

# Managerial and Technical Evaluation of SMOFCon 37 Streaming

## Introduction

To benefit convention runners who could not make it to Albuquerque for SMOFCon 37, we set up one of our panel rooms as the dedicated streaming room. All of the workshops and panels in that room were streamed live, via Zoom (<http://zoom.us>). As chair, owner and provider of much of the audio and computer gear, and a (nearly inconsequential) member of the tech team, this is my evaluation of how this effort to provide both live streaming of these workshops and panels went.

## Setup

The streaming room was set up as follows:

- Three mics on the head table (Sure SM48 on table stands)
- One audience mic – a Sure SM48 on Friday, upgraded to a higher quality mic for Saturday and Sunday
- All 4 mics were fed into a mixer (Behringer XR12 Mixer)
- Main out fed a room speaker (Behringer BD210D powered speaker)
- Aux or headphone fed to the computer audio in
- Computer (ASUS mini-desktop running Windows 10) running the Zoom conference
- Projector connected to the computer via HDMI output
- Wireless keyboard and mouse for the computer.
- A second computer set up in a remote location monitoring the meeting to ensure audio was running.

Using this setup, each day, I would log in and start the meeting as the meeting owner on that computer. If any of the panelists or workshop leaders had any presentations, we asked them to join the Zoom meeting and share it. As it turns out only two people used this, including me for the wrap-up and feedback session.

I also set up to have Zoom record all three day's meetings, and the following Saturday edited the meetings

## What Worked Well

Overall, this setup turns out to be pretty close to the ideal for an unattended setup for live streaming. By having the master streaming machine projected in the room, remote attendees could participate by chat, allowing audience members to relay their responses, but they did not risk interrupting the flow by breaking in on audio.

The recording also worked pretty well – especially since for most of the panels someone in the room thought to mute the conference at the Zoom control and then unmute at the start of the next panel – which meant that when editing I could use the blank spots in the visual representation of the audio track as a clue to the edges of the panels.

### What Didn't Work Well

The decision to not include a camera that would show the panelists was made somewhat late in the process and was not communicated with all of the panelists. So, a couple of times the panel did not realize that the remote participants did not have a view of what was going on in the room

### For the Future

I would recommend that conventions wishing to do unattended streaming look at a similar setup. They may or may not consider including a camera feed from within the room, but I would recommend against it for an unattended setup.

However, I am also thinking of how to do an attended streaming setup (for Westercon 74 and in general). In that case, I think a camera can be a great benefit. However, an operator will be needed to ensure that the camera and the presentation are properly switched and that the camera is picking up what is important.