

HYBRID DEPOSITIONS | Preparation, Tools & Tactics

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

The FAQs below were pulled from questions asked by attendees during the live webinar broadcast hosted on August 31, 2021, and answered by our expert panelists

When porting a to Zoom via OBS, you would also need a loaner device in front of the witness so the witness can see questioning attorney as well? Is this redundant? It depends if the witness has a laptop. Prior to the pandemic, witnesses rarely had a laptop to connect. Now, more witnesses are prepared with a laptop. However, it is still a good idea to have a spare laptop for the witness.

Is Veritext sales going to suggest multiple devices, aka laptops for the videographer to bring? The videographer is still responsible for bringing a laptop for the witness. In total, the videographer will have 2 laptops at a deposition site.

Does the production team download ALL cloud backups? Or only when needed when the primary recording has an issue? Only when there is a problem with the primary.

Can you run an HDMI from camera to laptop then into OBS then Zoom? Or, do you need that capture USB device to make that work? You would need a USB device of some sort to convert the signal. There are some new cameras out there that have USB outputs that could go directly into a laptop. But as far as going HDMI out of camera into laptop, not possible, as laptop HDMI's are outputs.

What is your suggestion when connecting to a law office that is using the VTC system and it doesn't allow them to switch to gallery view, they're aren't able to see the questioning attorney, and all they see is the witness spotlighted? They tell me to take off "spotlight." If the attorney demands that you don't use spotlight, please warn them that if your local recording fails, there won't be a full-screen backup of the witness which could jeopardize the record.

1. The deponent will be spotlighted for all. (If the deponent does not want to see themselves in full screen they can select the "hide self-view") 2. A recording will be done within the Zoom application and the recordings will be saved to the Pohlman Cloud. Please continue to record via any other methods that ensure a backup is created." Great point! The deponent can select hide self view or go to gallery. And if this isn't a Veritext Zoom, then obviously it would not go to our cloud. So we highly recommend in those instances a 2nd local recording of some kind.

If we're recording on our video camera, the Rocket computer, and Zoom cloud, do we still need to make a 4th recording locally in OBS? Nope, not necessary.

What if I cannot get the porting feature to work, how do I proceed? If you have exhausted all troubleshooting ideas, the emergency hybrid situation will come into play. The setup would be the same as a standard hybrid but instead of porting, you will be sending the image of the witness from the laptop in front of the witness. Not ideal for those viewing but at least they can see the witness.

"What about the scenario where it's booked as a hybrid (reporter and videographer in-person, some or no counsel present and some counsel remote via Zoom) and then it turns out the deponent is actually remote via Zoom (probably due to a last minute scheduling switch). Is there a new tech configuration that can handle this?"

Lately I've seen new types of a small portable 2nd monitors which will clip onto a laptop screen, which would provide the means to create the 2nd isolated channel needed for OBS to capture the Zoom feed. With the same peripherals already mentioned here and possibly a robust mobile hotspot, we would be able to accommodate the clients in a curve-ball situation.

It really seems the pivotal factor in whether a depo is booked as a remote or as an on-site (or hybrid) is whether the witness is physically present in the same room as the videographer. As long as the scheduling department is up-to-speed on this scenario and are being super thorough it probably won't be a problem." In this scenario, if the videographer in person is onboarded for remote work and can handle the curve-ball remote situation then by all means, still proceed on recording. If for any reason you think you cannot handle it because of factors such as bad internet/missing equipment, please call the Veritext Support team to find alternative coverage.

I thought OBS wasn't working with Mac? It depends on the Mac operating system. We found that older operating systems work with OBS but the most recent version does not. Audio is still a huge issue no matter what Mac operating system is used. We just find that troubleshooting PCs are way easier.

Not a terrible idea to bring a secondary 24" or larger monitor for exhibits that are shared via Zoom and are small print. That's a great suggestion, if possible.

Are we supposed to run breakout rooms? Nope, only concierge. If you are asked to run a breakout room, please let attendees know that a concierge is needed. You can either reach out to Veritext or have the client reach out to acquire one.

Who should we call if a concierge is required? Please contact your local calendar team.

When recording from the Hauppauge...do we still record in MTS or MPEG-4 videos? Record in .TS format.

What device should be recording during a hybrid? Your camera, OBS, and Zoom session should all be recording.

What is the witness laptop used for? Displaying the Zoom for the witness so they can see the remote participants and any exhibits being shown through the screenshare feature. Also, if an attorney plans to use Exhibit Share, the laptop must be logged into Exhibit Share so the witness can see the exhibits. You can choose to control the recording of Zoom through that laptop or the laptop OBS is being used on.

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Wouldn't a small tripod also be useful so the camera can be physically mounted off the PC? It could definitely help. Great suggestion!

Wouldn't an omni mic pick up all the unwanted noise in a conference room? Why do we want to pick up everything? It's not desirable to pick up unwanted noise, but these devices are good at picking up the spoken word. We've seen great results. Please note that omni speaker/microphones are for connecting people to the web conference, but not to record audio for the video.

Ethernet cable is a must. Not all law firms have good WiFi. It should be a CAT6 or CAT5e Ethernet cable as you need the bandwidth. Completely agree, Ethernet should always be the first option if possible

Would recording on a 2nd SD card in camera take the place of the Hauppauge PVR Rocket? Or, does one still want to record a backup on 3rd party device that isn't in camera? Typically, we treat the SD card as a backup since they typically are larger file types or the format doesn't match our standards, such as an mp4 or mpeg2. We would still want a 3rd party recording. You can still use the PVR Rocket software

Does anyone know if Windows 11 has any new wrinkles with managing the video and audio settings? Great question! We are still looking at Windows 11.

An attorney recently recommended that if a witness uses their cellphone for audio, to also set it to "do not disturb". That's an interesting suggestion.

I had a request for Webex and Google Meet. The problem is the tool bars in Google Meet show up in your pic on OBS. A simple solution would be to drag the Google Meet tool bar out of the recording zone in OBS. You may notice red dots around the image. You can grab those and drag.

Can you record both to the cloud and Hauppauge Rocket at the same time if all are remote? You can only record to OBS and the cloud. Since you are porting your through OBS, you cannot also record in the Rocket software.

Why use OBS, instead of just porting camera directly into Zoom? Video cameras aren't always picked up by web conference platforms like Zoom. OBS allows for a "virtual option" to ensure that the camera is seen by the remote attendees. Plus, you would still need a recording on your laptop via OBS or the Rocket. Sometimes if one program is using the USB camera feed, another program cannot use it at the same time.

Can we upload MP3 audio to reporter in the portal? We are looking into this!

Who swears in witness if the court reporter is not on site and the videographer is a notary? The court reporter does.

The Magewell device accomplishes the same goal except it works natively with Zoom and without OBS. I highly recommend it for all videographers. That is a good suggestion and if it works then I would say definitely use it. We suggest the Hauppauge Rocket since most videographers already have the device and there is no need to purchase another piece of equipment.

Are we expected to port all hybrid depositions where we are in-person with our main camera and not a separate webcam that is feeding Zoom for backup purposes? This is the ideal situation for hybrid. In an emergency, the laptop with a webcam setup can be used. This is why we suggested equipment that is already in a vendors kit. It creates a better experience for those attending remotely.

MORE INFORMATION

If you have additional questions for our panelists, please address them to courtreporter@veritext.com and we will ensure they are answered. Additionally, if you have feedback or suggestions for future content, please feel free to share that here as well. We would love to hear from you!

Watch a recording of Hybrid Depositions: Preparation, Tools & Tactics at www.veritext.com/hybrid-depos-recording/

Watch a recording of "What To Do If... Handling Issues During a Virtual Proceeding at www.veritext.com/what-to-do-if-on-demand-june-2021/

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