



Proposal for VC Teaching and Blended Learning

Draft Four – June, July 2009

This document outlines The International Church of the Nazarene's need for Video Conference and Blended Education infrastructure, outlining both the educational plan and the needed infrastructure required. It briefly summarizes the value's which would require this form of teaching as opposed to classroom only or online only models. The proposal is followed by appendices which show geographical areas and supporting documents on theory.

PROPOSAL SUMMARY:

The following proposal describes a plan to develop and expand a global video-conference network which would serve the areas in which we plant and cultivate churches. It is written, primarily, with the needs of ministerial education in mind, but it achieves far more than this as will be explained later. For the educational connectivity, however, this proposal allows preparation that is accessible but, unlike on-line models, provides people both personal and cognitive presence within a community of learners. Research (cited in the Annotated Bibliographies in the Appendices) demonstrate that on-line or other distance education models meet some very real needs, but repeatedly are reported as lacking personal connectivity and dynamic interaction as provided in extension centres, virtual and campus-based classrooms.

But, as indicated earlier, the benefits of this proposal far exceed the benefits of ministerial education alone. For instance, the following are already evident in our initial trial:

- **Connectivity:** When a workshop occurred which involved a pastor in isolated Perth, she commented that it was the first time she ever really felt connected to the rest of the Nazarene fellowship in Australia.
- **Mentoring and Coordination** – The missionary in Perth who plants aboriginal churches seeks to develop a network of 8 pastors in remote sites who have no contact with other pastors. They desire a weekly video conference session for the following:
 - Prayer
 - Training
 - Coordination of outreach including the Jesus Film showing and discipleship
- **Equipping and connecting for lay ministry.** The early trial also demonstrated the benefit of having a speaker in the USA talk with Australians in two different sites simultaneously (Woody Stevens of the Sunday School/Discipleship ministries – the participants in Australia felt totally connected to the international church in that event in spite of the miles of geographical distance.
 - Further events are being planned for similar events for Discipleship, for NMI conventions and for Field and National Board Meetings.
- **Missionary Speakers** can speak directly from the field to sending congregations.
- And, of course, many **further applications** which will become evident as people become accustomed to the medium and start realizing its full potential not only in ministerial education, but in equipping the total church in a global manner.

The following material expands this proposal and is treated under the headings:

1. The Philosophy undergirding the approach of Video Conference Teaching and Blended Learning (page 3)
2. Strategic Steps toward Implementation of a global system page (Page 9); and

3. Appendices including location maps, documents on the approach and annotated bibliographies (page 16). 1

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PHILISOPHICAL UNDERPINNING

STEMMING FROM THE VALUE OF

BLENDED LEARNING

Introduction:

- Blended learning (as used in this document) is a contemporary educational delivery model that depends not only on in-class teaching nor upon online or other distance modalities, but combines the strength of each to provide education that is community based as well as easily accessible wherever a person may live. This strategy for Blended learning underpins two very integral values of Global Nazarene Education: Namely, (1) Providing deep level education which undergirds lifelong learning and develops the thirst for further self development and (2) Assuring accessibility of educational opportunity. Due to the first value (quality education) World Mission has historically founded colleges, seminaries and now Universities in areas in which we evangelize. This priority and the extent of our expenditure on education both in personnel and in funding reflects our respect for quality education. Notwithstanding this import, however, we also know that the church is growing and developing at unprecedented rates. Thus, the second value (accessibility to all whom God calls) is absolutely essential to prevent creating a two-tier church – one with well prepared leaders due to the availability of educational opportunities and the other with limited opportunity due purely to geography or distance from developed world assets.
- We refuse to compromise quality of learning to provide accessibility. Furthermore, we refuse to limit access under the guise of protecting educational quality. Mission educators have consistently attempted the best marriage of these two goals. Again quality, in depth learning and teaching along with uncompromised educational access and availability drive us to serve people regardless of educational background and opportunity, location or language/culture.
- In order to facilitate the marriage of quality and accessibility the World Mission educators have developed a wide range of approaches not the least of which is extension sites connected to hub or main campus settings. This networking of extension sites has increased participation of people in formal ministerial education from 5,000 participants to over 12,000 participants within the last 7 years. At the same time quality has been assured as each extension participant follows a program approved by both the Regional Course of Advisory Committee and the International Course of Study Advisory

Committee. These approvals are in addition to our own efforts to assure the top level of education for every participant.

- We have desisted using online only extension work for the following reasons: Recent research in the era of 2005-7 has been highlighting a downfall of online education only (please refer to the appendices for further expansion of this concept), but briefly these include a sense of social isolation, lack of teacher support and lack of “cognitive presence.” Where extension sites are used, there is a local pastor/educator and a cohort of fellow learners. Two aspects of our view of the church and her approach to developing people include building a community of believers (or learners) and secondly, the incarnational model of imparting life and message. The extension education model has served well to this point, but now further challenges present themselves which lead us to explore the most contemporary models which demonstrate best practice for people like ourselves who desire to invest our own lives into the lives and practice of future pastors;
- We also know that these two values of quality and accessibility are not necessarily mutually exclusive; and
- We view Blended Learning approaches, including Video Conference as a component, represent the perfect marriage of our values as they bring the advantages of real-time classroom experiences to the locale of the developing pastor.

Philosophical Underpinnings

- Wesleyan Higher Education holds these various principles of life which flow over into education.
 - (1) Prevenient Grace which enables universal potential for all;
 - (2) Education and development of leaders is transformational more than it is informational;
 - (3) Education is, after all, About People rather than programs;
 - (4) Wesleyan people tend to be community and connected in nature. We worship in community, and we learn in community;
 - (5) Interactivity is the key to teaching. This is due to our strong belief in incarnational imparting of life to life;
 - (6) Thus we ascribe to an incarnational view of imparting life and learning by bringing real-time presence to those we are shaping and forming for life and for service.

The Next Step

- Historically we have had two streams
 - i) Classroom based
 - (1) Strength
 - (a) Community
 - (b) Interactivity
 - (c) Personal relationships
 - (d) Dynamic
 - (2) Modes
 - (a) campus
 - (b) extension centres
 - (c) satellite campuses by video streaming/interactivity
 - ii) Distance Education
 - (1) Strengths
 - (a) Access
 - (b) People are on site of their practice of ministry as they prepare (also somewhat true of extension centres as well).
 - (c) Flexibility of Schedule.
 - (2) Modes:
 - (a) Printed media with study notes
 - (b) On-line presentation
 - (c) Threaded discussion and forums.
- As we view the relative merits of each of these approaches, I suggest that neither is adequate alone – we need community and access, synchronous as well as asynchronous contact.
 - i) Thus the new approach of Blended learning is the direction toward which we need to move

Infrastructure needed generally

In order to fulfill the needs for the foregoing approach (blended Learning), we need to have in place the following:

- Qualified lecturers and mentors spread throughout the learning sites and district centres.
- Network of connected virtual classrooms linked to existing “real” classrooms. These virtual classrooms would be strategically placed in key places within each field or district and would be resourced with interactive video conferencing facilities, internet and CD materials as well as books and other ministry resources.
- Network of connected campuses from all world areas for sharing educational personnel
- Connected Learning Management Software (IE Blackboard or similar) with web manager
- Web host for stored video presentations and online educational services such as forums etc.
- Bridge for all sites (open for access with security offered by either restricting to H323 traffic or to password control or both).

OVERARCHING GOAL

- 1 In Global Nazarene Education we foresee having the following in place:
 - 2) Every learning setting will provide many interconnected delivery options including face-to-face interaction (either in the classroom, extension site or virtual classroom, online content delivery for all students including those who are on campus, discussion forums by threaded discussion for both campus and extension sites to link students wherever they are, and webcasting or podcasting of short lectures to enhance of presentations wherever.
 - We further see every campus being interconnected with Video Links and for the following benefits:
 - (1) Shared Faculty:
 - 3) While a teacher may be assigned to one location, their assignment would be to several locations. That is to say, they may have a regional assignment to serve in institutions throughout the regions or, going further, even a global assignment to serve institutions in several regions.
 - 4) Shared classes
 - By their very nature, smaller campuses cannot offer every subject which needs to be offered for elective or supplemental specialties. Furthermore, not every campus can have specialists in each field as may be required for seminary best practice and/or accreditation.
 - 5) Staff development

- The global church can provide each campus with the best international facilitators of teacher development, administrator development and board of governance
- 6) Sense of Community
 - Among smaller institutions, it will provide a vehicle for giving that sense of being a part of the larger church.
 - 7) Leadership development and networking.
 - 8) then further networked with interactive video or (audio in areas still awaiting infrastructure classroom) on each District

Implementation:

Having Described the philosophy and general concepts, we shall now consider the steps toward implementing first of all video conference teaching and secondly its inclusion in a blended learning environment globally:

Strategic Steps toward Implementation:

Step One: Pretrial and Testing

1. Progress to the current time:

VIDEO CONFERENCE INITIATION AND TESTING FOR EDUCATION

This stage has been underway since mid-2006. Regional Offices have been equipped for administrative coordination and vision casting which, in its own right, is valuable. To enable education to be equipped, the Global Mission Education Coordinator has been preparing Regional Education Coordinators with a vision of what could be accomplished using this medium for educational delivery to distance students and between existing institutions which could share resources.

Eurasia reported earlier use of their Regional Office equipment for hosting lecturers from the USA for the nearby college rather than having them travel to the country. Australasia has also been testing the concept of videoconference teaching and refining the system through these steps:

1. INSTALLATION:

- a. Installed Polycom VSX 7000e (the educational version of the hardware designed for virtual classroom use) in a dedicated classroom at

Nazarene Theological College (Brisbane): in a Sunday School classroom in Wantirna (Melbourne) Church and in the conference room of Asia Pacific Theological Seminary in Manila. These sets were installed simultaneously to establish the base for trialing bandwidth issues and firewall issues in world areas where broadband is less than optimal.

- b. Installed PVX software and ViaVideo II hardware in the Global Education Coordinator's Office in outer Melbourne and in a church in Perth, Australia. These installations were to explore ways of including sites with limited funds that would still see themselves as potential extension sites of existing seminaries or educational providers.

2. INITIAL USAGE:

- a. **Conferences** – the Global Education Coordinator participated in Various international meetings including Books for Pastors planning meetings (with other participants in Kansas City) and in a meeting with the General Superintendent's, General Church leaders and participants from Africa. The use of the Bridge in connecting more than one site simultaneously was satisfying, but also highlighted areas in which improvement in the technical area could be achieved.
- b. **Teaching Point to Point** – He also taught a full semester on Christian Education from the Sunday School classroom in Wantirna (Melbourne) and NTC (Brisbane) simultaneously. Various lecturers from NTC presented workshops in Brisbane and Perth simultaneously. Then Dr David McEwan Taught simultaneously in Brisbane and Melbourne. He reported that it was surprising how seamlessly it worked between the two sites and how "live" the dynamics were. (note: we did experience teething problems in the first course offered which have been addressed. These were involved with technical issues and broadband issues. This has been part of the learning curve and also the reason we started in small stages and steps. None-the-less, the student feedback on the quality of the educational experience has been outstanding).
- c. **Multi Site Leadership Events Using a Bridge** – The National Board (Australia and New Zealand) conducted a multi-site meeting of their Compassionate Ministries Board with participants in Perth, Melbourne and Brisbane. In another such event Dr Woody Stevens in Kansas City trialed the system with us in trialing the possibilities of using this in Discipleship training internationally. He conferenced with participants in Brisbane and Melbourne while in Kansas City – this three-way conference again was successful. Furthermore, the presentation of a class involving both APNTS in Manila and NTC Brisbane demonstrate this potential. The lecturer was in Brisbane with most of the students being in Manila.
- d. **Networking with other Practitioners** – The specialist team at the University of New England in Armidale Queensland have been a tremendous help to us by providing free consultation as needs arise.

They include a top world scholar specializing in using Video Conference Teaching in a Blended learning environment. Furthermore, they have on-staff a full time Polycom and Tandberg specialist and other IT professionals. Furthermore, Dr Alex Varaghese of Mount Vernon Nazarene University was elated at his trial of the system while teaching a block course in Brisbane, and has started dialogue with their IT blackboard specialist on their campus. The ongoing networking between Global Mission Education and Dan Schafer, Brad Firestone and Dave Anderson has been established through a face-to-face meeting, Video Conference session and now developing strategic planning documents together.

- e. **Personnel Training and Development.** Teaching is an art. No less is Video Conference participation and teaching. A workshop has been developed to equip existing educators with these skills. The first workshop was presented in Brisbane in July and the second is scheduled (by Video Conference) in Manila in September.

NEXT STEPS OF STAGE ONE (The Establishment and Trialing Stage)

Regularly Teach in Multiple Sites Simultaneously.

The following sites have been identified (IE existing students are ready) as critical next sites to be set up and interconnected:

1. Our existing sites of Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth
2. Additional anticipated sites include the following:
 - a. Bowen Queensland
 - b. Maryborough, Queensland
 - c. Adelaide, South Australia
 - d. Inner City Melbourne (for ministers in street and inner city mission work who desire access to quality ministerial education, but do not wish to leave their ministry sites to do so due to establish credibility among those whom others have not been able to impact).
 - e. Biloela, Queensland (A Country Centre with many churches desiring to use the facility of an “on-site” Bible College experience
 - f. Bundaberg, Queensland
 - g. Townsville, Queensland – a northern regional centre and university city.
 - h. Auckland New Zealand
 - i. Christchurch New Zealand
 - j. Hamilton New Zealand
 - k. Dargaville, New Zealand

- I. 8 Sites in Western Australia – remote locations in which we have aboriginal church plants with pastors without training. Jong-il-Kim would like to connect them for the purposes of education and for weekly coordination and prayer meetings to mentor them and build a team among Aboriginal Pastors who are new to the church.

These locations are illustrated in the appendices.

3. Requested sites in another educational zone, but which could be serviced by some classes from Brisbane, particularly at the degree and seminary level:
 - a. Apia
 - b. Honiara
 - c. Suva
 - d. Mt Hagen
 - e. Guam

Academic Staff Development

4. Degree Upgrade for Accreditation and Personal Development
5. Development in the philosophy of **ministerial** education and in the art of teaching adults.

Shared Faculty

6. No smaller institution can ever hope to have the number of professors or the specialization which is required particularly for education at degree and higher degree. The following institutions each of particular strength in certain teaching areas and could be interconnected so that all teachers in each could be shared among the rest, as could actual classes under offer in any one of them. For a start, these could include.
 - a. Brisbane (network established)
 - b. Manila (Network Established – Brisbane and Manila are already making arrangements to share faculty and courses through Video Conference use.
 - c. Korea Nazarene University (Probably have VC capability now or could at minimal cost).
 - d. Port Moresby
 - e. Indonesia
 - f. Possibly Fiji
 - g. Also a request from South Africa to be a part of this joint teaching/learning with Australasia in spite of the geographic and time-zone differences/

MODEL Virtual Classroom

7. While some of our sites operate from conference rooms, this minimizes the impact for education. NTC Brisbane is designing one of its classrooms in the

next building to be properly set up for Video Conference Teaching and coordination. This can serve as a model for other sites once its advantages are experienced. \

8. Beginning of the blended learning approach which would utilize:
 - a. Bridge connectivity for multiple site teaching simultaneously (to be commenced this semester).
 - b. Learning Management Software for storing pre-recorded videos, and other media rich content. Announcements and assignments can be posted here – students can submit work both for collaborative purposes and for feedback/marking by the lecturer.
 - c. Chat room and threaded discussion facilities.

OTHER NEEDS MET

- d. `International Church Connectivity. As was previously indicated, the conference with Woody Stevens demonstrated that there is opportunity to link every facet in our international church into a structure that creates real-time access and communication. Stemming from this, the Melbourne church will be hosting the District Assembly and Conventions – they desire to book speakers from HQ to speak to the conventions etc. in real time.

SUMMARY:

The foregoing requires the following infrastructure:

- 35 sites registered on the bridge (or open bridge with password protection which is far superior for educational networking, especially as the system grows in future developments.
- Model Virtual Classroom established at NTC using their existing VSX7000e plus the following:
 - Document Camera
 - Waycom Screen for using as “white board” for live notation. Current educational price AUD 1600 or USD 1300. An electronic white board would be preferable, but not affordable in the early stage.
 - Second camera to capture class and teacher simultaneously on host site.
 - Learning Management Software for 20 sites holding classes with initially 300 students enrolled in blended learning during early trial.
 - Webhosting of LMS; pre-recorded webcasts; stored power points and other documents as well as hosting Threaded Discussions/Forums for up to 1000 students.
 - IT person to establish (within World Mission) the connections and train on-site IT people on trouble shooting (would this be Brad?)

THE ROAD AHEAD:

Asia Pacific Total Regional Roll-Out:

Having established bases within Australia and some of the Islands as extensions of Nazarene Theological College(Brisbane) , and with both Brisbane and APNTS (Manila) now equipped to share lectures and classes between campuses in disparate locations, it is timely to consider the next stages in this region. Dr Melvin Rigsby, the Regional Education Coordinator, is committed to Video Conference classroom connectivity resulting from successful experiences with this delivery mode in the University of his former employment. He has expressed the desire that the *entire* region be connected with all institutions facilitated with video conference classrooms. He will be further consulted on his desires and goals in this regard.

SENDAS and Interconnectivity Between Spanish Speaking Regions:

This is outlined below, but is listed here because of its timeliness, urgency and priority to the global roll-out of the facility. We MUST move forward as quickly as possible as SENDAS truly depends on this mode of delivery to minimize travel between sites and in grouping centres as the program grows.

Interconnectivity between Continents

- Each Regional Educational Coordinator's Office and their nearest institution will be equipped and connected to a global network: This will require:
 - Asia Pacific – equipment and infrastructure in place – no further installation.
 - Africa – Regional Office for REC in place – need to include the College in South Africa.
 - Caribbean – REC and college need equipment and infrastructure
 - MAC – REC (and college location which is the same) need connectivity.
 - South America – Regional Office has VC.
 - Eurasia – VC in place in Regional Office and being used by EuNC as well.
 - Some USA/CANADA institutions are ramping up for this as well. Alan Schrock has developed connectivity with IT people in various US colleges and opened the door for initial discussions with the USA colleges concerning the plans we are currently formulating. Alan's history at ENBC has given awareness of some of the issues and challenges faced in the international development of this plan.
- The foregoing requires the additional infrastructure to that which would already be extant:
 - Setup for Caribbean REC
 - Setup for MAC REC and his institution in Costa Rica
 - South African College needs to be set up.
 - Seminary in Argentina may need to be set up.
- This would require four more sites registered or allowed on Bridge which would bring us to 40 sites. Of course, these 40 sites would not be using the bridge simultaneously. **PLEASE NOTE:** We need to have access to content sharing as well as 2-way video so that media rich presentations and student presentations can be shared with all sites simultaneously and interactively.

GLOBAL ROLL-OUT

Potential Language Connectivity:

1. French Connection – connect the various teaching sites of Francophone Africa (12 at the moment) with Paris, and USA to source former missionaries who can teach in French.
The following reasons may well mitigate such an approach:
 - a. Shortage of French speaking teachers with qualifications for degree level;
 - b. Share resources and bring connectivity;
2. Portuguese Connection – Connect Brazil University with Mozambique, Portugal and two sites in the Cape Verde. Again, they could share teachers and subjects. Already discussions have commenced with Brazil, Cape Verde and other parts of Africa, with the African Regional Education Coordinator keen on promoting this cooperation with Brazil.¹
3. Region Roll Outs
 - a. Africa
 - i. will trial the South African Connection (as established in previous section) with Australasia to trial connectivity.
 - ii. Connect the following sites (research shows that these sites are served by broadband internet – costs will be determined for viability in near future⁰. In addition to the French Sites. (NOTE: Fili and I will be meeting in Nairobi next month to further develop this strategy).
 1. ANSE Kenya
 2. ANU
 3. Malawi
 4. Nigeria
 5. Swaziland
 6. Ethiopia (Equipment already in place in the Field Office).
 - a. Usages include staff development and shared resources in teaching.
 - b. Once these sites are established there may be some development out into the spoke teaching sites.
 - b. South America Spanish, MAC and Spanish Caribbean
 1. In April, 2008, a special planning meeting was conducted in Argentina to plan for potential sites. A four-stage roll-out plan was developed which is outlined in the appendix, and it will serve 5729 students in 320 centres when fully implemented. San Jose has been equipped with a VSX7000e unit in preparation for this implementation, and next step was the IBOE team conducting a workshop with the principals of three regions in San Jose on September 24, 2008.
4. SUMMARY:
 - a. The Foregoing will require the following infrastructure:

- i. 90 total sites registered or allowed on the bridge – of course no more than 40 would be active at any one time due to time zone and timetabling issues.
- ii. Learning Management and web hosting for up to 6,000 students in the 30 some courses for the ordination for ministry.

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APPENDIX ONE:

LOCATION MAPS

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