

On-Demand Conferencing with Entry Queue Access on the Polycom MGC

Polycom's On-Demand unified conferencing enables participants to start and connect to a multipoint conference from their video or audio endpoints, without prior reservation or scheduling.

On-Demand conferencing can be configured on the Polycom MGC Unified Conferencing Bridge in numerous different implementations, yet all implementations appear the same to the end user. Participants may initiate or join any type of conference from any endpoint, without prior reservation, with a single dial in number.

In an On-Demand conference, resources are not reserved in advance on the MGC, and therefore an On-Demand conference can take place only if resources are available. Scheduled conferences always take precedence over On-Demand conferences.

On-Demand conferences may be configured in advance on the MGC, on both an individual and group basis, and resources are considered "dormant" until activated. Different levels of security may also be chosen, depending upon the conference requirements. The two key types of On-Demand conferencing are "Meeting Rooms" and "Profile Conferencing". Both types may be linked to an entry queue service.

All types of On-Demand and scheduled conferencing can be implemented concurrently on the MGC.

What is an Entry Queue?

An Entry Queue (EQ) is a special routing lobby to which one or several dial in numbers are assigned for both video and audio endpoints, including PSTN, VoIP, H.320, H.323, and T1-CAS. Participants with different capabilities may all dial the same dial-in number and will be routed to the appropriate conference according to a conference numeric ID. Participants are guided to the conference using menu-driven scripts that are part of the Entry Queue service, which utilizes IVR prompts and DTMF codes.

On-Demand conferencing on the MGC using an entry queue service can be implemented in two key ways – "Meeting Rooms" and "Profile-based".

Meeting Rooms

A Meeting Room is a reservation on the MGC without resource allocation and start. The reservation is saved in the MGC memory and remains inactive for an unlimited time, until the first participant connects to it. The Meeting Room is generally intended as a dial-in conference and can have any of the available conference attributes. Today, there is a limit of 2000 Meeting Rooms on the MGC.

The dial-in number allocated to the Meeting Room can be automatically allocated by the MGC (based on the dial-in numbers allocated to the MGC by the carrier and defined in the ISDN Network Services) or manually by setting up the Meeting Room. In the same way, the H.323 Network Service prefix is assigned to the Meeting Room. The conference is saved on the MGC in passive mode, without using any of the system resources.

When the first participant dials into the conference, the conference is automatically activated. Other participants may join the conference by dialing in. If dial-out participants are also defined for the conference, the system automatically dials out to these participants the moment the conference is activated. The operator or conference initiator may lock the conference to additional dial-in participants at any time.

An IVR-enabled Meeting Room can be configured to start only when the chairperson connects to the Meeting Room. In such a case, participants connecting to the Meeting Room prior to the chairperson connection are placed on hold and hear background music (when available). If the chairperson does not connect in a predefined time period the conference is automatically terminated. The conference is automatically terminated when the last participant quits the conference, when the chairperson exits the conference or manually by the operator - or conference chair.

Benefits:

- Supports Unified Conferencing (audio, video, data)
- Individual meeting rooms can be defined with pre-set parameters
- The Meeting Room may be secured with unique numeric ID, conference and chairperson passwords
- Entry queue services can provide another level of security, and guides users through meeting set up and access
- Meeting Rooms require initial setup on the MGC without resource reservation, and thereafter are only activated when a participant connects
- All IVR/DTMF features are available with entry queue service

Profile-based Conferencing

Profile saved on the MGC

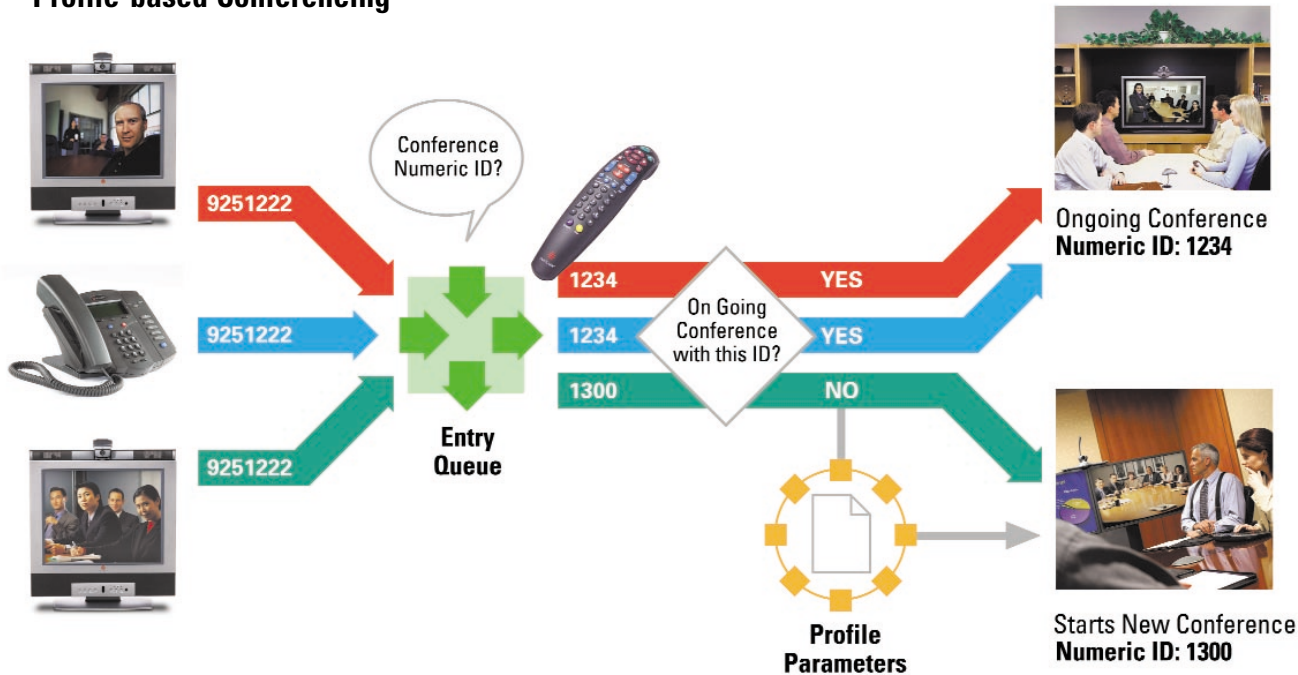
Profile-based Conferencing is based on a profile that is stored on the MGC and is linked to the Entry Queue. As opposed to Meeting Rooms, which are individual pre-defined conferences saved on the MGC. Profile-based conferencing uses one profile to start many conferences. Once a profile-based conference is started it becomes an On-Going conference and it is monitored and controlled as any standard On Going conference.

Once the user enters the conference ID, he/she is routed to the appropriate conference if it exists; otherwise the MGC starts a new conference with the conference ID that the user entered as the identifier. In this implementation, security is considered low priority as the conference ID can be inserted by the user on-the-fly.

Benefits:

- Supports Unified Conferencing (audio, video, data)
- Only one profile is required to be set up to support many conferences
- Since set up is on a group basis (not individual) it significantly reduces IT overhead
- Conferences may be started on the fly with out a pre-defined conference ID
- Minimal set up required on the MGC
- No conference limitations (as in Meeting Rooms) – limitations are only based on resources configured in the MGC
- All IVR/DTMF features are available with entry queue service

Profile-based Conferencing



Profiles and Conference Access Authentication – using External Database

Profiles of participants may be stored in an external enterprise database (such as LDAP) and linked to the entry queue service, as opposed to being stored in the MGC. This database application is used for additional authentication and utilizes the customers' enterprise database or directory. In this implementation, security is considered to be of very high priority.

The authentication can be done at the Entry Queue level and at the conference level. At the entry queue level, the MGC queries the external database server to verify whether the participant has the right to create a new conference. At the conference level the MGC queries the external database to verify whether the participant can access the conference and if the participant is the conference chairperson. This implementation can be compared to saving Meeting Rooms on the MGC, however in this case the profiles are saved in an external database, which has no practical size limitations. This allows centralized management and maintenance of existing employee profiles.

Conference Password validation with an External Database application

Once the participant is moved from the Entry Queue to the conference, the participant requesting to join the conference is validated against the database.

Chairperson Password validation with an External Database application

In this scenario only participants requesting to join the conference as chairperson are validated against the external database. If there is no match, the participants join as standard participants.

Benefits of Profile-Based Conferencing with External Database Authentication

- Supports unified conferencing (audio, video, data)
- User or meeting parameters don't need to be predefined
- Facilitates link to external and third party systems for simplified maintenance
- Link with enterprise database for integration with their environment
- Added user authentication
- Added meeting authorization
- Meeting and user details are shown on the GUI and as part of the CDR
- All IVR/DTMF features are available with entry queue service

The Polycom MGC – The industry's most flexible and advanced solution

The Polycom MGC makes On-Demand conferencing easy, by providing the flexibility to select the implementation method that best suits the meeting requirements, and adheres to the enterprises' corporate policies. Users can implement Meeting Rooms if security is of high priority, use Profile conferencing with the profile stored on the MGC if security is of low importance, or use profiles stored on an external database if security and centralized enterprise database management are of high priority. Any of these implementations can be mixed and matched, providing a flexible On-Demand conferencing environment and the highest ROI in the industry.

Ad Hoc Conferencing with External Database Validation

