

## Demonstrators – Your Ideal Video System?

A fellow member of our turning club and I are putting together an affordable video system for demonstrations at our monthly meetings, as well as for day long pro-demonstrations we have 3 or 4 times a year.

Having gotten suggestions from folks who have put together video systems, and having gotten some suggestions from none other than Richard Raffan, I'd like some suggestions from other Demonstrators who have worked with video set ups while demonstrating.

What we're putting together is a three fixed location cameras system – an overhead camera over the headstock end of the lathe, a tailstock end camera providing an end view and a front camera for front view wide shots. Lighting is overhead. All three cameras are zoomable wirelessly. We will be adding a display on behind the headstock, facing the demonstrator so he/she can see what the audience is seeing on the projected display or large flatscreen. The video feed from all three cameras go to a "director's station" where each is displayed on a separate flat screen and can be switched by a Switcher Box to send the selected camera's video feed to the audience display – projected onto a movie screen or to a flat screen. The whole system can be operated by one person.

INSERT ANNOTATED ILLUSTRATION HERE

Here are my questions for Demonstrators

1. As the demonstrator, you know better than anyone what you want your audience to see and what you're about to do. Would you prefer to dictate the shot you want – BEFORE you show details of a tool or make a cut (zoom the overhead camera in tight to see this finishing cut, give me a front wide shot to show how this end grain scraper is oriented, give me a close up of this hollowing cut, etc.)

or

would you prefer to do the turning and talking, leaving the camera choices for the best view to someone else?

2. Do you prefer a microphone or can you project your voice enough to not need one?

If you do need a mic and amplification:

How do you feel about wearing a wireless microphone?

What do you think of the Headset microphone?

What do you think of the small Lapel microphone?

If you wear a full face mask while turning, do you know of a wireless microphone that works with a full face mask?

3. How important is it for you to be able to see what the audience display is showing on your own, separate, display – say mounted behind the headstock end of the lathe – about eye height?

4. Are there times when you need to do something from the "back side" of the lathe? If you do need to get "back there", how much room do you need?

As the Demonstrator. what would YOU like to see in a video system for a future demo?

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JOHN LUCAS

Charlie The biggest problem is that demonstrators are not really playing to the camera. Obviously I've made a few video's and I try to play to the camera but your also playing to the crowd.

Ideally the camera should be able to get close enough so that if a demonstrator wants to show the grind on his tool or some detail on the work it can be shown. It's really hard to do that with a fixed camera.

It probably would help to have a monitor the demonstrator could see but the best thing would be a separate monitor placed low and in front of the lathe. Very few turners turn from the opposite side of the lathe. I'm probably the only one and I don't have to do it. I'm just pointing out that sometimes when your trying to cut with the grain it's easier from the back.

I don't like lapel mikes myself. They are loud when you have your head down and soft when you have you head up. The problem will be finding a mike system that won't be uncomfortable with a faceshield on and can still be heard well. The biggest problem I see with the system your working on is the price. When you start getting into monitors that show all 3 cameras, remote zoom and a monitor for the demonstrator it's getting pretty pricey.

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CHARLIE'S RESPONSE TO JOHN LUCAS

I understand that demonstrators don't play to the camera - when it's a live demo. When they're doing a video, it's often a very different story. Shooting a video permits stopping the action while the camera is moved and the lighting adjusted for the next shot, repeating the action so it can be shot from different angles and you can have as many takes as you want.

If arranged before the demo, when the demonstrator wants to show a closeup of a grind or something that needs some magnification, he/she can have a designated location in the demo space to place the tool or item in the field of view of one of the cameras. And with a dedicated demonstrator's monitor, say behind the headstock, at

eye height, he/she can show closeup details, with no delay that you'd have when a single camera operator has to move around to get the shot.

Regarding the price the system, Richard found a local source selling 7 1/2" (diagonal) flat screen displays for - \$50 each. So five of these, one for each camera, one for what's going to the audience's display and one for the demonstrator to see what the audience is seeing ,comes to \$250, not much more than a single good 21"

He's also picked up three older but still suitable standard definition video cameras, with IR remotes, for \$60 to \$70 each.

So

\$250 for the five flat screen displays

\$210 for the three used cameras (with IR remotes)

\$ 30 for the four inputs, one output switcher

\$ 60 for video cables and connector,

\$ 70 for the support structure "frame"

\$ 60 for three tripod heads with shafts

\$ 60 for three clamps to attach the tripod head shafts to the frame

\$ 30 for a pair of clamp on lights with reflectors

\$770 total (without projector and screen or largish flat screen display)

Go with just two cameras, an overhead and a tailstock end, and the price comes down by about \$160 to \$610. For a live demonstration, where the audience can see the demonstrator, no Long Shot camera is required, so a two camera system should do nicely.

Though the top and bottom "L"s of the frame have been welded together for better ridigity, we have left three, currently unused "T"s that can be moved around on the top part for adding to the system. The three uprights are not permanently attached to the upper and lower "L"s, so things can be added to them easily should the need arise. A Lexan safety shield would be no problem to add to the front and is a good idea - thanks for the suggestion.

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LLOYD IN MISSISSAUGA

Charlie,

Our club got a wireless **Audio-Technica ATW-R2100a receiver and ATW-T210a UniPak™ transmitter** with the **omni directional lapel mic** as we already the amp.

It is very clear even with a face shield on. You just need to remember to get the demonstrator to feed the wire under their smock and clip the mic onto their collar or it gets in the way like any dangley cable.

What kind of overall price point are you shooting for this whole set-up? It would depend on getting new or used camera's, but a ball park would be good. It looks like great set-up to build on as a club sees fit. You add a piece of lexan or something like that in front of part of the lathe to block large pieces going into the crowd if they fly off.

Lloyd

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CHARLIE'S RESPONSE TO LLOYD

We're shooting for a system that's under \$1,000. With what's shown in the annotated illustration, we're at \$770, excluding the cost of the ply and hardware for the storage/transport box/cart on wheels.

But, because the whole video system's components must all be stored between monthly meetings, and pro demonstrations, in a small box trailer - along with a mini lathe and stand, grinder and grinding jigs, a set of turning gouges and chisels, a tool box, two folding tables and a podium, the system mustn't take up much space, must keep all the parts together and it has to protect the delicate stuff - like cameras, flat screens, tripod heads etc. . The whole thing, when packed up fits in a 2'x2'x4'6" space, excluding the three 7' uprights. The trailer is 8' deep.

Did a quick price check on the Audio Technica wireless mic and wireless receiver you recommended. \$140 +\$200 = \$340 for the wireless mic and wireless receiver. That's out of our price range. But, maybe we can find a used set for under \$100. For our current club meetings and pro demos we really don't need amplification unless we also want to produce DVDs for our club's video library.

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JOHN JORDAN

That setup [ *Frame with 3 fixed zoomable cameras* ] won't work for those of us that turn at the end-even a bit around to the rear of the lathe. The most useful camera is one with enough wire and a tripod that can follow the demonstrator 180 degrees or so around the lathe-form normal position all the way around to the back corner with

basically an "over the shoulder" view. Tailstock and frame etc are in the way for many operations.

A monitor is useful, too. The lapel mic is fine if its a good one. **The tiny over the ear type [wireless mic] are awesome and really easy to wear.** The kind that clamp on one's head are AWFUL, intrusive, don't allow for faceshield/glasses etc. Give the demonstrator a break and get a good one. I usually have a tragic accident with those early on in the demo. :)

I think this should be like turning should be-the simpler you make it, the better.

John

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#### CHARLIE'S RESPONSE TO JOHN JORDAN

>That setup won't work for those of us that turn at the end-even a bit around to the rear of the lathe.<

The frame structure, as shown, has the open end of the "L" at the headstock end of the lathe, the tail stock being the short leg of the "L". But there's no reason why the open end of the frame structure can't be on the tailstock end for the situation you described.

>The most useful camera is one with enough wire and a tripod that can follow the demonstrator 180 degrees or so around the lathe-form normal position all the way around to the back corner with basically an "over the shoulder" view.<

With that range of motion, you'd almost have to have a Cable Tender so the camera person only had one thing to do - get the best shot.

Regardless of how many cameras that are used, or how they're used, there's still a need for lighting, and a fair amount of it since close up shots need more light. If moveable lights on flexible necks, mounted on the lathe are used, one or more will invariably be in the way of "the shot", or shining into the camera lens.

Overhead dedicated lights gets around the obstruction of camera view problem - but require something to support them - a tripod for example. But the lights' tripods can restrict the movement of the type of moveable camera set up you described. That's the Catch 22 of the single moveable camera idea - to get the shot you need more light - but then you may not be able to get in the position needed to get the shot because a light and its stand are in the way.

Over the shoulder shots would require the camera to be on a boom arm

> Tailstock and frame etc are in the way for many operations.<

See my early response to this issue.

" A monitor is useful, too. "

Hence the small monitor at eye height behind the headstock end of the lathe.

"The lapel mic is fine if its a good one. The tiny over the ear type are awesome and really easy to wear. The kind that clamp on one's head are AWFUL, intrusive, don't allow for faceshield/glasses etc. Give the demonstrator a break and get a good one. I usually have a tragic accident with those early on in the demo. :) "

A decent wireless mic with receiver that doesn't get in the demonstrator's way but does the job will be added to our To Do List - but off in the future.

"I think this should be like turning should be-the simpler you make it, the better. "

This from a guy that does fluted hollow forms and takes the time to study the half logette to get the best orientation of the color and grain in the turning, then makes adjustments between centers as he starts roughing his shape?! ; ) "Simple" is often a relative term.

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LYLE JAMIESON

Charlie, with all due respect, it does not sound like you are listening. You asked for feedback and get defensive and respond with excuses why you should continue with your project. I agree with both Johns. These systems get in the way and don't do the job. I like the zoom able feature but the fixed positions are only in the right place, to see what is going on, a small percentage of the time. The whole idea of a demo is to show the audience what is going on. If they can't see it or hear it we fail. The stationary position cameras can not do that job.

For Charlie I will give details to your questions. I do not want or need a response from you, you will never change my mind on this issue.

For others this might be pretty boring text.

I want and demand, when I do demos, a zoom able cam-corder camera on a tripod with a long tether as John J suggested. I direct the camera continuously so the audience can see what I am doing. I am not the norm as demonstrators go. So there is a need to have an experienced turner as a camera operator that stays in the game and knows what to do to get the best angle and shot so the viewer can stay with what the demonstrator is doing. It only takes seconds to reposition the tripod. **Not all demonstrators want to, or have the skills to, direct the camera.** If you have a (1)unable demonstrator and a (2)fixed position camera system, the audience might as well take a nap.

One example is I need to show the laser use when I demo hollow forms. The camera must be directly behind the lathe watching the laser drop off the edge of the vessel.

So one minute I am standing behind the lathe and the next minute I need the camera behind the lathe. I need the capability of showing the shape of the inside of my hollow form by watching the laser move across the bottom of the waste wood behind the bottom of the vessel. When I do a natural edge bowl I use a hand held laser to get the grain and color balanced and the camera must be in various positions behind me and behind the lathe. Fixed position cameras can not do this.

Yes, I need to be able to see the monitor in order to direct the camera.

Yes, I want amplification. I project my voice fine but **when I have the face shield on, they can not hear. And a good share of the audience has hearing difficulties.**

I need to have the camera and myself both in front and behind the lathe so the structure is always in my way. AAW went to great expense in San Jose to make these elaborate camera and light stands. I had it moved and those that did use it were very unhappy. Ask anyone that experienced AAW (both demonstrators and viewers) before you continue to invest any more time or energy in this project. I am sorry to burst your bubble but the momentum has swung back to a zoom able camera on a tripod, not fixed position cameras. Thank God!!

You yourself said, "With that range of motion, you'd almost have to have a Cable Tender so the camera person only had one thing to do - get the best shot." That's the bottom line!! Get the best shot for the viewer.

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JOHN LUCAS

Actually the long cables are not that much of a problem. You just have to leave enough slack so the camera operator can easily move them. At the last AAW symposium I attended I ran a camera. At one point I peeled up the gaffer tape holding the cables down so I could move the camera to get a better angle on what the demonstrator was doing.

We have professional camera operators film our graduation ceremony every year. They have a huge pile of cable near the camera rolled up so they can easily move the cameras on rolling stands anywhere they want.

When I ran cameras for the TAW symposium where we first tried out the boom arm camera. Having extra cable laying out was no problem at all. You just pick it up and flip it out of the way to move the rolling stand the boom arm was on.

As for Lyle's comments I could easily move the camera anywhere he would want on the boom arm. With the zoom capability you can have the image almost appear as though the camera was right at his shoulder but in reality it's several feet behind and up and not in the way at all.

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LYLE'S SUPPORTIVE RESPONSE TO JOHN LUCAS

Yes, John I like your idea of a solitary boom that has access to the shots we need captured. Its the stationary camras and the framework that I dislike.

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CHARLIE'S RESPONSE TO LYLE & JOHN LUCAS

I really am LISTENING - and learning. That's why I asked the question and posed it to demonstrators specifically and have gotten back lots of ideas to think about. If I asked questions about a particular suggested set up, it's because I see an issue that I have a question or two about. It's not that I feel the need to defend one method because I came up with parts of it. I asked for input - and you and others have responded.

Thank you and others for participating in this discussion.

With that out of the way . . .

The single experienced camera operator and zoomable camera mounted on a "fluid head" dollied tripod, with a long cable (and a Cable Handler) connected directly to the audience video display, and shots directed by the demonstrator who will stop turning until the camera is in position to get the shot he wants - is the Ideal set up - for an experienced demonstrator who has worked with video before and knows when the use of video will enhance the audience experience. It has fewer components, is less expensive, easier to set up and take down, is more versatile assuming good coordination between demonstrator and camera operator and doesn't require much storage space when not in use.

As you noted, not all demonstrators want to, or have the skills to, direct the camera operator. In our club's case, and I'm guessing for other clubs, the monthly meeting demonstrations are being done by club members, some doing their very first demonstration.

For the less experienced or completely inexperienced demonstrators, it would seem a good idea to have a Pre-Demonstration Orientation Meeting before the demo to familiarize the demonstrator with how to use whatever video system is to be used - to ENHANCE their demonstration. Video is an ENHANCEMENT to a LIVE demonstration, NOT a replacement for it. With the exception of situations where there's something the audience needs to see up close or can't see from their vantage point - the attention of the audience should be on the the demonstrator and what he or she is saying and doing - NOT on the video display. If the demonstrator were to say "Now if you'll turn your attention to the video display I'll show you in a closeup,

how I do this . . ." it would cue the camera operator for the shot wanted and the audiences' attention to the video display.

For the example you gave on the use of a laser pointer when hollowing, it seems an overhead shot, zoomed in so the laser's red dot was clearly visible on the audience display screen, would show the entire path of the cut and the laser dot, regardless of whether it's being made near to the top or bottom of the hollow form. With a single camera, the camera operator would have to be to your right for the top cuts and have to cross behind you and be to your left when you're working on the bottom half of the hollow form.

With either system the Laser Dot Drop Off, indicating the desired wall thickness has been reached, could be seen clearly by the audience on their large video display.

### **Regarding the Demonstrator's Monitor**

- where would you prefer to have it?

..(over the tailstock end of the lathe, up and to the left of you,

..directly in front of you?)

- how small can it be and still give you the visual feedback you need?

..(would one the size of a piece of paper or a little smaller be adequate?)

### **Regarding a mic and amplified sound**

- your point that some (maybe most) audience members have hearing

..difficulties is something I hadn't considered - even though, thanks to power

..tool use without hearing protection, I've got a 25 percent hearing loss.

..Add THAT to the design criteria considerations.

- face shields, especially ones that also act as a respirator, present a challenge

..for wireless mics, what type of mic have you found works best for this situation?

**Regarding the AAW video system** used for the San Jose 2012 Symposium, we agree that it had several problems.

The cameras and display were HDMI, and that caused the Dreaded Blue Screen problem when switching from one camera to the other.

The two fixed location video cameras required someone to aim each one and manually zoom them which meant that person had to play camera operator for each camera AND Switcher of which camera's signal was going to the audience display.

While the Switcher was close to one of the cameras, the other camera was at the other end of the FRAME. To change that cameras aim or to zoom it required leaving the Switcher to make the camera view change and returning to the Switcher to switch its video to the audience display.

The location of the audience display, at least for the demonstrations I attended, was too far to the side of the demonstrator. That meant you had to watch the video display OR the demonstrator but not both at the same time since they weren't both in your field of vision. Getting the audience display closer to the demonstrator. But that meant that the lighting on the demonstration area could wash out the audience displays. A black out curtain or shade could minimize that problem though.

**Regarding the AAW FRAME limiting the movement range of the demonstrator,** it seems there's not much need for much space around the headstock end of the lathe. There can be, as you pointed out, a need for room around the tailstock end of the lathe as well as between the lathe and the audience. My question is HOW MUCH ROOM?

To get from the turning side of the lathe to the audience side of the lathe, the demonstrator must get around one of the lathe's ends. Does it matter which end? I ask because the FRAME I've illustrated, is completely open on the tailstock end ( ie tailstock end - \_\_\_\_| Headstock end ). And if the front plane of the FRAME is within 2-3' of the lathe's center line, the demonstrator can stand on the audience side of the lathe without the FRAME getting in the way because it would be behind him or her.

We are in total agreement on The Goal - to get The Best Shot for the Viewer/ Audience to ENHANCE the demonstration and the audience experience of it. How that's accomplished is up for discussion, not debate. This is not a Zero Sum Game were someone must "lose" for someone to "win". And in a discussion, the more people constructively participating, the more ideas can be brought up and considered and the NEEDS vs the WANTS can be identified, along with options for meeting the NEEDS, and maybe even some of the WANTS.

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CLAY FOSTER

There isn't a scaffold or boom system that is as versatile and adaptable as a human with a camera on a tripod.

Many demonstrations and presentations are off-lathe work. A scaffold over the lathe is useless for that.

Instead of spending money on a boom or scaffold, buy a good hi-def camera, a good tripod, and a big hi-def tv. Everybody will get a good view of what's going on.

A small monitor for the turner placed low and in front of the lathe is great. The turner can see what the audience is seeing without even moving their head.

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MOLLY WINTON

I agree with John, Lyle, and Clay. The fixed cameras might be beneficial for maybe 15 minutes of one of my demos, then they'd be totally useless.

Lyle's recommendation of a tripod with a zoomable lens, and long enough cord to move it where the demonstrator wants, is smack on.

Clay also makes a good point about off-lathe camera needs.

When I do an all-day demo most of my work is done in my lap, with a need for close up shots frequently, but enough pull-away shots that the cameraman needs to be active and proficiently responsive to my direction. I also jump up occasionally to draw or diagram information on a **white board**, or hold examples of completed work for comparisons. I'm all over the front of the room. When working in my lap however, having a small screen in front of me to monitor what the audience is seeing, without having to crane my neck, would be fabulous.

Regarding a **mic, a strong clip-on, or good over-ear is my preference**. I can project my voice with the best of them, however as noted by Lyle (I think), there are a lot of hearing impaired folks in the audience that need the amplification. It can also save my voice if it's a big room.

Heed Lyle's recommendation to really listen to this feedback. It's better to scrap or modify plans at this point, than to scrap or toss out expensive equipment down the road.

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LYLE JAMIESON'S SUPPORT OF MOLLY'S POST

Great point Molly,

I use a white board to doodle a lot in my demos. And in a big room everyone can not see what Im drawing. The fixed camera group always go nuts trying to get it on the screen.

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JAMIE DONALDSON'S SUPPORT FOR MOLLY'S POST

..practice of KISS should apply. Molly may recall the OVWG Symposium where I operated the camera for she and Graeme Priddle during their burning demos. Using my boom and a simple fixed lens chip camera linked to digital projector, in my demo area we had no trouble producing video images that the audience could fully observe. All these over engineered set-ups are overkill without knowledge of how to operate even basic equipment to the best advantage.

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CHARLIE'S RESPONSE TO LYLE AND OTHERS

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Being both a videographer AND a demonstrator at AAW SJ give me a unique perspective on the experiment with a fixed frame box and video cameras:

- 1) it was actually dangerous and intrusive for some demonstrators to have to work AROUND the frame box.
- 2) with the shield up, it was like working INSIDE a box, being very difficult to hear or see the audience
- 3) using a High Def HDMI camera at AAW SJ was unnecessary because all the on-site projectors were just VGA--need to consider the entire electronic path when developing equipment specs
- 4) many demonstrators could not go from turning to painting or carving, etc. -- they were stuck in box. and it was very difficult to reconfigure the box when going from a carving/embellishing demo to a turning one, and visa verse.
- 5) no matter how good a videographer, there just wasn't the flexibility to follow the demonstrator's movement. for example, what an audience wants and needs to see in a turning demo may be the angle of the cut, the hand position, the body position which requires panning, zooming in/out, and re-positioning the angle of view. without a fully articulating and reposition-able camera arm, we had little ability do that with the San Jose setup.

6) any box-like structure closely surrounding the lathe will be obtrusive for most types of turning, carving, embellishing demonstrations. think some study of how to video cooking shows or dancing with the stars is called for.

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Richard Raffan AV System Suggestions

Briefly, as a demonstrator I have three essentials:

1: I need to be able to see what's on the screen so I know the audience is seeing what I want them to see. If there's one screen I want it at the headstock end where it's

easy to see at a glance while I'm turning. A screen behind the lathe is difficult to work with, behind the tailstock is hopeless for the demonstrator. Camera assistants rarely keep up with the action in demos I've watched and it's a difficult job.

The cameras should be directed by the demonstrator who should know what's coming next and who can warn the cameraman/woman of upcoming camera positions.

2: Cameras need to be manual focus.

3: I like a camera that's moveable around the tailstock so when an arm is in the way I can move either the arm or the camera.

General observations:

Fixed cameras overhead and over the tailstock are good to have, but not essential if the tailstock camera is mobile.

Avoid projected images; the lights required for the lathe always wash out a projected image if that's in a position where I can see them. Monitor screens are infinitely better and they offer a sharper image.

Lighting is almost always a problem with lights needed for turning washing out the image, so often I'm turning in the near dark so there's a decent image on screen, particularly when hollowing endgrain. This tends to be a camera problem.

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**AUDIENCE MEMBER PERSPECTIVE**

Joe Fleming - San Diego

Charlie,

Here are my comments:

1. did the use of video actually enhanced the demonstration or detract from it?

(joe) Added to it. I sit in the back and the video brought it home to me.

2. was the audience display a large flat screen, or a projection screen? Projection.

(joe) Works well, but the room needs to be darkened.

3. was the projected video display quality poor, fair, good or excellent?

(joe) Very Good

4. did the lighting at the demonstrator's area reduce the effectiveness of the display?

(joe) When trying to zoom in, the light was sometimes too bright and the image lost

5. did you mainly watch the demonstrator and only look at the video display to see details you couldn't otherwise see - or - did you mainly watch the video display?

(joe) Video

6. were there things the demonstrator was doing that you couldn't see and the video display couldn't either?

(joe) We have two cameras - one from tailstock end and one directly overhead. These are pretty good angles.

7. if there were moveable cameras on tripods with operators, did any prevent you from seeing things you might have been able to see if the operator(s) and camera(s) weren't in the way?

(joe) Camera operator stays out of the way pretty well.

8. if there was a structure around the lathe supporting cameras, lights, etc., did it obstruct your view or was it a distraction?

(joe) Camera is overhead and out of the way.

Anything else that you liked - or - disliked?

(joe) Too many camera operators try to zoom in on the cutting tip. That shot is really worthless for learning. The action is in the demonstrator's body and arm position. I MUCH prefer a camera shot that shows the tool motion and position.

(joe) Don't toggle back and forth between cameras all the time. Most operations can be covered by one angle. Switch when the operation changes.

(joe) In San Diego, our camera guys have it wired. They do a very good job of setting up and getting out of the way.

Bill Howatt

1. did the use of video actually enhanced the demonstration or detract from it?

Enhanced in most cases

2. was the audience display a large flat screen, or a projection screen?

Cameras to a computer and computer driving a projector.

3. was the projected video display quality poor, fair, good or excellent?

Very good but lighting is important.

4. did the lighting at the demonstrator's area reduce the effectiveness of the display?

At times, proper lighting is important and it will depend on the cameras, room lighting, etc

5. did you mainly watch the demonstrator and only look at the video display to see details you couldn't otherwise see - or - did you mainly watch the video display?

Depends on where I am seated. Usually watch the demonstrator but look at the display for things that can't be seen such as cutting inside a bowl.

6. were there things the demonstrator was doing that you couldn't see and the video display couldn't either?

It happens and this is where the camera setup is important.

7. if there were moveable cameras on tripods with operators, did any prevent you from seeing things you might have been able to see if the operator(s) and camera(s) weren't in the way?

Not usually, cameras tend to be mounted above and away and the cameras and related holding equipment is small. Operators only move into adjust a position when necessary and are out of the way.

8. if there was a structure around the lathe supporting cameras, lights, etc., did it obstruct your view or was it a distraction?

No real structure, see previous answer.

Anything else that you liked - or - disliked?

Plan ahead particularly for the points that are important to your presentation. You don't want the audience shouting they can't see what you are talking about. Did I mention "Plan Ahead"?

One of the most annoying things about demos, especially for new turners is the "notice the angle the gouge flute is at" statement. Usually nobody can tell what angle the flute is at and this often is not helped by video with the light shining off the steel. I saw a great device to help with this problem - a piece of wood with a hole in it that slides over the gouge. There is a perpendicular dowel several inches long that is perpendicular to the flute so the audience can easily see where the flute is pointing by observing the dowel.