



## **DBTAC: SOUTHEAST ADA CENTER**

*A Project of the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University*

# **VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETING FOR EMPLOYERS**

**Event Date:** June 25, 2009

**Presenters:** Richard Schatzberg, Jeff Rosen,  
Melinda Evans, Jill Houghton

**Facilitator:** Shelley Kaplan

## **Introduction**

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**SHELLEY KAPLAN:** My name is Shelley Kaplan and I am the Director of the Southeast DBTAC. I welcome all of our 76 participants today. We are very excited about the wonderful turn out for today's event. This webinar topic is

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the result of a new partnership between the National Network of ADA Centers—also known as DBTACs—and US Business Leadership Network. May I have slide 1 please. The national network of DBTACs has been around since 1991—just after the ADA was signed into law. We represent a national network of 10 ADA Centers...one in each region of the country. We are funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) of the US Dept of Education as a resource to you...to assist you in your efforts to be more inclusive of people with disabilities. We do not monitor or enforce the ADA. I can assure you if you call us, we don't keep a "HIT LIST"

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and report you to the feds if you are not in compliance.

We are fortunate to have Jill Houghton on our team. I hope you had an opportunity to read Jill's bio that was posted with today's materials. Jill knows EVERYBODY! She has lots of positive energy and creative ideas about how to get business and disability groups talking together to create winning teams that are mutually beneficial in this tough employment market. She's been instrumental in forging a relationship between the DBTACs and Kathy West Evans, Executive Director of CSAVR—the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils. In fact, today's webinar is the result of Jill and Kathy's early conversations coupled

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with the DBTACs who have been working to increase understanding about the ADA in general and its requirement, in particular, to provide effective communication. So many people are confused (and frankly overwhelmed) by the technology that exists to provide an equal employment opportunity for people who are deaf and hard of hearing.

As a result of this conversation, today's webinar was born. We are fortunate to have 4 speakers featured on today's call: Richard Schatzberg: Executive Chairman and Founder of Aequus Technologies, Jeff Rosen, General Counsel and Vice President of Governmental Affairs for SNAP VRS, Melinda Evans, Global Diversity and Compliance Director, Computer Sciences

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Corporation (CSC), And Jill Houghton, whom I've already mentioned, will be our primary facilitator for today. Each of our presenters' bios is online. I hope you have a moment to read them. You will appreciate the many hats they wear and their involvement in the disability arena.

First, some helpful tips about our webinar system....First, and most importantly, today's program is fully accessible to all people, including people who can't hear and people who can't see. Some people in fact, are connecting in fact via a phone bridge and others are benefitting from the real time captioning we have available online. Secondly, we encourage people to check their systems

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prior to the webinar to ensure the most positive experience possible. Please understand there are many computer issues on your side of the technology that are simply beyond our control. There are a few things you can do right now to enhance your experience:

You should close all other applications on your computer AND close automatic system checks during the Webinar to eliminate potential interference; and finally,

If your computer is connected to a network and has a firewall, please remember to periodically press the “space bar” during the Webinar to let the system know you are still present;

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sometimes networked computers shut down if the computer is “idle” for too long.

And lastly, the only way you can ask questions today and, we certainly do encourage your questions, is by typing in the “chat area.” We do this to reduce the amount of interference during the webinar. Jill and I will follow these questions and direct them to our featured speakers at the appropriate time. We will also voice the questions for the benefit of all participants, the captioner, and the transcript.

At this time, we are ready to begin today’s session with Richard Schatzberg as our first speaker. Welcome Richard and I turn the microphone over to you.

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## **Discussion Topics: An Overview (Slide 3)**

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**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Thank you, very much and good morning everyone. I have transitioned to slide three that is discussion topics and overview. I want to very quickly go through the points that we are going to touch upon today speak of the first topic is in-person or what we call community-based interpreting and talk about the disadvantages and advantages of each. Once we've do that, we want to get into the various forms of video interpreting, mainly video relay services and alternative form called video remote interpreting and make sure I understand the differences and talk about network security and. These are different strategies people use to enable the

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video phones to work within the workplace and a comparison of the level of accessibility versus the cost involved and cost of these various forms of video interpreting. We are going to talk on federal, state regulations and guidelines and talk about how you make decisions to use VRS or video relay service versus community-based interpreting. We are going to provide you some wonderful examples of how video interpreting is being used in the work place and extremely excited about Linda from Computer Sciences corporation is an a partner of ours today to talk about how they have implemented video interpreting for their employees that are hard of hearing and deaf. We will talk again take a few minutes to talk about the services of

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SNAP!VRS and allocated a good amount of time for Q&A discussion. Before we go on, what I might like to do by way of introduction is have my colleague, Jeff Rosen, from SNAP!VRS to talk about how he has connected to this webcast. He is connecting through video relay services. They want to take them few seconds, Jeff, to talk about how you are connected?

**JEFF ROSEN:** Yes, thank you. This is Jeff Rosen. I am speaking through a video relay interpreter who's using the telephone and interpreting via the Ojo, through SNAP!VRS.

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Great. Thank you, very much, Jeff. This is Richard. I'm going to go ahead to slide 4.

**JEFF ROSEN:** I have a little more I'd like to add. Using this technology-- video interpreters, I can connect to another person and asking for that extra moment, even when there is that pause, is very important for the deaf and hard of hearing. Just to let you know, when I grew up, there was no such thing as video relay interpreting. I would have to ask someone to make phone calls for me. Years later, there was a law passed and we had volunteers make these phone calls for us and that was not very successful to be honest. Now that we have the ADA, now that that has been passed, it is required that every state must enable video relay interpreting. We used to have the TTY equipment. That was not really successful

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either because people that were deaf and hard of hearing were typing back and forth. Speed was not very quick and there were lots of errors so it was not very successful. I used to work for the National Congress on Disability, and I had an interpreter that made all of my phone calls for me speak but that wasn't always successful. When I joined SNAP!VRS, I can use the relay Service at anytime. I do not need an interpreter in person 24/7. I can call in any time and use my language, ASL, to communicate. Thank you, Richard, for allowing me that opportunity.

## **Interpreting Methods (Slides 4 - 6)**

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**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** OK. I am on slide four that is entitled Interpreting Methods and by way of protocol, for our hard of hearing and

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deaf colleagues, typically when we start speaking, we announce our name. This is Richard Schatzberg. Let's spend a quick second talking about community based interpreting versus video based interpreting.— Community based interpreting is when our interpreters travel the road and attend the location where they and the deaf person and often one or more hard of hearing people are communicating within an office setting. It could be a meeting, a presentation, etc. Video interpreting is when the deaf person and interpreter are connected through a videophone. The interpreter can be anywhere in the country as can the deaf person. In terms of the requirement of each, for community-based

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interpreting, when the it interpreter goes out on the street, typically if a conversation, meeting or session lasts longer than 20 minutes, more than one interpreter is required so they can switch on and off, whereas with the video interpreting, longer calls are handled by a team of interpreters within a call Center or video Service Center. I will move to slide five which is entitled Interpreting Methods, continued. There are advantages and disadvantages of both community-based interpreting and video-based interpreting. The primary advantage for community based interpreting is that the interpreter can educate themselves on the topic that's going to be discussed to learn about the people involved, topics involved, and ask

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questions about the terms. And one of the advantages of that is, often, you can schedule the same interpreter who has some education about the topic time and time again. Oftentimes, corporations will work with the same interpreter over and over again. The advantages of the video-based interpreting are you can get real-time access. If a deaf person has a videophone on their desk, if they simply pick the phone up or dial the video phone and have access to the video interpreter at any point that they need it and for any period of time they need it. This is because there is no scheduling of interpreters involved. For video relay services, they are often free to both the company and the employee. Video relay Services-we will define

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that in a second- are paid for through the telecommunications relay fund. All of us on our phone bills have a line item called universal access charge. That money goes centrally through the FCC and video relay services and other forms of telecommunications relay services are paid for through that fund. In video remote interpreting, the advantage is if you have a five minute meeting or 10 minute meeting, you only pay for what you use versus in community-based interpreting, sometimes and very often there is a two hour minimum. I will go ahead and continue forward. I am on to slide six that is interpreting methods continued. We will talk very briefly about the disadvantages. For community-based

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interpreting, cost is often a major barrier for Corporations and educational institution. Interpreters are often paid portal to portal, meaning that from the time they leave their home or office to the time they arrived at the location, do their job and get back. The rates to back some parts of the country can be as high as \$100 per hour. If the session goes more than 25 minutes, you have to pay for two interpreters. Cost can be a very large barrier. As well, there is scheduling involved and, oftentimes, to get the interpreter, you have to schedule them sometimes weeks, more often days in advance. So that can be a challenge. The disadvantage for video-based interpreting is, typically, the interpreter has no knowledge

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about the topic that is going to be discussed. The joke amongst video interpreters is when you go into a VRS call Center, when you have been hired as a video interpreter, the joke is that your employer should give you a pair of depends. The interpreter never knows what is coming at them. That can be challenging, but also exciting. The other disadvantage is, oftentimes, you do not know what interpreter you will get. Like any call center, our system works on a random Queue...not random, but a sequential queue, so that the next call that comes in will automatically go to the next interpreter in our system, wherever they are in the country on an intelligence-based basis.

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## **Video Relay Services & Video Remote Interpreting (Slide 7)**

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I will continue forward to slide seven. This is where we are going to make a transition. The title of the slide is video relay services and video remote interpreting. We have now ended the discussion on community based interpreting vs. video interpreting. We are now going to focus, specifically, on video interpreting and talk about the two forms. One is video relay services and one is video remote interpreting. The difference between them is largely a matter of geography. In video relay services, the deaf person and the hearing person are physically separated. That is that they are on different buildings, down the hall from each other, one is

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on the road, one is at home. For that the communication to take place, there is a phone call required. It just so happens that that phone call, because there is a deaf person involved, in one leg of that phone call requires a videophone. You can see in the picture, the yellow picture under video relay services, you have a deaf customer using a videophone to connect to the interpreter. That interpreter is making them traditional phone call to the hearing third party and engaging in the back and forth, video on one side and voice on the other and it's a wonderful mechanism by which hearing people and people hard of hearing can communicate through that video interpreter. In video remote interpreting, the biggest difference

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between these is with VRI or video remote interpreting, the deaf person and hearing person are physically located in the same location. They are sitting in an office together having a meeting, sitting in a conference room, etc.. Because they are in the same physical location, a phone call is not required. They are using a videophone to connect in real-time to a video interpreter. One thing I want to point this out and this is a question that comes up very often, it is a perfectly good and legal use of video relay services for a deaf person to place a phone call down the hall from the hearing person. Four or five doors down is our chief financial officer. If I was deaf, just like I might do in the case where I am hearing, if I do not want

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to get up and walk down the hall to communicate with that person, I might call them on the phone to have them brief chat with them. The same use is fine for some one that is deaf. They can use VRS to communicate with people that are in the vicinity if they choose to not physically walk down the hall to communicate with them. That is a question that comes up very often. I wanted to touch upon that very quickly.

## **Network Security (Slide 8)**

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I am going to go ahead and transition to slide eight that is called Network Security. What we try to do here is...this is actually very useful for Network engineers. What this does is compare the various solutions that can be put into place

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on a cost versus accessibility standpoint. The black line in the lower left of the axis is about your network engineers configuring your network so that, only, for example, outbound calls to a VRS provider are capable. That is a very easy solution. They just allow and limit the ports only to be able to make outbound calls, as an example, to a video relay service provider. While that does provide access for the employee that is deaf and hard of hearing to VRS, that employee in using VRS this example of outbound only, cannot have a video call coming directly into them, nor can they use their videophone to contact other deaf and hard of hearing people, whether they be in the facility or outside in the community. While it is a solution

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that provides the deaf and hard of hearing people access to VRS, and the cost is quite low, because all it is is a firewall configuration, the amount of accessibility is somewhat low. Let's move onto the next scenario, which is the blue line. That is a solution that includes a dedicated line to the person's desktop. That can be a DSL line, a dedicated cable line or a use of a proxy or dirty Network. Many corporations open setting up open guest Networks for people that come into the building and one to gain access to the web, either for E-mail or access to browsing the Web. Some corporations opt to place videophones on that network that is a little bit more open. For the use of a DSL line, for example, while that is great accessibility

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because it is an open port solution, the deaf person cannot pick up the videophone, move to another room and connect from- the conference room, they are physically dedicated to where that line comes in. Great accessibility to it, and you can see there is a cost. For example, if you are putting in a DSL, you have to pay that monthly charge.

Let's move to the third solution and certainly the most complex of the solutions. This is where engineers, and as you will hear later on, SNAP!VRS does provide engineering consulting services to corporations and government/state agencies where we work with the engineers internally to create network solutions where we put in place, for example,

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just outside of the firewall, a session border controller or SBC or some type of network solution that is creating a secure pipe through the firewall. All traffic is funneled through that secure pipe. Extremely high accessibility, but also a more significant level of cost. When we get together with corporations, government agencies, we talk about these solutions and try and configure that solution for each customer, each enterprise that best works for them that marries various accessibility to the cost and budget involved.

## **Costs (Slides 9 - 11)**

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I will continue on to slide nine and talk about the costs. We mentioned this early but it is a good thing to bring up, again. The use of VRS is

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totally free to the deaf and hard of hearing employee as well as their employer and can use VRS as much as they want for free , 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. By law, VRS providers are required to be open every minute of the day and every minute of the year. With VRI, the employer has to contract with a VRI interpreting firm and pay based upon the usage. One of the advantages over community-based interpreting is you only pay for what you use. Often times there is a per minute fee that can range from \$1.50 up. You are typically charged with five or 10 minute intervals, whatever the interpreting firm requires. The broadband requirement for VRS and VRI are very similar.

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Most videophones use between 250 and 512kps. So that is a requirement.

I will continue onto slide 10, which is Cost, continued. Regarding video equipment, with VRS, many of the VRS providers provide videophones for free. I can tell you that SNAP!VRS, our company, it does provide the Ojo videophone to deaf and hard of hearing employees for free. With VRI, what happens is the company will go in and purchase a videophone, whether they do that online or go to a retail store and purchase a phone or soft phone, like a Web cam. One of the things that is important to point out is if you have a videophone from a VRS provider that can also be used for VRI. Just to touch upon

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installations, most of the VRS providers provide installation support, often for free for corporations and entities, education, government, state. Unless there are truly extraordinary costs, we will support installation by working with the network folks within those entities. Very few VRI providers offer installation services. In terms of training, many of the VRS providers will also provide training. Typically, what we will do is come to a central location and one of our deaf customer service or technical service people will provide often, a one to 2 hour training session for the employees on the use of technology and the use of the VRS service. Some VRI providers do that, as well.

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I am going to continue on to Slide 11, it is the final page on cost. I want to touch upon Network configuration. In VRS, there are complex network configurations, such as the installation of the media gateways or session border controllers. Often times, these require consulting agreements. Many of the providers provide consulting services in this area, SNAP!VRS happens to be one of them The VRI providers, especially those that are not VRS providers are really [ indiscernible ] companies and do not have the expertise to provide that kind of network support, Network Consulting. I guess that is similar on the engineering services side. SNAP!VRS and many of the VRS providers will provide engineering services so

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that our engineers are working hand in hand with the engineers of our enterprise customers to ensure that we get the appropriate level of accessibility for the end customer. For many VRS providers, they do not have that level of expertise because they often cannot provide that same level of service.

## **Key Federal Regulations (Slides 12 - 14)**

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I will continue on to slide 12. I am going to transition at this point. It is entitled key federal regulations. I will turn it over to my colleague, Jeff Rosen, to walk us through the next couple of slides.

**JEFF ROSEN:** Thank you, Richard. As I mentioned earlier, I am speaking through a

video interpreter. If you hear a woman's voice speaking for me, that is all right, it is more pleasing than my own voice, Anyways. As Richard has been explaining, VRS is funded through the [indiscernible ] that is the federal telecommunications, FCC. We are funded through the federal government, but VRS is not regulated by the FCC. VRI adheres to any state laws that would apply to them. The interpreters adhere to the Deaf Registry code of ethics and they adhere to those regulations. So, we have two overarching concepts. We have functional equivalency and the other is dial tone. The functional equivalency means that the relay should function in the same way, or should be the same sort of experience with what hearing

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people experience. Second, the dial tone means that VRS should function as a dial tone so that when I call through the videophone, any deaf or hearing person should experience VRS as a dial tone. It should be very smooth in that way. Those are the working concepts that we need to understand. We also have a confidentiality regulation that the interpreters need to adhere to. They are not able to talk about any of the conversations that they interpret through VRS and share any of the content in any of the conversations. When a hearing person talks to another hearing person, there is no intermediary that would know the nature of their conversation. In the same way, the video interpreters have to function in the

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same way and not share any of the content in the conversation. There is also no preferential treatment. Interpreters are not allowed to handle a call from preferred customers. They need to take the calls as they come in. That is the dial tone concept. The last thing that I want to talk about is the call content. All of the conversation must be relayed in a conversation [ indiscernible ].

The video interpreter is unable to give a summary of the content in the call, it all has to be done in real-time. Richard, can you move onto slide 13, please?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Sure. I am happy to.

**JEFF ROSEN:** OK. Thank you, very much. We are going to continue with the federal regulations related to VRS. [Long pause]....We just had a change in interpreter. As a deaf person, I have to be able to have the communication effectively occur. It is both with expressive and receptive communication. Moving on to the last point, that is the 24/7 Operation Services. For example, the call center must be operated 24/7, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. If the primary system were to shut down, there has to be a backup system to keep operations continuing. That is called redundancy. Okay? Onto the next slide, 14, please, Richard.

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Okay, Jeff.

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**JEFF ROSEN:** We are continuing with the federal regulations for VRS. The first point is pretty similar to what we have experienced with mobile, for example with the cell phone services, MAKING CALLS TO being able to trace, finding out where the call is coming from. Now, we have a new system that has been set up with 10-digit numbering where the number has been assigned to all people that have a videophone. For example, I have an actual 10-digit number that has been assigned that shows up on my caller ID for anyone--My caller ID. When I use that number to make a call, it automatically routes it through VRS, the provider of my choice, for example, my default provider would be--when the hearing person

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would call me, they do not have to call the -800 number first to get a specific VRS. They would automatically call my phone number. It would be routed through the video relay service directly to me. So, that is really wonderful. At this point, it is allowing people to have direct access, hearing people to have accessibility to deaf people with an interpreter being built in automatically so we do not have to put down TTY after my phone number. I can give my actual phone number that is the same as anyone else and anyone can use that number to contact me directly. Also, a deaf person would be getting a 10-digit number, it is a regional number and localized. That number is automatically passed through to the local public

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safety answering point, the PSAP. So, that location has been directly associated with that phone number. So, that is one thing that has been updated. The last point is the telecommunication. Again, going back to what we shared with VRS and VRI, some of the concerns are, how do we go about with the legalities of both of them? It is quite simple. For example, if people are in the same room, that is a VRI situation. If people are in different rooms that can be a legitimate VRS call. That is a simple way to approach it. It does not matter if one person calling, if they are in one cubicle away, on the other side of the hall, that can still be a VRS call. If you have a conference call and one person is calling into the meeting, that

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is, as well, possible to be a VRS call. And so, that is, really, the key to remember. That is the difference. With our video interpreters, they are trained that if they see everyone in the same call, if everyone is in the same room, they will alert the deaf person and ask and let them know that we are not allowed to process VRI calls because this is a VRS Center. If you do not see the people, if you do not see all of the members of the call within the same room, you have to continue on with the call. If there is a question of whether it is VRS or VRI, that is determined by the employee at the time through proper channels. Now, Richard, can you go on to slide 15?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** I sure can.

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## **Making Decisions to Use VRS or VRI (Slide 15)**

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**JEFF ROSEN:** So, slide 15 refers to making a decision about VRS or VRI and the benefits. I'm going into the depth on this. I want to make it clear that VRS and VRI are reasonable accommodations to employees. So, we should be able to deal with that and approach that as we would with any other reasonable accommodation. So, we have to process-we have to have processes in place to give those reasonable accommodations to our employees. We have to make sure that all of the rules and regulations are in set regarding VRS and VRI. If the employee is in public and want effective accommodations, then you cannot assume that

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you can just...You cannot assume that you can provide a VP or Ubio –we have to be sure that you cannot just provide the person with equipment . You have to be able to meet with them and make sure that effective communication is specifically broken down to what the individual needs. That is what we need to discuss to make sure that the accommodations are in place. To be clear, you can ask the person, what would be effective accommodations for you? How do you communicate? Do you prefer American Sign Language as opposed to text? Many deaf or hard of hearing people are not bilingual. That being said, they have limited English proficiency and are more comfortable with signing in

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American Sign Language. Myself, I am very proficient in English. My mother made sure of that. That being said, I prefer American Sign Language as my natural native language and prefer to use VRS services as opposed to a TTY or any kind of text service. So, as you can see on the list here, it is important that you schedule interpreters, even if last minute, often it is very difficult to get an interpreter last minute to physically come in. So, there is a lot of pressure on community interpreters, as I am sure you are aware of in your own experience; the pool is very limited. There is pressure to provide and getting interpreters last minute, we have noticed, it is complicated. VRS and VRI are tools that we can use to provide effective

the accommodations might need at that time. I will go back to and let him continue.

## **Work Place Case Studies (Slide 16)**

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I want to give you a sampling of the type of companies that we work with. The first is we have listed as category Fortune 500 companies and listed Computer Sciences Corporation. I will not talk a lot about CEC. We have Melinda Evans and she will talk next. I wanted to state that in the case of CSC, the network engineers and human-resources worked with our engineers to enable a video solution for their employees that met their needs. Melinda will talk more about that. In terms of small businesses, we have worked with a company called Hired Disability Solutions. They are a

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placement agency for people with disabilities and people in the deaf community and they are actually training and placing folks with disabilities and folks from the deaf community in service centers, call Centers. We in effect have worked with them to enable a VRS solution that meets the needs of their deaf and hard of hearing employees. One example of us working with the state government, and I know it says DOL CAP program, it should say DOD CAP within the Department of Defense. CAP is a centralized AT purchasing agency actually handles technology purchasing for 68 federal agencies. And, in the nonprofit world, one example of that is we are working with a group called Metalink, a transportation provider for

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people with disabilities. They have a business development effort and have hired a series of deaf and hard of hearing employees who are part of their business development or outgoing sales activities. For those employees that are deaf and hard of hearing we have integrated technology into their infrastructure to allow the deaf and hard of hearing folks to communicate at their discretion.

## **Computer Science Corporation (Slides 17 - 19)**

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I will transition to slide 17 and also turn this over to Melinda Evans from the Computer Sciences Corporation.

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**MELINDA EVANS:** Thank you, Richard. This is Melinda Evans. And thank you to all who allowed me the privilege to speak today. First, I want to tell you that within CSC, we did recognize that the telephone is a wonderful, wonderful telecommunication item...but for the hearing impaired it often just becomes a paper weight. I have made very good friend that is hearing impaired. She shared that with me one time. She does use her telephone sometimes to hang her hat or lay her umbrella up against. We really are pleased that have been able to work towards providing this wonderful service to our employees. Will you go to the next slide, please?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Sure.

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**MELINDA EVANS:** Now we are on what made our transition and implementation successful. First off, we are trying to break down the barriers that we have found in the past when we are trying to find them way to accommodate our employees that have a disability. Often, it is hard for us to find a resource , such as these organizations that can help us transition in a way that is helpful to not only CSC, our company, but to our employees. Cost can be rather important in this area. I know a lot of individuals really believe that large corporations have a large pool of money. But, like the individual citizen, we have to be mindful of our pocketbooks. What we try to do is to balance the needs of our employees and also try to be

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equitable in those supports. And actually, the way we are looking that this process and using VP, is that all employees need some type of tool to be successful whether it is a PC or Blackberry. The videophone is another tool that we provide to our employees. We believe that where we are providing that opportunity, it really helps our employee reach their full potential. That is what we want with all employees at CSC. The next slide, please.

One of the important factors of our program is, first off, we have high level executive support for individuals with disability program. I manage that program across CSC, globally, and in the U.S., we have been able to interact not only with our VPs but employees and managers

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across CSC. The other important factor is that we were able to engage our service delivery folks. Those are the individuals that are technical folks. I call them “technoids.” I do not know what they call me. I am in HR, but we won’t go there! We want to ensure that our non hearing impaired employees are comfortable communicating with those employees who are hearing impaired. It is important for us that all employees have the tools necessary to do their job. When they do their job, they make us successful. We are a real Team at CSC. The videophone, to us, is not a special program but is part of the process. While we are still working on making sure that that will be integrated within the Falls Church area successfully, we

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plan to work forward to take the videophone across the nation and look to moving across our boundaries. We have offices in Canada and South America. Again, we want to look that this program as not just a special program but just another tool that becomes available to our hearing impaired employees. I must applaud SNAP!VRS. They have been absolutely awesome working with us. I have learned a lot. One of the areas that we have issues with is our network configuration. That is what we used to provide the phone lines into the videophones. That can be very difficult because CSC is a very large company. We have 90,000 + employees worldwide. In the U.S. we work a lot with the federal government and are sometimes

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in secured areas where we just cannot use the network configuration. We are trying to work through those issues so that we can promote this program throughout CSC. Again, at the end of the day, when our employees are successful, we are successful. That means every employee, no matter what they need to do the job. With that, I will turn it back over to Richard.

## **What Does Snap VRS Provide? (Slides 20 – 25)**

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**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Thank you, so much, Melinda. I will transition to the next slide. I 'm gonna move them little bit quickly, if I can, so we have enough time for questions and answers. The next series of slides have to do

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with the technologies and services that are provided by SNAP!VRS. In fairness, let me say that we are one of several nationally certified providers of VRS. On the slide, slide 20, entitled what does SNAP!VRS provide, you see on the right hand side, the pictures of two videophones. One is Ojo VP which is a stand-alone desktop appliance that is 14 inches high. For any of you that watched the television show 24, that is the videophone they use on 24. In terms of desktop space, it takes up about as much as your regular phone. The advantage of having a standalone piece of equipment is, for example, right now, Jeff Rosen is watching the interpreter on the videophone but also has the entire desktop space available to view this

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presentation so that he is not having to split up the desktop space between a videophone and the other applications that he is running on his computer. I did want to point that out that in addition to the Ojo, we have a very, very special soft phone called Accessaphone. It is a software tool that like a webcam is loaded to your computer and what makes that tool so special is, as far as I know, it is the only Section 508/504 compliant videophone that I know of in the World. So, for government agencies, for corporations like CSC that contract with the federal agencies and state agencies, they have a purchase requirement that ensures, for example, Section 508, their electronic and information technology is fully accessible. This

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is one solution that absolutely meets those requirements. These are the two solutions that we are offering to our customers. As well, there are others coming out. What is interesting about both of these phones is they both use what is called the SIP protocol. Older videophone to use the H323 protocol. SIP is the newer protocol. Both get 30 frames per second of video quality on about 250 kps. So what you are getting is TV quality audio and video. That is enabled through the SIP protocol, Given that most of us are not technical, no reason to go into that, just walk away understanding anything, know that SIP is the newer protocols allowing for a much easier Network integration and installation. The Ojo is very light; weighs

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less than 4 pounds. People can actually pick it up. It comes in a Travel box. I have traveled all over the country and world with my Ojo. I literally, just need to plug it in wherever I am and can load up and have access to the videophone. It has also has really a wonderful ergonomic style, as you can see from that picture.

We are on slide 21, just to talk about the quality of the interpreters. As Jeff mentioned, our interpreters are bound by a confidentiality and ethics agreement because of the conversations with our deaf and hearing customers are confidential. They act as an intermediary. All of our interpreters are nationally certified interpreters and receive world-class training.

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We have tried to create for them a positive work environment so that we become the employer of choice for interpreters. Of course, this is true in any profession, there is disparity amongst the quality of interpreters. We had two interpreters on today's because you might have noticed one way or the other, that there is often the main difference in quality in interpreters. From SNAP!VRS's perspective, we focus on having a very fast speed of answer is because we do not want one of our customers to call us and wait a minute and 20 seconds to get answered. We tried to stay within a very reasonable speed of answering. And, over the history of our company, our speed of answering has been

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about eight seconds, which for this industry is very fast.

I will continue forward onto the next slide. Now, we will talk about the advanced features. The Ojo has built in of video mail. If I want to call Jeff and dial his 10 digit phone number, the phone system is intelligent enough to know that this is a hearing person trying to reach a deaf person. Automatically, my call, and let's say I am calling from my cell phone, will go to SNAP!VRS and say, "Who are you trying to reach?" I will say that I am trying to reach Jeff Rosen and this is Richard calling. I can leave him a video mail where I speak to the interpreter and they signed right to his videophone and when he gets back to his

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office, there is a number on the front of the videophone say you have three messages waiting. He will know I called and understand what topic I am calling about and call back when he is ready. We talked about the 30 frames per second of video quality...really exceptional. Jeff did a wonderful job of talking about the benefits of 10-digit and numbering, one of which you heard about today. Let me talk just a little bit about voice carryover. Many folks that are deaf and hard of hearing choose to voice for themselves. Both our Ojo and Accessaphone software phone allow the deaf person's voice to be heard by the interpreter that's also passed by the interpreter to be heard by the hearing person. So if Jeff decided

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instead of communicating through the sign language interpreter, he decided he wanted to voice, he could speak to all of us, and we would all hear him. That is called voice carryover. For many people that are deaf and hard of hearing, especially for those who have not been deaf and hard of hearing since birth and have been able to use their voice, this is a very effective tool. One of the things that I wanted to point out, the Accessaphone total conversation has integrated text. We are working, right now, to integrate that with our video interpreters. For example, that would enable, as Jeff was talking about a product called Ubi Duo, which is another assistive technology. Jeff could actually type that through integrated speech to

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the interpreter and the interpreter would have a much better chance of effectively voicing that for us. I will continue on. I want to touch upon the Engineering Services.

We do on site, live demonstrations for folks in HR, deaf employees and engineers so they can understand what we are talking about. When we work with a client, the first thing we do is we ship a demo unit, a real unit but one that is intended for the engineers where our engineers and the engineers of the client work to test the calibration into the network before we start demonstrating that to folks. For example, that is one of the things that we did with Computer Sciences Corporation. Also, when requested to provide network consulting and

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server development. Some of our customers hire us as consultants to say hey, we want to achieve greater accessibility, but we are really concerned about opening the doors to any network infringements. They will hire us to come in as Network consultants to build border controllers, media gateways, RTP solutions and work with the local engineers to integrate them into the networks and that is one of the services we provide for our customers as well.

I will continue on. Lastly, in terms of installation support, we do handle all of the provisioning of the phones for our customers. That is, we match a phone to a person so that when the phone arrives at the desktop, it is actually labeled, Jeff Rosen's, for example, phone. So

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when Jeff calls me, I can get his 10-digit number identified right to my cell phone so that I recognize the 10-digit number is there and that it's Jeff that's calling me. Once the videophones are provisioned, we go into corporations and entities and handle installation. Many times, that is done with the local network engineering team. For some of our customers, they opt to work with us under a maintenance program, an annual maintenance contract where we will come in and support the phones on an as needed basis but with all of our videophones, we provide remote Technical support and remote customer service support and that is offered through video, offered through e-mail, and offered through text.

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I will continue on to slide 25. So in terms of training and education...when we work with an enterprise we come on site to provide the training, as we talked about before . We do that for the network engineers, deaf employees and oftentimes as a train the trainers so that we only have to come in once and a trainer inside of the company can go around and train the employees wherever they are located. In the case of CSC and many of our Fortune 500 customers, those employers are geographically dispersed across the country and other countries. We have made lot of ASL videos and text-based tutorials Online. For some of our enterprise customers we're asked to do generic diversity training, we offer that service and as a

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rollout takes place, we can often do ongoing training of new employees and of employees that are involved in an expanded rollout.

## Questions & Answers

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I am going to transition now to slide 26 and also check the time. I think we are doing somewhat well on time. Here, I think this is the part of the discussion where we will open the floor to questions. I know we moved quickly, hopefully not too quickly. Please feel free to ask any of us questions about anything you have heard.

**JILL HOUGHTON:** Richard, this is Jill Houghton. I wanted to let the people know that if you have a question for the presenters, type into the public chat on the right hand side and hit enter.

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We have a question that was raised during today's presentation regarding how does using the Internet services through the Internet work with this?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** I am not exactly- maybe we could ask the person who brought that question up to expand on it. I think what the question is-it is probably one of two things: Either they are talking about how the Internet is used to enable a videophone. In that case, all videophones require broadband. You are required to have some access to the Internet for this videophone. The Ojo that is sitting on Jeff Rosen's desk is the same as the employees at CSC. You connect an Ethernet cable to that videophone or a power cord and that boots up.

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The videophone using the Internet just like you would with e-mail to push the video stream back and forth. The Ojo uses about 250 kps bi-directionally to enable that video to come through and can be set lower, about 150 kps and as high as 512 and just has to do with the quality of the video. The default setting is 250 kps. It is not taking lots of bandwidth. I hope that was the question. The other thing that might have been asked that I want to point out, and I mentioned this earlier is with the videophone, especially the Ojo as a stand-alone unit, you can be engaged on a video call—a deaf person can USING THE video phone while they are using their computer. Oftentimes, customer Service agents that are

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deaf are communicating with a customer through VRS and working on the Web researching a question that was asked by a customer or within an application within the call center, to pass a question on to a specialized agent or something like that. Both the videophone-one of the advantages of the Ojo and others that use very small amounts of bandwidth is that you can use the Web on your computer simultaneously. I hope I have answered that question.

**JILL HOUGHTON:** Jeff and Richard, this is Jill. Elaborating on that question, this person has gone on to ask can you use the Web cam to use video interpreting?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Can you use a Web cam to do interpreting? Yes, there are many VRI agencies that use web cams for the interpreting. It can be a web cam with a software phone. It can be a hardware phone like the Ojo. It really depends on the customer's needs. I can tell you that for many of our interpreters, our interpreters do not use the Ojo videophone within the call center. They use a different videophone that is called the Optics videophone. We have both Optics hardware phones and we also have Optics software phones that require web cams. Absolutely, web cams can be used for interpreting.

**JILL HOUGHTON:** The next question that's come in is "How does the call get directed through routers to the appropriate person? "

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** For example an incoming call, how does that get routed to the appropriate person? I believe that Jeff is behind a firewall and I dial his IP address or 10-digit number, how will that get through the firewall? This is Richard speaking. Let me preface this that these types of technical questions are not my expertise. I will do it as best I can. We have put in place a session border controller, when that 10-digit comes through, it is passed directly to an IP address just outside of the company's firewall and enters through the firewall through that secure pipe in

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the firewall. There is some intelligence within the network that says that this is a 10-digit number that this call came into, please route it to this IP address within the infrastructure. The dialing of the 10-digit number enables that call to track to the edge of the firewall, go through the firewall through the secure pipe in the firewall and within the network there is intelligence built in that route it to the appropriate person.

**JILL HOUGHTON:** Richard, this is Jill with the next question . If we get an Ojo phone from SNAP!VRS and use the free VRS call, are we obligated to use SNAP!VRI fee-based Service?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Absolutely not. This is Richard. Let me say as of now we do not offer VRI. We aren't strictly VRS, although we have several partners that offer VRI. Are you obligated to use our VRS service? Absolutely not. You can do what is called dial around to another VRS service provider. We hope you will use SNAP!VRS. We believe we have exceptional interpreters and our speed of answer is good-sorry for that little plug. You are not required to use SNAP!VRS. The end customer always has the right to dial around to another VRS provider. I did want to point out that we, SNAP!VRS, because we are provisioning that videophone, act as the default provider for the end customer. So, a hearing

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person who is trying to reach a deaf customer on a videophone, that's the intelligence because we have provisioned that phone and are, therefore, the default provider, that hearing caller who is trying to reach a deaf person will automatically be routed through SNAP!VRS because that is our videophone. When the deaf person is trying to call out, they are free to dial around to any service provider they'd like. That is a Federal requirement.

**JILL HOUGHTON:** Thank you. The next question that has come in is, "Can you please provide more explanation of the FCC rules about the use of VRS for interpreting? For example, could I use VRS for an in-person staff

meeting for an employee that is deaf by calling VRS?”

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Jeff, would you like to handle that one?

**JEFF ROSEN:** Yes. I just got a text. Did you see that?

**JILL HOUGHTON:** I am following the public tab. This is Jill. I'm following the chat and we were verbally raising the question.

**JEFF ROSEN:** Yes. I will comment now. What I said in my text comment is that you can use VRS, so long as not all of the participants are in the same room. If some participants in the meeting are in other locations, you can use VRS for that meeting.

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**JILL HOUGHTON:** The next question would be directed to Melinda. Melinda as an employer at CSC, have you experienced accommodating employees in a staff meeting when interviewing via utilizing VRS?

**MELINDA EVANS:** We have not had that opportunity yet. We are in the first phase of supplying our employees with the videophones that have gone through the initial training-unfortunately, I do not have that experience but we are looking forward to that opportunity and will be glad to try to report back to Richard and maybe Richard we can have some FAQs to develop and keep that information fresh for inquiries on this issue, as well.

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** That is a great idea. Thank you.

**MELINDA EVANS:** Sure.

**JILL HOUGHTON:** The next question is, what level of technical interpreting expertise would VRS interpreters be expected to have?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Our interpreters oftentimes pursue professional development where they pursue specialization. For example, one of those specializations is legal interpreting. One would be medical interpreting. I believe one of the specializations is also technical. Often times, especially in a VRI situation, the entity can request an interpreter that has professional development expertise or just skills

in a domain. Video relay service providers, in the near future, I believe, and will leave the comment to Jeff, have the capability to build into the call centers, specialized use, where for example, legal interpreters can be sitting in the queue waiting for calls that are specific to that domain, the same with medical and technical, etc.. Jeff, can you comment at all on the legality of that and how that will be handled in and the near future?

**JEFF ROSEN:** What Richard mentioned is correct. If you want a specialized interpreter, today, it is best to use the VRI to make sure that you can prepare the interpreter ahead of time and be prepared so that the interpreter and interpreting agency can provide exactly what

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you are looking for effective communication. Often, it does not really work out that way. Suppose I call my doctor about a health issue or a specific health condition that I have. Often, I cannot prepare for a VRI to call my doctor. But I can call through VRS and get an interpreter and the interpreters, like Richard mentioned, are very rigorously trained. They are skilled a variety of situations. Really, the most time-most of the time when I make a call, it is not an issue. They are trained in a variety of setting so that they are able to interpret most things that come up. The interpreters have a lot of variety. If, for some reason, the interpreter cannot effectively communicate or provide the client with the service they are asking through VRS, the

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customer can request to switch to another interpreter that is more skilled in the area. If the communication is not effective, it's OK for the customer to ask for the interpreter to be switched. If an interpreter is live and in person, basically, you are stuck with the interpreter that is hired to come in for specific situation. But with VRS there are several interpreters within a call Center and there is a possibility that they might be able to switch and the video interpreter will say that I will switch now with next and interpreter that will better handle your call. Does that help?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Thank you, very much.

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**JILL HOUGHTON:** Thank you, Jeff. The next question that has come in is with regard to firewalls and if you have experienced any firewall, if you could not work through the system?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** I guess the best way to answer that question is to say firewalls are firewalls. There is always a solution that can be implemented to traverse them. We have experienced corporations that have opted not to create those solutions. For example, for folks that really require the highest level of security, oftentimes we will recommend the implementation of DSL lines that create no possible opportunity for intrusion within the network. Certainly, the more expensive

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versions of those are when we go in and work with the engineers to put in place media gateways or session border controllers or relay solutions that are all-Pick one, it does not matter, they all three create the same outcome, that is to create a very secure whole or pipe through the firewall. There is not really a firewall that does not have a solution, it is whether the employer or institution decides to implement that solution.

**JILL HOUGHTON:** As a follow up, Richard, some of the solutions could be costly or cost prohibitive?

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Certainly. When you start getting into the higher end solutions,

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for example, depending on complexity and volume, the creation of a session border controller, which is the simplest way of looking at it is a server. The piece of hardware itself, depending on the skill required could be \$5,000 to \$10,000 on the high end and \$1000 to \$4000 on the low end and the consulting agreement to build the session border controller and integrate it into the network can also be considerable. You could be looking at \$25,000 to \$100,000 worth of work. I would consider those expensive solutions, yes. Is it always that expensive? No. Are we talking high end where there is massive scale?, yes, we are. I can tell you right now that we are building a SBC for a customer and the hardware was a couple of thousand dollars and

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the engineering work will be somewhere between \$10,000 and \$12,000 and it really depends on the number of redundant users that are required. That has a lot to do with the type of machine, power and processor that is required.

**MELINDA EVANS:** Richard, I will tell you that we have not experienced that issue yet. I fully expect that will happen. We have employees that are in certain locations in the federal government. They are not really tied into our activities or e-mail. We have to go through a certain process to get them engaged. I would expect that we will probably run into those problems. What we have done in the past is work with the customer to figure out the best

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way around that firewall. This should be very interesting. We are going to keep on top of that and document what the issues are so we can share with other companies, except where we cannot. We did some secret work that we cannot share. We might be able to share the process, not necessarily the customer or individual names or locations.

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Thank you, Melinda. I can add to that. This is Richard. We have worked with other very large government contractors where they, simply, will not put a videophone in, mostly because they do not want the videophone with the camera on it. That's not allowed by their legal requirement. Any picture capability, a camera or a cell phone

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with a camera is not allowed in the infrastructure.

**MELINDA EVANS:** That is absolutely right. We are hoping we can do a kiosk situation where there would be a location-we have talked about this issue, where we could dedicate a room where they could use a videophone.

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** The kiosk option is a wonderful one. It allows for a variety of employees to have open access to a videophone. Oftentimes there are deaf or hard of hearing employees that aren't working at a desk. They might be working in the mail room or any operation-type situation. They do not really need a videophone on the desk but

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providing a kiosk is a wonderful option for accessibility.

**JILL HOUGHTON:** In regards to utilizing the kiosk, have you worked with any employers that have used a similar approach, having the kiosk and used it to interview a potential employee?

**MELINDA EVANS:** We have not at this point, but I can foresee the future of doing so

**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** I can add to that. We have examples where, for example, we have a company that might have six deaf employees and provide videophones for the desks of those employees, but in addition the company requests an additional videophone to be placed in the lobby so that should a person

that is deaf or hard of hearing come into the lobby, they can communicate in real-time. That is an example of that.

## **Conclusion**

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**JILL HOUGHTON:** Thank you. With that, I think we are going to wrap this up. On behalf of the Southeast DBTAC, we wanted thank our speakers today, Richard Schatzberg, Jeff Rosen and Melinda Evans and thank our participants as well as thank Kathy West Evans from CSAVR and the United States business leadership Network for helping us put this webinar together . I think what we have heard today is that VRS and VRI really provide a significant array for employers to accommodate persons who are deaf and hard of hearing in

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the work place. Most importantly, one of the things that came across is that as with providing any reasonable accommodation, it is very critical that the employer works, specifically, with the individual to determine the best way to use VRS or VRI to assist them with the performance of his/her job. To always remember that as with any other reasonable accommodation, you want to work, specifically, with the individual. You are looking at slide 28. You will find the contact information for Richard Schatzberg and Jeff Rosen with SNAP!VRS. Both of them look forward to hearing from you and working hand in hand with you as they have done with Melinda at CSC. I know that Melinda is available to talk to you from an

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employer's standpoint and to talk to you about her personal experiences and to be of assistance to you. If there is anything that I can do to help you get hooked up with these speakers or information regarding this topic, please feel free to contact me. My contact information is there, as well. So, Shelley, with that, I will turn it over to you.

**SHELLEY KAPLAN:** Thank you, Jill. This is Shelley. I also want to extend my thank you to our presenters and you, Jill, for putting together with what was a well-received webinar with so many people connected using our software or the phone bridge. We see that this is an area of interest for many people and we will be continuing this webinar series on other topics.

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Please be reminded that if you would complete your evaluation of today's session that would be really wonderful and put your ideas down about other topics you would like to hear us present on. Your feedback is important to us. We will address your specific needs and concerns. In the chat window you will see that Celestia has posted the URL for the evaluation. Please take a moment and let us hear from you. This has been approved for .1 continuing education credits through Syracuse University. Lastly, a transcript of today off the session, along with all of the handout materials will be posted and available on our website. We also work with the USBLN to have it posted on their website. It takes about two or three weeks. Everything will

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be up there so you can refer back to the information or, certainly, if you have colleagues or friends that could not join us today, they will have the materials available to them. You have up on the slide now, slide 30 that talks about the continuing education credits Speaker you will see that there is an a deadline by July first to submit the participant list and the form to the DBTAC. If you have questions about that, give us a call 1-800-949-4232, and we will be happy to help you. With that, we will end a few minutes early. I thank you all. Again, we look forward to hosting you in the future with the next in our series of 2009 webinars for employers. Thank you, very much and have a great day. Goodbye.

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**RICHARD SCHATZBERG:** Goodbye and thank  
you.

**[Event Concluded June 25, 2009]**

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