
LSC Committee on Remote Participation/ Meeting Technology

Update for Virgo-LSC meeting

March 08

David Shoemaker

Charge

- The LSC-Virgo Meeting Technology/Remote Participation committee is charged to investigate the technology needs and means for successful meetings, whether attended in person or remotely
- Our objective is to implement satisfying solutions, such that
 - » For all meetings, for those physically present and those remote, the experience is optimized from the standpoint of technology and protocol
 - » For some collaboration business, more remote participation will feel like the best way to accomplish our goals.
- Hopes
 - » More people able to participate in a substantive way
 - » Fewer km flown per unit science done

What does Virgo-LSC want?

- **Questionnaire** sent to L-V collaborations -- ~800 persons
- ~132 Persons responded, or about 16%...not clear if representative
- On average, people would attend 1.4 fewer meetings per year if the technology were good
- They would participate in 2.6 meetings per year they would have otherwise missed
- 3/4 of the respondents say that better audio is very important for better remote participation; 1/2 said better slide access; about 1/4 want better video or that and a chalkboard
- Face-to-face meetings considered the most important focus of improvement for remote participation
- Half the respondents would change OS/platform to use the right technology if needed
- About half the respondents would be willing to spend up to \$250/year per user on remote participation technology and services. About 20% require that it be free; 13% of the respondents thought that \$1000/year was not too much

'Pickup' technology: What's available at present?

- Continue with posting of slides – no intention of phasing this out
 - » Video as convenient
- Still learning about microphone/processing techniques for large and small meetings
 - » Multiple microphones with automatic switching to closest speaker
 - » 'shotgun' pickups, ceiling microphones, etc.
- Investment required – probably start with EGO/LIGOLab acquisitions to explore good solutions, ultimately will need collaboration participation
- Goal is to make the dense level of interaction at meetings possible to follow and contribute to remotely

Remote Participation 'channel': What is available at present?

- A domain with rapid evolution in terms of technologies and services; our snapshot now indicated EVO as a good choice
- Objectives of EVO system well aligned with Virgo-LSC
 - » Designed for scientific collaborative work
 - » Second generation of VRVS; used heavily by CERN, other HEP collaborations
 - » 'free' for now – if we use intensively, will require an investment to help support bridges, support, evolution
 - » Trying out for this meeting – looking forward to feedback!
- Current quality of audio, video ok – promise of improvement with time
- Requires any Java-capable platform for viewing/listening, a 'webcam' and headset for broadcasting video and sound
- In use for this meeting
- LIGO Lab looking at proprietary systems for Lab functions – will report to collaborations on utility, advantages

So

- Enabling remote participation will require some initiative
- Seeding investments by Labs in some good 'acquisition' hardware
- Modest investments in per-seat hardware for all
 - » NSF happy to see this use of funds, by the way
- Practice with the tools needed – always awkward at first
- Development of meeting etiquette – in particular, means to recognize remote speakers via e.g., a designated moderator
- Believe that it will be repaid with more people participating more fully in the work of the collaboration

Write lscrempart@aei.mpg.de with ideas