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Partners Launch IT Institute in Hong Kong

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) is teaming up with San Jose-based, NASDAQ-listed [WebEx Communications, Incorporated \(WebEx\)](#) to establish a HK\$29.2 million information technology institute with the objective of developing the next generation online multimedia collaboration system.

The new HKUST-WebEx IT Institute will be supported by an investment of HK\$14.6 million from WebEx, matched by a grant from the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF). It is the largest-ever project funded under ITF's University-Industry Collaboration Programme.

Founded in 1996, WebEx is the world leader in real-time communications infrastructure for business meetings on the Internet.

An inauguration ceremony for the new institute was held today (10 March 2005) at HKUST, officiating were Prof Paul Chu, HKUST President, Mr Min Zhu, Co-Founder and Chief Technical Officer of WebEx, Mr Francis Ho, Permanent Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology), and Prof W S Wong, Science Advisor of Innovation and Technology Commission.

"I am extremely proud that a leading multinational hi-tech company like WebEx sees Hong Kong and HKUST as suitable partners with whom to conduct R&D, nurture IT leaders, and promote commercialization," says President Chu. "The new IT Institute will help build Hong Kong into a regional IT hub and a virtual enterprise center. The Institute's work will bring enormous benefits to business and industry, both locally and regionally."

"The strategic positioning of Hong Kong as the regional financial and trading center, and a window to Greater China, makes it an ideal place to promote IT developments," says Mr Min Zhu. "The Institute will leverage greatly on the knowledge and technical expertise of HKUST in conducting IT research and development."

The Institute will develop key technologies in the following four areas to enhance online collaboration between remote parties across the world. The technologies include speech recognition, image and video transcoding, as well as multimedia data indexing.



[Hi-res image](#) Plaque unveiling: (from left) Francis Ho, Min Zhu, Paul Chu and W S Wong



[Hi-res image](#) Francis Ho

1. Mobile Device Integration;Vto extend current multimedia systems to different mobile computing devices, such as personal digital assistants, smart phones, and 2.5G/3G mobile phones
2. Enabling Technologies;Vto develop a number of enabling technologies to enhance online remote collaboration
3. Real-time Collaborative Product Development Environment;Vto use the Internet to develop collaborative product development linking overseas clients, Hong Kong and the Chinese Mainland
4. Multimedia Digital Archiving System;Vto develop an easily retrievable digital archiving system for multimedia teleconferencing

About HKUST

Officially opened in 1991, HKUST is a well-established research university dedicated to the advancement of knowledge, and thus to the economic and social development of Hong Kong and the region through teaching, research, and service. It was named the world number 42 university in a ranking on the world's top 200 universities by *The Times*, UK, in 2004. It has gained international recognition for its groundbreaking research achievements in nanotechnology, biotechnology, and for its leadership in business education.

About WebEx

Founded in 1996 by Min Zhu and Subrah S Iyar, WebEx Communications, Inc. (NASDAQ: WEBX) is the leader in interactive communications infrastructure for business meetings on the Web. WebEx provides online web meeting applications through its multimedia switching platform deployed over a global network. WebEx's services enable end-users to share presentations, documents, applications, voice and video online. WebEx services are used across the enterprise in sales, support, training, marketing, engineering and various other functions.

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