

## **Designing a Truly Integrated (Onsite and Online) Conference: Concept, Processes, Solutions**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Web conferencing tools have entered the mainstream of business applications. Using web conferencing for IEEE conferences has a good potential of adding value to both organizers and participants. Authors propose a concept of Truly Integrated Conference (TIC) according to which a multi-point worldwide-distributed network of conference online authors/participants will enhance the standard (centralized) IEEE conference model, which requires attendance of the participants in person at the main conference location. The concept entails seamless integration of the onsite and online conference systems, including data/presentation, video, audio channels. Benefits and challenges of the TIC concept are analyzed. Requirements to the web conferencing system capable of supporting the TIC conference are presented and reviewed against commercial web conferencing tools. Case study of the IEEE Toronto International Conference – Science and Technology for Humanity, which was the first realization of TIC, is presented which analyzes various aspects (organizational, technological, and financial) of the integrated conference.