

Videoconference Installations on a typical school network

The use of video conferencing technology is increasing exponentially in the education community both Internationally and within New Zealand.

Video conferencing is a great tool for the classroom and for professional development for educators.

In order to ensure it is used effectively and without placing additional overheads on already strained resources it is important that:

- 1 *Educators receive appropriate training in the use of the technology and assistance in planning and availability of resources.*
- 2 *The equipment is properly configured and set up within the school's network to ensure ease of use and a positive user experience.*

This sheet and the following pages which provide a more technical overview for your ICT staff attempts to address the second issue.

We recommend schools install their video conferencing equipment in a publically accessible area behind their firewall called a DMZ (demilitarized zone). And no, we're not sending you to Iraq or Afghanistan. A DMZ is a no man's land, not part of the trusted computer network and not in the Internet, it's a land between the two. A DMZ should be used to place public facing servers (e.g. video conferencing equipment). In computer networks, a DMZ is a computer host or small network inserted as a "neutral zone" between a company's private network and the outside public network.

A DMZ is far easier to set up than other connectivity options for video conferencing. Users of the public network outside the company can only access designated equipment within the DMZ (in this case your video conferencing equipment).

The DMZ may typically also have a school's Web pages so these could be seen by the outside world. However, the DMZ provides access to no other company data. In the event that an outside user penetrated the DMZ security, the Web pages might be corrupted but no other company information would be exposed and there is very little risk to the video conferencing equipment.

So, this prevents unwanted visitors from gaining access to your school's server or network but makes it easy to set up and use video conferencing equipment within your school.



This diagram is indicative of how your network would be set up: