

Beijing's First Distance Learning Initiative Lowers Costs and Improves Quality of Education at 260 Schools in Xicheng District

Industry

Education

Daily use

- Distance learning
- Collaboration between schools within Xicheng District and beyond
- Access to institutions and experts worldwide
- International cultural exchange
- Remote teacher training

Polycom® RealPresence® solutions

- High-definition room environments in 260 schools and institutions in Xicheng District
- Universal collaboration platform enabling minimum-bandwidth conferencing
- Desktop software on PCs
- Interactive whiteboard technology

Benefits

- District balances educational resources and expertise across schools
- Administrators improve education while lowering costs
- Students engage in cross-cultural exchanges and collaboration
- Faculty and students gain access to international experts
- Teachers save time and improve productivity with video-based training



In October 2012, students and teachers from Fendou Primary School (Beijing), Huguosi Primary School (Beijing), Shenjiaying Primary School (Yanqing, Beijing), and No.25 Primary School of Haikou (Hainan) all participated in a video class at the opening ceremony for Educational Commission of Xicheng District's distance learning system.

In Beijing's Xicheng District, China's future leaders, business people, innovators, and academics can perfect their English by taking classes at a school in Connecticut or hone their entrepreneurial know-how with guidance from a business teacher in Australia. Yet no matter where they go, they can still be home in time for dinner.

It's all possible thanks to a high-definition video collaboration environment installed in more than 260 schools and educational institutions, from kindergartens to vocational schools. The network was launched in 2012 when the Educational Commission of the Xicheng District responded to a mandate from China's Ministry of Education urging the development of e-learning plans—part of China's strategy to prepare millions of youth for the country's emergence as an economic giant.

"Our goal is to make the best use of our existing educational resources while promoting international collaboration," says Liu Zhong, deputy director of the Educational Commission of the Xicheng District. "This state-of-the-art distance learning system connects all the parties that will participate in this educational exchange—member schools, domestic partners, and international partners."



“Polycom provides a bandwidth-efficient system built around industry standards so we can focus on teaching, collaborating, and creating the next generation of education in Xicheng.”

Liu Zhong, Deputy Director of the Educational Commission of Xicheng District

As the heart of Beijing’s first distance learning initiative, the Polycom network offers an opportunity to transform education for students, faculty, and schools:

- Students can take virtual field trips to places they may never visit in person.
- Experts can interactively teach classes from institutions half a world away.
- Students learn about communicating with peers from other cultures by collaborating face-to-face with their counterparts throughout China and beyond.
- Teachers can save time and improve their skills by participating in interactive seminars and workshops via video collaboration.
- Students are exposed to higher learning curriculum via collaboration with local, national and international universities.
- Schools drive down the cost of education by sharing knowledge and limited resources across dozens if not hundreds of schools.

Bandwidth-efficient and easy

An array of Polycom collaboration environments tap into Beijing’s Education Metropolitan Area Network—a broadband backbone available to all institutions. The devices range from PCs to fully integrated room systems with ceiling-mounted microphones and cameras that automatically track active speakers. Interactive whiteboards let teachers share slides, whiteboard diagrams, and other content with remote participants. The Polycom® RealPresence® Platform lets administrators easily manage video and audio conferences within the district and beyond.

The district’s Liu Zhong says Polycom met all its criteria for a distance learning system that delivers a quality, high-definition experience at lower bandwidths—and one capable of interoperating with other systems across the country or around the world. “Polycom provides a bandwidth-efficient system built around industry standards so we can focus on teaching, collaborating, and creating the next generation of education in Xicheng.”

About Polycom

Polycom is the global leader in open standards-based unified communications and collaboration (UC&C) solutions for voice and video collaboration, trusted by more than 415,000 customers around the world. Polycom solutions are powered by the Polycom® RealPresence® Platform, comprehensive software infrastructure and rich APIs that interoperate with the broadest set of communication, business, mobile and cloud applications and devices to deliver secure face-to-face video collaboration in any environment.

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