

Attorney's Manual for Courtroom Technology



U. S. District Court
Western District of Oklahoma
Updated 4/2011

Overview

The U.S. District Court, Western District of Oklahoma launched a program several years ago to provide state-of-the-art technology for evidence presentation in the courtroom. A key goal was to provide systems that are sophisticated, user-friendly, and flexible. The result of this effort is a choice of evidence presentation technologies to satisfy the different requirements attorneys may have.

This guide is a general overview of the courtroom equipment, containing some basic orientation and instructions. For more detailed information and instructions, the Clerk's Office staff will be happy to assist you.



Courtrooms 301, 302, 304, 305, and 501

The technology implemented in these courtrooms allows attorneys to display evidence using a document camera, DVD, computer, or virtually any other audio-visual source. There are connections at both counsel tables, at two litigant assistant locations, at the podium, and under both the judge's and deputy's benches for computer video (VGA) and audio, as well as connections for other video / audio sources.

There are touch panels for the presentation display system controlled by the judge and / or courtroom deputy. These controllers operate both the audio and video systems – they interface with the control center of the entire system.



Main touch panel



Podium touch panel

In addition, there is a smaller touch panel located at the podium, which allows control of the sources attached to the podium and counsel tables. This is the touch panel primarily dealt with in this manual.

Inputs

Each counsel table, litigant assistant table (*301 only*), and a cart near the podium have inputs for computer (VGA), video, s-video, and stereo audio. They are located in a hideaway panel on top of each table. To access the connections, press down on the panel and release. The panel will open to reveal all connections. A/C power is also provided from each of these panels.



Litigant Assistant locations in all courtrooms except 301 have these inputs accessible in a floor box provided at each location.

A/V Cart

Next to the podium is an A/V cart. On top of the cart is a document camera, touch panel, hideaway input panel, and annotation monitor. A DVD Player is located inside the cart.

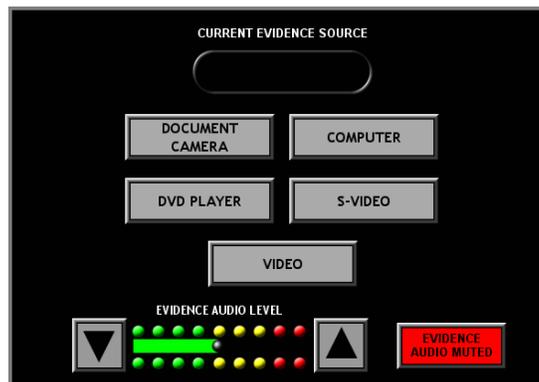
The courtroom deputy will assist with the setup of the equipment, and the placement of the podium.

In most cases, the equipment in the courtroom will be powered on and ready to use before a hearing or jury argument. The following page should be displayed:

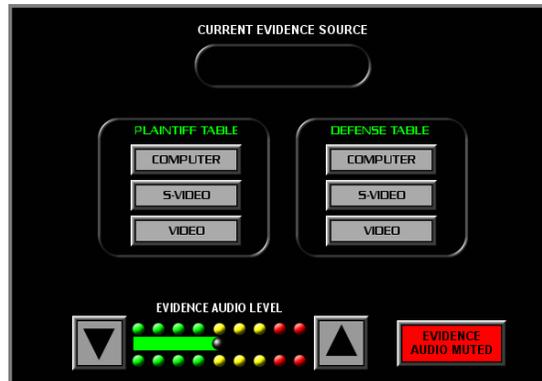


The buttons on the right are referred to as the “main menu”. These buttons are always available when the system is on and the panel is ready for use. These are the buttons used to access all necessary functions for displaying evidence in the courtroom.

The button on the main menu labeled “Presentation Cart Evidence Selections” is used to access sources located on the A/V cart (such as the document camera or DVD). It brings up this page:



The button on the main menu labeled “Attorney Table Evidence Selections” is used to access sources located on any of the attorney or litigant assistant tables. It brings up this page:



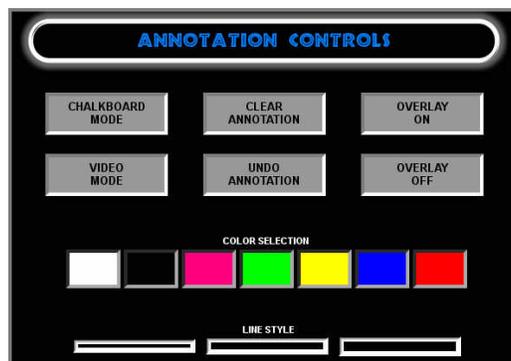
Computer: Pressing any of the “Computer” buttons on this page selects the computer (VGA) input at that location.

Note: *Computer display resolution must be set to 1024x768 with a 60Hz refresh rate!*

S-Video: Pressing any of the “S-Video” buttons on this page selects the S-Video input at that location.

Video: Pressing any of the “Video” buttons on this page selects the analog video (RCA) input at that location.

The button, labeled “Annotation Controls” is used to access control of the annotation system (discussed later). It brings up this page:



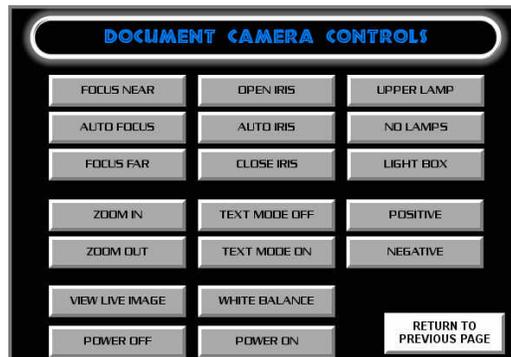
The button labeled “Auxiliary Selections” brings up a page with controls used mainly by court personnel for maintenance purposes.

The Document Camera



The document camera allows any item(s) that are placed on its display surface to be viewed on the courtroom monitors. You can use the document camera to display virtually anything: 3-D objects, transparent sheets, slides, and opaque presentation materials. You can choose a “text mode” display for more clarity of text, or use the normal display. There is also a negative/positive switch used for items such as X-rays. This document camera projects a clear image of evidence so that all counsel, the witness, and the jury have the same perspective of the exhibit.

Pressing “Document Camera” on the Presentation Cart screen of the podium touch panel brings up the document camera control screen. The document camera is also automatically powered on when this button is pressed.



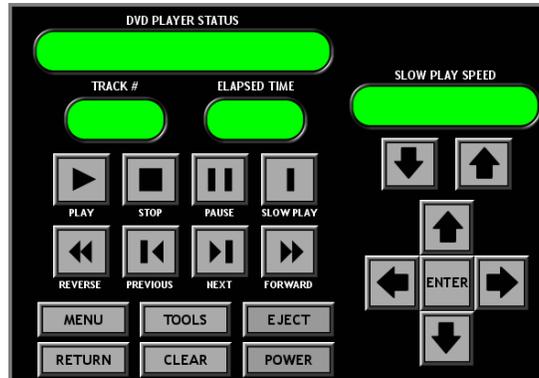
Note: Although zoom control is available on the document camera itself, it is recommended that the touch screen zoom control be used instead, as its control is more precise.

The DVD Player



The DVD Player allows a DVD to be displayed throughout the courtroom. The DVD Player is located inside the A/V cart, just beneath the document camera.

Pressing “DVD Player” on the Presentation Cart screen of the podium touch panel brings up the DVD Player control screen.



Annotation



The courtrooms are equipped with three touch screen lcd panels, one at the witness stand, one on the A/V cart, and one at the judge’s bench. These are used for annotating the evidence being presented. At each location, witnesses, judge, or counsel can “draw” on the image being displayed on the courtroom monitors by simply touching the monitor with a finger.

The color of the markings can be changed by pressing once on the corner of the monitor screen labeled “chg color”. The last marking can be removed by pressing once on the corner of the monitor screen labeled “undo” and all markings can be removed by pressing once on the corner of the monitor screen labeled “clear”.

All of these controls plus a few others are also available on the touch screen by selecting the “Annotation Controls” button from the main menu.

Display Devices (Courtrooms 301, 302, 304, and 305)

In addition to the annotation monitors listed above, these courtrooms are equipped with a large screen and projector, as well as eight individual LCD monitors for the jury. LCD monitors are also provided for each of the counsel tables, litigant assistant tables, and the

deputy / court reporter. Additional display equipment can be interfaced into the system if attorneys desire and the judge allows it. Any additional equipment of this type will need to be provided by the attorneys.

Requests for permission to use this type of equipment during a proceeding should go through the courtroom deputy.

Display Devices (Courtrooms 401 and 501)



Courtrooms 401 and 501 are equipped with two large LCD monitors for the jury instead of a projector and screen. These courtrooms also include eight individual LCD monitors for the jury, as well as LCD monitors for each of the counsel tables, and the deputy / court reporter. Additional equipment can be interfaced into the system, allowing for other equipment if attorneys desire and the judge allows it. Any additional equipment of this type will need to be provided by the attorneys.

Requests for permission to use this type of equipment during a proceeding should go through the courtroom deputy.

Microphones

Attorney Locations



On the base of these desk microphones there is a privacy mute button. Press and hold this mute button with your finger to mute this microphone in all speakers and all recording devices. *This is the only fully private mode. If the green light on the base of the microphone is lit, your voice could be picked up by the sound and/or recording systems.*

Wireless handheld or lapel microphones are also available for use.

Infrared System

(Dual Channel Headset Receiver)



This is a two-channel system:
Channel 1 broadcasts the language interpretation;
Channel 2 broadcasts the proceedings for the hearing impaired.

In brief, this is how it works: transmitters are mounted on the corners of

the wall on either side of the bench. The transmitter sends audio signals to the headsets using infrared waves.

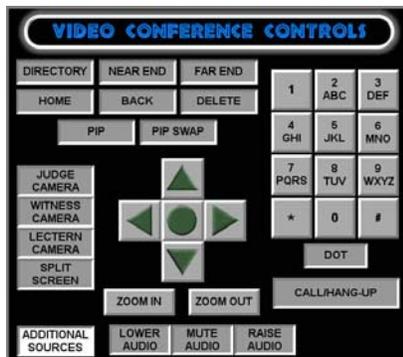
Infrared headsets are provided in the courtroom for the hearing impaired and for foreign language speakers. The courtroom deputy will set up and coordinate the use of the equipment.

Teleconferencing



The audio system is interfaced with a telephone conferencing system, allowing remote parties to participate in court proceedings. All participants in the courtroom should speak into one of the audio system microphones in order to be heard by the remote party. The audio from the remote party is heard through the courtroom audio system. Calls are placed by the courtroom deputy.

Video Conferencing



These courtrooms also have built-in video conferencing capability, allowing remote parties to participate in court proceedings via video. Cameras are in place to send shots of judge, witness, podium, and evidence display to the remote party. Audio is heard through the courtroom sound system. As with phone conferencing, all participants in the courtroom should speak into one of the sound system microphones in order to be heard by the remote party.

The courtroom deputy will set up and control the cameras and video connection.

Please make any video conferencing requests to the courtroom deputy at least one week prior to your intended use. Sufficient time is needed to test the hookups and equipment at the other site.

Courtrooms 303, 502, and 503

Similar to the other courtrooms, the technology implemented in these courtrooms allows attorneys to display evidence using a document camera, DVD/VCR, computer, or virtually any other audio-visual source. The main difference is that the systems in these courtrooms use composite video signals, meaning that higher resolution signals such as those from a computer (VGA) must first be converted before they can be displayed throughout the courtroom. This conversion process results in a reduction of clarity over the newer systems, yet still provides a very useful tool for evidence presentation.

Switching between video sources in these courtrooms takes place either on the document camera itself (303) or on a switcher located inside the podium (502 and 503). There are inputs for the camera, the DVD/VCR, and for other video sources such as a laptop.

The Document Camera



The document camera allows any item(s) that are placed on its display surface to be viewed on the courtroom monitors. You can use the document camera to display virtually anything: 3-D objects, transparent sheets, slides, and opaque presentation materials. You can choose a black-and-white display for more clarity, or the color display. There is also a negative/positive switch used for items such as X-rays. This document camera projects a clear image of evidence so that all counsel, the witness, and the jury have the same perspective of the exhibit.

The DVD/VCR



The DVD/VCR allows a DVD or VHS tape to be displayed on all of the courtroom monitors. The DVD/VCR is located on a shelf just beneath the document camera. Either the buttons on the front of the DVD/VCR, or a wireless remote control can be used to control the DVD/VCR.

Annotation Tablet with Video Marker



The annotation tablets, provided at the presentation cart, enable the attorney to draw or mark on any video that is currently being viewed on the courtroom monitors. The attached video marker works like a pen: just press the tip of the marker on the pressure-sensitive tablet while watching the monitor. Different shapes and sizes of pointers as well as different colors and widths of lines can be used. There is a menu at the top of the tablet: use the marker pen to choose the desired option.

Some Guidelines:

- Select the color and line width you wish to use by pressing the tip of the pen on the appropriate menu item (located at the top of the tablet).
- To draw, simply draw as if you were using any type of drawing utensil.
- You can drop a pointer onto the video screen by placing the pen close to the pad and clicking the button located on the side of the pen. Select the pointer style on your menu (at the top of the tablet).
- Clear the screen by pressing the pen tip on “Clear,” located at the top of the tablet.
- To draw on a blank screen, press “Chalkboard” on the menu.

Important Notes:

- If you press “Chalkboard” on the pad template, you will not be able to see any video images. Press “Video” to view the video source on all monitors.
- You can turn the pointer on and off at any time by pressing “Pointer On/Off” on the menu.

Connecting a computer in the courtroom:



The court will provide the necessary computer cables to get you connected. Your laptop can be connected at counsel table, or at the podium. Please ask the courtroom deputy for assistance regarding your specific needs. Please contact the deputy at least a week prior to your trial or hearing.

Video Conferencing – Portable System



In addition to the fixed systems in some courtrooms, the Western District of Oklahoma has one portable video conferencing system that can be used in several locations throughout the courthouse.

The court has used this technology for status conferences, hearings, trials, oral arguments, and other proceedings with sites throughout the U.S. The judicial system as a whole has found videoconferencing to be a cost-effective and productive technology for its needs.

To request use of this equipment, please contact the Clerk's office at least one week prior to your intended use of the video conferencing equipment. Sufficient time is needed to test the connections and equipment at the other site.