

# Case Study

## **SUPERNet**

Bringing Technology into the  
Community: Opening Doors to Advanced  
Education

## Background

The SUPERNet (Schools United to Provide Enhanced Resources) consortium, which recently received a Technology Integration in Education (TIE) grant to fund a distance learning project, is comprised of 15 East Texas school districts in a 300-mile radius. The project, "Voyage of Discovery", emphasizes the training of teachers in technology integration techniques. Research shows that the most successful training must be hands-on and continually supported. The project is designed to do just that. Using the experts at Southwest Regional Development Laboratories (SEDL), the grant proposes to bring the hands-on training right to East Texas teachers, parents and students via videoconferencing and other distance learning technologies.

## Installation and Operation

The school districts are linked via a Wide Area Network (WAN) to the University of Texas Health Center in Tyler, Texas. SUPERNet utilizes technology experts from SEDL, broadcasting from the University of Texas, to train approximately 128 teachers so that they can better educate their students. According to Debi Crawford, Program Director for the TIE grant, "The difference that this program is making is immeasurable. It's wonderful because teachers are finally getting the technology instruction that they need." Also, because two of the districts are now sharing one calculus teacher, the

program and videoconferencing systems are providing an effective way for teachers and students from different districts to collaborate by sharing resources and information.

In addition to teacher training, SUPERNet has found numerous beneficial programs for which it's able to use the VCON systems:

- The University of Texas Health Center hosts meetings that bring together community members from each district.
- Approximately 300 people from rural residences enjoyed programs from the Discovery Science Place in Tyler and Freshwater Fish Hatchery in Athens, Texas.
- The UT Health Center also brought in medical experts to reach 11 sites simultaneously with advice and warnings surrounding flu season.

## The Need for a Videoconferencing Solution

Howard Barnett, President of Designs That Compute, who integrated and supported the VCON systems for SUPERNet, saw early on the potential for implementing an IP videoconferencing deployment over the SUPERNet network. "By providing the video over an IP network, rather than traditional methods, we were able to get equipment to more users, more quickly due to the reduced price of deployment."



### The Video over IP Solution

Barnett continues, "VCON's PacketAssist™ architecture featuring Adaptive Bandwidth Adjustment, IP Precedence and other quality of service mechanisms has helped to make this program successful, providing high quality video and audio. Also, the MediaConnect™ 8000's dual monitor capability allows teachers to project video onto a large projector, while simultaneously sharing documents and presentations using a separate VGA monitor."

### An Eye to the Future

This summer the districts plan to fund a summer technology school for families wishing to learn basic computer skills and applications such as desktop publishing. The consortium hopes to actively encourage kids and parents to attend these free seminars and training events.

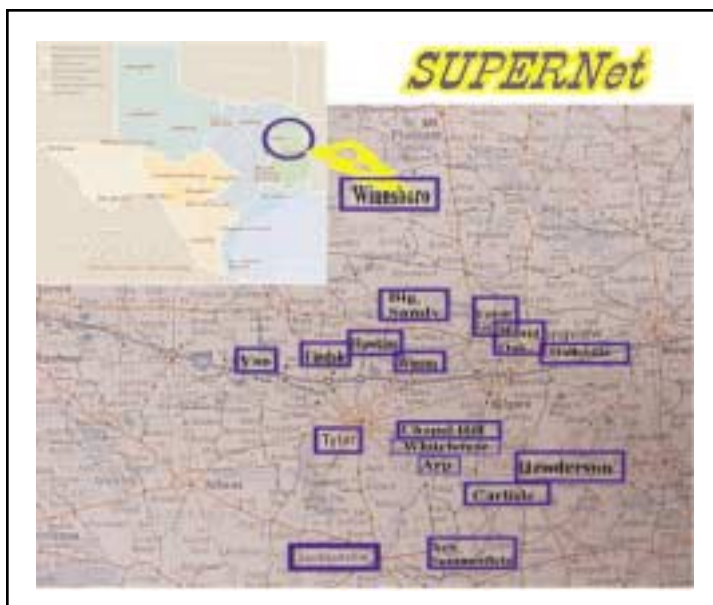
### About VCON

VCON is a developer and manufacturer of a comprehensive range of networked Video over IP solutions. VCON's state-of-the-art, award-winning products are able to provide

customers with a high quality of service (QoS) over enterprise IP networks. The company also offers complete meeting solutions for desktop, compact, and group conferencing over ISDN, ATM, Satellite, xDSL and other carriers. The company markets its products and services through a network of reseller partners, OEMs, and value-added resellers worldwide. With headquarters in Israel, VCON holds subsidiaries in the Americas (in Austin, Chicago, New York, San Jose, Atlanta, Denver, Washington, DC and Mexico City), Germany, Spain, France, Japan and the United Kingdom and has sales offices in China. VCON (Sicovam No. 022021) is publicly traded on Le Nouveau Marché. For additional information, visit VCON's web site at [www.vcon.com](http://www.vcon.com)

For additional information about SUPERNet, visit their site at [www.uthct.edu/nwn/tie.htm](http://www.uthct.edu/nwn/tie.htm)

For additional information about Designs That Compute, visit their site at [www.visionality.com](http://www.visionality.com)



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