

SNDLC MEMO

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SUMMER 2006 IPCONTACT SOFTWARE UPGRADES

The newest version of the IPContact distance learning software will be released this summer and installed by Dark Fiber Solutions in the near future. This new release contains exciting enhancements to our current system.

VIEW & HEAR EIGHT SITES AT ONE TIME

We are currently able to connect up to eight sites. When all eight sites are part of a video-conference, we have full audio to and from all eight sites. However, we can only see four sites at a time on the screen. **The updated software will allow users to see and hear all eight sites at the same time.**

The new update will work, without extensive hardware revisions, on:

- *extended media carts (dual-sends)*
- *first generation carts*
- *distance learning media carts.*

Before the upgrade will work in the static classroom the current television receivers need to be replaced with a LCD projection system.

The software upgrade and the ability to view all eight sites at once come at a good time. SNDLC staff has been concerned about the age of the existing television monitors in the static classrooms, and the cost of future maintenance required to keep them operational.

In April, the SNDLC Board gave approval to ESU 5 to begin writing an RUS grant. **If approved, this grant - along with member in-kind dollars and funds from SNDLC maintenance - will provide a low-cost way for member sites to remove the television monitors from their static classrooms and install a projection system.** SNDLC members will be contacted concerning their input and their level of support for this grant application.

If an SNDLC member wanted to convert their static classroom without benefit of grant funds, the cost has been projected at \$4,500. Member participation in the grant and the projection system conversion is optional. A member site with the original TV monitors will still be able to connect to eight sites during a video-conference, but will be able to see only four sites at any one time.

Converting a static classroom to a projection system will cost \$4500



DIGITAL RECORDING CAPABILITY

Another new feature of the new version of IPContact is the ability to digitally record a class with a simple click of an icon.

Once the recording function is activated, digital data is sent to a computer server located within the SNDLC network. The recording could then be made available for playback anytime, anywhere.

A user with a valid username and password will be able to download the recorded session and view it from any workstation. This software revision allows distance learning teachers a new way to make information available for their students, whether in dealing with student absences or providing review and practice of challenging class material.

In time, this software revision will allow students to download files to an iPod for later viewing and review.

