

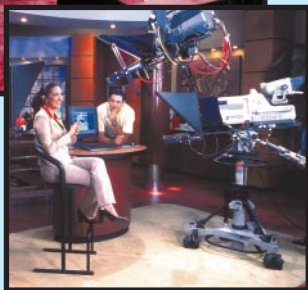


## PROMPTING *SIMPLIFIED*

Prompting permits the speaker to present text in a professional manner while at the same time maintaining eye contact with the camera, or live audience. It is used as an aid to help a speaker look natural and appear in command of the situation. When a prompter is employed, the presenter acquires confidence, which enhances the presentation and helps gain the attention and interest of the viewer.

A Prompting system is comprised of two elements, a means to compose and scroll the text and the monitor system from which the text is read.

Today, because of the international language compatibility of computer operating systems, most scripts are generated by word processors, although manual drive tables for typewritten scripts are still in use. In the latter instance, scripts are placed on a conveyor belt and transported under a small Vidicon camera; when the script is moved under the lens, the text appears as video on the prompter. Over the past few years, however, manufacture of drive tables has almost ceased and they are now difficult to obtain.



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## PROMPTING *SIMPLIFIED*:

The image of computer generated scripts is of a much higher quality than typewritten copy and, therefore, more readable. Computers also permit very large font sizes and different font styles to be set, making it easier for the presenter to see. Prompting Programs differ as to features, but a prerequisite is that the text be scrolled smoothly, otherwise it will adversely affect the presenter which will be noticed by the viewing audience.



windows software  
A-600WIN

An added advantage of word processors is that the prompting program may be loaded into a laptop for use anywhere; the individual may scroll the text on his computer screen using the touch-pad, or a mouse, to rehearse his presentation away from the location of the prompter display.

For example: Listec's A-6000WIN Windows Prompting Software provides a powerful prompting tool. It incorporates instant editing, and two separate word processors so that computers operating under Windows XP, 2000 or 98 may be configured for dual-monitor operation.

## PROMPTING *SIMPLIFIED*:

The prompter monitor system utilizes a specially manufactured mirror, also referred to as a beamsplitter, that is normally positioned at a 45 degree angle to the monitor.

The mirror has a semi-transparent coating baked onto the front surface that, on average, provides for 70 percent transmission through the glass and 30 percent reflectivity off the glass. The text is reflected on the front side of the mirror and the lens "sees" clear glass through the rear. The light loss is approximately .750 f-stop. Some prompter mirrors have a clear, low reflectance coating on the back side to prevent light from penetrating through the glass into the lens, which could affect cameras having the ability to automatically adjust for light fluctuations. Other coatings are available: For example, the user may wish to specify a 60-40 coating for high-light

situations, i.e. for work out of doors, or even 80-20 for very low light conditions in studios.

### *How a Prompter is Configured:*

Most prompters are configured to interface between the pan and tilt head and base of the camera; these are described as "on-camera" prompters.

The type of prompter hardware supplied normally depends on the model camera and lens in operation. Therefore, it is important to know before a prompter is specified whether the camera is a full-sized studio unit, or portable-type, and if the lens is a box-type wide angle studio unit or ENG barrel. In addition, the carrying capacity of the Tripod/Pedestal System including the Pan Head should be determined to ensure it is capable of supporting the entire complement.

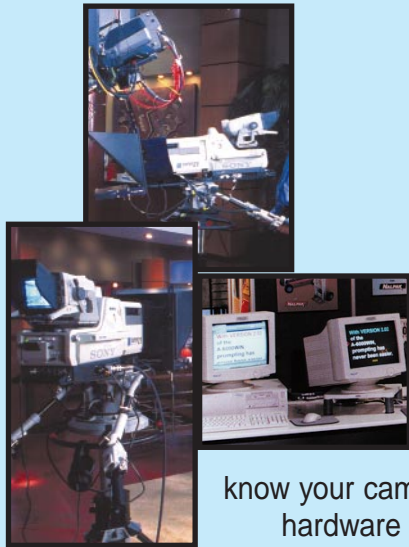
know your camera  
hardware  
**PROMPTER  
CONFIGURATION**

On-camera prompters are utilized by news presenters, or when the speaker is being videotaped.

### **PROMPTING SIMPLIFIED:**

On-camera prompting hardware consists of a monitor (either CRT or flat panel), a mirror/hood assembly, and a balance plate that fits between the base of the camera and pan head. If a portable-type camera is employed, then a riser and/or counterbalance weight may also be required. The riser is used to position the camera lens at the center point (optical axis) of the mirror; a counterbalance may be needed when the front end of the prompter weighs more than the camera/lens complement.

For instance: Listec Model A-2012P is a 12-inch on-camera monitor prompter and is recommended for outside broadcast use and for studios where space is limited. The A-2012P is configured to support a portable-type camera with ENG barrel lens and features a Fold-down Mirror/Soft Hood Assembly, instead of the standard trapezoidal studio hood. It also incorporates a Camera Riser and



studio crt  
A-2012P



studio crt  
A-2015CCD

10 lb. (4.5 kg) Counterbalance. Prompters with fold-down hoods also work well with robotic heads. Model A-2012P weighs 37 lbs. (16.75kg) and, therefore, a tripod system capable of supporting at least 55 lbs. (25 kg) would be required.

### PROMPTING SIMPLIFIED:

Model A-2015CCD is also configured to support a portable-type camera in studio configuration with ENG barrel lens. This unit, however, features a 15-inch monitor, standard studio trapezoidal Mirror/Hood Assembly, Camera Riser and 20 lb. (9 kg) Counterbalance. A pedestal and pan head with a carrying capacity of 100 lbs. (45 kg) is therefore recommended.

In addition, Listec prompters may be specified with a Wide Angle Mirror and Hood Assembly to accommodate a camera with a box-type studio lens. For example: Listec prompter models ending with the suffix "FSW" are configured to support a studio camera, such as the LDK-6000HD with HA22X7.2 Lens.

### PROMPTING SIMPLIFIED:

#### *New Technology:*

Most recently, Flat-Panel Prompters were introduced. These units typically weigh one-third less than a CRT monitor prompter. Because of their light weight, in most instances, tripod systems do not have to be upgraded; this permits budget funds to be applied towards the purchase of technologically advanced prompters, rather than new mounting equipment. Flat-Panel Prompters are also ideal for use with robotic pan heads.

Flat-Panel Prompter Displays, such as Listec Models T-2012P or ST-2015CCD, weigh only 12 lbs. (5.45 kg) and 25 lbs. (11.3 kg), respectively. The primary difference between the T-Series of Flat-Panel Prompters and the ST-Series is that the ST Panels feature Composite and S-Video inputs only, while the T Panels feature a



flat panel prompters  
T-2012P  
ST-2012CCD

custom video controller board and PC Graphics input in addition to Composite and S-Video.

As Listec's mounting hardware is interchangeable, most existing Listec customers may simply substitute a Flat Panel for the existing Monitor.

Owing to the advanced technology, Flat-Panel Prompters are more costly than monitor-based units. With this in mind...

## **PROMPTING SIMPLIFIED:**

...Listec developed the T-2000 PromptBook Assembly. This unit features Listec's standard easy-mount hardware but utilizes the client's own Laptop computer as the prompter panel, producing a simple, fully professional flat-panel prompter at an economical cost.

## **PROMPTING SIMPLIFIED:**

### **Off-camera Specialty Prompters for Eye-line Viewing:**

While prompters utilized with cameras are normally mounted onto a pan head, if the tripod or pan head does not have the ability to support the gross weight of the entire complement, free-standing prompters are available.

The Listec Model A-2015SA is a Stand-Alone Prompter. The eye-line assembly includes a 15-inch monitor with Mirror and Studio Hood attached that is mounted onto a Roll-Around Dolly. When prompting is required, the A-2015SA is placed directly in front of the camera lens and then stored away when not in use.



promptbook  
T-2000



stand-alone  
prompter  
A-2015SA

executive conference  
CRT PROMPTER



## PROMPTING *SIMPLIFIED*:

Prompters are also used for public speaking, in which instance neither a camera nor tripod is employed.

## PROMPTING *SIMPLIFIED*:

Listec Model A-2015CS incorporates a 15-inch black and white composite monitor for this purpose (color is also available). Conference Prompters may also be configured using a flat panel, which makes them much easier to transport, such as the Listec Model ST-2015CS.



executive conference  
FLAT PANEL  
CRT PROMPTER

A conference configuration includes a monitor, an adjustable stand to support the prompter mirror and, in the case of a CRT-monitor system, some form of shroud to mask the monitor from the audience's view.

A complete system is typically comprised of two prompters, each situated to the left and right of the speaker. This permits the presenter to maintain eye contact with the audience while reading from the prompters. Black and White monitors are usually employed but at times color monitors are specified, since color seems to help non-professional speakers, or those with reading disabilities, to focus on the script; LCD displays provide the option of color and/or black and white.

Conference Prompters are also employed for teleconferencing at remote locations but in addition to text, they are used to transmit video. Each site has a prompter and when an individual speaks, the viewer at the remote location sees the person he is talking to and, therefore, looks and feels more comfortable.

## PROMPTING SIMPLIFIED:

### Deciding on a Prompter:

As prompting is an extremely important part of a presentation, the hardware and software selected must be reliable and of good quality. If a prompter fails during a live production, this could have serious consequences. Prompters and Prompting Software may be used for presentations wherever a speaker is involved.

Initially, prompters were a well kept "secret" for use only by broadcasters; however, as politicians, business people and public speakers of every kind wished to appear as professional as the news presenters, the marketplace for prompting expanded. In addition to television facilities, prompters are also being supplied to governments, schools, corporations, hospitals, museums and other institutions.

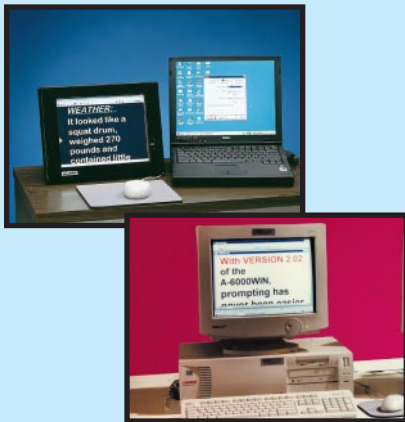
While prompting systems may look the same, there are important differences. To ensure the correct system is purchased, the customer should develop an outline of how the prompter will be used, what they want to achieve with regard to scripting and how much they have budgeted for the project. The customer should then discuss his concerns with the dealer or the manufacturer. For example: Does the user want to display graphics on the prompter panel, i.e. a PowerPoint presentation. Does the TV station want to display a weather map to aid the presenter? Is editing required at the same time the prompter is active?

## PROMPTING SIMPLIFIED:

With regard to the Prompting Software, the customer should be cautioned never to assume that a prompting program performs a certain task and we would suggest that the user request a demonstration version of the software to determine if it incorporates the features required.



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demo download  
WINDOWS  
A-6000WIN

demo download  
DOS

## PROMPTING *SIMPLIFIED*:

While prompting might not have as high a profile as other video equipment, it is integral to a professional presentation.

The purchase of a prompter is not made very often and the equipment must last many years. Serious consideration should, therefore, be given to the selection of prompting equipment. Questions to ask are: Does the manufacturer have a reputation for after-purchase customer support? Are Programs enhanced as technology changes? Are software upgrades made available and if so, at what cost?

We hope the foregoing has given you a good idea as to what prompting is and the types of prompters that are available. Listec Video Corp. has been a part of the Video Industry since 1967 and is committed to the ongoing process of developing prompting equipment that can be depended upon well into the future.



selecting the right  
LISTEC PROMPTER

