

CARMA Operating Procedures

All CARMA staff must follow specific operating procedures and conventions to ensure the capture of high-quality recordings and minimize the risk of failing to record presentations. This document summarizes these procedures and policies; detailed instructions are contained in the *CARMA Operating Instructions*, which can be found on the main CARMA server lecb.

Preparation

Before departing to record an event

➤ ***Enter metadata***

Entering the metadata (title, author, venue, etc.) except the timing in CWIS makes the uploading and processing quicker after the event is over. It also avoids delays by assuring that the client has given us all of the information.

➤ ***Label all tapes***

Put labels on all the tapes and load the cameras *before* leaving the lab. Write the event name, the date, the tape number (“x of n”) and indicate if the tape is for recording the slides. If the event is going to be more than one hour, put labels on all the other tapes as well. This helps prevent mix-ups and lost tapes.

➤ ***Check equipment***

Use the checklist to verify that everything needed is packed. Don’t rely on your memory, and don’t assume that the last person to use the equipment put everything back. A checklist for each specific event can be printed from the reservation and scheduling database, and a generic checklist is in the main case.

Setting up for recording an event

➤ ***Always wear a nametag***

It is important for the organizers and speakers to be able to identify you, it makes you look professional and it gives CARMA exposure.

➤ ***Check tape labels***

Double-check that all tapes are labeled – there should *never* be an unlabeled tape in the camera.

➤ ***Perform all of the operations on the setup checklist***

Leveling the tripod, performing a white balance and making sure there is adequate disk space available are essential to capturing the event and producing a quality product. A copy of the setup checklist should be in the main case, and an electronic copy is on the computer’s desktop.

➤ ***Make note of any changes made to the A/V connections***

It is essential that the A/V equipment in the room be fully functional when we leave. Multiple people may be packing up after a recording, and written notes can help avoid forgetting to restore a connection. Sticky notes should be placed on any equipment or cables that are changed to make it easier to reconnect correctly.

➤ ***Introduce yourself to the speaker and the person that will make the introductions***

Explain CARMA's mission and emphasize the importance of capturing the presentation in the best fidelity possible. Inform them that you may have to interrupt the session if there is a failure in the audio or video equipment that might jeopardize their lecture on the web. Ask the person making the introduction to wait until you confirm that the recording has started before they begin speaking.

➤ ***Perform a complete sound check***

Verify that the camera receives a full, clean signal from all of the microphones and that the channels are not being overloaded.

➤ ***Always make a test recording and verify that the video, audio and slides are being successfully captured***

Clients depend on CARMA to record their complete event. Recreating a presentation from backup tapes and slides is time consuming, error prone and costly.

➤ ***Display CARMA recording sign, flyers and business cards***

Advertising CARMA's services is crucial to the continuation of our business, so always post the CARMA recording sign on the door and place a stack of flyers and business cards nearby.

Presentation Recording

➤ ***Interrupt the proceedings to correct problems***

This is hard to do, but we are being paid to record the event, so the sponsor expects us to take charge and to solve problems right away. While the presenter may be a bit annoyed, they are not paying the bill, and in reality they will not be happy if the slides aren't showing or the recording doesn't sound good. The microphone on the camera should only be used as a very last resort.

After Recording

➤ ***Pack cables and equipment neatly***

Roll and tie up all cables to prevent tangling and snagging, which can damage the wires and cause intermittent signal loss.

➤ ***After packing up when the event is over, always verify that all the equipment in the room works***

Make sure that if you changed any connections to the computer, projector or anything else that you've restored the system to working order. As described above, use sticky notes to mark the items that need to be reconfigured.

➤ ***Put away tapes***

Upon return to the lab, *immediately* remove tapes from the cameras, switch the write-protect tab to save, confirm that the labels are correct and put them in the box on the shelf. This is mandatory.

➤ ***Upload files immediately***

Before you leave to go home, it is essential to start the upload process. This will reduce the possibility of losing data and will shorten the time to posting the lectures on line. When multiple staff members record an event, the person with the most seniority is responsible for uploading the files.

➤ ***Delete test recordings***

Move all test recordings that you made during setup to the trash. You know what can safely be deleted better than anyone else.

➤ ***Report equipment problems***

If you encounter any problems with equipment, put a label on the item with a description of the problem. Also, send a message to all of the other CARMA staff to alert them, even if you just suspect a malfunction.

Processing

➤ ***Use care when reviewing the slides***

There are bugs in the scripts that process the slides, and in some cases “builds” and similar small changes from slide to slide don’t get detected, in which case important slides are deleted.

➤ ***Verify the entire posted lecture***

Sometimes the recordings aren’t fully processed correctly, so it is crucial to make sure that the entire event and all of the slides are included.

Miscellaneous

➤ ***Calendar***

If you are not working full time, post your schedule on the wall in the lab near the calendar. Enter any times you will not be available from your regular schedule in the CARMA Google calendar. We often get requests for recording on short notice, and it is essential to know the availability of the staff.

If on any day you will not be coming in as scheduled, send a message and/or phone the manager and other staff you work with. If you are scheduled to record an event and you are going to be late or unable to come in, you are responsible for arranging for a substitute and calling the manager.

➤ ***Lab***

Keep the lab organized and clean. There should *never* be any tapes lying around, and tools not being used should be in the tool drawer. We frequently get visitors to lab, and we want to project a professional appearance. Minimizing the clutter also makes it possible for others to find important items when needed.

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