

HOW TO MAKE WEB CASTS

WHY WEB CASTS?

Nowadays with the world a global, digital place, people turn more and more to the Internet for news and information. Webcasts are a way for gathering news and information and stream them on the internet, often even before they reach the traditional media platforms like TV. So, making a webcast is an effective way to stay in touch with your active and target audience, as most of them will be surfing the Internet for news and information.

HOW TO MAKE A WEB CAST

USING A CAMCORDER AS A WEBCAM

It is obvious that for making webcasts you will require a webcam. The good webcams are a costly affair and the cheap ones may not have the quality of display that you may want. An alternative is to use a digital video camera, or even an analog one, in place of a webcam to broadcast your webcasts.

Not only will this save you around US\$100 or more, but the quality of a digital video camera will be excellent, as compared with that of a stand-alone webcam, as the optics in a camcorder are much better. In addition, the lenses of camcorder are designed to accurately reproduce color. Sometimes it is a good idea to use your existing digital video camera to double as a webcam. Also, using a digicam, the quality of video chat programmes, like Yahoo Messenger, Skype, and MSN Messenger will improve.

It is, in fact, possible to use a software solution to transform a camcorder into a high-end Webcam.

What you will need:

- A Video camera
- A video Capture card
- A software programme with webcam capabilities

Video capture card: This can be in the form of external boxes or other complicated devices, but the best would be to opt for an internal PCI one, which has to be inserted in your computer. You may also have to install the driver for the card.

You can also consider buying a TV tuner card/video capture card combo. This combination is available with almost all currently available capture cards and it will enable you to watch TV on your PC.

The TV tuner card will have either a standard yellow composite video port. Or output with S-video.

Software: Most of the video capture cards are available with viewing software, as do most TV tuner cards. If you have a capture card, you should be ready. If you bought a TV tuner card, you may have to open the TV viewer program and switch it over to the video in setting instead of television before using it. If you don't, your webcam program may ignore the input from the camera and send the person a live feed of whatever TV channel you were last watching.

There is a full range of webcam software available to use with your camcorder. Just plug your camcorder into your PC's Firewire port, run DVdriver and start the software you want to use.

Some softwares which you can choose are:

WebcamDV: It runs in conjunction with your webcam software application. It lets your digital video camera behave like a webcam! Just think, you now have a webcam with the features of your camrecorder like 600X zoom, auto focus, stereo sound etc.

ActiveWebcam : It is mainly used for security and surveillance, but it can be used to stream video from your camcorder.

DVDriver : It is a software tool that lets you use your camcorder with any software that works with webcams. It basically functions by tricking Windows into believing that the camcorder is just an ordinary USB webcam.

When the software is all set up, plug your camera's video output into the card's input by using the appropriate cable. Sometimes, there may be a mismatch of the output ports, but you can use converters to match the s-video and composite.

As soon as the camera is hooked up, turn it on and then with the card's viewing software you can confirm that you're actually receiving signal from the camera. For listening to the audio, you can hook up your camera's audio out to the card's audio in. However, using a headset with a microphone or even just a computer microphone will make the audio sound better, and also there can be distance between you and the camera.

Once you confirm that the capture card is functioning, you now to do is set up your webcam program. Webcams are commonly used for webcam discussions is an IM program like Windows Live Messenger, AIM, Yahoo Messenger, even Skype.

First you select the device you want to use, then you can tweak to see how the picture looks. You have to choose your video capture device from the list. Once selected, the screen will allow you to see brightness and contrasts.

Next press the "start webcam conversation" button while talking to a person using the same program, and your camera will start sending a feed directly from the camera through the capture card. Turn on your camera, point it at yourself, and you are now ready with your webcam broadcast.