



Desktop Videoconferencing Guide

A guide from the
JANET Videoconferencing Service

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Introduction

This document is to assist those using the JVCS Booking Service to book and join a videoconference to include one or more Desktop Videoconferencing participants. Please note that the Desktop Videoconferencing is a pilot feature.

What is Desktop Videoconferencing?

Desktop Videoconferencing is a pilot feature available to registered users of the JANET Videoconferencing Service (JVCS). It allows users to participate in a booked videoconference from a PC or laptop without having to use a hardware-based endpoint (CODEC). This feature uses the Tandberg software called ConferenceMe and permits a lecturer or teacher to chair a discussion from a regular videoconferencing venue (room) with several students who are using desktops and laptops at other sites or at home.

1 Hardware & Software Requirements

Desktop Videoconferencing (JVCS Desktop) is only supported on PCs or laptops running Microsoft Windows™ software, therefore, is not supported on PCs or laptops running MAC or Linux operating systems.

The following minimum specifications are recommended for using Desktop Videoconferencing:

- PC or laptop running Windows XP (Service Pack 2 or higher), Windows Vista (Service Pack 1 or higher), or Windows 7
- Dual-core processor
- 1GB RAM minimum
- Network connection (e.g. office network or home broadband)
- Webcam
- Headset with microphone - either USB or 3.5mm jack plugged directly into the pink microphone socket and green speaker socket ports. Alternatively, a personal USB speakerphone may be used, e.g. a ClearOne Chat, Phoenix Duet or Polycom Communicator.
- Desktop Videoconferencing software installed:
<http://193.60.198.133/conferenceme.msi>

Note: the software package is labelled 'ConferenceMe.msi' (provided by Tandberg)

Users must have administrative permissions on their PC or laptop to install this software. If there are any issues with installation they will need to contact their IT department.

2 Booking a Videoconference to Include a Desktop User

1. Login to the Booking Service - <http://www.jvcs.ja.net/cgi-bin/vcng/welcome.cgi>
2. Click **Book videoconference**
3. Enter conference details: title, purpose, date, time and a Conference coordinator
4. Click on **Add Venues and attendees**
5. Add a conference venue
6. Click **Add Guest**
7. Select **JVCS Desktop** under **Guest type**
8. Enter the **Name**, **Organisation** and **Email address** of the Desktop Videoconferencing conference participant. An email will be sent to desktop guests with a link to join the conference at the designated date/time and a link from which to download the software package labelled 'Conferenceme.msi' (provided by Tandberg) to be installed on the machine (if it is not already installed).
9. Add a registered venue by clicking on **Add to Conference**
10. Under **JVCS Desktop Videoconferencing participants** enter a reason for using this system
11. Click **Confirm venue and attendees** to confirm booking details
12. Adjust any further conference options if necessary under Advanced settings
13. Click **Complete conference booking**
14. The Booker will be presented with a booking reference, including a link (for information purposes only), which their Desktop Videoconferencing guest participants will use to access to join the conference, e.g. <http://www.jvcs.ja.net/c/3BE3IAPg>. This link is also emailed to all Desktop Videoconferencing guests listed in the booking.

3 Joining a Conference using Desktop Videoconferencing

Desktop Videoconferencing guest participants will automatically receive an email with details of the conference (see sample email below).

1. Within the email click the conference link
2. Enter your email address in the form
3. Click [join videoconference](#) to connect to the conference

Sample email:

You have been sent this email because Dr Lecturer has invited you to join a videoconference using your computer.

Before the conference you will need:

- a webcam and headset on your PC
- to download the Windows only software client from <https://193.60.198.133/conferenceme.msi>

At 13:00 on 22/11/2009 please go to <http://www.jvcs.ja.net/c/D68K405t>.

To accept this invitation

click <http://www.jvcs.ja.net/c/D68K405t&op=accept&email=xxxxxx@yahoo.com> or,

if for any reason you cannot join this conference,

click <http://www.jvcs.ja.net/c/D68K405t&op=reject&email=xxxxxx@yahoo.com> to reject this invitation.

More information on the conferences is below.

Reference: NO160647

Conference Title: The conf

Purpose: Administration/Management Meeting

Status: Videoconference is committed

Duration: 22/11/2009 13:00 until 22/11/2009 14:00

Conference Contact: Dr Lecturer

Contact Email: xxxxx.xxxx@xxx.uk

Contact Phone: xxxxx xxxx xxx

Conference Participants:

xxxx-house-xxxxx-room@xx.xx: Dr Lecturer

xxxxx@xxxxx.com: Desktop Videoconferencing1 participant

The JVCS Management Centre can be contacted on +44 (0)131 650 4933

4 Hints and Tips

Feature	Shortcut Key
Full screen	F or f, F11, Ctrl+F11, Alt+Enter
Next local layout	L or I
Next participant	Left or Right arrow keys
Next MCU layout	Up or Down arrow keys

Also see:

[http://ftp.tandberg.com/pub/software/mcu_4200/TANDBERG%20Codian%20Desktop%20Videoconferencing%20Software%20Release%20Notes%20\(1.0\).pdf](http://ftp.tandberg.com/pub/software/mcu_4200/TANDBERG%20Codian%20Desktop%20Videoconferencing%20Software%20Release%20Notes%20(1.0).pdf) – Page 11 for *In Conference* features.

General

Desktop Videoconferencing is affected by the resources available on the PC and the connection to the PC.

We recommend Desktop Videoconferencing is not used over a wireless connection, unless this is the only option available and the connection is not heavily contended (shared with other PC's).

We also recommend closing all applications which may be heavy bandwidth users, and may attempt to use resources you need for your videoconference. Examples of these include Skype, any type of instant messaging system (e.g. MSN), any file sharing software, and MS Outlook or similar. If you have a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection, this should also be closed.

5 Q&A

Q1. “When I click on the link in the email I get the error message “This videoconference is not active (JVCS Desktop available: 03/08/2009 11:00 - 11:45)” what does this mean?”

A1. The link has either been accessed before the conference is due to start or the JVCS operators have not yet assigned the conference to a MCU because it was booked within the last two hours.

Q2. “When I join the conference the other participants cannot hear me but I can hear them. I have checked my headset, but this appears to be caused by the network. What can I do?”

A2. This is a known issue when Desktop Videoconferencing traffic is being managed by bandwidth controls and no priority is being given to the audio. To rectify this, the PC user must disconnect from the session and lower the bandwidth on the Desktop Videoconferencing client by navigating to:

Start - > Programs - > Tandberg - > Configure ConferenceMe

A dialog box (Figure 1) will appear and it is here that the ‘Bit rate’ needs to be changed from AUTO to a lower speed. We recommend that you start with 128kb. If you find that the quality is acceptable, you could try 256Kb the next time.



Figure 1: Configurations options – change Bit rate

Note: this cannot be done while in an active session

6 Support

JVCS can offer standard firewall advice and FAQs but will not support individual users of Desktop Videoconferencing - all communication must be channelled through the site administrator.

If the software does not install or run correctly, the user's local IT department should be consulted.

For the Desktop Videoconferencing software to work effectively, the user must be connected to a reliable network and have access to a suitable MS Windows PC or laptop which is equipped with a webcam and headset.

The user's organisation may need to allow access through its firewall for Desktop Videoconferencing. For information on the ports used by the software, please see page 2 of the following document:

<http://www.ja.net/documents/services/video/JVCS-and-firewalls.pdf>.

Before seeking assistance, you should check the following:

1. Is the PC hardware and software operating as normal?
2. Is the Local Area Network running and can the PC connect to the internet?
3. Are peripheral devices - webcam and headset connected and configured correctly?
4. Check the problem is not related to restrictions placed on local PC or laptop (e.g. disabling of features or local firewall settings).
5. Any user password or administrator rights related problems are also to be dealt with by local administrators.

7 Desktop Videoconferencing Error Messages & Solutions

Error message - "disconnected due to network"

This error message can be one of three things:

1. The Windows firewall is blocking ConferenceMe.

Solution: Add the ConferenceMe software to the Windows firewall exception list.

2. The organisational firewall is blocking the ConferenceMe software.

Solution: Contact your system administrator, who will need the following link to resolve this issue:

<http://www.ja.net/documents/services/video/JVCS-and-firewalls.pdf>.

3. Alternatively, this error message can relate to the conference being blocked by the customer's anti-virus software. ConferenceMe uses port 80 for signalling, which can cause heuristic virus scanners to behave in this way.

Solution: The IP address (included in the link sent from the booking service) needs to be added to the exceptions list within the anti-virus software. The following are three popular anti-virus solutions:

Anti-virus	Solution
AVG (v8.5 or later)	Add an exception to Web shield for each IP address included in the link sent from the booking service
Avira	Add an exception to Web Guard for each IP address included in the link sent from the booking service
Kaspersky	Add an exception to allow ConferenceMe traffic

Error message – "ConferenceMe is already running on your PC"

If ConferenceMe is open already and you try to click on a ConferenceMe link from the Booking service the following error will appear:

"ConferenceMe is already running on your PC."

Solution: Close ConferenceMe and click on the link again.