FIRSTCLASS®
Collaboration Suite

Thousands of school districts around the world have securely connected their students, teachers, parents, administration, and alumni through collaborative online communities powered by FirstClass.

The FirstClass Collaboration Suite is designed to facilitate and enhance communication, collaboration and knowledge sharing by connecting key stakeholders within the education framework — including students, faculty, parents, administration, and alumni — within a secure, online environment. FirstClass brings together a variety of popular technologies within a fully integrated suite of applications that is cost-effective, flexible, and easy to manage and administer.
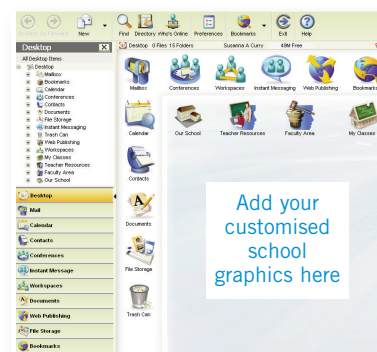
ONE TECHNOLOGY, MANY SOLUTIONS

The FirstClass Collaboration Suite has been designed specifically to meet the unique needs of education organisations. Here are just a few ways in which FirstClass is being used by schools and school districts around the world:

- **Online Learning Communities** – FirstClass enables schools and entire school districts to create collaborative online learning communities that enhance communication and collaboration between students, parents, teachers, administrators, and alumni. FirstClass enables a community-based approach to teaching and learning by connecting all contributors to the education process within a secure, online environment.

- **Student Email** – The widespread availability of computers and the Internet has created an entire generation of students who are are very familiar with popular electronic tools such as email, instant messaging, and file sharing. FirstClass delivers a powerful messaging platform that is cost-effective, easy to maintain, and designed to ensure the safety and security of students.

- **Safe Social Networking** - Internet-based social networking websites are increasing in popularity among students looking for an easy-to-use facility in which they can publish and share their thoughts, interests, photos, bookmarks, files, and so on, with other like-minded students. FirstClass provides a dynamic yet safe electronic social networking environment that is controlled and managed internally.

- **Professional Learning Communities** - FirstClass provides an environment that enables professional development to advance from an infrequently scheduled event to a constantly evolving process, enabling peer groups of teachers to collaborate within a school and across an entire school district to facilitate curriculum development, share best practices, and leverage the drive and energy of thought leaders on a continuous basis.

- **e-Learning** - Many learning organisations are looking to deploy an effective e-Learning environment to complement their in-class teaching and, in some cases, provide a complete virtual classroom. FirstClass delivers a proven e-Learning solution that provides learning organisations with the flexibility to offer a wide range of education delivery formats — from virtual schools to blended and hybrid learning models.

FIRSTCLASS®
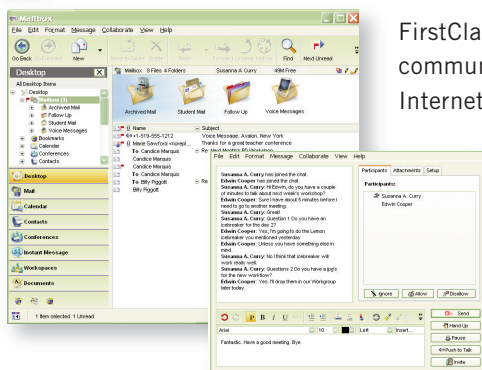Powering collaborative online communities.

The FirstClass Collaboration Suite offers a variety of applications that are seamlessly integrated and designed to work efficiently on the FirstClass platform. The core components and applications within FirstClass include:

YOUR PERSONALISED PORTAL: THE FIRSTCLASS DESKTOP

All FirstClass users are outfitted with a personalised desktop that is presented each time they log in to the system. The FirstClass desktop acts as a portal, offering a summary view of all applications the user has access to and provides "one-click" access to all features and components of FirstClass. The desktop can be customised with unique background graphics (eg. school logos, images, etc.) that can be easily set by individual users or applied to a large group of users by an administrator seeking to maintain and control a consistent theme across a school district.

EMAIL & INSTANT MESSAGING

FirstClass offers fully functional email capabilities that enable users to safely and securely communicate within the education community or, if desired, with a managed set of external Internet destinations. FirstClass offers an incredibly powerful suite of messaging features that includes message grouping, previews, mail automation tools, message tracking and status, and message notification for mobile users.
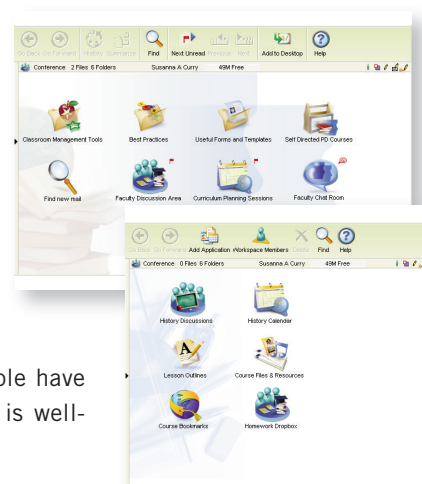
FirstClass also provides integrated instant messaging, a powerful peer communication tool that enables users to check if another user is online and instantaneously share messages, graphics, files and even voice communications.

COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCES & WORK SPACES

At the core of FirstClass' collaboration capabilities are FirstClass Conferences and Work Spaces — permissions-based shared spaces that facilitate topic-based discussions, email, group calendars, peer editing, classroom resource sharing, lessons, assignment drop boxes, and more. Each conference can have custom background graphics, layouts, resources and workflow tools, and can be used for a wide array of topics such as professional development, communities of practice, online courses, administrative forms and processes, and peer discussions.

FirstClass Conferences have permission-based controls to ensure that only appropriate people have access to each conference, and that the role each person can play within the conference is well-defined.
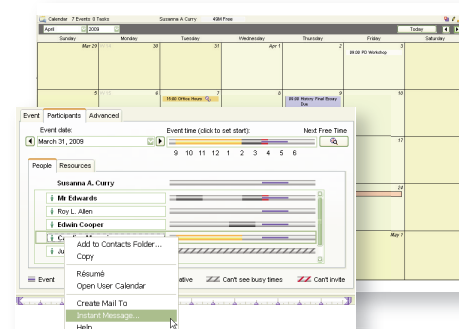
FirstClass Work Spaces, offering many of the features of FirstClass Conferences, are designed for project teams looking to quickly set up a secure area for collaboration and electronic resource sharing between a smaller group of people. New Work Spaces are easily created by selecting from a variety of pre-formatted templates.
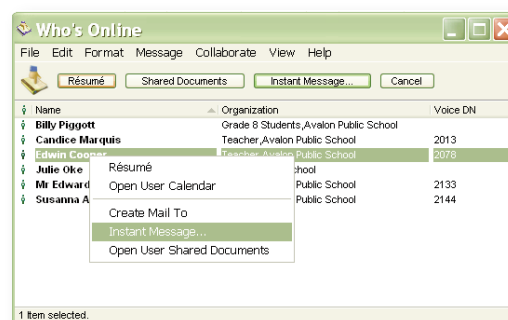
CALENDARING & SCHEDULING

FirstClass offers comprehensive calendaring, scheduling, and time management capabilities that are tightly integrated within the FirstClass environment. A wide range of viewing options are available, including weekly, monthly, and flexible multi-day views, and the robust scheduling feature provides "at a glance" access to a participant's or resource's availability for booking and calendar conflict resolution.

Other calendar features include support for repeat events, formatted text, and attachment of files and messages.

CENTRALISED USER DIRECTORY/PRESENCE MANAGEMENT

FirstClass includes a central user directory system that automatically makes contact information and a rich set of supplementary information available for all users on the FirstClass system. The directory provides users with a powerful tool for interacting with other users on the system — including addressing email and launching Instant Message sessions — by highlighting in bold the names of users who are currently online. Users also have the ability to create FirstClass Résumés — user profiles that contain contact details, personal information (ie. special interests, hobbies, etc.), pictures or graphics, and any other relevant information the user would like to include about themselves.
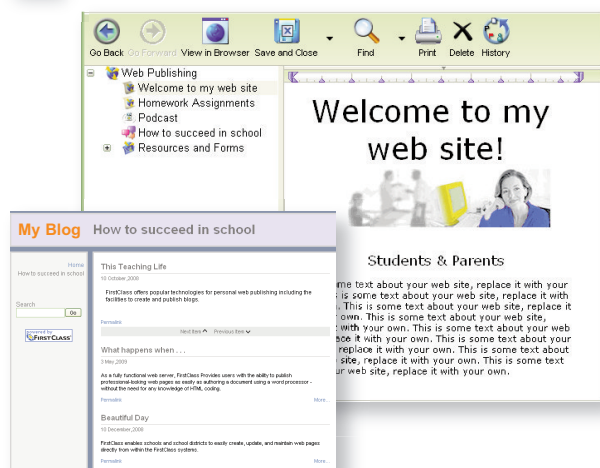
CONTACT MANAGEMENT

FirstClass provides an easy-to-use set of contact management tools that enable users to effectively manage their personal contacts as well as shared contact databases for use within work groups or teams with features including import/export of contacts, mail lists, contact sharing, and more.

ARCHIVING SERVICES

As regulatory and institutional authorities come to terms with the importance of electronic messaging in the modern organisation, it is becoming increasingly critical to provide reliable long-term storage of historical messages. FirstClass Archiving Services provides a comprehensive archiving, retention and searching capability for all FirstClass messages. The Archive Server is only accessible to the site's Librarian, requiring a special user ID and password. Messages in the Archive Server will be automatically retained for the period of time specified by the Administrator, based on the class of the user, and may not be deleted during that time. When the retention period has been reached, messages will be automatically deleted.
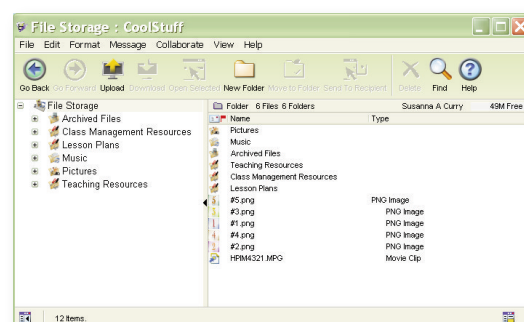
WEB PUBLISHING, BLOGGING & PODCASTING

FirstClass enables schools and school districts to easily create, update, and maintain web pages directly from within the FirstClass system. As a fully functional web server, FirstClass provides users with the ability to publish professional-looking web pages as easily as authoring a document using a word processor — without the need for any knowledge of HTML coding.

Teachers can easily create personal websites to post content such as course materials, assignment schedules and deadlines, and effectively communicate relevant information to parents.

FirstClass also offers popular technologies for personal web publishing including the facilities to create and publish blogs and podcasts.

PORTABLE FILE STORAGE

With FirstClass, all user data resides securely "on the network" rather than left exposed on individual personal computers. This design enables greater efficiency and security and makes content stored within FirstClass a truly flexible and portable commodity — enabling users to access their FirstClass content anywhere, anytime, from any type of Internet-enabled computer or handheld device. FirstClass users can easily store files of any type within their FirstClass account, through simple "drag and drop" from a local computer or through the Upload/Download tools within FirstClass.

ADD-ON TOOLS AND APPLICATIONS

FirstClass offers a selection of add-on tools and applications that seamlessly integrate with the FirstClass Collaboration Suite.

FirstClass ED

FirstClass ED is an innovative education development application for enhancing both teaching and learning that offers a powerful set of tools including:

- Rich content creation
- Curriculum sharing
- Classroom management
- Automated assignment workflow
- Performance and progress tracking
- Moderated discussions
- Resource management

FirstClass Unified Communications

With FirstClass Unified Communications, email, voicemail and fax messages reside in a single mailbox that can be easily accessed from a personal computer, web browser, telephone, or wireless handheld. FirstClass Unified Communications adds a powerful suite of voice and fax capabilities to the FirstClass system that is designed to replace expensive, proprietary voicemail systems and stand-alone fax machines with one, centrally managed multimedia messaging system.

FirstClass Log Analyzer

The FirstClass Log Analyzer provides a robust set of features for analysing and summarising information contained in FirstClass log files. The Log Analyzer is an invaluable tool that helps administrators answer important questions about usage and performance — providing the information necessary to effectively set policies and plan the configuration of a FirstClass system.

21st CENTURY TOOLS FOR IMPROVING LITERACY

FirstClass enables students of all ages to enhance their literacy skills by turning readers and writers into editors and collaborators. Students from schools across a district can connect through FirstClass conferences, email, or instant messaging to discuss literature or curricular topics, peer edit and publish their written work, and expand their roles beyond that of simply consumers of information, to become content producers and co-authors.

FLEXIBILITY AND EASE OF USE

FirstClass' flexibility and performance offers significant benefits to both users and technical staff, including:

- Easy-to-navigate user interface reduces the learning curve and training requirements for new users.
- Client software is quick and easy to download and install.
- Multiple platform support — including Windows, MAC OS X (PPC or Intel), Linux Client and web browsers — enables anytime, anywhere access to the system.
- Minimal hardware and administration requirements significantly reduce the time and effort needed to support the system.

CONTACT US

To learn more about FirstClass solutions and how they can benefit your learning organisation, please visit our website at www.intl.firstclass.com or contact us directly.

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FIRSTCLASS®
Powering collaborative online communities.