

Creating Accessible Adobe Acrobat Connect Professional Meetings

Introduction

Accessibility is an immensely important effort. For the user with a disability, the challenge is to identify tools that provide the most convenient access to web-based and other electronic information. Now, with the Adobe Acrobat Connect Meetings Captioning Extension, you can easily add captions to your Acrobat Connect Meetings.

With the Acrobat Connect Captioning Extension, meeting organizers can deliver professional closed captioning within their meeting environment. You can use the Acrobat Connect Captioning Extension to include hearing-impaired attendees and guarantees you are [Section 508](#) compliant. The extension is available free of charge to Acrobat Connect customers.

The Acrobat Connect Captioning Extension adds a new pod to your Acrobat Connect environment that enables real-time captioning of your organization's live Acrobat Connect Meetings. Meeting organizers hire professional captioning services from partners such as the [Media Access Group at WGBH](#) and [Caption Colorado](#). Professional stenographers attend the Acrobat Connect Meetings or teleconference to listen to the audio and transcribe the information, using specialized stenographer's keyboards. This information is transmitted to a captioning server. The captions are then transmitted to the Acrobat Connect Meeting and are broadcast to the end users. Meeting leaders and attendees have the ability to view and format captions in real time and to view them as a transcript at the conclusion of the meeting.

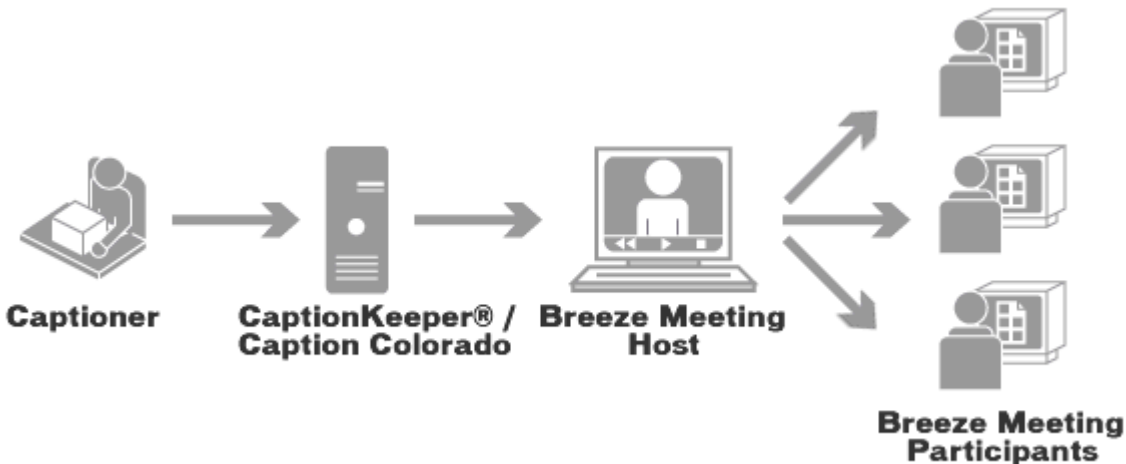


Figure 1 Acrobat Connect captioning architecture

To create an accessible Acrobat Connect Meeting:

- Prepare to use the Captioning Extension.
- Arrange for captioning services:
 - Caption service provider, or
 - Onsite stenographer and captioning server from WGBH
- Prepare for the meeting.

To create accessible meetings, make sure the captioning extension has been downloaded, installed, and set up in the Acrobat Connect Meeting room.

Download and Install the Acrobat Connect Captioning Extension

The Acrobat Connect Captioning Extension is available for download as a ZIP file. The extension comes in the form of a .SWF file, Captions.SWF. The ZIP file also includes a readme file.

1. Download the Acrobat Connect Captioning Extension: www.adobe.com/cfusion/exchange/index.cfm?view=sn511&extID=1032548 (349.3 KB).

Registration may be required.

2. Unzip the file to the desktop or other location on your machine.
3. Open the Acrobat Connect Meeting room in which you wish to use the extension.
4. Click **Pods** from the menu and choose **Share** and then **Select from My Computer** (Figure 2).
5. Browse to locate the **Captions.SWF** extension file and choose **Open**.

The Acrobat Connect Captioning Pod appears (Figure 3).

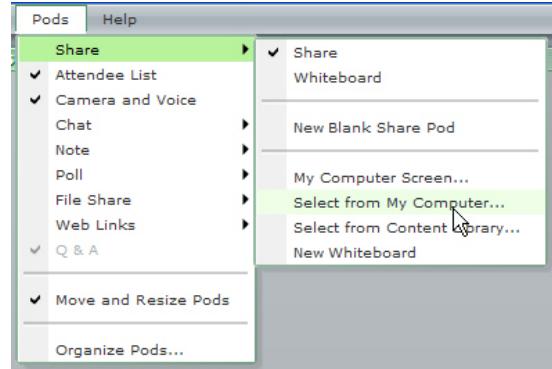


Figure 2 Select pods to show onscreen

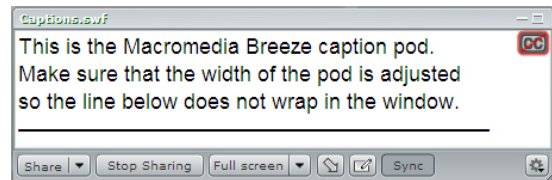


Figure 3 Captioning pod

Once the captioning extension is installed, the captioning pod will continue to remain available in subsequent Acrobat Connect Meeting rooms. You may choose to hide or share the captioning pod as needed.

Placing the Captioning Pod Onscreen

Once the pod is displayed in the meeting room, meeting Hosts should position the pod on the screen and adjust the size and location of the pod to ensure the captions are visible. A few lines of default text and a horizontal line are provided in the window to facilitate sizing and positioning of the pod (**Figure 4**).

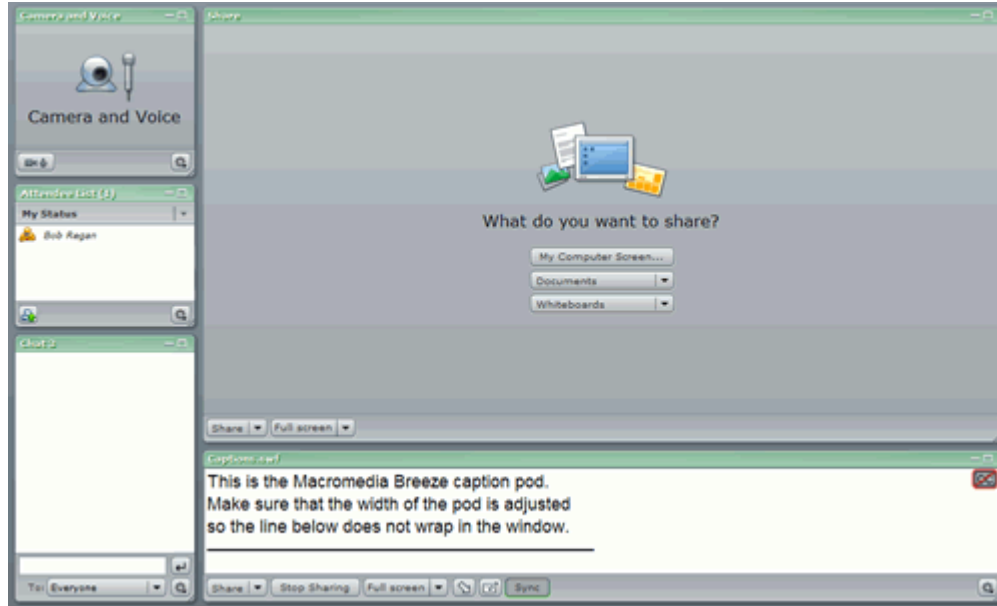


Figure 4 Captioning pod placed at the bottom of the Breeze window

It is important to remember that meeting participants can individually adjust the font size of the captions, so a good idea is to make the pod tall enough and wide enough to accommodate at least three lines of the large, or default, text size.

Arrange for Captioning Services

Now that the captioning pod is available in the meeting, you need to set up the services to have audio transcribed and displayed through the captioning pod during the meeting. You may choose to engage a remote stenographer or use your own onsite stenographer to provide captions. The stenographer will connect to a captioning server that will in turn deliver the information to the Acrobat Connect Meeting room.

Captioning Service Providers

The following partners provide professional captioning services and have tested their services with the Acrobat Connect Captioning Extension.

Media Access Group at WGBH Caption Center

Founded at the Public Television Station WGBH in Boston in 1972, the Caption Center was the world's first captioning agency -- pioneering access to television for viewers who are deaf or hard of hearing.



Freelance stenographers or organizations with onsite stenographers interested in delivering captioning services via Acrobat Connect Meetings may consider using CaptionKeeper, available for sale from WGBH. CaptionKeeper is a



software program that enables professional stenographers to easily connect and caption Acrobat Connect Meetings. CaptionKeeper converts television-based closed-caption data into web-streaming formats. It takes closed-caption data input from professional stenographers' keyboards and outputs text suitable for use in Acrobat Connect Meetings.

For additional information on CaptionKeeper, please visit www.captionkeeper.org. Captioning services are available from the Media Access Group at WGBH Caption Center. For more information, call 617-300-3600 (voice/TTY) or visit main.wgbh.org/wgbh/pages/mag/.

Caption Colorado

Caption Colorado is the nation's leading provider of real-time captioning, performing over 100,000 hours annually. Services include affordable real-time captioning; offline or post-event captioning, including the preparation of text-perfected, time-synchronized files; and Internet text-streaming services. Through proprietary software, Caption Colorado offers a direct connection to Acrobat Connect Meetings. Using this service provides you with a stenographer as well as the server use for the duration of your meeting. For more information, call (800) 775-7838 or visit www.captioncolorado.com.



Prepare for the Meeting

Once a captioning service has been arranged, the captioner will need information about attending the meeting and setting up the connection to the caption server.

The following information is needed to connect to the meeting:

- Teleconference number
- Acrobat Connect Meetings URL
- Caption data URL
- Caption data connection port
- Meeting ID (for Caption Colorado only)

To ensure a successful captioning experience for your attendees, keep in mind the following tips:

- Ensure that the captioner has the correct teleconference number and a reliable telephone connection.
- If audio is delivered by using VoIP, ensure the captioner has a high-speed connection and the audio clarity is sufficient for accurate captioning.
- Ensure that the captioner has access to the Acrobat Connect Meetings.
- Test the connection in advance and confirm that the captioner has the necessary software and bandwidth to attend the meeting.

Connecting to Caption Data

Once the captioner has logged into the meeting, the captioner needs to establish a connection to the caption data server. To do so, the captioner should be promoted to the role of Presenter in the meeting to access the Settings menu for the captioning pod. The Settings dialog box contains a Connection tab (available only to Hosts or Presenters) with controls for connecting to a caption server.

1. Click the **CC** icon in the top right of the captioning pod to access the Settings menu.
2. Click on **Settings** from the **Settings** menu to open the Settings dialog box (**Figure 5**).
3. Enter information as needed, including _____ (**Figure 6**).
4. Click **Connect**.
5. Proceed with captioning the Acrobat Connect Meetings.

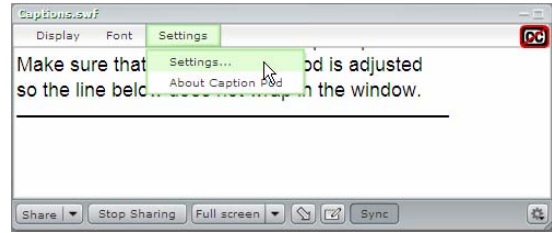


Figure 5 Click to open the Settings dialog box

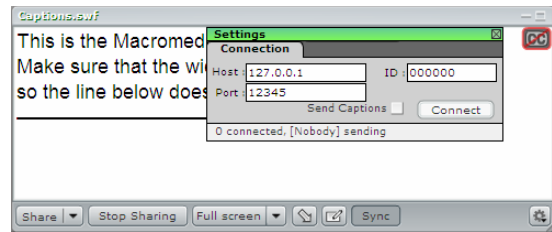


Figure 6 The Settings dialog box

Connection Options

The following are a few of the connection options relevant to the captioner. The Connection tab in the Settings dialog box contains controls for connecting to a caption server (**Figure 7**).

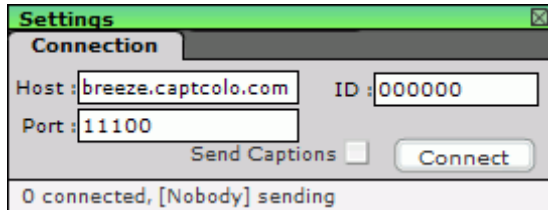


Figure 7 Connection settings tab

- The **Host** field contains the TCP/IP number or the DNS name of the caption server. The TCP/IP number must point to the caption server to establish a successful connection. Check with the administrator of the caption server to verify the correct setting.
- The **Port** field contains the port number on which the caption server is listening. For a successful connection, the port number must match the port number the caption server is listening to. Ask the administrator of the caption server for the correct setting. *Note: If the caption server is separated from the Acrobat Connect Meetings by a firewall, see the later section on firewall issues.*
- The **ID** field contains the meeting identification number. This information is currently only used for Caption Colorado sessions. It provides the caption service provider with a means of differentiating between captioning sessions on the same URL. The CaptionKeeper software does not use this information.
- The **Connect** button attempts to connect to the caption server by using the connection information provided in the settings. Status messages about the connection attempt are visible in the caption display area. *Note: There can be several instances of captioning pods connected to caption servers.*
- The **Disconnect** button disconnects from a currently connected caption server. Status messages about the connection attempt are visible in the caption display area. *Note: The Connect button turns to a Disconnect button after a connection is made, and back to a Connect button after a disconnection.*
- The **Send Captions** checkbox controls whether or not captions received from the caption server are sent to all meeting participants. This checkbox can only be checked if this instance of the captioning pod is connected to a caption server. If this checkbox is unchecked, captions will no longer be sent to

the meeting, but the connection to the caption server will remain intact. *Note: There can only be one instance of captioning pod sending captions to a meeting at any given time. Checking this box automatically unchecks it from all other captioning pod instances. The other captioning pod instances remain connected but not sending captions. This is useful for long meetings using captionkeeper – a new steno coming into a meeting can connect and begin to enter captions. Once the new captioner is ready to take over, the captioner checks the Send Captions button to send captions live.*

- The **status bar** at the bottom of the Settings dialog box keeps track of the total number of caption sources (captioning pod instances connected to some caption server) at the meeting, as well as the name of the captioning pod instance that is currently sending captions to the meeting. The name is the name of the participant in the Attendee List.

Caption Viewing Options for Attendees

The captioning pod displays the captions from the caption server (**Figure 8**). The meeting Host controls the dimensions of the pod, but users can individually customize the caption font to meet their preferences. Attendees may alter the size of the font and choose whether the text is displayed on a higher-contrast white-on-black background.

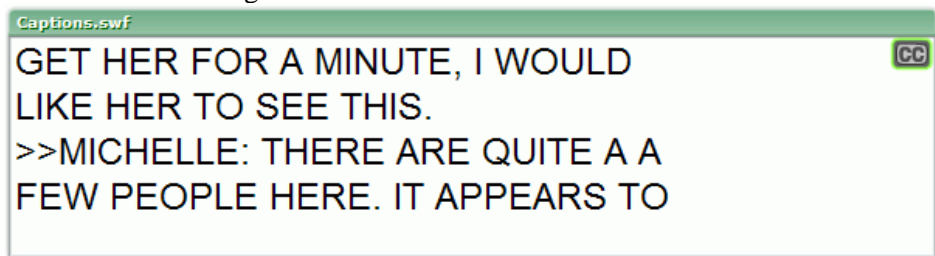


Figure 8 Captioning pod with captions displayed

Font Menu

Under the Font menu, the following items are shown:

- **Small** selects the small font size. Using the small font, you can maximize the number of caption lines displayed in the window.
- **Medium** selects the medium font size. This is the default font size (**Figure 9**).
- **Large** selects the large font size. *Note: As you increase the font size, fewer characters fit on a single line, and lines will wrap. The pod always displays the last line of the most recent caption.*
- **White on Black** reverses the display, displaying white text on a black background. This menu item toggles between White on Black and Black on White (**Figure 10**).

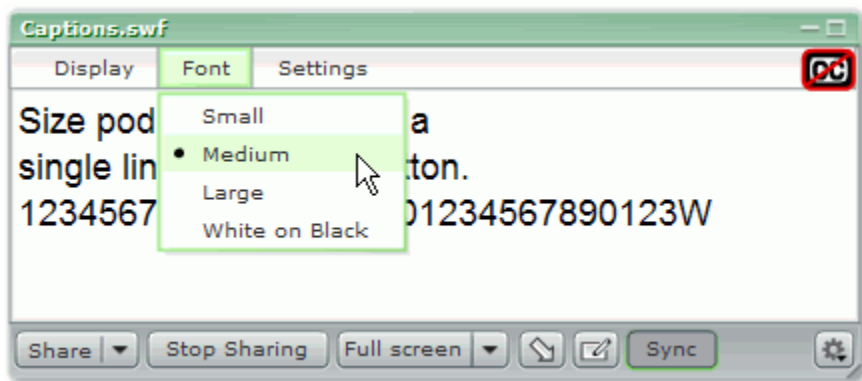


Figure 9 Selecting font size in captioning pod

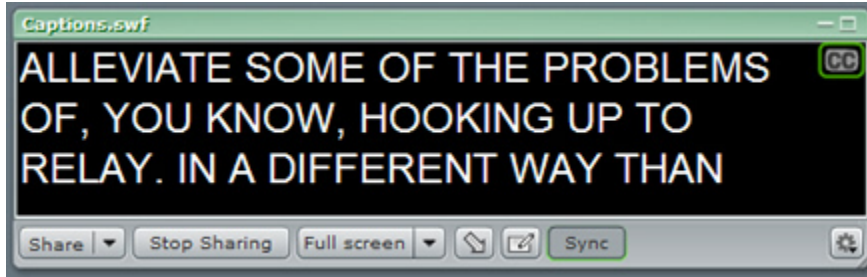


Figure 10 Captioning pod white-on-black contrast option

Display Menu

Some attendees may find the captioning service distracting; if so, they can individually choose to disable it. The Display menu contains a **None** item (Figure 11) that suppresses the display of captions in the window. When **None** is selected from the Display menu, the captions disappear, but the pod remains visible on the screen because the meeting Host controls the presence or absence of the captioning pod.

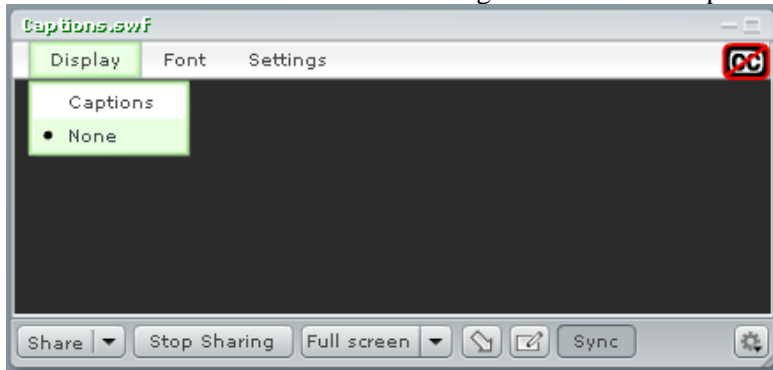


Figure 11 Display menu with None selected

Conclusion

Accessibility is an immensely important effort. Individuals and organizations with different functions will find different reasons to adopt accessibility, and it is the law for many institutions.

For the user with a disability, the challenge is to identify tools that provide the most convenient access to web-based and other electronic information. Now, with the Adobe Acrobat Connect Captioning Extension, you can easily add captions to your Acrobat Connect Meetings.