



Application Story

Kent College Pembury

e/pop[®] Web & Video Conferencing Brings Kent College Pembury's Staff, Students and Parents Together

For girls aged three to 11, Kent College Preparatory School is one of the leading independent preparatory schools in the country. High academic standards, excellent SAT results and preparation for further schooling are at the heart of what it does.

On the same site, Kent College Pembury is one of the leading independent senior schools for 11 to 18 year old girls in Kent. Its particular ethos is founded on nurturing confidence and providing an exciting range of opportunities to inspire and achieve success.

The School strongly believes that there is more to childhood and learning than examinations. With this in mind, Director of ICT Bill Burles is continually on the look out for innovative ways to not only improve learning, but the students' overall experience at Kent College Preparatory School. "We wanted a solution that could improve the current ways of communicating, both during lessons and during the student's social time," he explains.

Kent College Preparatory School sought a web conferencing solution that didn't require client software. It had to be easy to use and not hardware-based so that anyone could use it anywhere in the world. It needed to enable the staff and students to share applications and data using their existing PCs and requires little or no training. And, the chosen solution needed to do all this and yet be inexpensive and reliable.

Kent College Preparatory School discovered WiredRed's e/pop Web Conferencing software via the web. e/pop is designed to enhance relations in both education and business to easily communicate complex topics and eliminate unnecessary travel. So, whether just down the corridor or halfway around the world from each other, e/pop enables disparate parties to enhance communications and collaboration. Utilising voice and video IP, its users can partake in real-time collaboration, sharing information whether it be in the form of a document, application or presentation.

Problem:

- Kent College Pembury sought an inexpensive and reliable web conferencing solution

Solution:

- e/pop Web Conferencing, a full-featured, affordable, multiparty web and video conferencing software

Business & IT Benefits:

- e/pop is browser-based, runs on standard PCs and is easy to use
- e/pop is secure and can integrate with customer or third-party PKI
- e/pop cuts long distance phone costs and no per-minute usage charges are incurred

Kent College Preparatory School's first use of WiredRed was particularly inventive. One of the pupil's parents, Simon Court, runs a high profile management consulting company called Value Partnership. He offered to undertake a lesson on communications during one of the fifth year's marketing lessons. Through e/pop, which was projected onto a smart board at the front of the classroom, he and the students were able to communicate via video, voice and text chat despite him being in a different location. "This provided a real life example on how ways of communicating are evolving and how web conferencing will become a larger part in all of our lives in the future," enthused Lex Bracewell, the prep school ICT Coordinator. "They found it great fun, in fact it took them over two hours for the teachers to calm down their excitement afterwards!"

Charlotte Owen, a fifth year student, was just one of those excited by using the technology. "I think that web conferencing was so amazing the way you can talk to people, but also look at them at the same time and the fact that they could be miles away or even in another country."

Her friend Pebe Beetham agreed. "The video conferencing was really great! It was so cool to sit in front of a tiny camera, and be able to talk to someone miles away. It was brilliant!"

A more serious use of the e/pop software is to allow the boarding students to be able to communicate securely to their parents and friends. "There are obvious security issues with allowing them to chat via channels such as MSN and other IM clients which we wanted to avoid," explained Burles. "WiredRed's e/pop is very secure and traceable and doesn't require any software on the parents end – we don't even need to send them a disk."

e/pop is one of the most secure web conferencing solutions available today. It is server-installed software, so you have control over physical security, web conference routing, and access to server event logs. At the click of a mouse, you can set your conference server to always use SSL3/TLS or let your conference hosts decide whether they want to use more secure connections. For sensitive applications, you can also set your conference server to use your own Public Key Infrastructure (PKI).

"As well as improving the learning experience for the students by enabling offsite teachers and speakers to be able to lead a lesson without being physically in the classroom, we can synchronise classrooms with other schools and colleges both in the UK and the rest of the world," said Burles. "Imagine having a French lesson with students in a Paris classroom helping the students in Kent; none of this could be achievable and so cost effectively without e/pop."

e/pop has saved the School substantial costs in installation, training and phone costs that it would have spent with other systems available on the market. "We didn't want to spend £10,000 on a video conferencing solution and were similarly put off by other web conferencing vendors insistence in charging by the minute. We wanted to eliminate operational expenses whilst keeping capital expenses low," explained Burles. "e/pop can work with even the most basic hardware incredibly effectively."

"The potential advantages of installing e/pop are almost limitless," added Burles. "The inclusion of desktop sharing and PC remote control in e/pop means that we can even use it to fix any problems that our teachers or parents are having with other applications wherever they may be."

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