Competitive Profile
VuLink™ 326 vs. PictureTel 900 Series

Gentner
You're Virtually There™

P*ositioned to Win*

The VuLink Set-top systems place Gentner Communications squarely at the heart of the latest developments in video conferencing, while offering a unique blend of "appliance" and "PC-centric" technology that addresses diverse needs without sacrificing performance or functionality. On one hand, the VuLink offers the reliability and ease of use of a set-top video appliance, complete with simple dialing capabilities, powerful one-piece remote control unit, flexible remote camera models, and robust network management through its VuConsole remote management software. At the same time, the VuLink provides high performance PC and data conferencing capabilities through the popular Windows CE operating system, along with an integrated Internet Explorer® browser for accessing web or Microsoft Office content during a call and Microsoft Outlook® integration through its VuMeeting™ software. Truly an advanced, best-of-breed product, the VuLink provides resellers and integrators a new, differentiated opportunity for delivering total solutions to their customers.

PictureTel's 900 Series is fine for video conferencing. It even includes a PC-based architecture that provides presentation and PC capabilities, mimicking capabilities the VuLink has offered from its inception. But the 512Kbps 900 costs $3,200 more than the 384Kbps VuLink 326 for its entry-level model, and tops out at $21,500 for a "fully-loaded system." Meanwhile, it offers many similar features *and over-hypes them with cute names that essentially describe what have become industry-standard, commonly found capabilities.* What the 900 does not provide are the value and price/performance ratio available from the VuLink. Why pay for unnecessary features like Windows NT when the Windows CE-based VuLink can be adapted easily to international or vertical, user-oriented applications with a minimum of effort? CE has come into its own as the operating system of choice for compact, fully-functional appliances. For the customer looking for a complete solution at unquestionable value, Gentner's VuLink 326 is the obvious winner.

S*imilarities*

ITU Standards	Connectivity	Audio/Video	Other
• H.320, H.323 • H.261, H.263 Video coding • H.281 FECC • Annex D • T.120 • G.711, G.722, G.723, G.728	• Ethernet LAN • ISDN	• 30 fps max frame rate • Acoustic Echo Cancellation • PTZ Camera included • Remote camera support • VGA support • Noise reduction and automatic gain control	• JPEG via browser • Hand held remote • Auto SPID detect • Picture in Picture (PIP) • VCR support • Dual monitor support • SDK

M*ajor* **D***ifferences*

Gentner VuLink 326	Capability/Feature	900 Series
Windows CE	Operating System	Windows NT
PCMCIA card slots for attaching hard drives or other devices to system PLUS PC functionality working with LAN-based files	PC capabilities	PC functionality working with LAN-based files; USB ports and ImageShare, priced option
384K H.320 and H.323	Transmission Rates	512K H.320, 768K H.323
Integrated web browser for slide send; MS Office/web content	Presentations support	Embedded web server only which limits presentation capabilities
2	Video inputs	5
VuMeeting option for integration with MS Outlook Express	Scheduling	Not available

VuLink™ 326 vs. PictureTel 900 Series

Other **U**nique **D**ifferences

Gentner VuLink 326	Capability/Feature	900 Series
Yes	Power Save Mode	Not available
Not available (see footnote)	H.263+[1]	Yes
Yes	Video setting adjustment	Not available
Available through standard video transmission & browser	UIF control over content	Available with some features unique to PictureTel, some standard features

Gentner **V**alue **D**ifference

Gentner VuLink 326	Capability/Feature	900 Series
$6,299 MSRP @ 384Kbps	Base System	$9,500 MSRP @ 512Kbps
$399	Integrated scheduling via VuMeeting	Not available
$249	Network management	Expensive option per unit monitored
$6,947 MSRP (single worldwide price with no international markup)	Total Value Difference	**$9,500 + NETWORK MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE, intl. markups**

SALES TIPS

Marketing Hype--PictureTel tends to barrage buyers with feature after feature, not often distinguishing between which are important and which are "table stakes," the standard features any vendor should provide. They make it seem that "many features" means their products are better than anyone else's. Features like "Off the call PC apps," "Point and Click functionality," "integrated web browser," and "Click and Connect Dialing," *among many others,* are all available from Gentner as well as some other vendors. Where is the substance when so much time is spent on hyping standard features?

Standards Are Key--PictureTel continues to create and promote proprietary capabilities that only work with other PictureTel systems, such as Siren™ 14 audio. Proprietary features are fine when they add value and differentiation. But audio standards are sufficiently mature after years of development, and we question the need for proprietary audio in the year 2001 when the entire goal of the industry should be to encourage interoperability between dissimilar systems.

Former Opponent of PC Architecture-- For a decade PictureTel marshaled all sorts of arguments against PC-based video conferencing platforms. It wasn't until they ran into financial problems and needed Intel's help did they begin to change their tune. But we can question their ability to offer top-notch customer support on a platform and architecture they traditionally argued against supporting.

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[1] H.263 extensions have been the subject of many overstated, inappropriate marketing claims from some vendors. Various vendors have implemented *very slight* improvements to H.263 video algorithms, but not enough to warrant consideration as offering additional value.

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