



CASE STUDY: EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY AND AETHRA® VIDEO COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

**Customer interviewed: European Space Agency
Video communication System Used: Nova™ and Supernova™**

The European Space Agency has always been at the forefront of videoconference use, appreciating videoconferencing as the best way to share information in an efficient and timely fashion among its various European sites and Moscow and Kourou (French Guiana) locations.

In October 2001, a total of twenty-four Aethra videoconferencing systems were installed in seven cities in Italy, France, Germany, Netherlands, Russia and Spain in order to realise an important multi-country videoconferencing project improving communication among the several Agency's offices.

The European Space Agency uses Aethra solutions to create a complete video communications network allowing easy interaction and rapid contact between the various sites, without problems of distance and time. The Agency chose Aethra equipment because of Aethra's experience and competence in this area. The Agency especially appreciates Aethra's versatility in responding to different and complex requirements. Aethra's systems are fully interoperable with the major international standards, support IP networks and share multiple applications.

Aethra has considerable experience in the development of worldwide projects such as the multi-country project required by the Agency. ESA has chosen Aethra's multimedia rollabouts Supernova and Nova, being particularly impressed with the data sharing made possible by these systems. The two rollabouts also offer a shared whiteboard, which means that people at different sites can work together on the same computer applications. For Nova, Aethra has developed DATACONF software that allows the connection of a PC dedicated to data sharing. The videoconference participants can work on the same data simply by launching DATACONF and establishing a connection between Nova and another videoconferencing system.

Aethra also supplies an MCU (Multipoint Conferencing Unit) bridge for the European Space Research and Technology Centre (Estec) in the Netherlands. The bridge allows the simultaneous connection of several ESA sites over ISDN and IP as Aethra's videoconferencing systems are fully interoperable with the equipment of the European Space Agency's other external partners.

Technical Notes

Supernova

- Top level solution: audio, video and data system with two plasma monitors
- Compliant with both H.320 and H.323 standards for videoconferencing over ISDN and IP networks
- Perfect sound reproduction with echo suppressor
- Software for use of data channels with dedicated multimedia applications
- Capability to connect up to 5 locations at 128 kbps (competitors' solution for medium conference rooms can only connect a maximum of 4 locations over ISDN)

- High quality voice tracking feature that allows Supernova to automatically track and frame the speaker
- Camera with 9 presets, zoom and autofocus and high-speed pan&tilt can be locally and remotely controlled with the infrared control
- Ideal for large rooms and auditoriums

Nova

- Entry/middle level solution: audio, video and data system
- Compliant with both H.320 and H.323 standards for videoconferencing over ISDN and IP networks
- Capability to connect up to 5 locations at 128 kbps (competitors' solution for medium conference rooms can only connect a maximum of 4 locations over ISDN)
- High quality voice tracking feature that allows Nova to automatically track and frame the speaker
- Camera with 9 presets, zoom and autofocus and high-speed pan&tilt can be locally and remotely controlled with the infrared control
- Its large, lightweight wheels and quick set-up mean that it can be easily moved from one videoconference room to another in a matter of minutes
- Ideal for medium conference rooms like offices and meeting rooms

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Aethra

Aethra occupies a leading position in the telecommunications market around the world: it has installed over 110,000 videoconferencing systems and sells its products through more than 40 telephone companies world-wide. The company develops, manufactures and markets a wide product range in the telecommunications sector: from ISDN and xDSL products, video communication systems and audioconferencing solutions to the management of audio, video and data services. This wide range has always distinguished Aethra in the telecommunications industry world-wide, reflecting its capacity to develop cutting-edge technologies. Aethra's 30 years' experience and its success in this market have resulted in the company's international presence in over 60 countries.

For further information: www.aethra.com

European Space Agency

The European Space Agency (ESA) works on programmes for science, telecommunications, Earth observation and launchers. Founded in 1975 it comprises 15 Member States in Europe. Canada has special status and participates in some projects under a cooperation agreement. The Agency has liaison offices in Brussels, Washington and Moscow. All European Space Agency projects are the result of cooperation between experts from every continent as well as manufacturers and potential users. The Agency is one of the major players in the Galileo Project.*

Galileo is to the European Satellite Navigation System (superior to GPS but compatible with Galileo) which will be validated in space by 2004, while the full constellation of 30 satellites will be operational by 2008.*

For further information: www.esa.int

Aethra Press Contact:

Francesca Galeazzi
 Tel.: +39 071 2189 742
 Fax: +39 071 887077
francesca.galeazzi@aethra.it

European Space Agency Contact:

Franco Bonacina
 Tel.: +33 153697155
 Fax: +33 1 53697690
Franco.Bonacina@esa.int