

# United States District & Bankruptcy Court

District of Idaho

April 2014

## **Electronic Courtroom User Manual** *for* **801 E. Sherman, Pocatello Idaho**

### **Overview:**

The District and Bankruptcy Courtrooms in the Pocatello U.S. Courthouse located at 801 East Sherman in Pocatello Idaho are equipped with a modern audio/video suite to facilitate creation of the court record and present evidence to the court and Jury. These systems include infra-red technology for assisted listening and language interpretation and are designed to accept computer input from counsel computers and a variety of portable equipment.

This documentation is intended to provide you with the information you need to take full advantage of the equipment in the Pocatello courtrooms. This document should also serve as a reference to brief your clients and witnesses.

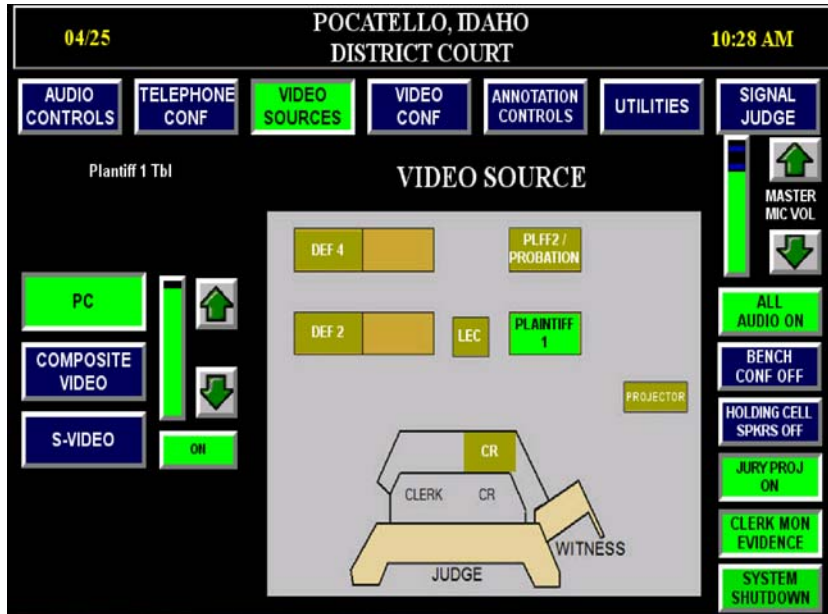
This document will cover all electronic components in the courtroom. For your convenience those systems are addressed in separate sections by function.



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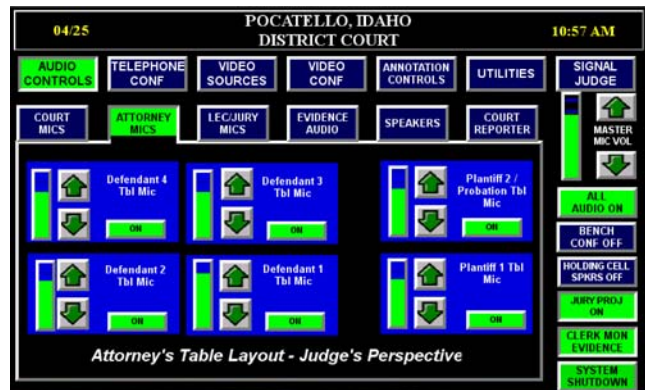
## AMX Touchscreen Control Panel

The courtroom Audio and Evidence Presentation Systems are fully controlled via identical AMX Touchscreen panels at the Judge's and Clerk's benches. These panels control all functions of the system and control projector and screens as well. These units control which location within the courtroom may present video evidence, as well as control of the sound system, video teleconferencing, and audio teleconferencing. These panels also include the ability to blank or "video mute" the jury monitors. These touch sensitive display panels are manufactured by AMX and are discussed throughout this document.



## Audio Systems

The courtroom audio systems were installed as an integrated part of the courthouse. The microphones on the counsel tables are only the most visible part of the system. Each courtroom has speakers in the corresponding chambers so the Judge's staff can listen while performing other duties. All courtrooms also have infra-red interpretation systems as well as audio reinforcement for hard of hearing participants. Each system also has audio teleconferencing, allowing the Teleconference to be conveniently made part of the court record.



## Microphones:

There are a variety of microphones throughout the courtrooms. All system microphones, regardless of style, have a unique characteristic sound pickup pattern. The pattern is a heart-shaped pattern called a cardioid with the sound pickup pattern extending straight out from the tip of the microphone, reducing to a zero or "null" pickup towards the rear of the microphone. This pattern maximizes the sound



pickup from the speaker while eliminating unwanted noise and feedback from the courtroom speakers. The typical microphone of this type picks up sound from an approximate angle of 50 degrees from center, or about 100 degrees total, so it is important the microphone user speak as directly into the microphone as possible.

Average speaking distance to the microphone should be between 10 and 16 inches. The microphones at counsel tables have touch pads which mute the microphone as long as the touch pad is pressed. Normal operation resumes when the touch pad is no longer pressed. The

microphones are highly sensitive and will pick up the slightest whisper so be sure to mute them during consultation with your client. Do not point the microphones up as they are extremely sensitive and will pick up the audio from the ceiling speakers creating a feedback situation. If you have any questions about the sensitivity of these microphones, try one of the Phonic Ear headsets that will be discussed in the “listening assistance” section. You will find these quite remarkable and you will be amazed at the ability to pick up every whispered conversation in the courtroom.

The Judge’s benches in the two large courtrooms also have sidebar microphones. The judge may elect to press the Bench Conference button on the control panel so that pink noise is heard through the jury speakers to further prevent the bench conference from being overheard.



The microphones at the witness stands are quite sensitive but when preparing your witnesses you still need to remind them to speak clearly and directly at the microphone, at a distance of no more than 12". If you wish to have the witness speak directly to the jury please instruct the witness to adjust the microphone so that they are still speaking into it. These microphones cannot pick up the witness if the witness is speaking in a different direction. Each courtroom has a hand-held wireless microphone as well as a lapel microphone available for use.

### **Listening Assistance System:**

Each courtroom is equipped with a listening assistance system consisting of a phonic Ear Infrared emitter, which is mounted on the front wall of the courtroom. Up to 18 battery operated headset receivers are also available for listeners. The system uses low frequency lightwave (infrared) transmission, similar to that used with TV and DVD remote controls, and permits all headset users to hear courtroom procedures in an amplified manner. This amplification is quite effective, as even a whisper in the courtroom can be heard on the headsets.



**Headsets:**

Each headset (see picture below in the interpretation section) has a separate volume adjustment on each ear and it is important that the user not set the volume level too high in order to prevent ear discomfort when someone is speaking loudly into any of the room microphones. Aside from the on/off switch and separate volume controls, the headsets also have an A/B switch. The headsets must be set to channel A for listening assistance, channel B is used for interpretation as discussed in the interpretation section of this document. The clerk has a supply of rechargeable AAA batteries for these headsets.

**Interpretation System (Two Main Courtrooms only):**

Each courtroom is equipped with an interpreter system consisting of a Phonic Ear infrared emitter, which is mounted on the front wall of the courtroom (pictured in the assisted listening section) and two microphones. Up to 18 battery operated headset receivers are also available for listeners. The system uses low frequency lightwave (infrared) transmission, similar to that used with TV and DVD remote controls, and permits all headset users to hear interpreted discussion in an amplified manner. This amplification is quite effective and the interpreter can speak in a whisper and will be heard on the headsets.

*Headsets:*



Each headset has a separate volume adjustment on each ear and it is important that the user not set the volume level too high in order to prevent ear discomfort when someone is speaking loudly into the interpreter's microphone. Aside from the on/off switch and separate volume controls, the headsets also have an A/B switch. The headsets must be set to channel B to listen to the interpreter, channel A is used for listening assistance as discussed in the assisted listening section of this document. The clerk

has a supply of rechargeable AAA batteries for these headsets.

*Interpreter's control console:*

To operate the Interpreter System, the interpreter must plug his/her headset/microphone into the microphone jack on the interpreter's panel and adjust the headset so that the microphone element is within one-half to one inch from his or her mouth. The Interpreter's control console consists of the HEADSET/SPEAKER switch, a HEADSET VOLUME control, and a MUTE switch. For normal interpretation, the



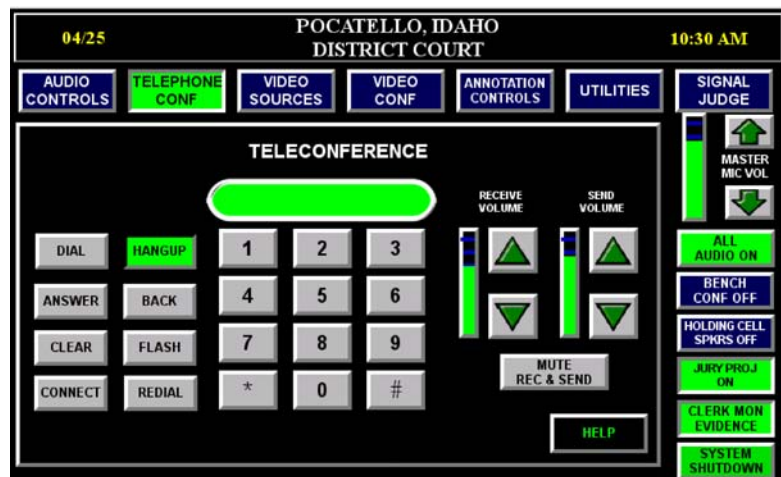
interpreter should have the HEADSET/SPEAKER switch in the HEADSET position, so those listeners wearing the wireless headsets can hear the interpretation. For “broadcast” of the interpreter’s microphone over the courtroom speakers the HEADSET/SPEAKER switch should be switched to the SPEAKER position. If at any time the interpreter needs to temporarily turn off his or her microphone, the interpreter may press the MUTE switch. The audio will remain muted until the MUTE switch is pressed again. The headphone portion of the Interpreter’s headset is used to monitor courtroom audio from all courtroom microphones. The interpreter may vary the level of this audio by adjusting the HEADSET VOLUME control.

A second microphone is provided at the witness stand for interpretation. This microphone will only function in the “broadcast” mode (sending the audio out over the speakers) and does not have a control console. This is the only microphone available for interpretation in the Grand Jury room and the microphone is located under the clerk’s bench (immediately in front of the witness stand) rather than in the witness stand.

**Audio Teleconference:**

Teleconferencing using the Lectrosonics DMTH4 Telephone Hybrid Interface permits the Judge and other participants in the courtroom to listen to, and hold conversations with, parties outside the courtroom. Control of this unit is via the AMX Touchscreen on either the Judge’s or Clerk’s bench.

To establish a conference call, the courtroom deputy can establish the connection using the courtroom telephone set designated for that purpose or dial directly using the AMX touch panel. When using the courtroom handset, the courtroom deputy dials all of the participants and places the called participants on hold and then must select the Telephone Conference menu on the AMX Touchpanel, pressing the button marked “CONNECT.” If the courtroom deputy dials directly using the number pad on the AMX control panel, he or she enters the number and then selects “DIAL” on the control panel. Normal courtroom conversations as picked up by the courtroom microphones will be heard by the caller and the caller’s voice will be heard over the courtroom loudspeaker system. If it is necessary to change the volume level of the caller’s voice, it may be adjusted by pressing the RECEIVE Volume. To change the volume from the courtroom to the caller, the SEND Volume control button on the AMX control panel must be pressed. It is very important to note that the participants outside of the courtroom can only hear discussions spoken clearly and directly into the courtroom microphones.



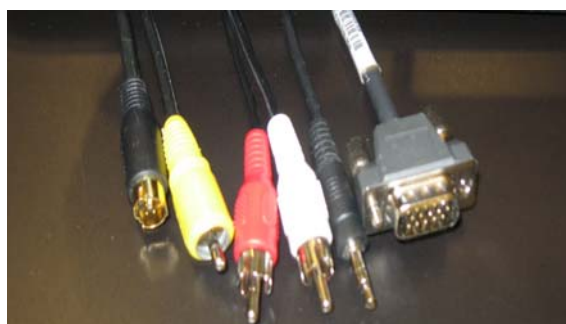
If at any time during the call the courtroom deputy wishes to prevent the caller from hearing the courtroom conversation, he or she may press the MUTE REC & SEND button on the phone conference section of the AMX control panel once. This mute button will then remain in effect until pressed again, at which time the conference will be restored to full two-way operation. To disconnect the conference, simply announce to the outside party that you are hanging up and press the HANGUP button on the AMX control panel. The call will be immediately terminated.

### **Additional Audio Notes:**

For your reference, you should know that audio is distributed throughout the courthouse. For example, each courtroom has audio feeds to the respective chambers suite so that personnel can continue their other duties while listening to the courtroom proceedings. Audio can also be distributed to the detention cells on the first and second floor (two main courtrooms only). This requires the courtroom deputy manually flip a switch located between the audio equipment racks. This switch is normally set to the off position so no audio is directed to the holding cells by default. This was designed to accommodate an unruly or disruptive defendant.

### *Auxiliary Inputs at Lectern and Front Counsel Tables:*

There are also inputs at the two front counsel tables, labeled “Aux Audio.” These “RCA style,” allow counsel to bring portable DVD players into the courtroom and play the audio over the loud speaker system. The clerk’s bench also has an auxiliary audio input using a 1/4" stereo jack under the counter. The lectern has a stereo mini, pictured second from right, for connecting sound to notebook computers. The volume levels of these inputs can be adjusted by repeatedly pressing the volume control arrows on the AMX Touchscreen “Evidence Audio” controls. The jack at the left of the attached picture is the auxiliary audio input jack. Real Time Court Reporting jacks are also available at most counsel tables. Please contact the court reporter for more information.



### **Video Systems (Two main courtrooms only)**

The video evidence presentation system is also fully integrated into the courtrooms and consists of a variety of components, all controlled via the AMX Touchscreen panels at the Clerk’s and Judge’s benches. The system also has the ability to receive computer inputs and accept input from a variety of portable devices. Flat Panel Touch Screens are available at the lectern and the witness stand in both the District and the Bankruptcy courtrooms. The Touch Screens are used annotate any displayed video evidence using a finger. The jury video can be “blanked “ or muted from the AMX Touchscreen until it is determined appropriate for viewing by jurors. Counsel tables have monitors to display the video, as well as the clerk, judge and witness. A Sanyo PLC-XF70 projector is mounted in the rear wall of the

District Court courtroom and two large 37" monitors are provided in the Bankruptcy courtroom to allow the jury to view the video.

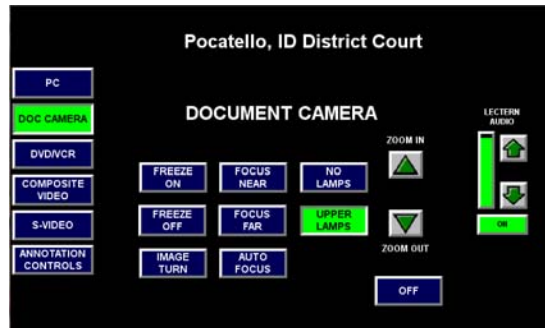
**WolfVision VZ-9 Plus Evidence Presenter:**

The evidence presenter is also frequently known by the terms visual presenter and document camera. This tool is used for presenting documents, slides, negatives, X-rays, maps and even three-dimensional objects.

To use the document camera, lift the camera arm using the tab on the arm of the document camera designed for this purpose Do NOT lift by holding on to the camera. The document camera comes on automatically when lifted up. The camera can be controlled by using the AMX Touchpad at the lectern in the District courtroom or the controls located on the camera. In the Bankruptcy courtroom, the camera controls are located on the camera. Pressing the ZOOM buttons on the AMX Control Panel or using the ZOOM wheel on the camera control will enlarge or shrink the area displayed, and allow the user to greatly magnify the image.



District Camera Controls



Lectern Controls in District Courtroom



Bankruptcy Camera

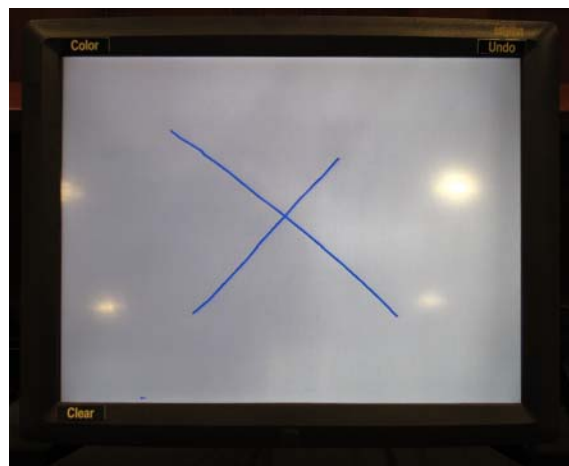


Bankruptcy Camera Controls



### **Touch Panel for Lectern and Witness in Both Courtrooms:**

All video evidence is displayed at the lectern and witness stand on a flat panel LCD display, except this version is enhanced to include touch capabilities. This special Touchscreen allows counsel or the witness to comment on the evidence presented. The annotations are created by drawing right on the display using the tip of the finger. The person must press firmly on the display while annotating. The color of markings can be changed by pressing in the upper left-hand corner of the display, clear the most recent annotation (undo) by pressing the upper right-hand corner, or clear all annotations by pressing in the lower left-hand corner. The person can “drop” an arrow on screen by tapping with his or her finger.



### **DVD/VCR at Lectern:**

The DVD/VCR in the Lectern equipment rack is a high quality JVC Professional Series Super VHS/DVD Player. This unit produces excellent freeze frame and other special effects, thus allowing for a very high quality image during annotation.

### **Additional Video Inputs at Counsel Tables:**

The picture to the right illustrates the standard jacks at the counsel tables. These connectors or jacks are present at the front two tables in the two main courtrooms.



#### **Composite Video**

The composite video is for devices such as VCRs, document cameras or any other portable low resolution devices that are brought into the courtrooms. Since many of these portable devices have RCA connectors, the clerk has a supply of adaptors to translate between styles. The clerk will select the corresponding “Table” input source at your location to display the video from any device you have plugged into that jack.

#### **S-Video**

The S-Video is capable of producing slightly higher quality output than a composite video signal. Most of the newer higher resolution document cameras and Super VHS VCRs have S-video outputs. The clerk will press the corresponding “Table” button and then select the s-

video input on the Touchscreen to display the video from any device you have plugged into that jack.

### Computer Video

This jack should look familiar. Plug this into the video output from your computer. The system can display video at resolutions as high as 1024 by 768 pixels. Caution should be advised at these higher resolutions however as the image will be quite small. A resolution no higher than 600 by 800 pixels is recommended. Some of the newer notebook computers do not have sufficient output power to drive the system. This is a design decision intended to extend the length of the battery. The clerk has an extra amplifier to assist with this problem. This is just one of the reasons you need to test with your equipment before your hearing begins. The large District Court courtroom also has computer inputs at two of the tables on the back row. Real Time Court Reporting jacks are also available at most counsel tables. Please contact the court reporter for more information.

### **Final Courtroom Note:**

If a single piece of advice could be offered, it would be to practice with the courtroom systems so that you are completely comfortable when you appear. Practice with the actual equipment you will be using (the EXACT equipment, not a “similar” model) so that potential incompatibilities or other questions are resolved well in advance of your court date. You can contact the court at (208) 478-4123 to schedule time in the courtroom.