Outside the cloud : other ways to collaborate online

Unit - V

Collaborating via web-based communication tools

- evaluating web mail services

- Evaluating instant messaging services

- Evaluating web conferencing tools

Evaluating web mail services

- InTraditional email Post Office Protocol(POP) is used. In POP email dedicated email client program (Microsoft Outlook or express) is installed to sent are receive messages.

- The problem is the client program is installed in PC and all the mails are received in that PC only. We cannot access the data while we are in some other place or during mobility.

- Alternate is the web mail. Unlike POP email, web mail can be accessed from any PC having web browser and internet connection.

- The messages are stored in web not locally.

- All needed is a user id and password, you can go inside mail box, see new items in inbox, can create new messages etc

- Eg Yahoo!, Google, Microsoft

- Gmail:

- Google web mail service is called as Gmail(mail.google.com). It is free. All most all web services develop their UI similarly.

- Gmail doesn't use folders. But instead you can tag each message with one or more labels. This has the effect of creating virtual folders.

- Gmail groups together related email messages in what Google calls conversations. A conversation might be an initial message and all the replies to that message etc.

Yahoo! Mail

- This another web service. The basic mail is free.

- Yahoo!Mail plus- is paid service that lets to send larger messages.

- It gives unlimited storage.

- It is more functional than Gmail. It offers traditional folder-based organization. You get a message pane and a reading pane. It also offers users the SpamGuard spam filter and Norton AntiVirus virus scanner.

Windows Live Hotmail
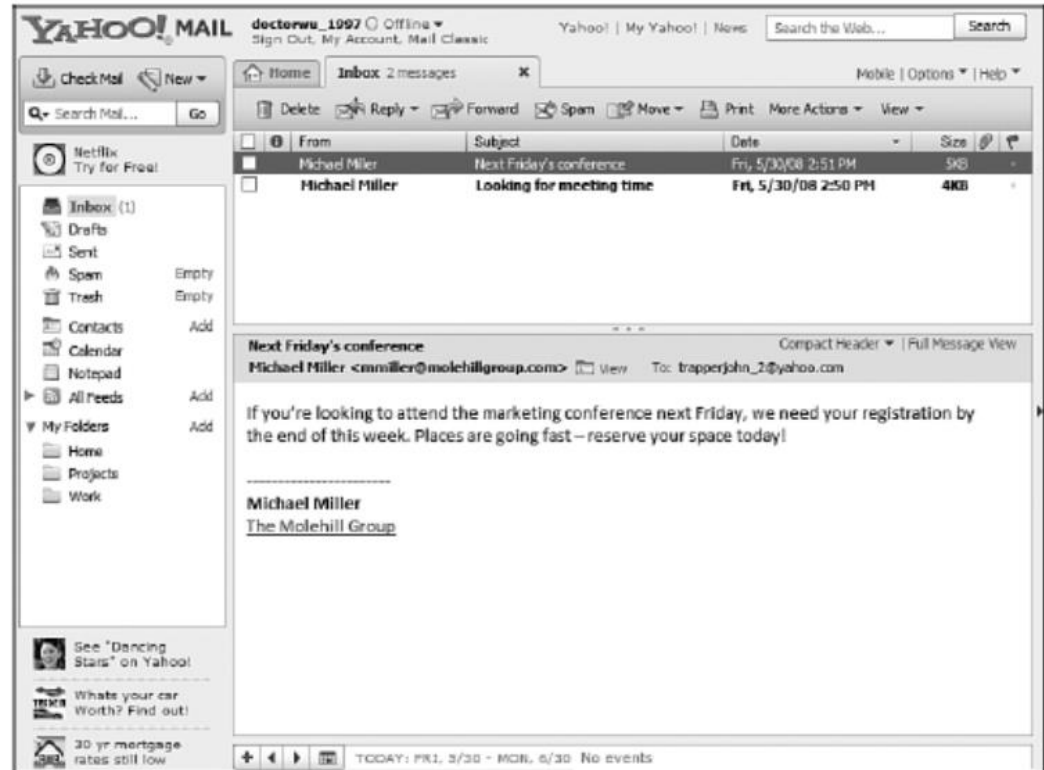
new Windows Live Hotmail interface.
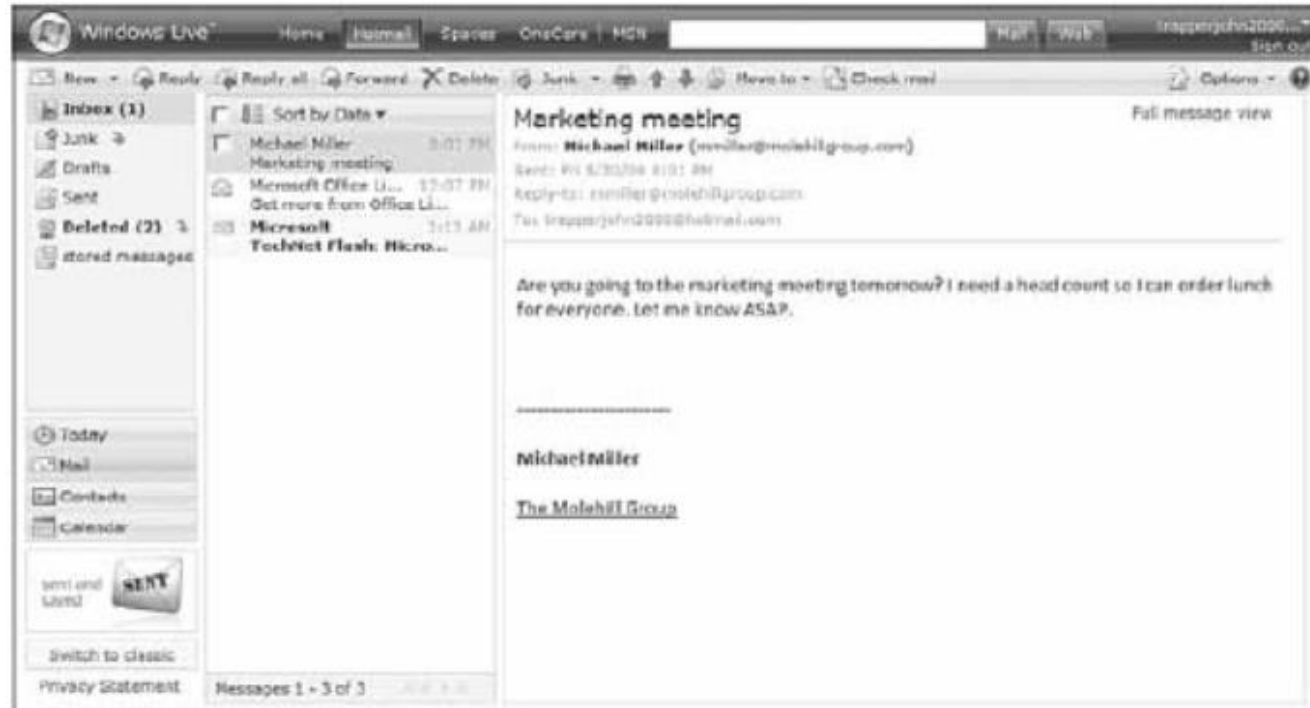
Folder pane on the left ,
message page in the middle,
and reading pane on the
Right.
This integrates with windows
live contacts And calender
and other services of windows

Apple MobileMe Mail

- By apple.
- ([www.me.com)-](www.me.com) you can access mail not only from PC but from iphone also.
- It is not free
- Some other providers of mail services are
- AOL (mail.aol.com)
- BigString(www.bigstring.com)
- Excite mail(mail.excite.com)
- FlashMail(www.flashmail.com)
- GMX mail(www.gmx.com)
- Inbox.com(www.inbox.com)
- Lycos Mail(mail.lycos.com)
- Mail.com(www.mail.com)
- Zoho Mail (zoho.mail.com)

Evaluating Instant Messaging Services

- Instant message – to send text and receive immediately the response.

- Email , usenet and the www operate via a traditional client/server model , with most of the heavy lifting done via a network of dedicated servers. The POP email is stored on and managed by an email servers.

- Whereas Instant messaging doesn't user servers at all. The message goes directly to the user's PC and is not filtered or stored in any servers. The technical name is P2P(peer-to-peer)

- All instant messaging needs is a client software and an IP address.

- Instant message players are

- America Online(AOL), Google Talk, Yahoo!(yahoo! Messenger)

- As the above messaging doesn't go well with each other ,The draw back is that those who want to communicate with each other must ensure that both have the same applications

- AOL Instant Messanger(www.aim.com)
- More than 60 million users
- Supports text messaging, file sharing, RSS feeds, group chats, ability to text message to and from mobile phones, voice chat, video chat.
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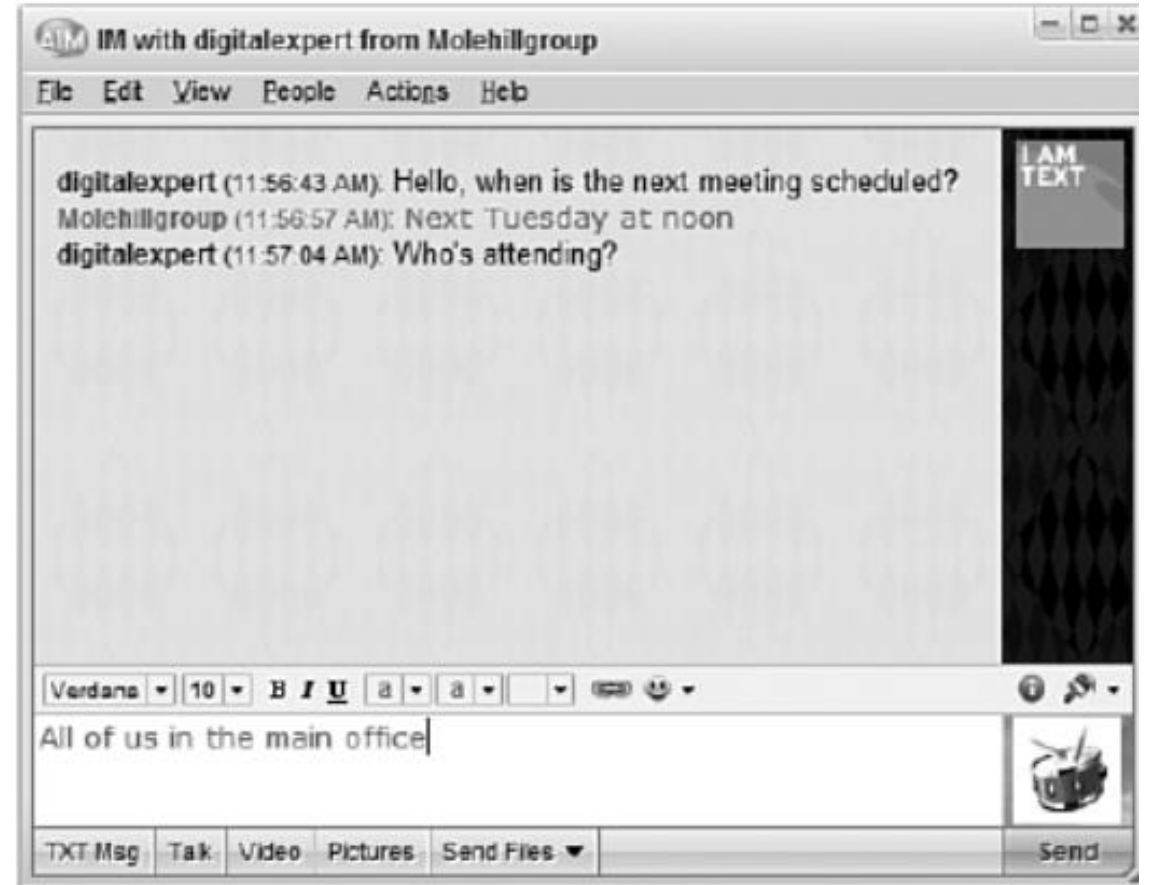
ng with AOL Instant Messenger (AIM).

Google talk

- Is the name of both Google's instant messaging network and its IM client.

- Can be downloaded from(talk.google.com)

- Supports text messages, voice over IP(VoIP) internet phone calls.

- Google talk is mostly used via its gadget. With this no software is needed to be downloaded.
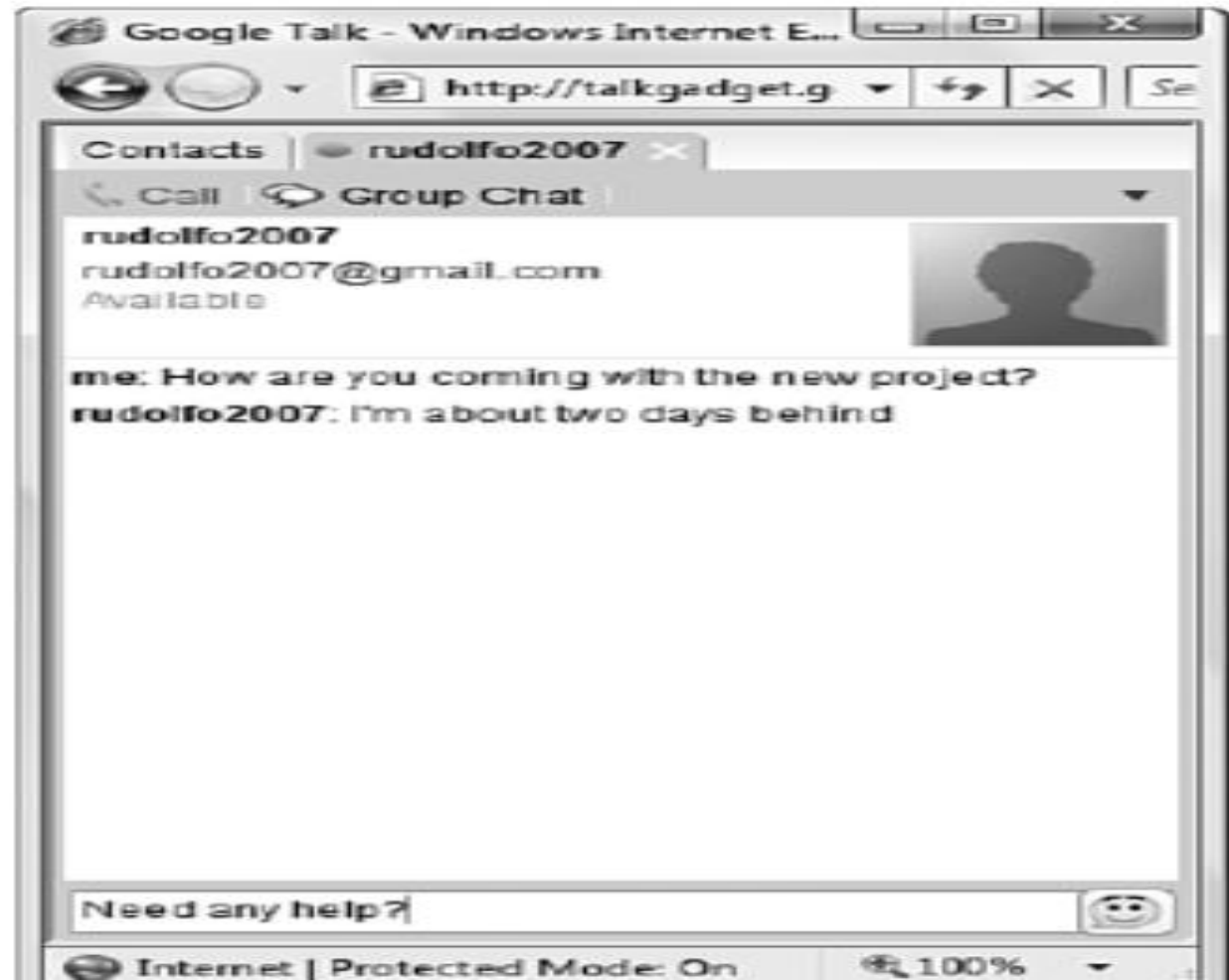
- **ICQ –** the granddaddy of all instant messaging programs.(www.icq.com)
  - Developed by Mirabilis in 1996, but acquired by America Online in 1998.
  - Grouped conversations, voice messaging, photo vieweing etc
- Window Live Messanger
  - More than 27 million users
  - Grouped conversations, voice messaging, photo vieweing etc
- Yahoo! Messanger
- More than 90 million users
- Text messaging, video messaging, PC-to-phone and PC-to-PC calling, voice mail, file sharing and chat rooms.
- It also lets the user receive up-to-date stock price, news headlines, sports scores, weather forecasts and notification of any waiting Yahoo!mail

Evaluating web conferencing tools

- Email- one-to-one , no time bar

- Instant messaging , one-to-one , time concerned

- When more than two persons want to communicate with each other at the same time, there is a new tool called web conference.

- This is mainly for conducting live meetings and presentation over the internet.

- In web conference, each participant sits before his own computer in his location. Each participant's computer is connected to the conference via the internet and each participant sees the presentation on his own screen in real time.

- Communication between participants can be audio(streaming audio, VoIP or traditional telephony) or include audio and video(webcam)

- Most web conferencing services are hosted by vendors. One has to fix with them and are costly.

Features of web conferencing

- Application sharing- where the presenter and participants can all access and use the same application in real time. This is useful for smaller group meetings, when all participants are collaborating on a project
- Desktop sharing- presenters entire desktop visible and accessible to participants
- File and document sharing- individual files open for all to edit and useful for group collaboration
- Powerpoint presentation- can use all features of ppt
- Presenter notes- let the presenter take notes during the course of th conference
- Annotation- lets the presenter mark up the document being shared or given, typically by drawing or highlighting on the screen
- Whiteboard-blank screen on which the presenter can draw or highlight objects
- Text-based char- let participant discuss in real time
- Audio conferencing- adds the spoken words of the presenter to ppt.
- Video conferencing- puts a picture of the presenter in a corner of the conference webtop, generated via webcam
- Polling- lets the presenter ask questions of the audience
- Quizzes- lets the participants answer test questions, with results tabulated in real time.

Adobe Acorbat Connect

- This software and service offers personal online "meeting rooms" for large organizations. For $39 / month , it gives audio/video conferencing, screen sharing, whiteboard and chat functionality.
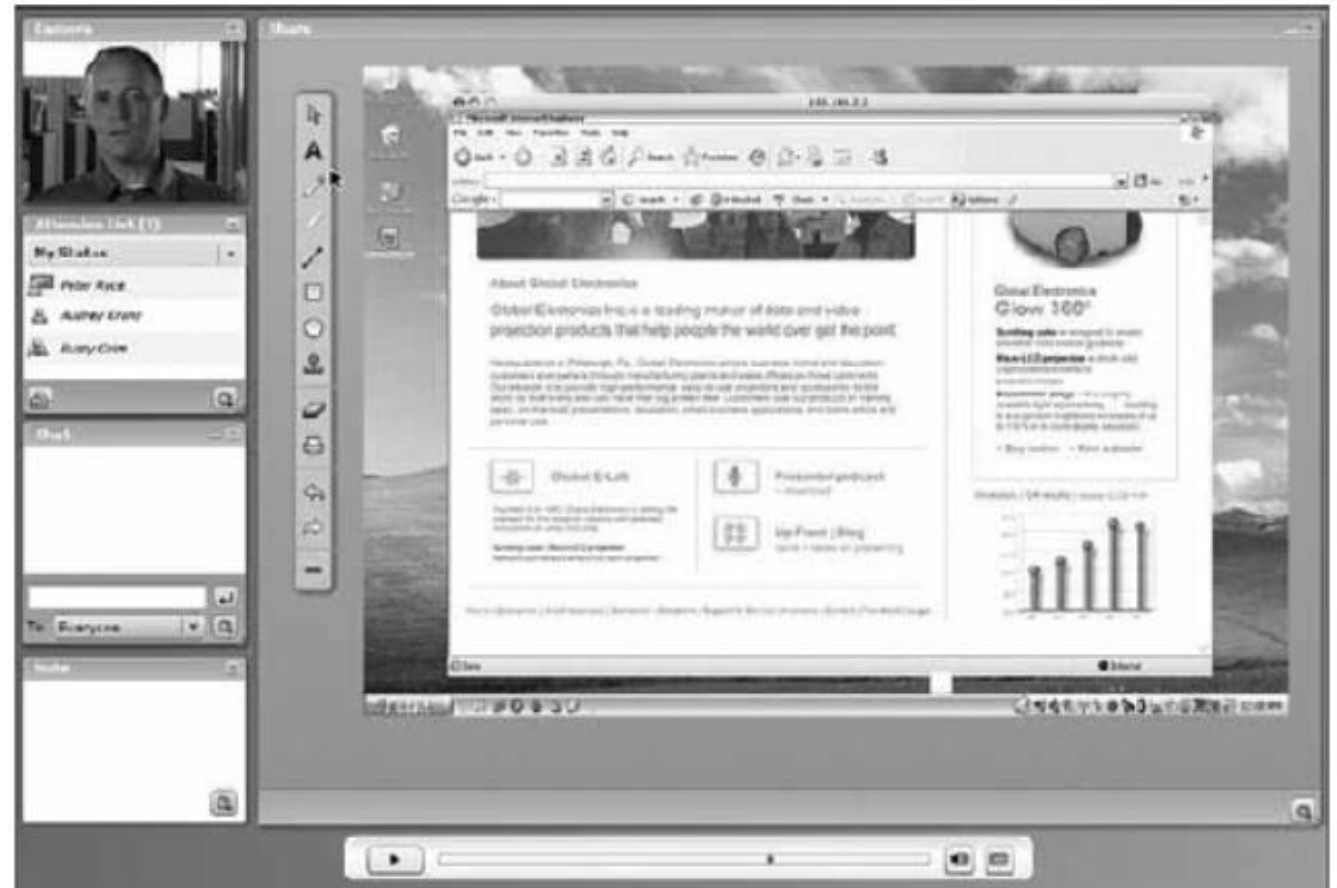
- Common features are : online presentations, file and document sharing, whiteboard, polling, integration with Skype for conference audio, E-Quizzes.
- Convenos Meeting Center-(www.convenos.com) web-based conferencing service
- Genesys Meeting Center-(www.genesis.com)
- Glance-(www.glance.net)- main focus is easy-to-use screen sharing, with no client s/w necessary to install.
- IBM Lotus Sametime- it comes with enterprise instant messaging , multiway chat, VoIP and point-to-point video, and integration with most major desktop applications.
- Microsoft Office Live Meeting- is hosted service available in two versions (Standard and Professional). The user get audio/video conferences, PPt viewer, integration with Microsoft outlook, application and desktop sharing.
- Persony Web Conferencing- (www.persony.com) –doesn't charge a monthly fee. Instead, you pay once for the software($995) and don't have any usage fees.
- Pixion PictureTalk (www.pixion.com) hosted conference solution with four different plans. Per minute plan- charges you only for time used. Personal plan-charges you for a single 10-person virtual meeting room; professional plan- priced by the seat; Enterprise plan- lets host the whole shebang on your own servers.
- Yugma: offers three different plans, priced from $199.95 to $899.85 per year based on how many people may attend a meeting. Features include desktop sharing, teleconferencing, public and private chat, annota- tions, and a whiteboard.
- Zoho meeting: (zoho.com)free web conferencing service. It includes the expected features, including application/desktop sharing, chat, and Skype integration, as well as remote PC control.

- WebEx: this is the most-used web conferencing solution today. Various pricing plans are available. Features are VoIP support, integrated audio and video, application sharing, on-the-fly annotation, meeting recording and playback, and so on.

- The figure shows a typical WebEx presentation. In this example, a PowerPoint presentation is being annotated by the presenter, while partici- pants are chatting in a pane on the right. The presenter, in this case, can also take notes during the course of the presentation; these notes appear in their own pane on the lower right
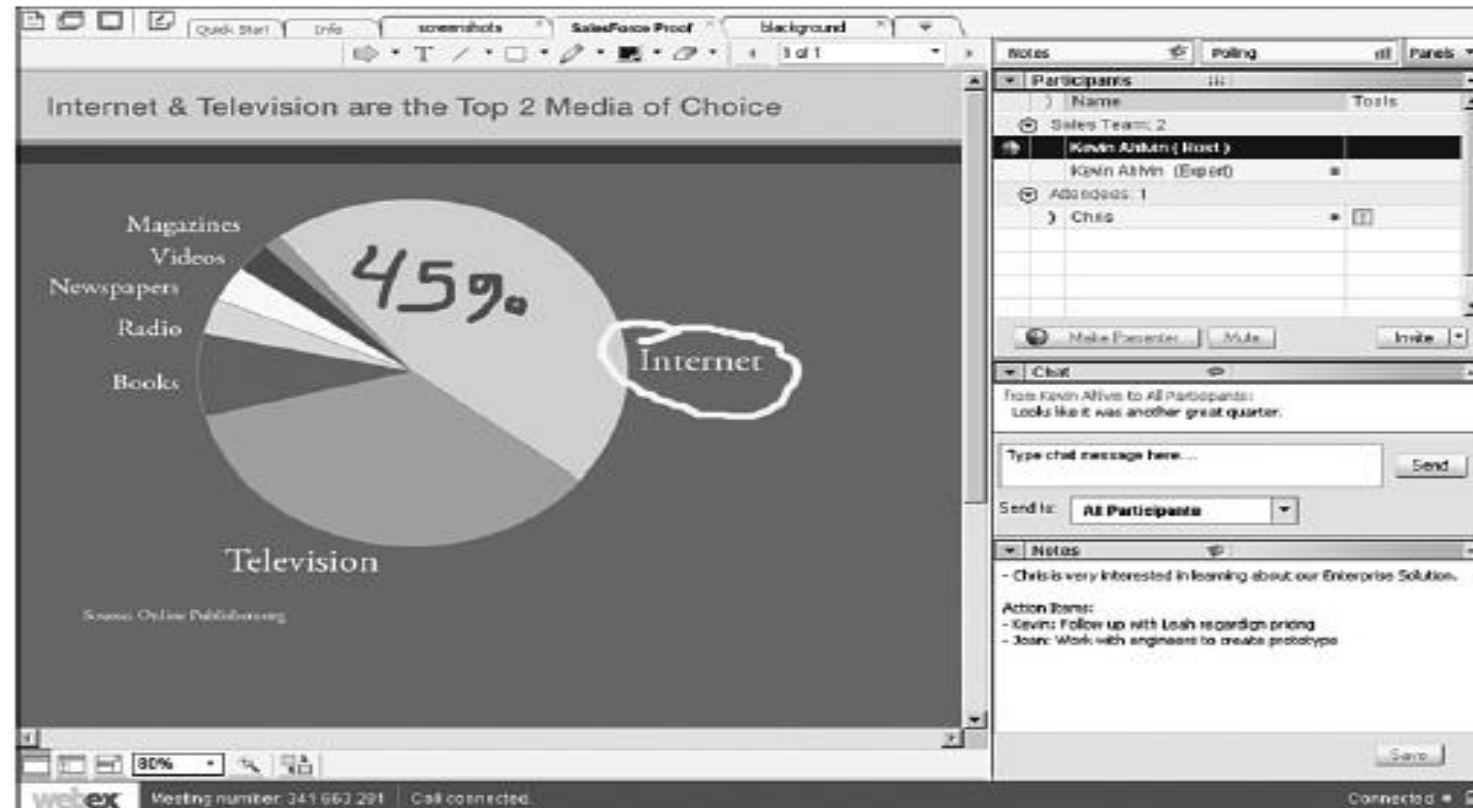
Collaborating via Social Networks and Groupware

- Creating groups on social networks: . The typical social network is a hosted site that aims to create a community of users, each of whom posts his or her own personal profile on the site. Each user includes enough person information in her profile to enable other users with similar interests to connect as "friends"; one's collection of friends helps to build a succession of personal communities.

- The profile pages include blogs, discussion forum or chat space etc

- They can post their individual activities.

- A social network group is like a virtual meeting or community room. . Instead of posting notices on a physical bulletin board, you post notices on a virtual message board. Instead of exchanging brochures and papers by hand, you upload photos, documents, and other files for all to share. And, because most social networks are free for all to use (in exchange for the occasional on-page advertisement), it's a cheap way to keep the members of your group up-to-date and organized. No IT knowledge is required, no server space is costed as usage is free.

- The business people use these for advertising their products

FaceBook

www.facebook.com – for grownups

It includes the following collaborative features:

- Recent news

- Discussion board

- Uploaded photos and videos

- Posted web pages

- The Wall—a kind of chat board

The group can be Open(public), closed or Secret(membership by invitation only)

MySpace

- Mainly for teenagers and pro-teenagers

- www.myspace.com

- No file uploading, but photos can be uploaded, facility for posting group bulletins are there.

- On has to tolerate with Advertisements will be there

- **Google Groups** (groups.google.com). When you create a Google Group, you get the obligatory message forum, but you also get to upload and share files, as well as create topic-specific pages within the group; group mem- bers can be notified of new posts via email. A Google Group can be Public (anyone can join, but only members can read messages), Announcement- Only (anyone can join, but only moderators can post messages), or Restricted (only the people you invite can join).

- Yahoo! Groups :- Here you also get a message forum (with email notification of new posts) and file uploading, and also a photo library, group calendar, and polls. You can select whether your group appears in the Yahoo! Groups directory, whether anyone can join or if you have to approve all members, and who can post messages to the group.

Evaluating Online Groupware:

- For larger businesses, a social network group is not enough.

- A collection of web-based collaborative tools that help the team members to communicate with each other and manage their group projects. Such a solution is known as groupware. Groupware is a collaboration software for workgroups.

- Online groupware includes
  - File and document uploading and sharing
  - Web calendar
  - Task/ project manager
  - Message boards
  - Text-based chat rooms / instant messaging
  - Wiki like collaborative pages
  - Blogs

- Why use online groupware? –

- It puts all group communications all in one place- and one place is accessible to group members in any location.

- Groupware makes it easier to communicate, which reduces the number of meetings and conferences calls as well as email traffic.

- All the above increases the productivity of group members.

Online Groupware applications

- AirSet : (www.airset.com) includes group announcements, web calander, contact list, task list, instant messging, wiki for collaborative publishing, blog, file sharing, online storage, photo albums, music playlists. When one person in group makes a change, everyone sees the updated information.

- ContactOffice: (www.contactoffice.com) web-based data management system that lets you share emails, contacts, tasks, appointments, and documents with other group members. You can create internal or intercompany groups; the latter helps you communicate with customers, suppliers, and other people outside your immediate office. You also get a web-based calendar, address book, message forum, and real-time chat

- Google Sites: formerly known as Jotspot, lets you create a group web page (hosted by Google). This page is completely customizable with your choice of file uploads, group announcements, task/ project management, mailing lists, group calendar and the like. It is free. It integrates other Google apps.

- Huddle : (www.huddle.net) is a hosted environment that combines online collaboration, project management, and document sharing, using social net- working principles. You create a network of collaborative team workspaces, managed from a central dashboard. You can then take advantage of Huddle's online file storage, project calendar, RSS and email notifications, whiteboard, wiki, and other collaborative tools

- Nexo (www.nexo.com) lets you create a free personalized group website. The site can include photos, videos, forums, message boards, interactive calendars, polls, and to-do lists. Nexo targets its service to family, friend, and community groups, although it may also function for some less-demanding business groups.

- OpenTeams :(www.openteams.com) is better suited for larger businesses. It offers team folders, blogging, and wiki-like collaborative pages, all monitored via a customizable Navigator page. One can

- keep track of key team members, organize resources with tags, participate in threaded discussions, and monitor new content posted by team members. Pricing is on a per-user, per-use basis, starting at $0.99 per user log-on day.

- projectSpaces : (www.projectspaces.com) provides an online workspace designed especially for group collaboration. You get an online document library, email discussion lists, task management, group announcements via email and RSS,a shared group calendar, and shared group documents.

- Teamspace : (www.teamspace.com) This application offers task and project management, contact management, an online calendar, message forum, notice board, file sharing, text-based chat, and synchronization with Microsoft Outlook. Pricing is on a per-member basis, with additional fees for storage space used.

Collaborating via Blogs and Wiki

- Blog: a blog is a collection of individual posts or messages. The posts are arranged in reverse chronological order, with the newer post on top.

- Older posts are placed in archives, which are accessible via a link in the sidebar column. At the end of each post, the user can comment.

- This is where blog is powerful as it is not the work of a single person, many people can give their comments. This makes a blog ideal for keeping track of progress on a group project.

- Steps

- Create your blog, hosted on your company's servers or on a popular blogging tool such as Blogger or WordPad. It can be made private and assign authorship status to all the members of the team. This means that every one on your team can initiate new posts, as well as comment on the posts of others.

- When you have something important to say to the group, you make a blog post. Same with the other members; when they have updated info, they post it. In addition, other members can comment on your posts—for example, you can create a post to schedule a meeting, and have the other members com

- ment on your post with their replies.

- Members of your group can access the blog by navigating to its web page to see what's new, or subscribe to an RSS feed that will notify them whenever there's a new post to the blog, so they're never in the dark

- Blogger: (www.blogger.com) – Google's blog-hosting community and with more than 8 million individual blogs. It is free. The blogger dashboard is where one manages all the blog activity.

- From here one can create new blog posts , edit comments to your posts, manage your blogger account and profile and access blogger's help system. It is where new blogs are created.

- Creating a new Blogger blog is as easy as filling in a few forms. After you click the Create a Blog link in the Blogger Dashboard, you're asked to enter a title for your blog and a corresponding blog address (the part of the URL that goes before Blogger's blogspot.com domain). Next, you get to choose a tem- plate for your blog—a predesigned combination of page layout, colors, and fonts. Blogger now creates your blog—and you're ready to start posting.

- You can customize your blog with any number of different templates and color schemes; you can also add a variety of gadgets and other nonpost page elements.

- Of course, one of the things you'll want to customize is the list of people who have access to you blog. By default, a Blogger blog is completely public, and anyone on the Internet can read it. However, there's a way to make your blog private so that only invited guests can view it; just go to the Blogger Dashboard, click the Manage: Settings link, and then click the Permissions link. When the next page appears, go to the Blog Readers section and select who can view your blog: Anybody (keeps the blog public), Only People I Choose, or Only Blog Authors.

- For a group blog, the option you want is Only Blog Authors. Of course, you now have to invite the other members of your group to be blog authors; do this by click- ing the Add Authors button.

- TypePad: (www.typepad.com) is quite similar to Blogger. You can customize your

- blog with a number of different designs and widgets, and you can select multiple coauthors for your blog. However, TypePad isn't free; you pay anywhere from $4.95 to $89.95 per month, depending on the features you want. (You need at least the Pro plan, starting at $14.95/month, to support multiple co-authors.)

- WordPress (www.wordpress.com) is another popular blog-hosting community. It's a lot like both Blogger and TypePad, but perhaps a bit more customizable. You get lots of themes to choose from, sidebar widgets, and a private mem- bers-only option. You also can create multiple blogs and assign multiple authors. And, like Blogger, a WordPress blog is completely free.

Evaluating Wikis for collaboration

- Wikipedia is, in essence, a giant online encyclopedia—but with a twist. Wikipedia's content is created solely by the site's users, resulting in the world's largest online collaboration.

- Wikipedia articles are written, edited, and elaborated on by people of all types, from students, to subject-matter experts and professional researchers, to interested amateurs. It's a true group collaboration. Which is, in fact, what a wiki is—a collection of web pages where any users can contribute or modify content. The first wiki was WikiWikiWeb, a website founded in 1995 to facilitate the exchange of ideas between computer programmers. Wikis enable all users not only to write new articles, but also to comment on and edit existing articles.

- Today, many organizations use wikis as collaborative applications. A group wiki can be public (open to all users), as Wikipedia is, or private—which is ideal for project groups, businesses, and other organizations.

- A private wiki invites all group members to create new pages on the wiki site or to edit any existing page. All writing and editing is done within the web browser, no extra software or tools necessary. In most instances, there is no review of the articles or edits before they're accepted. The result is a collection of articles or documents, written collaboratively. The wiki software organizes the articles behind the scenes and manages the ver- sioning for each article.

- Pbwiki : (www.pbwiki.com) offers various levels of wiki hosting. Small wikis (one to three users) are free; larger ones are priced as low as $4 per user per month. Wiki creation is easy, thanks to a variety of premade templates. You also get online file storage to help you organize your other documents as part of your wiki.

- Versionate : Versionate (www.versionate.com) offers hosted wikis designed for group collaboration. A Versionate wiki is business friendly, thanks to SSL-level security and full control over editing privileges; you can also import Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and PDF documents into your wiki. The company offers several different plans: Free (500MB storage), Personal (2GB storage for $2/month), Business (unlimited storage for $25/month), and Enterprise (unlimited storage for $2/user/month).

- wikihost.org

- The wikihost.org site (www.wikihost.org) provides free wiki hosting. Wiki creation is via the GeboBebo engine, which offers a local database structure, user and rights management, RSS feeds and email notification for new and updated articles, and image and file uploading.

Wikispaces

- Wikispaces (www.wikispaces.com) claims to host more than 450,000 individual wikis. Standard features include image and file uploading, widget and media embedding, RSS feeds and email notifications, discussion areas, and detailed user statistics. A variety of hosting plans are available, from Basic (free) to Private Label Premium ($800/month).

Zoho Wiki

- Finally, from our friends at Zoho, comes their wiki application, Zoho Wiki (wiki.zoho.com). They offer free wiki hosting complete with WYSIWYG editing, versioning of wiki pages, and the ability to make your wiki public or private— all for free. Your wiki is managed from a Dashboard page, just click the New Page icon to add a new page to the wiki.