NetMeeting

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Make telephone calls to people around the world and share applications and data with them at the same time. With NetMeeting, you can chat with groups of people while sharing thoughts on a group whiteboard. Microsoft NetMeeting is the only communication software that enables groups of people to share applications, allows more than two people to participate in a conference, and is based on international standards, ensuring worldwide communications.
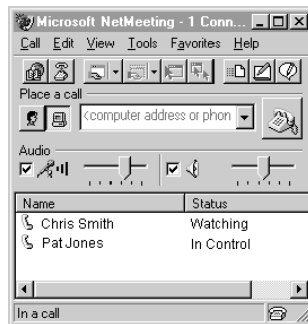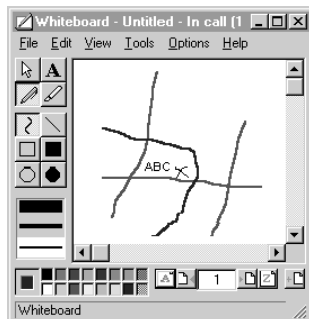

Figure 11 Make a telephone call on the Internet with NetMeeting

While you're talking on the phone over the Internet, you can also share data with the people you're talking to in the following ways:

- **Share applications.** You can open an application on one computer and share it with all connected computers even when the connected computers do not have that application installed. For example, you can share a Microsoft Word document with three co-workers. Each person now sees an image of your program on his or her computer. You can review the document together and take turns editing, and everyone sees all the changes in real time. This will also allow support personnel to help users fix problems by taking control of their applications remotely to show them what to do. This is much more advanced than the cut and pasting of bitmap images offered in other solutions.
- **Transfer files.** Use the same modem connection to transfer files without interrupting the conversation.
- **Chat area**. Type messages in your own private chat room. Perfect for online meetings on an Intranet or an online social gathering on the Internet.
- **Draw on a whiteboard.** Brainstorm ideas or sketch out a design by opening a whiteboard on all connected computers. The whiteboard comes with drawing and text tools, which you can use to sketch an organization chart, draw a diagram, type action items, and perform similar tasks. You can point out specific areas by using a remote pointer or highlighting tool, or take a "snapshot" of a window and then paste the graphic on a page.

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- **Figure 12** Draw on a shared whiteboard while talking.

You can also host just a voice conference or just a data conference. On an intranet, you might have the voice connection over the office phone system and the data connection over the LAN. Users can also use a "do not disturb" option that declines calls automatically without interrupting your work. NetMeeting can also be configured to run in the background, listening for calls out of the user's way. If a call comes in, you just double-click a new Windows 95 tray icon to bring up the application. NetMeeting also allows a user to refuse a file being sent to them. And, with the new speed dial ability, you can make calls more quickly. This also provides one-button access to your NetMeeting home page and ULS server, making the connection process much easier.

NetMeeting adheres to major international standards from both the International Telecommunications Union (ITU)and the Internet Engineering Taskforce, to guarantee broad interoperability between applications and across platforms. For example, you can share a whiteboard between different applications on different platforms thanks to support for standard protocols such as the ITU's T.120. Additional standards supported by Internet Explorer include G.723, H.323, POP3, HTML, and MIME. So, unlike proprietary competitive solutions, NetMeeting can interoperate with solutions from Intel, Ptel, Vtel, Confertech, MCI, ATT, Apple and over a hundred other vendors solutions.

NetMeeting also supports "multipoint" connections, which allow more than two people to join in conversations. Voice conferencing is currently limited to connections between two points, but up to five points for data conferencing, and even more simultaneous users through network-based conferencing services. It includes a tool for connecting to and scheduling the use of network-based conferencing services.

You can download the NetMeeting from the download area (http://www.microsoft.com/ie/download/) for Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 Beta 2.