to be a benefit with 60% of our team having been with us for over 3 years,

We provide communications hardware from five leading manufacturers along with a whole portfolio of supporting products. We have gained superior accreditation with all of the suppliers we work with, along with awards for Customer Care and Service (2004 and 2005) , Comms Channel Reseller of the Year 2005, Essex Business of the Year 2005 and Business-to-Business winner 2005.

Our target market are companies, either single or multisites with over 20 employees, and with no upper limit. Our market sector is any company looking to improve their process and procedures along with increase in sales, cutting costs and improving service, and we have been especially successful in Government, Financial, Travel and the Motor Trade.

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