

Courtroom Applications



FIRST NATIONAL EXPOSURE

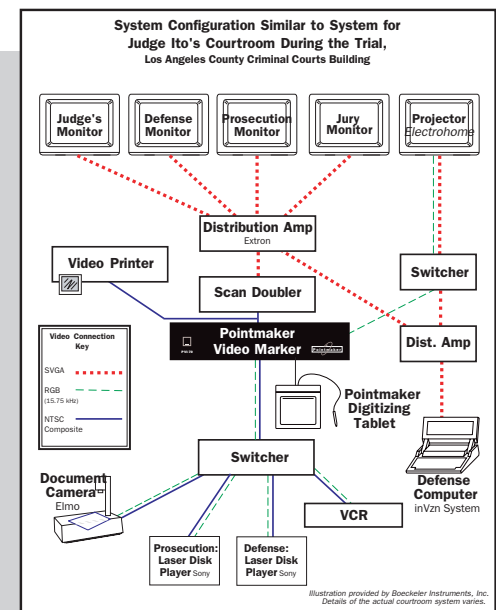
O.J. Simpson Trial Uses Pointmaker

On February 6, 1995, Judge Lance Ito approved the use of the Pointmaker video marking device for use in his courtroom during the O.J. Simpson trial in Los Angeles. The Pointmaker was requested by attorneys when they found that they needed an easy way to focus the judge and jury's attention on video evidence displayed on four monitors, a video projector, and – on Judge Ito's approval – to the news media for television broadcast.

Challenge: While annotation capabilities existed for some computer images, there was no way to apply such annotation to images from other video sources in the courtroom. These sources included VCRs, document cameras, laser disk players, and computers.

Solution: Because of the extensive use of video and multimedia in this trial, the Pointmaker was installed. It was placed between a switcher that controlled which sources would be displayed, and a distribution amp, which output the annotated video to the various monitors and projection screens.

Results: Using colorful drawing lines and pointers generated by the video marker, attorneys could now easily draw and point on video images being discussed – much the same way sports commentators could draw on football plays. This paved the way for the Pointmaker to be used in many other applications outside the sports arena.



EASE OF USE FOR ATTORNEYS, EXPERTS

Courtroom of the Future Launches Simplicity

Professor Winton Woods of the University of Arizona Law School spearheaded the first educational showcase courtroom to integrate A/V equipment that required the use of the Pointmaker. Since this 1994 installation, the Pointmaker has been integrated in several other similar showcases, such as Courtroom 21, Courtroom 23, and the National Judicial College. The goal for such facilities is to develop and provide guidelines for students and attorneys on the necessity, legality, and viability of technology that can be used in the courtroom.

Challenge: While large trials with great budgets can afford A/V setups like those at the O.J. Simpson trial, how could the smaller trial implement today's technology? Also, how can such technology remain easy to use in cases that cannot afford a full-time technical staff?

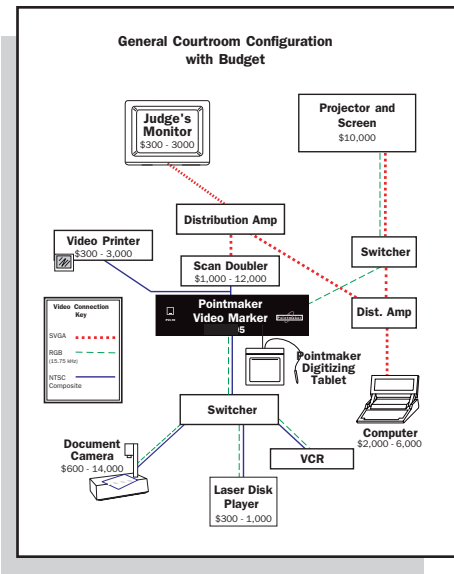


Professor Winton Woods using the Pointmaker in the Courtroom of the Future.

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Solution: As the Courtroom of the Future shows, a single Pointmaker can be installed and used with a single monitor for the judge and a projection system for the jury. The video images can come from devices most offices or courtrooms already possess: a laser disk player, VCR, and a laptop computer. Add a document camera and projection system, plus the Pointmaker, and you have your modern courtroom on a budget.

Results: Attorneys and experts can easily walk up to the podium and set their map or image under the document camera, thereby displaying it to judge and jury at once. While discussion ensues, they can annotate key points using the Pointmaker. In another installation, courtroom systems integrator Randall Stevens says, "Everyone has praised the Pointmaker's ease of use, and how it was very effective in helping explain information to the jurors. With more and more use of video technology, animation, and graphics in the courtroom, I can see that the Pointmaker is going to be a much-needed tool."



WHEN TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

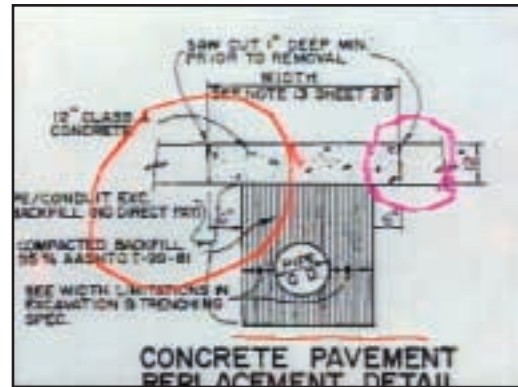
Shreveport Federal Courthouse Cuts Time, Cost

Shreveport Federal Courthouse (Shreveport, LA) In 1996, the Shreveport Federal Court-house under Judge Donald E. Walter developed plans for a new "electronic" courtroom so that attorneys and witnesses could present evidence in a more efficient manner. The system would also allow viewing from anywhere in the courtroom.

Challenge: The video sources that display the evidence include both VGA computer images – such as scanned photographs – and NTSC composite images – such as from a document camera or VCR. The attorneys and witnesses needed to draw and point on the images coming from either source. A pointing finger or laser pen couldn't be viewed on all monitors. Also, PC software that annotates computer images can't be used to annotate other types of video images.

Solution: A Pointmaker PVI-83D was installed with two digitizing tablets, one at the lectern for presenting attorneys, and one at the judge's desk. In addition, a touch screen was connected to the PVI-83 and placed in the witness stand so that a witness can draw or point using only a finger.

Results: The electronic courtroom is utilized to its fullest extent, saving time and cost for all parties involved in litigation, both civil and criminal. According to court officials, the video marker is used in almost every case, with best results from lawyers who practice drawing on the tablet for a few minutes before the trial. Witnesses are also encouraged to try out the touch screen ahead of time.



Video print of trial exhibit with annotation.



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