ACCESS GRID

Supporting group-to-group interaction across the Grid
http://www.mcs.anl.gov/fl/accessgrid

Extending the Computational Grid

Group-to-group interactions are different from and more complex than individual-to-individual interactions. Large-scale scientific and technical collaborations often involve multiple teams working together. The Access Grid concept complements and extends the concept of the Computational Grid. The Access Grid project aims at exploring and supporting this more complex set of requirements and functions.

An Access Grid node involves 3-20 people per site. Access Grid nodes are "designed spaces" that support the high-end audio/video technology needed to provide a compelling and productive user experience.

The Access Grid consists of large-format multimedia display, presentation, and interaction software environments; interfaces to grid middleware; and interfaces to remote visualization environments. With these resources, the Access Grid supports large-scale distributed meetings, collaborative teamwork sessions, seminars, lectures, tutorials, and training.

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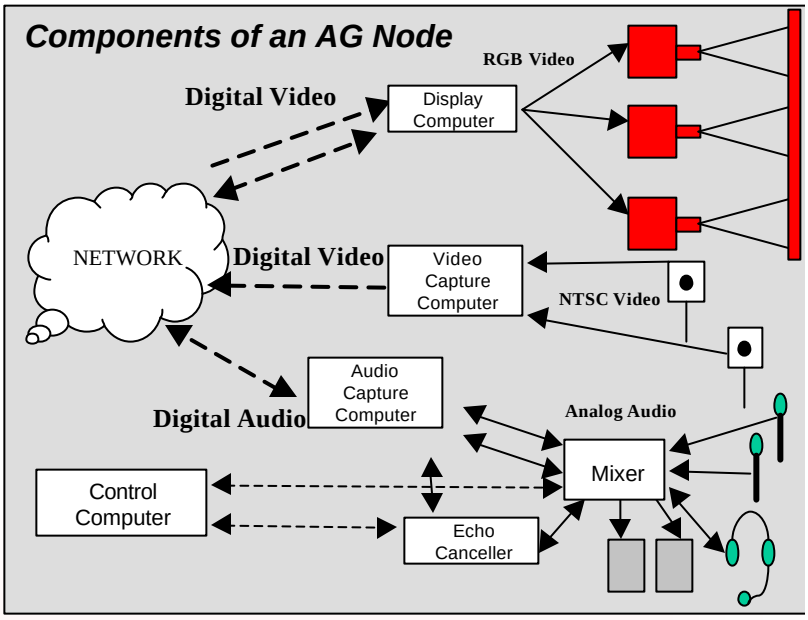

Providing New Capabilities

During the next two years the Alliance Access Grid project will prototype a number of Access Grid nodes and use these prototypes to conduct remote meetings, site visits, training sessions and educational events.

Capabilities will include

- high-quality multichannel digital video and audio
- prototypic large-format display
- integrated presentation technologies (PowerPoint slides, mpeg movies, shared OpenGL windows)
- prototypic recording capabilities
- integration with Globus for basic services (directories, security, network resource management)
- macroscreen management
- integration of local desktops into the Grid
- multiple session capability

The Access Grid nodes will also provide a research environment for developing of distributed data and visualization corridors and for studying issues relating to collaborative work in distributed environments.

Ensuring Persistent Electronic Spaces

The Access Grid project addresses the need for persistent electronic spaces. We believe persistence is necessary to build true electronic communities, create lasting maps of the real world to distributed virtual environments, and enable experimentation with new modes of collaboration.

The Access Grid project is one of several projects in our Active Spaces research program, which is exploring possible workspace environments. The Active Spaces program is developing a new application environment metaphor "beyond the desktop": large and small proactive and reactive systems in which users can both "think" and be.