

QuickTime™ Conferencing SDK

Apple Media Conference—Questions & Answers

Is Apple shipping an end user application/product for QuickTime Conferencing?

Apple is developing an end user application for Apple's networked media conferencing solution to test out the APIs, and demonstrate human interface concepts for multimedia networking, and to provide a basic media conferencing solution for end users.

What does this application enable me to do?

The Apple solution is a conferencing application that enables real-time collaboration using video, voice, and data. In addition to point-to-point and multi-point conferencing, the application features multicast capabilities as well. Using AppleTalk Multicast or TCP/IP multicast, this enables a single media source to be broadcast over a network and be viewed at multiple sites.

What can be accomplished in the shared window?

Data is shared via a shared-window space, where any of the connected parties can drag in items to be shared, including text, graphics, sound samples or QuickTime movies. Once in the shared space, text and graphics can be annotated using a set of whiteboard tools. Users can select their own cursors, drawing tools, pen colors, pen thicknesses, and fonts to annotate whatever may be in the space. Each individual has full control of the shared space, and is allowed to add and delete as the collaborative session warrants.

How many people can conference together?

This is dependent upon the network and CPU on which the application is running. Using Ethernet, up to six or more individuals can conference together, though with more users, quality degradation will be apparent. Packet-switched networks will allow multi-party connections with better quality. Connecting over TCP/IP or ISDN allows two-way, point-to-point connections. Using smaller windows will also lower the bandwidth needed, thus enhancing performance. Users who want to participate in multi-party conferences, should increase the partition size by one megabyte for each additional two users.

What networks can I conference on?

The application can support connections over existing infrastructures such as Ethernet and Token Ring networks (LAN) as well as ISDN (WAN). With additional hardware, H.320 can be used. Emerging network standards such as ATM and IsoEthernet will also be supported. In addition, third parties are working with Apple to provide solutions for high-speed modems as well as other communications networks.

What kind of Macintosh do I need to use Apple Media Conference?

The application is optimized on AV Macintoshes but can run on any 68040 based Macintosh or Power Macintosh, including PowerBooks. Apple is working with third

parties to provide media conferencing solutions using high speed modems and other mobile networks.

What version of system software is required?

The application has been optimized to work best with Mac OS 7.5 and takes advantage of the convenience of PowerTalk (for network browsing and directory services).

What is the size of the application?

The application uses approximately 672K of disk space, and has a suggested memory partition size is three megabytes.

How scalable is this application?

This solution is capable of running on various Macs, PowerBooks, and Power Macintosh. The application will dynamically adapt to available connectivity and bandwidth. Asymmetric connections are also possible, allowing users to share and send any combination of video, voice, and data.

Can I record conversations?

Yes. This feature allows each individual to record either an individual window, including their own, or all of the members of a conversation together. These recordings are then saved in your system as QuickTime movies. To insure privacy, each person can set their preferences allow remote recording, require permission before recording, or not allow any recording from remote sites. When a conversation is played back, it is in the form of a tiled layout, with video windows arranged horizontally.

What compression schemes does it support?

The application supports all QuickTime compliant compression schemes including industry standards such as JPEG, MPEG, H.261, and de facto standards such as Apple Video.

Is video-mail a feature of the application?

No, currently the application does not support video or audio mail.

How can I use the whiteboard to share sounds or QuickTime movies?

Sounds can be shared simply by pasting or dragging them into the shared window. QuickTime movies may also be shared provided the movie file is in a folder that is shared on the network. Like sound samples, movies can be shared by pasting or dragging them into the shared window.

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Credits

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