

What you can manage

A videoconference can include many venues but until now only a list of booked participants was displayed on the Conference Management pages. The upgrade means that live screen shots of participants are now shown instead, updating every 30 seconds (or shorter or longer if the user so decides). These screen shots are there throughout the conference, and are a visual aid for conference managers to see if a participant has arrived, if the codec is on, if there are any problems with one or more site's video and so forth.

The conference administrator can also add and remove participants while the conference is in progress, and if it is being recorded then the recording can be stopped while the conference continues: useful if, for example, the recording was to cover a performance, presentation or discussion of a specific topic and the topic has now moved on. Another addition, much requested by users, is the new guest facility – the ability to include telephone guests. Guests can join the videoconference by phone without needing access to videoconference facilities themselves, and without needing to be registered as users of the service. In booking the videoconference, the administrator simply selects a new guest type: “telephone (audio only)”, and enters the name and email address of the telephone participant. The telephone guest is then emailed a number to call into the videoconference.

Users can also dial in direct to the videoconference. While this could be done beforehand, Janet Videoconferencing had to know the IP address they were dialling in from, which meant the administrator having to contact every user in advance. Now users can be given an IP address to dial into, and a PIN to enter once connected which will put them straight into the right conference.

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