

## Briefing

The focus of this unit is the use of information technology to mediate interactions, including social networking in a workplace context, video conferencing, e-commerce (interactions between business and consumers) and the training of users.

Students practise: language used to describe current changes, especially as it applies to social networking systems; the second conditional, through discussing different video conferencing systems; explaining the meaning of technical words; making requests with regard to training needs.

### Enterprise social media

Social networking sites such as Facebook and their equivalents in other parts of the world are becoming very common. Business-focused equivalents of these also exist, designed to improve communication within companies, especially large ones. These are known as enterprise social media, one example being Yammer. Some common features of these systems include:

- **instant messaging:** while systems such as ICQ and Microsoft Messenger are going out of fashion in many countries for social purposes, such systems are considered very effective for communication within companies.
- **forums:** these enable people to write questions which are viewable and answerable by anyone with access to the system.
- **document management:** this allows documents to be shared, edited and/or archived by people with the relevant permissions. They are useful for storing policies and procedures, sales literature, specification sheets for products the company produces and so on. This may also be associated with a **comments** feature, which allows people to make comments about documents, thus aiding collaboration.

There may even be a **speech-to-text** or **text-to-speech** capability, allowing the system to accept voice input or provide output in spoken form respectively. Nowadays, most systems use encryption (see Unit 3) to improve security. When messages and data are encrypted, even if a hacker accesses them, they will not be readable.

### Video conferencing

**Video conferencing** can be a great time and money saver for business as it can avoid the need to travel. However, equipment can be expensive and often a **dedicated room** (sometimes called a telepresence room) is necessary. The photo on page 46 and audio script 32 on page 77 give further information.

**Videophones** are a much cheaper solution, yet still have video conferencing's advantage over telephones of allowing the participants to see each other's facial expressions and body language. However, they cannot easily be used to connect more than two people, especially if they are in more than two different places. Internet-based services such as Skype also allow video calls but they do not provide the same immersive experience as a full video conferencing set-up which is designed to give the closest impression possible of being in the same room as the other participants.

One technology that is essential for video conferencing (and other systems using large amounts of data) to work well is **data compression**. There are many different ways to do this but they all involve coding information so that it takes up a smaller amount of storage or bandwidth. Some examples include MP3, which is commonly used for audio, jpeg for images and zip for many other types of files, from images to documents.

### E-commerce

**E-commerce** systems have to overcome various challenges. They have to be secure – customers have to be able to trust that their personal and payment details are not at risk of being found out by others. Ease of use is also very important, as is the customer experience; the **user interface**, the part of the system that users see, is important for both of these points. And they have to **integrate** with other systems such as the company's accounting and inventory management systems so that the website does not sell the customer items that are out of stock and so that staff can be informed if the company is running low on an item. Also, the system has to tell the staff (or robots) that pick items off warehouse shelves which items to pick and tell the packers where the items must be sent to.

Although acronyms are used throughout the book due to their ubiquity in IT, this section is the first place where the word **acronym** appears.

A lexical point of note is that the term **shopping basket** is preferred in the UK and is sometimes shortened to **basket**, while **shopping cart** (or **cart**) is more common in the USA. However, because many websites use third-party applications for their shopping basket which may have been developed in another country, this distinction may not always be apparent when using a particular site.

The listening in this section mentions an **e-wallet** (also known as a **digital wallet**). As its name suggests, this is like a physical wallet but carries such things as cash or credit card details electronically, usually on a mobile phone. To spend money, the user simply swipes the mobile phone across a sensor near the cash register of a shop (see the photograph on page 49 of the Course Book). It relies on a technology called **NFC** (Near Field Communication), built into many smart phones, which transmits data over very short distances.

### Training users

Training is an often-overlooked but very important aspect of any new IT system. The full benefits of IT systems can only be enjoyed if users know the most efficient way to use them and this is unlikely to be picked up quickly without instruction.

Most teachers, especially in the ESP field, will already be familiar with the concept of a **training needs analysis** – finding out through questionnaires and other methods what a specific group of students needs to learn as the start to the process of developing a syllabus that meets their needs. This is done in most areas of adult education, not just in ELT, and is particularly relevant in the workplace as training must be highly targeted in order to be cost-effective.

### Business matters

In this section students work in groups to decide on technological solutions to a company's problems and then write a short, appropriately formatted report to present and explain their group's decision.

#### Further reading

Use the following keywords to search the internet for websites which give more in-depth information about the topics covered in this unit: enterprise social networking, Yammer, video conferencing, data compression, digital wallet, near field communication.

## Teacher's Notes

### Warm-up

Put students in pairs or small groups. Ask them to compare the notes they made for homework about how they communicate electronically and how the forms of communication they use might be useful at work. Put relevant vocabulary on the board and make sure that all students know their meanings by eliciting them from students who used them.

### Enterprise social media

#### Speaking

- 1 This unit looks at ways in which IT facilitates interactions, including electronic communication. This opening activity asks students to discuss, in pairs, how they communicate electronically with family and friends, and about advantages of each form for different purposes.

#### Vocabulary

- 2 In pairs, students match three online services and websites to their categories. The previous activity is likely to have brought up other examples; students can match these and any others they can think of to the same categories.

Students' examples of each may vary depending on where they are from. For example, Mixi (Japan) is a social networking service and WordPress (most 'western' countries and many others) is a blogging and web CMS service.

1 c 2 d 3 a

#### Speaking

- 3 Students discuss the differences between the websites/services mentioned in Activity 2 and how they might be used differently in a work environment from a social one. They should also consider other similar websites or services, such as those whose logos are shown in the Course Book. They also speculate about possible security and privacy issues.

#### Suggested answers

- 1 Twitter only allows short messages but Facebook and LinkedIn allow much longer messages. LinkedIn is for work and business but Facebook is for friends.
- 2 for work: more about getting information and selling things; with friends: more about being friendly, discussing things, giving opinions, making arrangements, etc.
- 3 security: people might give away company information; privacy: if people use them for social reasons, the company might see something about the worker's private life. There's a record that the company can keep for a long time, and people can search.

#### Listening

- 4  30 The focus now switches to describing current changes. Students listen to five people describing trends and decide whether each is best represented by graph A or graph B.

1 A 2 B 3 A 4 B 5 A

#### Language

Students may need help with forming the subject of sentences using *increase* and *decrease*. Providing a common model (*the number of .../ the amount of ...*, depending on whether the quantity is countable or uncountable) can assist with this.

You could also point out that *more and more* is more informal and spoken in style, while *decrease* and *increase* are more likely in writing. This distinction is quite important. You may also wish to mention that *fewer and fewer* is used with countable nouns and *less and less* with uncountable nouns.

- 5 Students now look at audio script 30 on page 77 and underline the parts of the sentences showing change. Note that this activity can equally well be done before the language is introduced; this would result in a discovery approach, in which students make hypotheses about how the language relates to meaning, which are then checked. This can be a highly effective approach.

- 1 Our website is getting more and more visits. We'll need more bandwidth soon.
- 2 My colleague gave me some good news. Laptops are getting cheaper! I'll buy one soon.
- 3 The number of companies using a social networking system is increasing.
- 4 The number of visits to our website is going down. This isn't good. We need to look at this.
- 5 More and more staff are asking for mobile access in order to work from home.

- 6 For controlled practice, students complete the gaps in the short conversations using the words in brackets and language from the Language box. Several alternatives are possible for each.

*Suggested answers*

- 1 Hard drives are getting cheaper.
- 2 Our website is getting slower.
- 3 Our forum is becoming more and more popular.

## Listening

- 7 ▶ 31 The focus now moves back to social networking, more specifically, enterprise social networking. By picking up on points that students made in Activity 3, explain that enterprise social networking is a type of social networking system designed specifically for the workplace. Depending on your students' knowledge of IT and the world of business, you may be able to elicit from them some examples and their features and capabilities.

Students now listen to a company's general manager talking to an IT officer about replacing the company's current but rather limited enterprise social networking system. For this first listening, students answer a gist question.

Easy. Most of the requested features are common.

- 8 Before this second listening, which is for a more detailed understanding, go through the features of enterprise social networking systems listed in the table. Students have to tick the appropriate column in a table to indicate whether each is in the current system or is a new feature that the manager wants in the new system.

Current system: 1, 2, 3, 6  
New system: 4, 5, 7, 8

- 9 Students listen for a third time and mark the trends listed as upward or downward. Before playing the recording, check that all students understand the items.

1 ↘ 2 ↗ 3 ↗ 4 ↗ 5 ↗ 6 ↗

## Language

- 10 As a continuation of the previous sequence of activities, students work in pairs to write sentences which represent the trends they identified in the previous activity. Emphasise that what they write does not have to be the same as what they heard; it only has to have the same meaning.

To provide some variety in feedback, and if your students are trusting of each other, you could ask them to swap their answers, check against the audio script on page 77 and then discuss the answers with the other student.

## Speaking

- 11 Students work in groups to discuss two questions. The first provides freer practice of the language point for this section. The second allows an opportunity for some basic critical thinking around the topic of the section, as well as recycling of vocabulary relating to enterprise social networking systems.

## Video conferencing

### Speaking

- 1 The lead-in questions here guide students to talk about advantages and disadvantages of visual as opposed to audio-only communication and introduce the topic of video conferencing.

*Suggested answers*

- 3 no need to travel, lower cost, less time wasted, more flexibility
- 2 Students now look at a photo of a video conferencing set-up and decide which items from the list they can see in it. This is best done collaboratively, for example, in pairs. Most of the vocabulary here is new. An interesting point is that some of the items that logically must be present, such as cables and video cameras, cannot be seen. You could ask students to speculate about where those items might be (cables might be ducted through the furniture and video cameras might be small and above the

monitors). The control panels can be seen: they are the screens in front of each of the local participants.

control panels, high-definition monitors, local participants, remote participants

## Listening

- 3 ▶ 32 This recording, in which two technicians have a conversation, introduces some slightly technical information about video conferencing. The gist question asks which two types of video conferencing systems the woman talks about.

dedicated systems and desktop systems

- 4 Put students in pairs and ask them to attempt to complete the glossary. Then play the recording again to allow them to check their answers, and/or ask them to check against the audio script on page 77. Make sure they understand the meaning of *location* before doing this.

1 dedicated system 2 remote control  
3 MCU 4 (data) compression

## Language

One way to introduce the language focus here is to ask students what will happen if there is no remote control, putting their responses on the board and eliciting adjustments until they are grammatically correct. Then the same could be done for something that is not currently true in your classroom. For example: *What would happen if we didn't have a whiteboard?* The difference in situations when the two forms could be used could then be highlighted. Whichever way you introduce the second conditional, it is important that the first conditional is reviewed, as this is needed for Activity 6.

It is also important to point out that in spoken second conditionals, *would* is often shortened to *'d*, which can be hard to hear. *Can* changes to *could* or *would*/*'d be able to*.

A further point is that, after introducing a topic with a second conditional, speakers continue to indicate the hypothetical nature of the situation through the use of *would*. For example, the speaker of the first example in the Language box might continue by saying, 'That would help us save a lot of money because people wouldn't have to travel'.

- 5 Students identify second conditionals and the tenses used within them in audio script 32 on page 77.

If we had one of those now, we could connect to our Tokyo, Dubai and Paris offices!

If we had a video conferencing system, we would save in other areas.

We use the past simple in the *if* clause and *would* or *could* in the main clause.

## Listening

- 6 ▶ 33 To practise identifying conditionals and relating them to meaning, students listen to five people talking about video conferencing. They decide whether the situation being talked about is likely (first conditional) or hypothetical/unlikely (second conditional).

1 likely 2 unlikely 3 unlikely 4 likely  
5 unlikely

## Speaking

- 7 Ask students to guess the function of the item in the photo (a videophone) and to talk about whether they have seen or used one before, and what they would do if they had one.

Then, if your students are good at listening, play recording 32 again (from Activity 3) and ask students to complete the middle column of the table in their books. Otherwise, ask them to use the script on page 77 to accomplish this task.

When the middle column is complete and has been checked, students are ready for the main part of this activity: using second conditionals to compare what they would be able to do with the video conferencing system as opposed to a videophone.

How many locations of participants?  
more than two

How many participants in each location?  
more than one

Cost?  
more expensive

Room  
special room

Equipment needed  
HD monitors, video cameras, remote controls,  
MCU

- 8 In pairs, students complete a table which indicates the problems that could occur if a video conferencing system did not have the listed items. They then go on to say these problems in complete sentences.

*Suggested answers*

- 2 maintenance would be expensive
- 3 data wouldn't transfer quickly enough; there wouldn't be enough bandwidth; video wouldn't transfer properly
- 4 video conferencing would only work with two locations
- 5 people wouldn't know how to use the system properly
- 6 there would be nowhere to go for the video conference; would have to hire a room each time
- 7 data would use too much bandwidth; bandwidth charges would be high

- 9 Students roleplay conversations between a general manager and an IT worker in which the IT worker attempts to persuade the manager to purchase a feature from Activity 8. By using the second conditional to explain the problems that would happen if the purchase is not made, the IT worker tries to overcome the general manager's reluctance to spend money.

To maximise practice, either tell students to swap partners at regular intervals or run the activity as a mingle.

- 10 In pairs, students speculate about how the people mentioned would benefit from access to video conferencing facilities. If a further situation is wanted, you could also ask students to consider two employees of a company which has offices in several different countries.

In a later lesson, valuable recycling of the language in this section could be achieved by asking students to roleplay selling video conferencing equipment. They would explain the benefits and how it could help to solve problems.

*Suggested answers*

- 1 If a deaf person could use video conferencing facilities, they'd be able to use sign language/do things that they wouldn't be able to do by telephone.
- 2 If a child could use video conferencing facilities, they'd be able to study from home/wouldn't have to go to boarding school/live at school.

- 3 If doctors working in a small hospital a long way from the city could use video conferencing facilities, they'd be able to communicate with doctors in the city more easily.
- 4 If a company director who doesn't have time to visit clients overseas could use video conferencing facilities, she'd be able to communicate with her clients more easily.

**Extra activity**

Students write a paragraph for two of the situations in Activity 10, explaining the problems that would be avoided by choosing particular features. It may be helpful to build up a model paragraph on the board by asking students for their suggestions, writing them on the board and carefully guiding students to suggest appropriate changes until you are satisfied with it.

**E-commerce**

**Speaking**

- 1 Students discuss whether they do any shopping using the internet, and the advantages and disadvantages of doing so.

**Reading**

- 2 The text describes the experiences of someone who sets up e-commerce systems. Two gist questions are provided for this initial reading.

The three parts of an e-commerce system are: user interface, shopping basket and payment system. Dalya finds the payment system the most difficult to set up.

- 3 Students match meanings to words in the text.

- |              |                    |         |
|--------------|--------------------|---------|
| 1 integrate  | 2 components       | 3 code  |
| 4 processing | 5 delivery address | 6 order |
| 7 accounting |                    |         |

- 4 These comprehension questions encourage more in-depth understanding of the text.

- 1 the user interface
- 2 the shopping basket
- 3 to track/for tracking items in the basket
- 4 the shopping basket
- 5 the payment system
- 6 the payment processing system
- 7 Several kinds of software can accept data from it.

- 5 Explain what an acronym is and elicit some examples. Then, in preparation for the language section, ask students to find three acronyms in the text and underline their meanings.

During feedback, make sure students understand that, while the words they have underlined explain what the acronym stands for, they may need to read around those words to understand what it means. For example, to understand what *EDI* means, they need to know what *this* in *which makes this easier* refers back to (integrating the payment system into several different systems) and they also need to read the next sentence.

B2B (business-to-business)  
B2C (business-to-consumer)  
EDI (Electronic Data Interchange)

## Language

Before reading the Language box, you could ask students to underline the parts of the text that give the meaning of the following technical words: *user interface*, *cookies* and *payment processing system*. Then ask them to match them to the points in the Language box.

## Speaking

- 6 In this information gap activity, students listen to each other giving some definitions and match what they hear to phrases and acronyms.

**Student A**  
a DRM    b bricks and clicks    c NFC

**Student B**  
a SSL    b B2G    c bricks and mortar store

### Extra activity

Write the words defined in Activity 6 on the board and ask students to close their books. Then ask them to write their own definitions before checking with each other and the book.

## Listening

- 7 ▶ 34 Students will hear a conversation between a customer and a salesperson talking about a new product. The initial gist questions here involve identifying the product and the problem it solves.

The product is an e-wallet system. It solves the problem of slow speed of using e-commerce/ people not buying things because e-commerce is too slow.

- 8 Students listen again and answer more detailed questions.

1 They type in their information once. The information is then stored in the system. When customers want to buy something, they log on, enter a password and their information is sent to the vendor company.  
2 They pass their mobile phones over a sensor when they want to pay and type in a password.  
3 Security: it sends data straight to the accounting system/it integrates with accounting systems.

## Speaking

- 9 From their memory of the listening, students write a definition of an e-wallet. They then compare what they wrote in pairs and negotiate to jointly construct a single definition, combining the best of each other's ideas. This can then be shared and compared with the class.
- 10 To allow personalisation and critical thinking, students discuss whether or not they personally would use an e-wallet system, giving their reasons.
- 11 In pairs, students write definitions of three words from the article in Activity 2. Then they read the definitions to a partner, who guesses the word being defined. Alternatively, students could choose words from earlier in the book to define for their partner to guess. For students currently working in or studying IT, a further alternative is to ask them to use definitions that are relevant to their work or study. Either way, this activity could be run as a mingle.

The variations could also be used in a later lesson for review and recycling.

## Training users

### Speaking

- 1 If your students are not already familiar with e-learning, begin by discussing as a class how computers might help people to learn in a workplace environment. Any experiences that individuals have had of e-learning will help here. This will lead nicely to the initial discussion questions in the Course Book.

### Suggested answers

- 1 It's very important. Without training, they will waste a lot of time trying to work out how to use it, or just not use it, or not use it efficiently/properly.
- 2 E-learning saves travel costs. People in many different company departments/locations can be involved in the training. Some people will find it more motivating/interesting.

## Vocabulary

- 2 Ask students what they remember about enterprise social networking (ESN) systems from the first section of this unit. Then ask them to match the words to the definitions.

During feedback, if you are in a company, ask students to think of an example of a policy, a procedure and an announcement. In preparation for the next activity, make sure that students know that instant messaging is also called chat: both terms are used on the recording.

1 c 2 d 3 b 4 g 5 a 6 f 7 h 8 e

## Listening

- 3  35 Find out how much students already know, if anything, about the concept of a training needs analysis. If they do not know, explain what it is. Then give them time to read the checklist; you may need to explain what *access* means but the rest of the words should be review from earlier in the book or covered in the previous activity. While listening, they tick the items in the checklist each time one of the speakers mentions a need for that point. Be prepared to pause the recording after each speaker if necessary.

The following areas/features should be ticked: increasing efficiency, document collaboration, finding messages, smartphone syncing, threaded view, archiving of old messages, tagging of messages, files and documents

## Language

Two alternative ways to lead into this language point are:

- 1 Ask students, in pairs, to look at audio script 35 on page 78 and identify the requests, then compare them with the Language box. Point out first that requests do not always have to be questions. It may help to go through the

first speaker's turn with the students before putting them in pairs to look at the others.

- 2 Elicit one of the requests students heard in the audio in Activity 3, then ask them, in pairs, to write it in as many different ways as they can. They could then check their ideas against the audio script.
- 4 Students write polite requests for training in each area mentioned in the prompts. These could be developed into conversations similar to those they just heard.

### Suggested answers

- 1 It would be great to know how to use instant messaging.
- 2 Could you tell me how to use document collaboration features?
- 3 Could we learn about document archiving?
- 4 It would be good to learn about finding information.

## Speaking

- 5 Students use the prompts to have conversations similar to those they recently heard. As these relate to concepts dealt with in previous units, it may be useful to do a little review first. This activity could be a mingle. An alternative, for added realism, would be for students to ask about things that they feel they need training in in real life. Make sure that your students are having a proper go at talking about their needs, and not just saying *Could I have some training in ...?*

### Extra activity

Stronger classes could be asked to roleplay persuading a manager to provide more training by explaining the advantages of doing so. This could review the recently studied second conditional; for example, students might say: *If we had more training, the admin staff would be able to work more efficiently.* Two things that may help with this are:

- deciding on a specific item of software or hardware on which to provide training, ideally something relevant to students in real life.
- making a list of advantages of training at the end of Activity 1.

## Business matters

In this section students read a report, make decisions based on the recommendations therein and write their own short reports in response.

### Reading

- 1 Students look only at the headings and use them to identify the main points of the report. Reading headings first is a useful reading strategy – an aspect of skimming – which students should be encouraged to embrace.

problems (with communication and internet sales) and recommendations for IT solutions

- 2 Students read the report again, this time in more detail, and answer the questions. Additional questions that could be written on the board for students to answer are:
  - 1 *What kind of people or organisations does the company sell to?* (Businesses and consumers: it mentions B2B and B2C sales.)
  - 2 *What is going better for the company: face-to-face sales or e-commerce sales?* (Face-to-face: the report mentions that their bricks and mortar stores are doing well.)

- 1 The company has more than one location. (An 'overseas office' is mentioned.)
- 2 Communication isn't very efficient, especially for international locations.
- 3 Internet sales are going down. Customers don't like the system because it's hard to use.
- 4 **a** Find technology to help with the problems.  
**b** Find out the prices and features of appropriate systems.

### Speaking

- 3 In pairs, students decide which items of technology mentioned in the unit could help the company in the report. They say how things would be different if the company had the items now, thereby recycling second conditionals.

### Suggested answers

#### Enterprise social networking systems

If the company had an ESN system now, communication between departments and countries would be easier and more efficient. Collaboration would be easier.

#### E-wallet

If they had an e-wallet now, customers would be able to use the e-commerce system more easily and quickly, and perhaps more would complete their transactions.

### Writing

- 4 Students identify features of reports by answering questions about the report in Activity 1.

- 1 headings
- 2 **a** the introduction    **b** the middle part ('Problems: communication and internet sales')    **c** the final part ('Recommendations for IT solutions')
- 3 at the beginning

- 5 Students write reports explaining the decisions they made in Activity 3 and using the features they identified in Activity 4.

#### Extra activity

Depending on your students' needs, they could also give presentations to explain their decisions in Activity 3. This would give further practice of the presentation strategies from the previous unit. Students listening would need to have a task to do while listening; you could ask them to identify the IT solution in each presentation and make a list of its benefits.

### Preparing for the next unit

If your students are familiar with programming or website development, ask them to make a list of stages in writing a program in preparation for **Unit 7**. Students could be asked to look at a few websites and identify some features they have in common.