



Video is the new voice.



Torsten Prill, director of the university data center (ZEDAT)

Today, videoconferences are so simple that you can reach your counterparty with just a few key sequences, anywhere in the world.



Vasco Tonack, UC & video project manager at ZEDAT

DIGITIZATION. SIMPLY. MAKE IT HAPPEN: VIDEO2GO FOR STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS

CAMPUS WIFI, UNIFIED COMMUNICATION AND VIDEOCONFERENCING AT FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

Universities, like companies, now have to compete for good young talent. They have to be an attractive place for students, young scientists and researchers and other personnel. People certainly take state-of-the-art IT systems into account when they are considering institutions.

“Scientific endeavor today depends very much on teamwork. Researchers now tend to work highly interdisciplinarily. A key aspect of research at FU Berlin is that it involves a great many different cooperative ventures with researchers located elsewhere; in fact, much of this cooperation is highly international. Being a leading university at international level means that networking and maintaining contacts with other organizations and education institutions – both in Germany and in foreign countries – are vital to our overall research” says Torsten Prill, managing director of the university data center (ZEDAT) at Freie Universität Berlin. This networking and collaboration can be made much simpler and improved in quality through state-of-the-art videoconferencing technology. “Video is the new voice,” says Torsten Prill.

AT A GLANCE

Collaboration:

- LAN@FU: Connectivity at 175 locations
- Installation of a Wi-Fi solution with up to 877 megabits per second, campus wide
- Establishment of a central campus VoIP unified communication solution
- Integration of voice and video communication for interdisciplinary collaboration, knowledge transfer and recruiting

Video:

- Videoconferencing: more than just unified communication
- HD videoconferences with stationary and mobile video systems (live experience)
- Within and outside the university, in Germany and abroad
- Efficient, environmentally friendly and flexible

THE REFERENCE IN DETAIL

THE CUSTOMER. The Latin words “veritas”, “justitia”, and “libertas”, which frame the seal of Freie Universität Berlin, stand for the values that have defined the academic ethos of Freie Universität ever since it was first founded, in December 1948. Freie Universität believes its role is to provide exactly that kind of space for ideas and its guiding principles to resonate – a place that brings together innovations, researchers and students, concepts and ideas.

The comprehensive university and its nearly 150 degree programs, more than 34,000 students and 7,500 employees, focuses on quality in research and teaching. In 2012, Freie Universität was again chosen as a participant of the Excellence Initiative, a program of Germany’s Federal Government and state governments, one of eleven universities in Germany to be so recognized.

THE TASK. The university’s ICT systems and equipment, distributed throughout more than 175 buildings and associated outdoor spaces, also had to be “excellent” – combined with the objective of having modern IT that is both competitive and enables increased automation of the administrative processes by the central data processing facility (ZEDAT) at FU Berlin. This required migrating a legacy PABX to an innovative communications system, the optimization of telecommunications services and maintenance activities, the centralization of telecommunications management and operations and the establishment of a central campus VoIP solution by integrating PC telephony, i.e. audio and video calls using PCs plus web conferencing.

THE SOLUTION. A comprehensive high-speed wireless network was set up across the entire university campus. Deutsche Telekom Technischer Service installed state-of-the-art Wi-Fi access points in over 175 buildings – such as the auditorium, library, labs, seminar rooms, lecture halls, administrative offices and the historic mansion of one department faculty – as well as outdoors.

As a result, employees, students and guests can now access the Internet at up to 877 megabits per second – from just about anywhere on campus. This is in addition to 8,000 state-of-the-art IP telephones with video feature. “This is how things are today: Every new hire is automatically assigned a phone extension and an e-mail address and automatically granted access to the Wi-Fi. And all without one of us having to push a single button. It just happens, every day,” summarizes Vasco Tonack, project lead for UC and video at ZEDAT.

- Migration of some 8,000 telephony ports and data links for all campus locations via a PoE switch infrastructure
- State-of-the-art campus Wi-Fi infrastructure with installation of 1,800 Cisco Wi-Fi access points
- Rollout of 8,000 Cisco IP phone sets, including Cisco Desktop DX 70 with video feature
- Integration of Unified Communications, status and contact center services
- Installation and integration of videoconferencing systems, such as Cisco TelePresence MX 700

CUSTOMER BENEFITS. A state-of-the-art videoconferencing system is now available to researchers, technicians, students and administrators. They can collaborate live – in maximum HD video and HD audio quality, intuitive to use and without media fragmentation. Video integration and web collaboration simplify and streamline interdisciplinary collaboration. And the system is interoperable with the different providers and types of systems in service around the world. Videoconferences are also an important instrument for cutting the university’s travel expenses, as well as the associated CO₂ emissions. ZEDAT, the internal ICT service provider for university associates and facilities for teaching, research and administration, guarantees top quality and continuity of the communications infrastructure through effective, centralized TC service, operations and maintenance, combined with the automation of administration processes for new users and facilities.

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