

Video conferencing and media sharing

Playing a movie while video conferencing

For sharing movies and recorded video among multiple viewers, there's no better online delivery method than a video conference. It reduces travel costs, allows immediate interaction, and gives the presenter valuable feedback and cues from the audience.

But there's more to sharing media effectively than just playing a file. How can a presenter keep all participants synchronized in the movie? How can HD video run in an online meeting without taxing bandwidth? How can all participants see the movie on computers running different software and hardware configurations?

Applications

When do most business users need to share media? Mostly in product demonstration movies and training films, when the online meeting replaces the face-to-face conference and the presenter plays video from a projector or computer. Media sharing is also at the heart of telemedicine applications, such as online radiology consults that connect geographically distant clinicians and patients.

Video conferencing technology is a big step in helping presenters and participants to converse and collaborate, and media sharing is the next big step in boosting productivity.

Media sharing – FAQ

- What kind of media files can I share over Nefsis?
- How much bandwidth do I need for HD video sharing? For medium quality?
- What do conference participants need to watch the video I share? Do they need a media player?

Synchronized video for all – not so easy

The first big technical problem in sharing media over a video conference is in **distributing the media**. Traditionally, the presenter makes the media file(s) available to all participants via e-mail, shared network drive, FTP, CD/DVD, or some other way of pushing a file to them. This is cumbersome at best for average-sized media, and can be prohibitive for large, HD files. Then, once they have the files, participants must ensure that they are running a compatible, up-to-date media player and that the file will play correctly on their computer; if not, they must take the time to install updates. This error-prone process places the burden of preparing for the video conference on participants, and participants do not like to prepare.

The next big problem is that, even when everybody has the file and the player in which to run it, the presenter has **no way of synchronizing** everybody's player with simple commands like play, pause, cue and stop. Participants launch the video at different times and control it at their own desktops, so the presenter loses control of the experience and the online meeting. The presenter also loses the important leader-follower connection to participants and the opportunities to gauge audience reaction that are critical in training and presentations.

As an alternative, presenters can share the player application running from their own desktop and play the media in the conference room, but this results in choppy video.

Synchronized video over Nefsis – very easy

Nefsis circumvents the problems of distributing files and synchronization by **playing the media from inside the conference room**.

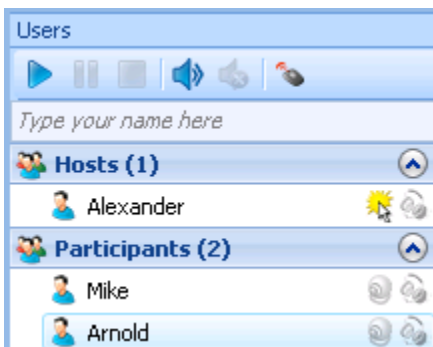
Nefsis transcodes the movie from its source media file format (.wmv, .avi, mp3, .mov, etc.), sends it from the presenter's computer to the cloud-based virtual conference server (VCS), and plays it in the Nefsis conference room. Participants view and hear the content over the same IP connection and through the same Nefsis Web/VoIP/video conference, without running any special media player or codec on their computer.

Online meetings become much more productive and efficient, especially for product demonstration movies and training films:

- presenters no longer need distribute media files
- participants no longer need scramble to download large media files or verify a player before joining the conference
- presenters have complete control over video playback – e.g., start, pause, rewind, seek – while keeping the media synchronized (participants can adjust volume and zoom)
- presenters maintain a stronger connection to all participants, who remain more engaged in the online meeting

How To

The presenter starts the video conference and ensures that all desired attendees appear in the Users pane:



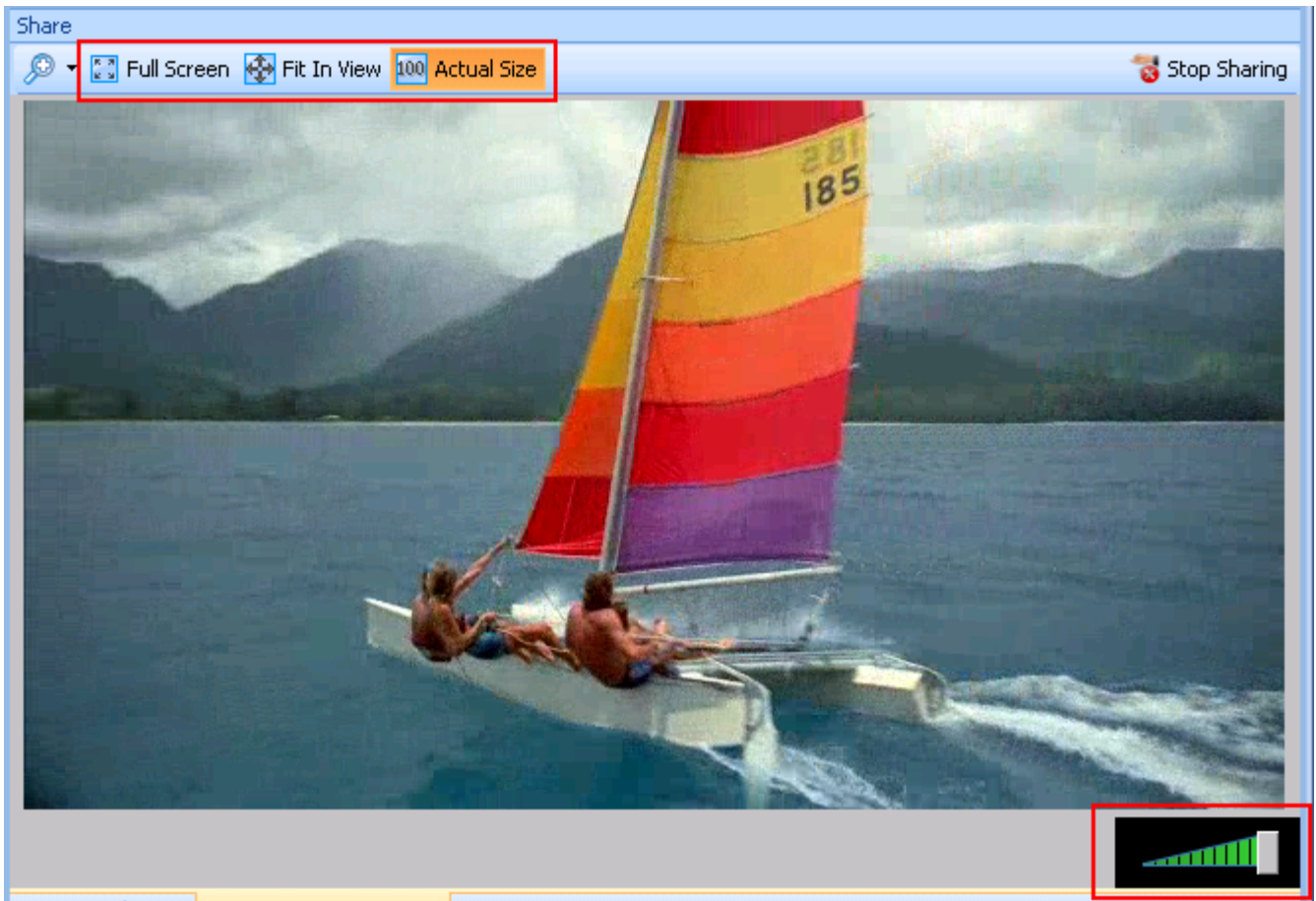
The presenter clicks on Media File, then selects the desired video for the conference:



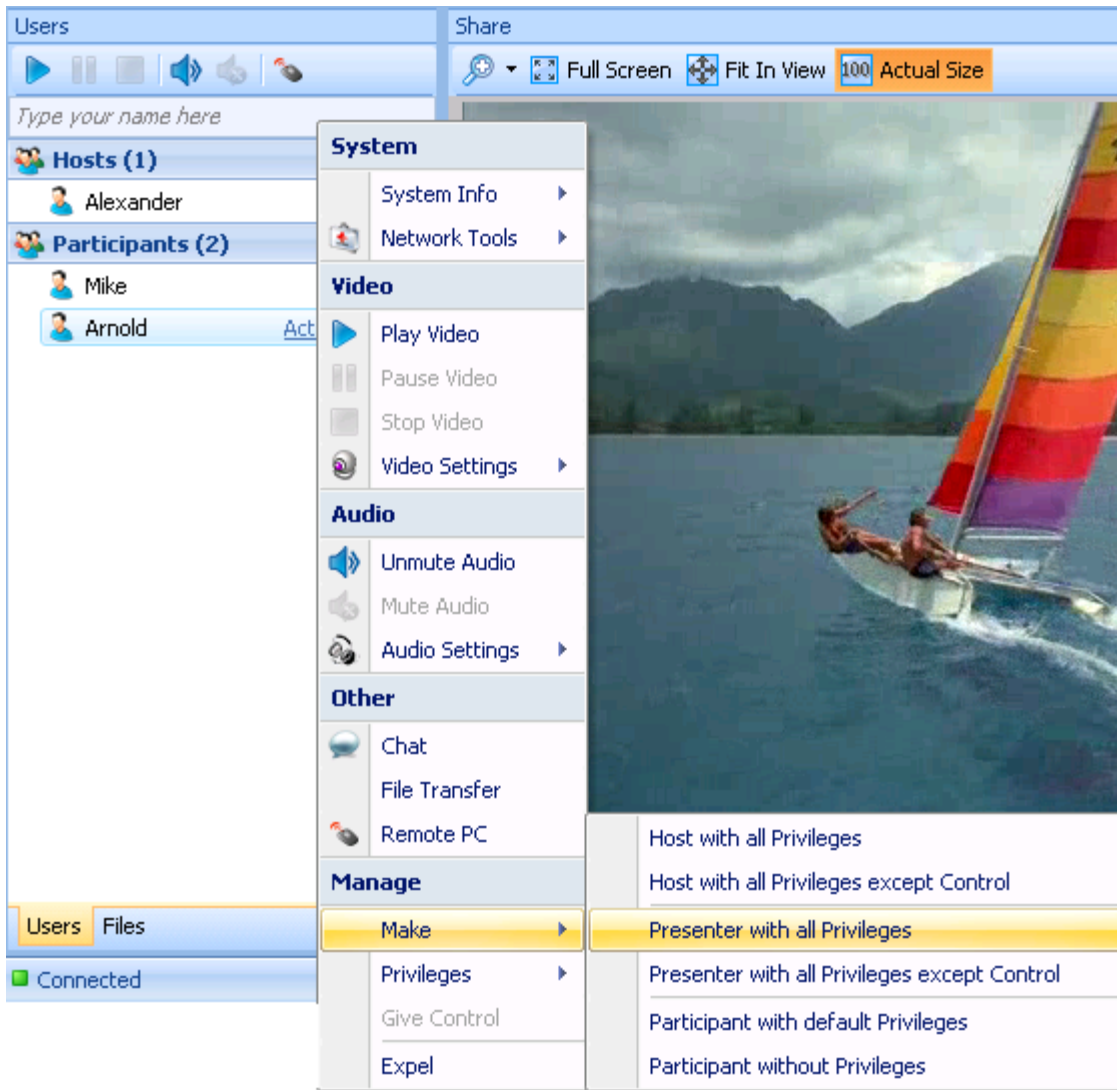
The presenter clicks the play button, and participants see and hear the video exactly as the presenter sees and hears it. To control playback, the presenter can move the progress slider, select video size, click play/pause and choose high/medium/low video quality:



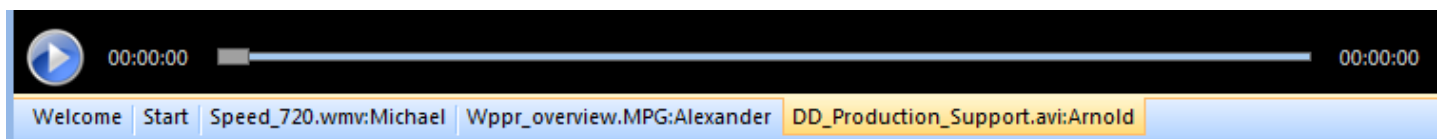
Participants may adjust volume but may not control playback:



Presenter can make a participant another presenter, who can share a media file and control playback from another computer:



Multiple presenters can share multiple media files in a conference room at a time. Nefsis appends each presenter's name to the name of the media file on the tab:



Conclusion

Synchronized video and convenience for participants are vital to successful online training sessions, product demonstrations and movies. Nefsis' sharing technology plays media directly in the video conference room without requiring participants to run a media player on their own computer. It also supports the close presenter-participant relationship crucial to effective online meetings.

Call to Action

Contact us to schedule a live demonstration of media sharing.

Keywords: video conferencing, media sharing, play movie, share media, product demonstration movies, training films, Webex, Polycom, Tandberg, IP video conferencing, WMV, QT, QuickTime, synchronize, synchronized, synchronization, MPEG4, player, codec, encoder