

ClearOne

Tabletop Controller for XAP Q&A

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Q&A

Q: What is the Tabletop Controller for XAP?

A: The new Tabletop Controller for XAP makes it easy for XAP users to start and run an audio conference without the need for touch panels, which can be expensive, awkward or intimidating. Its attractive industrial design looks great on a boardroom table. And the intuitive dial pad makes it simple for anyone to start an audio call. This is the most attractive, cost effective and easy-to-use tabletop audio conference control panel solution for XAP systems on the market.

Q: Why was it developed?

A: Users of high-end installed audio conferencing systems have traditionally relied on "touch panel" type control systems. Touch panel systems can be expensive, awkward to use, and usually have so many options that they can confuse or intimidate users. They are not easy to configure – they literally require a computer programmer to make them work.

ClearOne's RAV product introduced a simple tabletop control panel that was very well received by users. Our high-end installed audio conferencing users immediately requested a similar control panel for use with XAP systems. The Tabletop Controller for XAP is ClearOne's response to demand from our clients.

Q: What other benefits does the Tabletop Controller offer?

A: In boardrooms, there are three main operational modes assisted by technology. In order of most used to least used they are:

- a. Presentations
- b. Audio Conferences
- c. Video Conferences

A major bonus benefit of the new Tabletop Controller is it allows XAP systems to control presentation functions in addition to audio conference functions.

Along with the intuitive dial pad with standard telephone controls to manage audio conferences, there are also five user-definable keys to manage basic presentation functions. These keys can be programmed for basic presentation control functions, such as lights on/off, projector on/off, screen up/down, shades open/closed, etc. This means the Tabletop Controller facilitates the most commonly used operations in boardrooms and similar application spaces.

Note: Physical interface for control of external devices is through the GPIO ports or serial port on the XAP units; they do not connect directly to the Tabletop Controller.

Q: How does this new product compare with the current XAP IR Remote controller?

A: The XAP IR Remote has limited functionality, limited wireless range and is susceptible to interference from plasma screens and fluorescent lights. And because it is handheld,

users experience frustration when it is misplaced. The new Tabletop Controller overcomes these issues.

Although the XAP IR Remote performance could be significantly improved by redesigning to use a higher IR carrier frequency and more powerful IR emitters, the current plan is to discontinue the product and offer only the Tabletop Controller.

Q: What are the competing products, and how does the ClearOne product compare?

A: The ClearOne Tabletop Controller is priced at \$799. Competitive systems are \$1300 and up.

Polycom offers a clumsy and relatively expensive accessory for its Vortex systems with the VTX-1000 unit. When used with a Vortex system (competitor to the XAP line) it is basically a \$1300 dial pad with no other functions. This means the Polycom solution can address only some of the basic audio conference functions – but it cannot handle the presentation control functions commonly used in boardrooms.

Serial control systems manufacturers have systems that can manage presentation, audio conferencing and video conferencing functions. Until now, they were the only choice available to users needing presentation function control and video conference functions. The new Tabletop Controller now gives users another, more cost effective choice to implement presentation functions.

The two major players in the control systems market are AMX and Crestron, whose control panel systems are priced at \$2500 MSRP and higher. The ClearOne control panel will have a retail price of \$799, which will make it very attractive to customers who have less complex room requirements and don't need all of the functionality offered by an AMX or Crestron system.

To summarize:

ClearOne's Tabletop Controller handles presentation *and* audio conference functions. The relatively low cost and expanded functionality yield a high benefit/cost ratio.

Polycom's VTX-1000 solution handles only basic audio conference dial functions. The relatively high cost and limited functionality yield a low benefit/cost ratio.

Serial control systems handle presentation, audio conference and video conference functions – at a very high cost to users needing only presentation and audio conference functions.

Q: What is included with the product?

A: The following items are included:

- Tabletop Controller
- 40' Y-cable – connects to serial port of XAP & power source on one end & controller on other end
- Power adapter (connects to Y-cable to supply power out to controller)
- Pre-printed function labels for user-defined keys
- Configuration software

Q: When does the product ship?

A: The product is scheduled to begin shipping during the first half of March 2006.