

# MAKING CALLS WITH NETSCAPE<sup>®</sup> CONFERENCE

*In this lesson, you learn how to use the Netscape Conference program to make calls over the Internet.*

## WHAT IS NETSCAPE CONFERENCE?

Internet phone capabilities have been a hot item on the Internet for the past year, and, as you might expect, Netscape includes an Internet phone-capable program in its Netscape Communicator suite of applications. The Netscape Conference lets you engage in real-time audio conferencing and data sharing by using your Internet connection. If you have a microphone and sound capabilities on your computer system, you can use Netscape Conference much like a telephone. Netscape Conference even comes with a speed dialing feature and call screening. Unlike regular phone calls, you can call up Internet users by using their e-mail addresses.



**New to E-Mail?** If you're relatively new to the use of e-mail and e-mail addresses on the Internet, turn to Lessons 16, "Sending E-Mail Using Netscape," and 17, "Managing Netscape E-Mail," for more information.

Internet phone tools are all the rage these days. They allow you to make long-distance phone calls over the Internet without incurring long-distance charges. As with any new technology, there are still quite a few kinks to work out. The audio quality of many

computer microphones isn't always the best, plus the quality of your Internet connection factors into the mix as well. Despite a few drawbacks, the technology is destined to improve with time.

Netscape Conference enables you to talk to your colleagues over the Internet, store e-mail addresses of people you talk to the most, and record incoming messages. Netscape Conference also comes with a chat tool, a conventional method of "talking" over the Internet by typing in your conversation, and a White Board, a tool that enables you to share a file while online.

There is a catch to using Conference. The person you want to talk with must have a copy of the same program, a microphone with sound capabilities on his or her computer, and knowledge of when you're calling to set up his or her computer to answer.

## CONNECTING WITH NETSCAPE CONFERENCE

Before you can use Netscape Conference to call another user, you must first run the program's setup utility. Locate the Netscape Conference executable file. Look in the Netscape folder or directory. Double-click the Netscape Conference icon to start the program and run setup.

The installation program portion will lead you through the setup process and help you configure a program to work with your computer's sound card, microphone, and modem. When the setup program is complete, it will perform an audio test on your computer's sound system. Then, you can use the program.

Follow these steps to place a call with Netscape Conference:

1. Connect to your Internet Service Provider and open the Netscape Conference program (see Figure 15.1).



FIGURE 15.1 The Netscape Conference window.

2. Choose the Web Phonebook button. This is an interface with a Conference Directory of all Netscape Conference users. In a few seconds the Web Phonebook appears on your screen (see Figure 15.2).



FIGURE 15.2 Netscape Conference Directory.

3. You can locate the person you want to call by either selecting **View All Entries**, selecting the first letter of the person's name, or by doing a search on the person you want to call.



**Note!** Remember, to use Netscape Conference to call someone, the person you want to talk to must also be on the Internet with Netscape Conference running.

4. When you select the person you want to call, Netscape Conference rings the other person's PC. They can answer by clicking the **OK** button (see Figure 15.3).



FIGURE 15.3 The Pending Invitation dialog box.



**Make It a Real Conference** You can invite more than one person to join your conference call. Just repeat Step 3 to invite more people from your Address Book.

5. When the person accepts your invitation to conference, Netscape Conference establishes the connection. Talk into your microphone to speak to the other person. To exit the conference call, choose the **Hang Up** button and then click **Yes** to close the call.



**I Can't Hear Anything!** If you have difficulties hearing the other person speaking, choose **Call, Preferences, Audio** to make sure that Netscape Conference has correctly identified your audio card.

## USING NETSCAPE CONFERENCE TEXT CHAT

If you're having trouble hearing the person you are calling with Netscape Conference, or if your computer doesn't have a microphone, you can use the Chat feature to communicate. With online chat, you can talk by typing in your conversations.

Follow these steps to chat with Netscape Conference:

1. From the Conference program window, click the Chat Tool button. This opens the Chat Tool window, as shown in Figure 15.4.

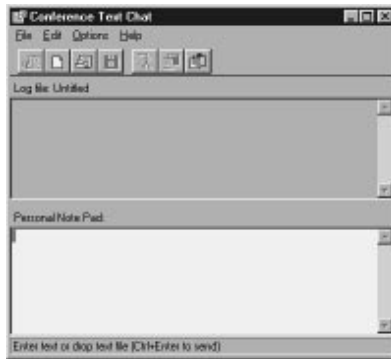


FIGURE 15.4 The Netscape Conference Chat Tool window.

2. In the lower section of the window, click your mouse pointer and type in what you want to say.

3. When you're ready to send the text, press Ctrl+Enter.
4. The text is added to the conversation window, titled Log File. To save the conversation, click the Save button.
5. To close the Chat Tool window, open the File menu and choose Close.

## USING THE NETSCAPE CONFERENCE WHITE BOARD

White Boards are used to share data during lectures, conferences, and other types of group meetings. Netscape Conference comes with an electronic version you can use to share files with people you're conferencing with over the Internet. For example, you can share an Excel worksheet and make notes and drawings, such as arrows and underlines to note important points as you're talking on the file for all to see. You can even erase your marks, similar to using a White Board eraser.

Use these steps to open the Netscape Conference White Board feature:

1. From the Conference window, click the White Board button. This opens the White Board window, as shown in Figure 15.5.
2. To load a file or image, open the File menu and choose Open or click the Open File button. Locate and select the file you want to share and then click the Open button.
3. Conference loads the image onto the White Board for all conference call participants to see. Everyone can take turns marking on the file image by using the markup tools on the left side of the White Board window.



FIGURE 15.5 The Netscape Conference White Board window.



**Clear the Board** To erase the marks on the White Board, open the **Edit** menu and choose **Clear Markups**. To remove the image as well as the marks, choose the **Clear White Board** command.

4. To close the White Board window, open the File menu and choose Close.

In this lesson, you learned how to use the Netscape Conference program to make phone calls over the Internet. In the next lesson, you learn how to send e-mail using Netscape Messenger.