



**CASE STUDY:
DISTANCE LEARNING WITH AETHRA® VIDEO COMMUNICATION**

St. John's College Preston, pioneer of global project between business and education

Customer interviewed: St. John's College Preston

Video communication system: Vega®

St. John's is a College of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, and is an educational institution, which serves Greek communities in Melbourne. All students at the College undertake several periods of Modern Greek studies every week, as St. John's is committed to the teaching and learning of the Greek language and culture. As such the College is constantly reviewing and developing the teaching of Modern Greek, and exploring ways to create new teaching and learning strategies and opportunities for its students. One new opportunity recently identified is distance learning via video communication. It enables frequent and full interaction between students in different countries all over the world. With this in mind, St. John's decided to take part in the Oikade Project, a global education project involving schools in Greek communities on every continent, who interact and exchange opinions and ideas using video communication.

"The goal of the project is to establish communication between children of the same age and nationality that live in different countries. By realizing the differences and similarities of their habits and customs the children of the Greek Diaspora will come closer to their home country, while the children living in Greece or Cyprus will broaden their horizons. At the same time group communication will hopefully lead to the development of personal relations and will provide the impetus which will forge long-lasting friendships".

(Oikade Project Manual Pg. 3, 1999, The Bank of Cyprus, Athens)

The Oikade Project involves schools in Johannesburg (South Africa), Toronto (Canada), New York (USA), Melbourne (Australia), Athens (The Hellenic Republic) and Nicosia (Cyprus). A Video Conferencing facility provided by Aethra has been set up in each of these schools, along with a video recorder and Internet access allowing twinned schools to participate in a series of lessons via video link-up.

Technical assistance and training has been provided to all the teachers and Project Managers involved, and consultants have visited each of the schools.

The Oikade Project has provided significant opportunities for learning, covering many curriculum areas, and thanks to video communication enables students to overcome barriers of distance and time. The students learn a variety of important skills from this experience, for

example the ability to work in a group not only in their local environment, but also in virtual groups when interacting with their remote classmates in other parts of the world. They also learn important communication skills, and the technical skills needed to use the equipment.

“As we move forward and immerse ourselves in this year’s Oikade Project – with subsequent projects to be developed on an on-going basis – we are constantly reminded of the possibilities for learning with a wide variety of technologies are endless, and exciting. The partnership that we have experienced with the Bank of Cyprus here in Melbourne and in Athens had been a great success, and has brought new perspectives and approaches to teaching and learning here at St. John’s” commented Mr. Henry Corcoran, Principal of St. John’s College.

About Aethra

Aethra (www.Aethra.com) is a leader in the global telecommunications market, with distribution of its leading-edge products through more than 40 telecommunications carriers worldwide. The company develops, manufactures and markets a wide range of high-performance telecommunications products, including ISDN and xDSL products, video communication systems and audioconferencing solutions, and management solutions for audio, video and data services in over 60 countries. These exceptional products have distinguished Aethra as a leader in the telecommunications industry worldwide for over 30 years, reflecting its expertise in bringing cutting-edge communications technologies to market.

For more information, please visit the Aethra web site at www.Aethra.com

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