

Collaborating Over the Internet in an Online Meeting

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Download and install the latest version of NetMeeting onto your computer
 - Host an online meeting to share a PowerPoint show with participants you invite to the meeting
 - Yield control of the presentation to the participants
 - Regain control of the presentation
 - Open a chat window and a whiteboard in which participants can collaborate
 - Add and remove participants from an online meeting
 - Participate in an online meeting to which you are invited
 - Troubleshoot common problems that may arise in an online meeting
- Perhaps the most powerful feature of the Internet is the way you can collaborate with other users. PowerPoint provides this capability with its built-in support for Microsoft's NetMeeting software. In this chapter, you join the worldwide network of NetMeeting users. You will learn how to join a meeting in progress or invite one or more users to join you in a meeting. You will be able to show them your presentation and discuss it with them in a chat window. If you want, you can yield control to the participants, who can then navigate and make changes to your presentation, while you watch. Figure 42-1 shows these features in action on the desktop of a meeting's host.

Before you can do these things, however, you need to make sure you have the latest version of NetMeeting installed on your computer. To find out what the latest version is, and to install it if you do not already have it, follow the *Multitit* Web site link to Microsoft's NetMeeting Web site.

Note: When this book went to press, NetMeeting was a Windows-only technology. Consequently, this chapter does not include instructions for the Macintosh.

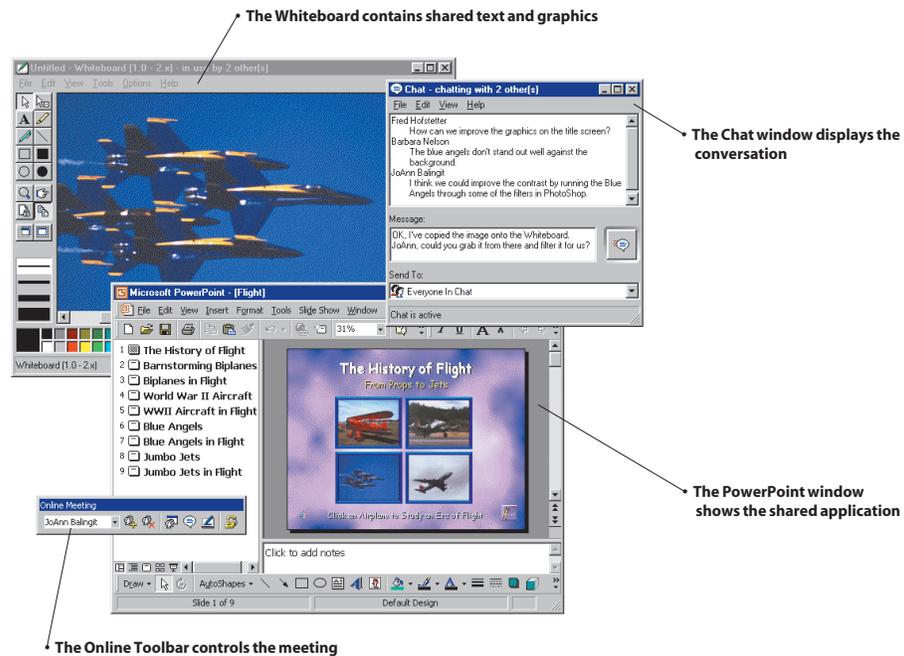


Figure 42-1 An online meeting in progress.

Holding an Online Meeting

Show-Me Movie:

"Holding an Online Meeting"

Once you have the latest version of NetMeeting installed on your computer, you can use PowerPoint's built-in collaboration features. To host an online meeting, follow these steps:

- ▶ Open the presentation you want to share.
- ▶ You can either schedule a meeting or hold the meeting now.
- ▶ If you want to schedule a meeting that will be held later, you must have Microsoft Outlook installed. If you have Outlook, pull down the PowerPoint Tools menu, click Online Collaboration, and then click Schedule Meeting. When the Outlook window opens, use Outlook to schedule the meeting.
- ▶ If you want to hold the meeting now, pull down the Tools menu, click Online Collaboration, and then click Meet Now. The Find Someone dialog appears, as illustrated in Figure 42-2. Type or select the name of the first participant you want to invite to the meeting. Note that the participants you invite to an impromptu meeting must have NetMeeting running. It is easiest if they are all logged on to the same NetMeeting server you are on, otherwise, you will need to search for them in the Microsoft Internet Directory or type or select their directory server in the Select a Directory field in order to find them. If your participants are not logged on to the NetMeeting server, you may need to place a phone call to arrange the meeting.
- ▶ The first time you start an online meeting, you will be prompted to select a directory server. If you do not know what server to use, try the ils.chi-town.com server, which is one of the more popular NetMeeting servers available to the public. If the chi-town server is not available, follow the *Multilit* Web site links to publicly available NetMeeting servers.

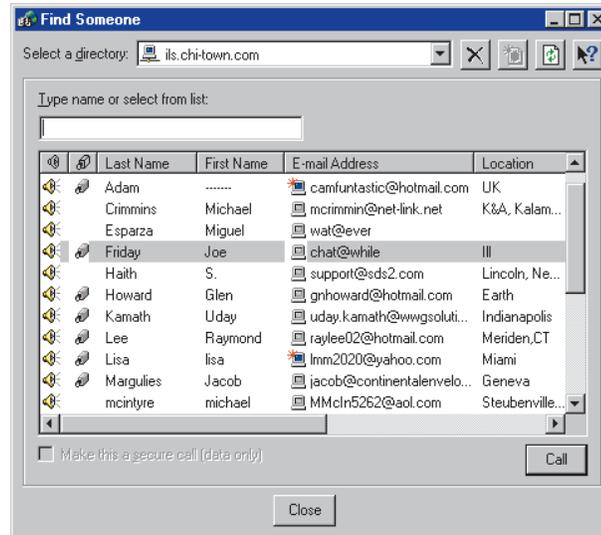


Figure 42-2 The Find Someone dialog appears when you choose the option to hold a meeting now.

The Online Meeting Toolbar

During a meeting, the Online Meeting toolbar enables you to moderate the proceedings. You can invite additional participants to join the meeting, remove participants, allow others to edit and control the presentation, display the chat window, display the whiteboard, and end the meeting when it is over. Table 42-1 lists and explains the controls on the Online Meeting toolbar, which will appear on your screen as follows:



Table 42-1 Online Meeting Toolbar Controls

Control	Name	What It Does
	Participant list	Drops down a menu of participants currently in the meeting
	Call participant	Invites additional participants into the meeting
	Remove participant	Lets the host remove participants from the meeting
	Allow others to edit	Allows participants to edit and control the presentation during the meeting
	Display chat window	Allows participants to write messages in the meeting's chat room
	Display whiteboard	Allows participants to draw or type messages on the meeting's whiteboard
	End meeting	Allows an individual to leave the meeting, or lets the host end the meeting for the entire group

Only the host of the meeting gets to use the Online Meeting toolbar. If another participant wants more control of the Microsoft NetMeeting features during an online meeting, that participant must use the NetMeeting program directly by clicking Microsoft NetMeeting on the taskbar.

Adding Participants to a Meeting in Progress

Show-Me Movie:

“Adding Participants to a Meeting in Progress”

To invite another participant to join a meeting in progress, you place a NetMeeting call to the person. PowerPoint makes that easy to do by placing a control for that on the Online Meeting toolbar. Follow these steps:

- ▶ Click the Call Participant button on the NetMeeting toolbar.
- ▶ When the Find Someone dialog appears, as illustrated earlier in Figure 42-2, type or select the name of the participant you want to join the meeting, and then click the Call button.
- ▶ If the participant you call is available and decides to accept your invitation, the participant joins your meeting.
- ▶ If the participant you call is unavailable, you may need to place a phone call to deliver the invitation in person.
- ▶ To view a list of the participants who are currently in the meeting, click the Participant List button on the Online Meeting toolbar.

Answering a Call to Join a Meeting

Participants must have NetMeeting running on their computers in order to receive a call to join an online meeting. When you receive an online meeting call, the Incoming Call dialog will appear, as illustrated in Figure 42-3. Click Accept if you want to join the meeting, or click Ignore if you want to decline the invitation to join the meeting. The presentation that is being shared will appear on your screen. You will probably be curious to find out who else is in the meeting. To find out, switch to your NetMeeting window or click NetMeeting on your taskbar to inspect the participant list.

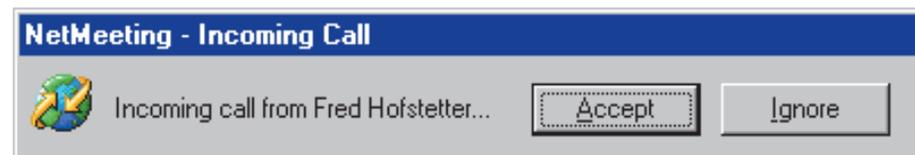


Figure 42-3 The Incoming Call dialog.

Removing a Participant from an Online Meeting



The host is the only person who can remove participants from an online meeting. If you want to remove someone, follow these steps:

- ▶ On the Online Meeting toolbar, pull down the Participant List and select the name of the person you want to remove.
- ▶ Click the Remove Participant button.
- ▶ The Online Meeting dialog appears as illustrated in Figure 42-4, asking whether you really want to remove the person from the meeting.
- ▶ If you click Yes, the person will be removed.

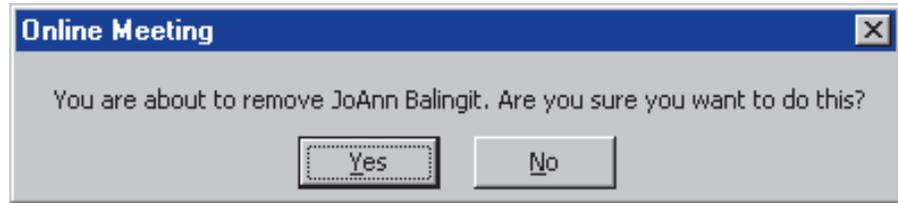


Figure 42-4 The Online Meeting dialog asks if you really want to remove the person from the meeting.

Ending or Leaving an Online Meeting



Only the host of an online meeting can end it. If you are the host, you can end a meeting by clicking the End Meeting button on the Online Meeting toolbar. When you end a meeting, the other participants are automatically disconnected from each other.

If a participant wants to leave a meeting before it ends, the participant can do so by clicking Microsoft NetMeeting on the taskbar, then clicking Hang Up on the NetMeeting toolbar.

Collaborating in an Online Meeting

During an online meeting, there are many ways you can collaborate with the other participants. You can write text messages in the Chat window, work on the Whiteboard, and share the PowerPoint presentation in which the meeting began. The host can even click a button to permit other users to edit and control the presentation.

Yielding Control to Another Participant



When an online meeting starts, the host is in control of the presentation. If you want to yield control to someone else, click the Allow Others to Edit button on the Online Meeting toolbar. Only one person can be in control at a time. To take control, the participant double-clicks anywhere in the presentation. A dialog box appears on the host's screen, asking if you want to let the participant take control, as illustrated in Figure 42-5. Click the Accept button if you do. The first time you try this, you will be amazed how the participant can take control of your presentation and have full access to your menus and toolbars.

When someone else is in control of the presentation, you will not have the use of your cursor. Instead, the initials of the person in control will appear next to the cursor. At any time, you can turn collaboration off by clicking the Allow Others to Edit button if you have control, or pressing **[Esc]** if you do not. This will return the cursor to you, and the



Figure 42-5 The Request Control dialog.

other participants then continue to watch you work. Remember that when collaboration is off, participants can still work simultaneously in the Chat window or on the Whiteboard.

Using the Whiteboard



Only the host of the meeting can open the Whiteboard from within PowerPoint. To do so, the host clicks the Whiteboard button on the Online Meeting toolbar. To close the Whiteboard, the host clicks the Whiteboard button again.

When the host opens the Whiteboard, it will appear on the participants' screens. If participants want to open the Whiteboard any other time, they must use the Microsoft NetMeeting program directly by clicking Microsoft NetMeeting on the taskbar.

Using the Chat Window



Only the host of the meeting can open the Chat window from within PowerPoint. To do so, the host clicks the Display Chat Window button on the Online Meeting toolbar. To close the Chat window, the host clicks the Chat button again.

When the host opens the Chat window, it will appear on the participants' screens. If participants want to open the Chat window any other time, they must use the Microsoft NetMeeting program directly by clicking Microsoft NetMeeting on the taskbar.

Sending a Message in Chat

When the Chat window is open, you can send a message by following these steps:

- ▶ Click once inside the message pane of the Chat window to position your cursor there.
- ▶ Type the message you want to send.
- ▶ Press **[Enter]** to send the message.
- ▶ If you want to send a private message to one of many participants, click that person's name in the Send To list before pressing **[Enter]**, as illustrated in Figure 42-6.

Show-me Movie:

"Sending a Message in Chat"

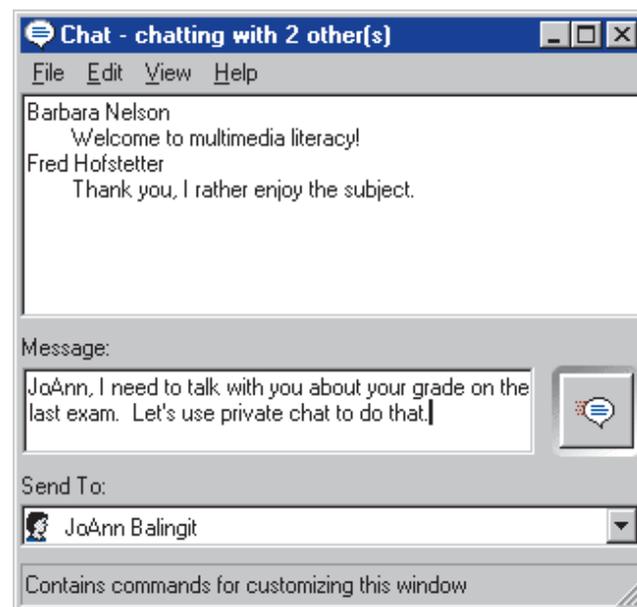


Figure 42-6 Sending a private message in the midst of a chat with other participants in a PowerPoint meeting.

Show-me Movie:
“Sending a File to All
Participants”

Sending a File to All Participants

During an online meeting, the host can send files to the participants. All of the participants in the meeting receive the files that are sent this way. If you are the host of a meeting and you want to send a file, such as a copy of the PowerPoint presentation you are sharing, follow these steps:

- ▶ Switch to your NetMeeting window, or click NetMeeting on the taskbar. The NetMeeting window appears.
- ▶ Pull down the NetMeeting Tools menu and choose File Transfer. The File Transfer window appears.
- ▶ Pull down the File Transfer window’s File dialog, choose Add Files, and add the files you want to transfer. The files you choose appear in the window, as illustrated in Figure 42-7.
- ▶ You can send the file to everyone, or you can pull down the Send To menu at the right end of the toolbar to select a specific person to send the file to.
- ▶ To send the selected file(s), click the Send button.
- ▶ The participants who receive the file will see a dialog box that lets them refuse the file, close it, or open it. If they close or open the file, it will be stored in their *Program Files\NetMeeting\Received Files* folder.

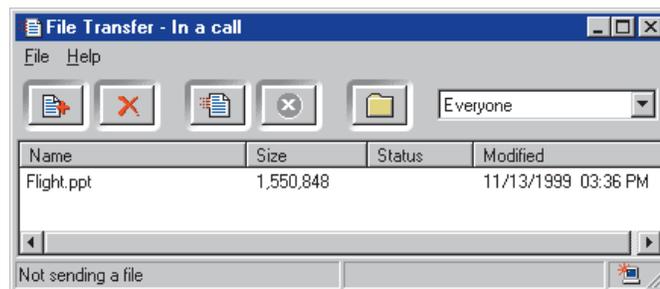


Figure 42-7 The File Transfer window.

Troubleshooting Online Meetings

The host of an online meeting should know about some common problems participants encounter in online meetings. By knowing about these problems in advance, you will know how to troubleshoot them should they occur.

1. If participants complain about a crosshatch pattern appearing on their screen, you probably have another window covering part or all of your presentation. Do not cover your PowerPoint presentation with other windows. This includes the Chat window and the Whiteboard. Any window that covers your shared PowerPoint presentation will result in a crosshatch pattern appearing in the covered part of the window on your participants’ screens. The online meeting toolbar, on the other hand, is allowed to overlap your PowerPoint window. If you move the toolbar into the window, the participants will see it. Move the toolbar into the window if you want the participants to be able to observe how you moderate the meeting via the toolbar.
2. If participants complain about not being able to see all of the presentation, they probably have their screen resolution set lower than yours. Either make your

PowerPoint window smaller, or make your screen resolution match that of the participants. To change screen resolution, click the Windows Start button and choose Settings—Control Panel—Display.

3. Participants cannot print the PowerPoint presentation you are sharing with them unless you send it to them as a file, which they can then open on their computer and print.

Closing Comment

Because this is the last chapter of the book, it should probably conclude with some profound statement about the future of multimedia. This book is already full of statements attempting to be profound, however, so let's end instead with a quote from a famous old song: "We've only just begun." Now that you have started, enjoy the journey.

exercises

1. Check to see if you have NetMeeting installed on your computer. If you have trouble finding it, click the Start button, choose Find, and look for NetMeeting. Did you find NetMeeting on your computer? What version of NetMeeting is it? To find out, run NetMeeting, pull down the Help menu, and check the About box.
2. Go to the Microsoft NetMeeting site at www.microsoft.com/netmeeting. Find out what the most recent version of NetMeeting is for your computer. How does this compare with the version number you found in exercise 1? If your version of NetMeeting is out of date, follow the links at the Microsoft NetMeeting Web site to install the latest version.
3. Find a friend or a classmate who has NetMeeting installed. Following the steps given in this chapter for holding an online meeting, start an impromptu meeting, and invite your friend to join you. In order to make this work, before you start the meeting, you must ask your friend to get NetMeeting running and go to the same server you are planning to use. If you do not know what server to use, try the ils.chi-town.com server, which is one of the more popular NetMeeting servers available to the public. If the chi-town server is not available, follow the *Multilit* Web site links to publicly available NetMeeting servers. Try the following procedures with your friend, noting which ones work and which ones cause trouble at first:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Participant List | After the meeting starts, pull down the Participant List on the Online Meeting toolbar. Is your friend listed there as a participant? |
| Share the Show | Run through your show. Is your friend able to see it clearly? Note any problems your friend has viewing your presentation. |
| Chat | Click the Display Chat Window button to get a Chat window on screen. Use this window to communicate with your friend during this exercise. Ask your friend, for example, does your presentation appear OK? |
| Yield Control | After you run through your presentation, click the option to Allow Others to Edit, and see if your friend can take control of your presentation. Before you do this, however, be aware that if you yield control, your friend will be able to edit your presentation. |
| Remove a Participant | Send your friend a message in the Chat window saying you are going to try an experiment and remove your friend, then invite him or her back. When your friend acknowledges the message, click the Remove Participant button and remove your friend from the meeting. |
| Invite a Participant | Now click the Call Participant button and try to get your friend back into the meeting. How long does it take your friend to get back into the meeting? |