



Former Enron CEO Skilling sentenced

cnews Tech News

Greg Michetti

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HALO grabs limelight

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SAN FRANCISCO, CA - Normally, anybody wearing a halo would not be found guilty of stealing a show.

However, that's what happened here at Hewlett Packard's Annual Imaging and Printing Conference 2006. While HP rolled out over 100 new products such as digital cameras and printers, it was its presentation and demo of the **HP Halo Collaboration Studio** in nearby Palo Alto that raised the eyebrows of the attendees.



The simple definition of the Halo Collaboration Studio is that it is a videoconferencing room where participants electronically meet with their counterparts who are available via audio and video in an identical Halo "room" in another part of the world. The better definition of Halo is far more complicated as it operates on the HP Halo Video Exchange Network (HVEN); a high-bandwidth, full-duplex connection that HP officials say is 50 times faster than standard DSL.

Most of us have been exposed to videoconferencing of some kind and while it's OK, it certainly hasn't brought about the decimation of the travel industry. Then there's that uncomfortable, kind-of-goofy one to two second delay from when the audio catches up to the video.

We can all agree there really isn't anything as good as being there; especially for critical business meetings where so much of the interaction is body language. A quiet sigh, the upward rolling of the eyes or a suddenly sweaty forehead convey a far bigger message than words.

That's what Halo delivers. It IS a lot like being there and after the first few eerie moments of being in a Halo meeting room, you begin to lighten up and think the people you are meeting with are actually sitting at tables across the room. Only they're not. The demo we saw included three other groups of two people in New York City, Germany and Singapore in addition to us in Palo Alto.



Iraq: America has lost 85 troops this month so far. Should the U.S. pull out?

Yes - but only when the Iraqis can control security.



- Yes - when other NATO countries take over.
- Yes - the U.S. people will insist.
- No - the job isn't done.
- No - there would be a slaughter in Iraq.
- No - it would cause instability in the region.
- Maybe - when they find teh WMDs.

SUBMIT

Results | Story



Sales of the (US) \$425,000 Halo rooms have been growing since it was launched by HP in December 2005. Targeted at Fortune 1000 firms, the current customer list includes PepsiCo, General Electric Commercial Finance, computer chip manufacturer AMD and DreamWorks Animation. Jerry Seinfeld even has one in his New York location and uses it to collaborate on movies with the Hollywood big shots. The appeal of a Halo room is obvious: No travel expense, no jet lag and faster decisions by senior corporate executives who are always in demand. These are huge attraction points for the big firms.

HP's Imaging and Printing Group

Halo falls under the umbrella of HP's Imaging and Printing group where executive vice president Vyomesh Joshi outlined it as a new business model.

"We are the only company positioned to do this," he adds.

Joshi, one of the top visionaries in the Valley, is seldom wrong; especially when he discusses data, imaging, printing and how it is handled it relative to the Web.

"The Internet is the 'accelerator,' he explains. "It collapses time. You will consume content right away and every single content area will be going through this transformation."

The message here is HP will somehow, someday be in this business. While today, the company's core revenues come from something as diverse as capturing an image and somehow printing it on a coffee mug or canvas throw rug; the idea is still the same: This is their business. Better yet, they want it all; from input all the way to output and everything in between. More importantly, they like doing all themselves; a strategy that has maintained a top ten Fortune rank for several years.

"Do I know what we'll be selling 20 years from now," says VJ. "Of course not."

However you DO know it will be in this area.

Over 100 new products

At the IPG Conference, HP announced the shipment of its 100 millionth HP LaserJet printer after 20 years in the laser printing industry. Notable products that will be released in the back-to-school August/September period include four new cameras, the E427, M627, R827 and R967. Some models have an anti-shake mode designed to help prevent blurry shots and the 6MP, 5X digital zoom E427 model carries a sweetheart price of \$139.99 Canadian.

HP also announced the HP Photosmart D7360 Photo Printer, which comes with a 3.4-inch touch screen color image. With it, you can remove red-eye right from the printer; no need for a PC. Another model, the HP Photosmart A716 Compact Photo Printer is the first compact photo printer capable of storing over 4,000 photos HP also announced two new ink cartridges, updated versions of the HP 57 and HP 78 called the HP 57+ and HP 78+. The cartridges will work with all existing HP printers but will use Viverna ink for better quality photos.

In the past month, Hewlett-Packard's two key, money-making divisions have given their State-of-the-Union conferences here in San Francisco. Three weeks earlier and three blocks away from the IPG meeting, Todd Bradley, the Executive VP of HP Personal Systems Group (PSG) held a session outlining his divisions' new product line.

PSG is responsible for 32% of HP's revenues while IPG hauls in approximately 29% of the total HP revenues; an amount now in the area of (US) \$90 billion.

Gregory B. Michetti of the Alberta-based systems integration firm Michetti Information Solutions, Inc. can be reached via www.michetti.com.



■ ■ Gadget Guy Greg Gazin



Finding MIO

Who would have thought that a technology that predates your home PC could be carried around and used to find directions to the nearest convenience store, hotel or directions? [Full Column](#)

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