



WHITE GLOVE VIRTUAL PRESENCE vs. REMOTE PROGRAMMING

As a company which delivers control system programming services, exclusively through the utilization of virtual presence tools and processes, we at DGC are often asked to explain the difference between White Glove Virtual Presence, and conventional remote programming methods which have been commonly utilized and deployed for many years now. The question is a fair one, and we frequently find ourselves answering it by explaining in general terms how what we do goes far beyond merely controlling a system remotely, to virtually placing our programmers in the same space, by facilitating a more effective and natural interaction with systems, similar to physically being present.

At times, we even go so far as to compare our differences to those between HD Telepresence, and legacy video conferencing, but as apt a comparison as it may be, we share similar challenges, in that some in our industry intrinsically get it, while others simply do not; those who do not, typically are quick to dismiss the differences, and thus forfeit the many tangible benefits that could be realized if they better understood and embraced them.

We welcome the opportunity such a challenge presents, to better explain and demonstrate the many benefits White Glove Virtual Presence affords our customers and their systems. We hope our enthusiasm regarding the many unique ways we utilize and deploy virtual presence proves infectious; however we have found that our enthusiasm can be misinterpreted, and create in some a distraction from our core message, in the form of a perception that we feel we invented the concept of remotely programming control systems. To that end we wanted to take the time to clearly state our position for the record, and proactively address any confusion that may exist.

It should come as no surprise to an industry of value added resellers that we did not invent, develop, or even build the hardware, software, or connectivity solutions which make up the collection of tools and processes we refer to as White Glove Virtual Presence. We readily own up to this fact, and avoid any implication to the contrary; however we are none-the-less proud of the tremendous value we add to the integration process from our unique ability to source and deploy the latest technology of the day, for the betterment of our clients and their systems.

As a point of fact - one would be over 70 years late to any claim of special involvement in the development of remote programming methods and practices. The concept is not a new one, and for that matter, it is no longer even novel. Long before our small industry even had equipment requiring programming, or comm ports to connect a modem to, people were remotely connecting to computer systems to control, monitor, and program them. On September 9th, 1940, George Robert Stibitz first demonstrated the remote operation of a computer over a phone line during a meeting of the Mathematical Association of America, in McNutt Hall at Dartmouth College. Members of the audience were invited to transmit problems to a computer at Bell Labs in New York City, using a teletypewriter in the hall, which also received the solutions transmitted back to it within seconds.



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We have certainly come a long way since then, but despite there now being few devices manufactured of any merit which do not come equipped with an Ethernet port - as a group, our industry has failed to progress much beyond the use of VPN tunnels, port forwarding, and legacy applications such as Terminal Services and VNC.

To be fair - these methods and applications do create an effective remote connection to computers and control systems on a job site, but they require special setup, and modification of client firewalls which are becoming increasingly harder to penetrate. They also require at least a basic understanding of Ethernet networking, which even today is hard to come by in the average AV technician. Once setup, these methods and applications provide a ready mechanism to modify and monitor existing systems, but they fail to properly support a system during its initial build-out and commissioning phases.

To share one of the “industries first” achievements we are proud of, we are the only provider of control system programming services who supply our customers with the hardware, software, and Internet connection required to virtually place our programmers on-site; enabling us during all phases of a project to provide consistently high levels of support, and facilitate useful interactions with systems.

Our hardware is small and portable, including handy built-in features like a digital microphone and 2 mega-pixel camera, allowing our programmers to participate fully in the testing and commissioning of control systems, much in the same ways they might if physically present. Our software is industry leading, reliable, and secure - and the Internet connections we supply are based on the latest mobile broadband technology's, which support the highest speeds available in any given area.

Howard Schultz, Chairman and CEO of Starbucks, did not invent the concept of a coffee house, but after seeing a coffee bar on practically every street in Milan during a buying trip in the early 1980's, he successfully shaped our idea and understanding of what one is, when came back to the United States and systematically transformed Starbucks - from what it was at that time, a small retailer of whole bean coffee, leaf teas, and spices - into the worldwide chain of over 17,000 coffee houses we know and love today.

I humbly submit that in a similar way, I see the trans-formative effect virtual presence tools and processes are having on other larger industries and business models, and am currently in the process of systematically transforming DGC into a new kind of professional services company which raises the bar for the entire industry, by demonstrating previously unimaginable levels of quality, service, responsiveness, flexibility, and overall collaboration.



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Although we cannot take credit for spawning the general idea and concept of virtual presence - we do believe in it deeply - understanding fully its great potential and many benefits. We are committed to being leaders in the development and deployment of virtual presence; tirelessly pioneering new and innovative ways to use it, to improve not just our own business, but that of our customers, and the entire industry as well. We maintain a proven track record of successfully deploying solutions that improve the overall experience of control system programming, all the while strengthening customer relationships, and creating a sustainable and scalable framework from which we can all better operate.

Don't be fooled by imitators. I will share the wisdom of my own personal experience, hard earned from countless hours locked away in the R&D lab, and explain clearly that the devil is in the details regarding any claims of virtual presence capability; even our own. I have personally developed all of DGC's virtual presence capabilities, and I can report that it required over two years of research, development, and testing to produce a complete solution which is truly plug-in-simple, easy to deploy, and actually capable of facilitating a game changing and seamless interaction with our customers and their systems.

There is no one thing we do which clearly differentiates us, or demonstrates definitely what we mean by virtual presence; instead, I ask that you collectively consider the many small, but meaningful ways we differentiate ourselves everyday, such as the collaborative, technology rich way we approach most every aspect of our business, and our customer centric approach which values responsiveness, flexibility, and the overall experience of working with our company and team. I ask that you consider our commitment to fully featured and reliable solutions, secured through enterprise license and volume purchasing agreements, with well known and highly respected manufacturers and software developers. Then, factor in our attention to the most subtle of details, and you will begin to understand our unique ability to offer the best control system programming, and customer experience, our industry has ever enjoyed. These are the things which make up the essence of White Glove Virtual Presence, and the things which best delineate DGC's virtual presence solutions from the remote programming methods of decades past.

All of us here at DGC sincerely appreciate you taking the time to read this, and we thank you for your consideration.