Adobe Connect:

Getting Started Guide for Participants and Presenters
Table of Contents:

Procuring the Necessary Hardware ................................................................. 2
Preliminary Software and Connection Tests .................................................. 3
Joining an Adobe Connect Meeting ............................................................... 4
Setting up a Microphone and Camera ......................................................... 4
Using the Adobe Connect Application Interface ....................................... 6
Introduction

This is a paragraph of text which people will certainly read.

Companion Guide

This guide is a companion to the video series of the same name, which has been made available at the following URL: http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL30E17671742A36EF&feature=plcp.

About This Guide

This document will provide a brief orientation on how to participate in an online meeting using Adobe Connect on a desktop or laptop computer. This guide is not applicable for those wishing to participate in an Adobe Connect meeting using a mobile device (e.g. iPad, Android Tablet, smart phone, etc.); however you can find those instructions in a forthcoming document entitled “Connect for Mobile Devices” located on the ATS website (www.etsu.edu/ats).

What is Adobe Connect?

Adobe Connect is a Flash-based web conferencing application used by ETSU in order to conduct synchronous online meetings and presentations. Connect allows you to meet with others online and communicate through audio and video. You can also share your desktop screen, PDF documents, PowerPoint presentations, audio, video, and much more, all without requiring any expensive software or accounts. Adobe Connect is a hosted online service provided by ETSU, so all you need is a computer with a high speed Internet connection in order to participate.

Topics Covered

1. **Hardware & Devices**
   What you will need in order to participate in a meeting.

2. **Software & Connection Tests**
   How to perform a variety of preliminary software and connection tests that will ensure that your computer is ready for an Adobe Connect meeting.

3. **Joining a Connect Meeting**
   How to join a Connect meeting using a web browser.

4. **Hardware Setup**
   Setting up your camera and/or microphone from inside Adobe Connect.

5. **Adobe Connect Interface**
   Using the Adobe Connect application interface as both a Participant and Presenter.

6. **Intended Audience**
   This document is intended to train individuals who have little or no experience participating in
Connect meetings, or for those who need a step-by-step guide on how to prepare their hardware for an Adobe Connect meeting.

**Procuring the Necessary Hardware**

In order to participate in an Adobe Connect meeting you are going to need some hardware. The specifics will depend on your scenario, but we'll at least go over the basics.

1. **Computer + a high speed Internet connection.**

   If you are a student on the ETSU campus then you can use any of the open computer labs, or you can connect your own computer to the on-campus network to receive a high speed Internet connection. Faculty and staff can, of course, use their own office workstations. If you are located away from the ETSU campus then you will need to find your own solution.

2. **PC compatible microphone and/or video camera.**

   Most Adobe Connect meetings are held in order to allow multiple parties to communicate with one another. If you know that you will be required to speak during your meeting or provide video of yourself or your surroundings, then you may need to procure one or both of these items. Most laptops now come pre-installed with both microphones and webcams that are ready to use. If you have a laptop with these devices installed then that should be sufficient, but I do recommend that you use headphones; I will explain why in just a minute.

   If you are using a desktop computer then you will likely need to obtain a separate device (or two) in order to transmit audio and video. PC microphones and cameras come in a wide variety of styles. You will even find some combination devices that act as both a camera and a microphone. There are no rules about what kind of device you need to obtain, just remember that you get what you pay for. Here are a couple of tips that might help you. 1) USB microphones tend to provide better audio quality than microphones that use an analog connection, and 2) In most cases, you will want to use headphones during your Adobe Connect meeting. This may impact your decision about what kind of microphone to get because you can either procure a headset microphone, or use a pair of headphones along with a desk-mounted microphone.

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**Why use headphones?**

Using headphones can be very important, because allowing your speakers to transmit sound can cause a variety of frustrations for everyone involved in your meeting. When someone speaks into their microphone while using Adobe Connect, their voice gets transmitted to everyone else and is output either to speakers or headphones (depending on what each person is using). If you are using speakers, then their voice may come out of your speakers and then right back into your microphone. This can cause echoes, or, at the very worst, a horrible, high-pitched screeching noise (feedback). To avoid this problem, you should use headphones, which will...
In Summary

You’re going to need:

- A computer with a high speed Internet connection
- A PC-compatible microphone
- USB microphone typically offers better quality
- Headset microphone will help eliminate noise
- A PC-compatible camera (optional)

Once you have these items, you will want to make sure that they work prior to attending an Adobe Connect meeting. This will be your responsibility to figure out—there is such a wide variety of devices that it is difficult to provide a step-by-step guide for every scenario. Generally, you should start by making sure that everything is properly connected, then test out your microphone and camera using either the software that came with them or your operating system’s device settings.

Once you’ve got your hardware ready, it’s time to perform some tests.

Preliminary Software and Connection Tests

The next step in preparing your computer for an Adobe Connect meeting is to ensure that you have the proper plug-ins installed for your browser and that you are able to successfully connect to the ETSU Adobe Connect server using a high speed Internet connection. To check for all of this we will be performing a series of automated tests online.

1. First, open up your preferred web browser.

For many people, this will either be Internet Explorer (Windows) or Safari (Mac OS X), however Adobe Connect will actually operate from within the Adobe Flash Player, and will look identical in every scenario, so the browser you choose is not important as long as it supports Flash (Internet Explorer, Safari, Firefox, Chrome, Opera, etc.). Since I am running Windows I will use Internet Explorer, which comes pre-installed on any Windows PC.

2. Once your browser has loaded, you will need to navigate to the Adobe Connect Connection Test page located at this address:

As soon as the test page is loaded it will begin to perform 4 separate tests. First, it will check to see if you have the Flash Player installed, and, if so, whether or not your version is supported by Adobe Connect. Second, it will attempt to make a connection to the Adobe Connect server. Third, your Internet connection...
speed will be tested. And finally, it will check to see if the Adobe Connect Add-in is installed. If any of these tests fail then you will be provided with troubleshooting tips, or links to download the Flash Player and/or Adobe Connect add-in. Go ahead and address any of these if they appear. Once you have finished, repeat the test until you have passed all four of them. If you continue to experience issues then you may want contact your meeting host and make them aware of any problems.

Once you have passed the preliminary tests then you are ready to join an Adobe Connect meeting. I will show you how to do this in the next video.

### Joining an Adobe Connect Meeting

Your meeting host will need to provide you with a URL in order to access your specific meeting, but while you are watching this video you may or may not have access to a real meeting, so we have setup a test space which you can use.

1. **From your web browser, enter the following URL into the address bar:**

   ![URL](http://etsuac1.etsu.edu/test)

   This will take you to a login page. Only ETSU faculty and staff members are given Adobe Connect user names and passwords; if you have an account then you may sign in, but you can also click on “Guest” and log in with a guest name. Click on “Enter Room” once you have entered your information.

   Since you have installed the Adobe Connect Add-in, you will be re-directed to a new Flash Player window, which will automatically open up in full screen mode. You can see on my task bar that a new window has opened. If you go back to the web browser then you will see that the page we navigated from has been left blank. You can close this tab if you would like, as it is not of any use.

   You have now joined an Adobe Connect meeting! If you use the same computer that you are on now to join a meeting in the future, then you can skip straight to this step – you’ll just use your host’s URL instead of the test URL.

   Now we need to get your microphone and camera set up. We’ll cover this in our next video.

### Setting up a Microphone and Camera

Hopefully you’ve already confirmed that your microphone and/or camera do work outside of Adobe Connect, but just because they are connected and functional doesn’t necessarily mean that Connect recognizes them right away. I will now show you how to setup and use your camera and microphone from within an Adobe Connect meeting.

1. **The first thing to do is setup your audio settings.**

   To do this we are going to use the built-in audio setup wizard. From the meeting window, go to the menu bar and click on Meeting > Manage My Settings > Audio Setup Wizard... This will open up a multi-step wizard that will guide us through the process of setting up both our sound input and output.
a) The initial (zero) step simply defines what the wizard does. Go ahead and click Next here to move on to step 1.

b) This first step will check to make sure that you are getting sound output from Adobe Connect.

Click the test button here. You should hear music. If you don’t hear music then you will want to check that your sound is turned up and not muted. If you are using headphones that are plugged in through speakers, then make sure that the speakers are plugged in, turned on, and turned up. Once you hear sound, go ahead and click “Next” to proceed to the next step.

c) Step 2 will ask you to select your audio input device.

Click on the drop down menu here to select your device. If you are using a USB device then you will likely see the name of your device listed here. If you are using a device with an analog connection then you will likely see it listed as either “front input” or “rear input”. Click next to move on to step 3.

d) Step 3 will test your microphone input.

Click on the “record” button and say a few words, and hit “Stop” when you are finished. You may get [Test 1, 2, 3]. You should see a visual indication that sound is being transmitted. You can press the play button to playback your recording. This will give you a good idea of how sensitive your microphone is. If it is too loud or too soft we will adjust that in a later step. If your microphone was not detected then you may have selected the wrong one from the list. Try going back to Step 2, select another microphone, and try again. Once you are finished, click next.

e) Step 4 will test your microphone when you are silent and attempt to filter out any background noise.

Remove as much noise from your environment as possible, stay quiet, and then click the “Test Silence” button. This test will take about 7 seconds or so. Once finished, click next.

f) Finally, you will be presented with the “Advanced Settings” button.

If your microphone playback was too loud or too soft in step 3, then go ahead and click on this button. From the advanced settings menu, you can adjust your microphone volume. Decrease the volume level to make your voice softer, and increase it to make your voice louder. Once finished, click” OK”, then click “Finish”.

g) You still need permission

Your audio input and output should now be setup; however you won’t be able to use your microphone unless your meeting host gives you permission to do so. Inside of this test meeting space you have automatically been promoted to the “Presenter” role, which grants you the ability to speak whenever you wish. We’ll go over how to broadcast your voice in the next video.

2. If you are going to use a webcam then, just like with the microphone, you will need to let Adobe Connect know about it.

Go to the menu bar and click on Meeting > Manage My Settings > Select Camera. This will open up a small Flash pop-up with a drop down menu. Click on the drop down menu and select your camera from the list.

Support Contact: Daniel Gibson (gibsondv@etsu.edu; 439-8244)
Then click “close”. Your camera should now be ready to use in Connect, but, as with the microphone, your meeting host will have to give you permission to use your camera.

Your devices should now be ready to use inside Adobe Connect. In the next video we’ll look aspects of the meeting interface that you will need to be familiar with in order to participate in the meeting.

**Using the Adobe Connect Application Interface**

Now that you have everything setup and ready for your Adobe Connect meeting, the next thing you need to know is how to use the interface in order to communicate effectively in a live setting. In this video we’ll go over the basics of what participants and presenters need to know.

First of all, let me explain what I mean when I use the terms participant and presenter. These terms are used to define two separate kinds of roles from within Connect. When you log in to a meeting, you are automatically assigned a role; likely either as a participant or presenter. There is also a third role, called the host, which will be held by whomever it was that created the meeting. These roles define what you are able to do, by default, within the application interface, and it is the host’s role to manage everyone else’s level of access.

I mentioned in one of the previous videos that inside of this test meeting ([http://etsuac1.etsu.edu/test](http://etsuac1.etsu.edu/test)) you are automatically promoted to the presenter role. This means that you have all of the rights of a participant, as well as some added abilities to share media and information.

**Participants**

I’ll first go over aspects of the interface to which a participant is limited, as their level of access is the most basic. The participant role assumes that you are in the meeting to consume information, and maybe throw in the occasional comment. By default, this role only has access to view the content being shared and to offer some input in limited ways.

Now before I dive into specific features, let’s get oriented with the overall interface.

*Menu Bar*

Here you see only two options—Meeting and Help. We have already interacted with this portion of the interface when we setup our camera and microphone, so it is somewhat familiar to us at this point.

*Meeting Area.*

This simply refers to the visual space where the meeting will take place.

*Layout.*
This refers to the arrangement of the windows inside the interface. Each of these windows is called a pod. You can still call them “windows” or “panels”, or whatever else you like, but if you hear your meeting host talking about pods then you will know what they are saying.

**The Meeting Layout Can Change**

What you see inside this test meeting is a slight modification of the default meeting layout. When you get into your own meeting, you may see something that looks totally rearranged—don’t worry. Your host is in control of which pods get shown and how they are arranged.

**The Attendee List Pod**

As a participant or presenter, you will only be able to view this pod, but it can provide you with helpful information over the course of your meeting. You’ll notice right away that this pod lists the names of the individuals in the room. To the left of each name you’ll notice an icon. This icon corresponds to each user’s role. Here, Daniel Gibson is the host, Thomas and Practice User (that’s us) are presenters, and Jim is a participant. Knowing these roles immediately helps me identify what each person will be expected to do in the meeting.

Additionally, to the right of the names in the attendee list, you will sometimes see a variety of other status icons. Everyone involved in the meeting has the ability to quickly communicate a number of things by utilizing these icons. Jim has just raised his hand; this is a way for participants to request the ability to speak using their microphone. The host can respond to some of these statuses by granting permissions.

To indicate your own status, you can either click on the My Status button at the top of the attendee list pod, or you can go down to the bottom left of the meeting area. Here you will notice a status options drop down menu. If you click on the arrow for this menu you will see several options ranging from responses, requests, quick yes and no answers, and even a status indicating that you have stepped away from your computer. You can click on any one of these to broadcast your status. To clear your status, pick the last option from the status options menu.

**The Chat Pod**

As a participant you have the ability to use the chat pod to communicate via text message with everyone in the room. All you have to do is type your message into the input box at the bottom of the pod. When you are finished typing your message, hit [ENTER] on your keyboard or click the send message button just to the right of the input box. This will send a message to everyone in the room. If you need to communicate privately with a specific person, you can click on the drop down below the message area. This will allow you to choose an individual in the meeting. Once you have chosen their name, you can send a message just as before, but the text will appear red in the chat box for both you and the person to whom you sent the message.

**Other Pods**

As a participant, you may encounter other pods that require your interaction, such as the Poll, File Sharing, and Web Links pod, but these are largely self-explanatory and typically only require that you click on an item. The attendee list and chat pods will be the ones you use most while in the participant role. Most other pods will simply watch as your host or presenter uses them.

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Presenters

Now that we’ve gone over some of the basics, I will go over aspects of the interface relevant for those in the presenter role. This role gives you the ability to share more information, such as voice, video, and media files, without restraint, and is most suitable for an individual presenter or for a group of collaborators working and communicating together.

Using Your Microphone

The first thing that I want to show to presenters is how to broadcast their voice, as this is often the first thing people want to do. Sharing your voice is easy, just press the talk button; located at the bottom of the interface beside the status options menu. You can actually press talk if you want to use communicate using push-to-talk. To go into hands free mode, just press the lock icon to the right of the talk button. Finally, observe that there is a small drop down icon to the right of the lock icon. This menu will, among other things, allow you to quickly change your microphone’s sensitivity level through the low, medium, and high volume options.

The Camera and Voice Pod

Next let’s take a look at broadcasting your camera. To do this you will need to use the camera and voice pod. Look towards the bottom left of the camera and voice pod and you will find a small button. If you hover over the button with your cursor then a tool tip will pop up saying “Start my camera and voice”. Click this button. Assuming your camera is setup correctly, you should see your broadcast video from inside the camera and voice pod. Once you’ve activated your camera, you can pause and start your video broadcast by toggling the camera button, which has replaced the original “Start my camera and voice” button. You can also deactivate your camera (and voice) by pressing the stop button.

You also have some options that allow you to adjust the video transmission. In the bottom right of the pod you will see a pod options button. This allows you to adjust the orientation of the captured image, as well as the quality of the image. You can select slow images, which requires the most bandwidth, all the way to high bandwidth, which is the highest quality setting. You may need to play around with these to determine which works best for your scenario.

The Share Pod

The last pod we’ll look at is the share pod. This pod, as you might expect, allows you to share various forms of media with everyone else in the meeting. There are 3 primary ways to share. You can either share your computer screen, media files (like PowerPoint presentations, PDFs, images, etc.), or a digital whiteboard. Let’s look at each of these.

1. Documents

To share documents, we’ll go to the share pod and find where it says “What do you want to share?” Click on Documents > Select from My Computer… This will allow you to upload a variety of document types. You can upload PowerPoint files, PDF files, JPG images, MP3 audio files, Flash SWF files, and Flash video files. For now I will choose a PowerPoint presentation. Once you have selected your file, click open.

In order to display any kind of media in a meeting share pod the file first has to be converted into something flash compatible. This may take a couple of seconds or minutes depending on the size of the file you have
chosen. This is one reason why I recommend that individuals have any files they want to share uploaded before the actual meeting starts. There’s also another reason, but I’ll explain that in a second.

Once the file has been uploaded and converted, you should see it inside your share pod. Since I’ve uploaded a PowerPoint presentation, the share pod now has some extra buttons specific to navigating PowerPoint slides. Along the bottom left of the share pod you will notice that I have a back, forward, and sidebar button. This allows me to navigate through the presentation, and everyone watching follows along with what I am seeing in my meeting screen. Opening up the sidebar, I can even jump to specific slides or look at my speaker notes, which have been imported from PowerPoint, and no one else will see anything but the slide. I’ll go ahead and turn the sidebar off for now.

There are also a couple of visual communication tools that you can use when sharing any kind of visual files, such as PowerPoint, PDF documents, images, and video. These tools can be seen in the bottom right area of the share pod. They are the pointer tool and the whiteboard overlay. If I click on the pointer tool button, then I will be able to click anywhere in the share pod to draw attention to a specific area of the document, and everyone will see the pointer. I can then turn the pointer tool off by clicking the button again. If I turn on the whiteboard overlay then I will be given a set of tools that I can use in order to make annotations on top of the file which I am sharing. These tools are identical to the tools you are given when you choose to share a whiteboard. You have a pencil, marker, line, shape, text, and stamp tool. These tools can be used in conjunction to simulate a whiteboard or smart board that you might use in a live environment. Several of the tools have their own options which display to the bottom left of the tool menu. You can customize these options as you use the tools. I encourage you to play around with these on your own to get used to them if you wish to use them in your meeting.

As I said earlier, right now everyone in the meeting is seeing what I see, but I can change that by clicking on the sync button which is currently activated. This will deactivate sync mode, which will allow everyone in the meeting to view the document for themselves. This means they can navigate through slides, open up the sidebar, and look at whatever part of the document they wish. This is useful for collaborative environments. If I need to retake control, I can simply click the sync button again to reactivate sync mode.

Now let’s take a look at some other things we can share. If I want to switch to a different document in the share pod then I can do so in one of two ways. I can click on stop sharing, which will remove any active document and take me back to the opening share screen, or I can click on the share drop down menu, which will allow me to upload a new document without going back to the blank window. This time, I’ll upload a PDF document.

Once my PDF document has been uploaded and converted, you may notice that I now have several tools that you would find in a PDF viewing application. I can navigate between pages, either by pressing the back or forward arrows, or I can type in the exact page that I wish to view. I can also zoom in to the document using the zoom slider or by typing a percentage value into the zoom percent input box. Along those lines, I can also quickly zoom in to fit the width of the page in my share window just by clicking the fit width button, or fit the entire page in the window by pressing the fit page button. Lastly, you can rotate the document clockwise and counter-clockwise using these two buttons.

Also notice that at the bottom of the share pod I still have the ability to use the pointer tool, whiteboard overlay, and sync options.
2. Sharing Your Desktop Screen

This can be very useful in a variety of situations when you need to show something on your screen that you couldn’t otherwise upload or display inside of Adobe Connect. I'll first click stop sharing to get rid of this PDF document, and then I’ll click on My Computer Screen… from the middle of the share pod, this will bring up a dialogue box. You have a few options with regard to sharing your screen. You can show your desktop, which will display everything on your computer screen; or you can limit the sharing to a specific application, which will allow you to show anything that happens within a particular application on your computer; and lastly, you can share a specific window, which will only share one open window from your computer. I typically recommend that users just go ahead and choose desktop, because this gives you the most freedom, but if you are concerned about users seeing something that you don’t want to share then you may want to be more specific. Since I have multiple monitors connected to my computer, it will allow me to choose which one I want to use. Once you have made your selection, click share. The meeting window will be minimized and you will be returned to whatever you were doing prior to entering the Adobe Connect meeting. You should also notice that an Adobe Connect icon has deposited itself into your system tray. You can now browse a website, demonstrate how to use a specific application, or do anything else that you could do on your own computer screen. Sharing your computer screen is just like sharing live video, so keep in mind that this will eat up a lot of bandwidth and may cause trouble for users with slower connection speeds.

If you want to stop sharing your screen, or make modifications to what you are sharing, you can go to your system tray and click on the Adobe Connect icon. From the menu that pops up, I am going to click stop screen sharing, which will automatically take me back to my meeting window.

3. Whiteboards

Click on Whiteboards > Whiteboard. This opens up a blank white screen which allows you to use the same tools that I mentioned earlier from the whiteboard overlay. To open up those tools, go to the bottom right of the screen and click on the Whiteboard tools button. The only difference in this mode is that you can have multiple whiteboards at once. I could make some notes on this board, and then go over to the bottom left of the window and click the right arrow to move onto a new board. I could then come back later if I needed to, or create yet another board. I’ll go ahead and click stop sharing now that I’m done playing around with the whiteboards.

All The Rest

There are other pods and features that presenters can take advantage of, but your meeting host will have to make them available to you. What I have covered will get you through the vast majority of situations, but if you have questions that have been left unanswered, please send them to your meeting host and they will be happy to help you out.

All you have left to do now is to go out and get involved in a meeting. Good luck!