



DiCentra FAQs – 12

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Using DiCentra with Zoom

Question: Can DiCentra be used with Zoom? If so, are there any tips?

Answer: Yes, DiCentra can be used with Zoom for showing a competition as part of a video conference.

In the following it is assumed that you have installed both the Zoom application and DiCentra on your machine, and that you are familiar with the basics of both.

Configuring Zoom

In recent versions of Zoom it appears that when you run a DiCentra competition some screens may not be shown to participants, although they will be shown on the DiCentra screen of the projectionist. The screens affected are the image details, the held back (popup) thumbnails, the lightbox and the scoreboard. To rectify this do the following:

1. When the projectionist first opens the Zoom application, the **Settings** gearwheel icon will be seen at the top right. **Click** on it.
2. Select **Share Screen** from the left hand menu and under **Share Applications** select **Share all windows from an application**.
3. Close the **Settings** window.
4. The projectionist can now start a previously scheduled meeting or create a new meeting in the usual way.

This setting should now persist for future meetings.

Sharing in Zoom

Zoom allows you to share your computer's screen(s) or the window(s) that are currently open for applications such as DiCentra. If you choose to share an application's window, Zoom will sometimes/often show a warning message that the application window has closed, and sharing has stopped if you start running a competition while sharing DiCentra's main window. The competition may appear to be running, but the window will not be shared with other participants (no green line around the window and sharing menu at the top).

Thus, it is best to share Zoom's "Screen" on a single screen machine or "Screen 1" or "Screen 2", whichever is the DiCentra projector screen, on a dual-screen machine. This should allow you greatest flexibility about how you start competitions in DiCentra and should not give "application closed" warnings when you exit a competition or a sub-window such as the lightbox or scoresheet in a competition.

The prescriptions below are ones which I find most reliable.

The Projectionist's View

Single Screen Machine: Let us assume that you, the projectionist, have scheduled the Zoom meeting on your machine with only one screen.

1. It is not essential, but before starting Zoom it is best to start DiCentra and use **Competition > RUN COMPETITION** to start the (first) competition.
2. The DiCentra competition will now cover the whole screen. To start Zoom, press the **Windows key on the keyboard** which will bring up the Windows Taskbar.
3. Type **Zoom** into the **Taskbar Search box** to start Zoom, and its management screen will appear in front of the DiCentra competition title page.
4. Start the Zoom meeting in the usual way.
5. If DiCentra is not running the competition yet, **start DiCentra, select the competition and Competitions > RUN COMPETITION**. If the competition window hides the Zoom window, press the **Windows key on the keyboard** and **click on the Zoom icon** on the taskbar to bring the Zoom window to the front.
6. **Move the cursor** over the Zoom window to bring up the **Zoom command bar** at the bottom and click on **Share Screen**.
7. Several thumbnails will appear. The first one will be labelled **Screen**. You will also see a thumbnail labelled **Competition**.
8. Do not select the competition thumbnail but select the **Screen** thumbnail instead and click on the **Share** button. Selecting **Screen** ensures that anything displayed on that screen, such as the lightbox or scoresheet will be seen by the other participants.
9. If the Zoom window is in front of the DiCentra competition window at any time, just click on any exposed part of the competition window to see the full image and to ensure keyboard characters for marking etc. are handled by DiCentra.
Note: Even though Zoom shares the competition window it does not always switch keyboard input to DiCentra. Just **click on the competition window** to fix this.
10. Once the competition has finished, use the red **Stop Share** button at the top of the screen to hide the screen from the audience, and select another competition to be judged if necessary.

Two (or more) Screen Machine: The steps above apply with slight variations. There are two options:

1. Use **Edit > Configure Screens** in DiCentra to set the DiCentra's Projector and Desktop screens to be **the same physical screen**.
 - a. In versions 4.14.387 and above DiCentra will not hide/blank the other screen(s).
 - b. This allows you to put the Zoom and DiCentra windows on different screens if you want.
2. Use **Edit > Configure Screens** in DiCentra to set the DiCentra's Projector and Desktop screens to be **on different physical screens**.
 - a. By default, in this mode DiCentra will blank the desktop screen with grey or a colour of your choice (**Edit > Preferences > Dual Screen**).
 - b. In DiCentra version 4.14.387 and above you can choose not to blank the desktop screen using the **Edit > Preferences > Dual Screen** page.
 - c. In this mode the Navigator and various dialogue boxes will only appear on the projectionist's desktop screen and will not be seen by the audience.

Here is a step-by-step guide for case 2.

1. It is not essential, but before starting Zoom it is best to start DiCentra and use **Competition > RUN COMPETITION** to start the (first) competition.
2. The DiCentra competition will now cover the whole of one screen (let us assume it is screen 2) and it will blank the other screen unless blanking is turned off (2b above).
3. To start Zoom, press the **Windows key on the keyboard** which will bring up the Windows Taskbar.
4. Type **Zoom** into the **Taskbar Search box** to start Zoom, and its management screen will appear on one of the screens in front of DiCentra's competition.
5. Start the Zoom meeting in the usual way.
6. If DiCentra is not running the competition yet, **start DiCentra, select the competition and Competitions > RUN COMPETITION**. If the competition window hides the Zoom window, press the **Windows key on the keyboard** and **click on the Zoom icon** on the taskbar to bring the Zoom window to the front.
7. **Move the cursor** over the Zoom window to bring up the **Zoom command bar** at the bottom and click on **Share Screen**.
8. Several thumbnails will appear. The first one will be labelled **Screen 1**, the second **Screen 2** etc. You will also see a thumbnail labelled **Competition**.
9. Do not select the competition thumbnail but select the **Screen** thumbnail that shows the **competition's title page** instead and click on the **Share** button. Selecting **Screen <N>** ensures that anything displayed on that screen, such as the lightbox or scoresheet will be seen by the other participants.
10. If the Zoom window is in front of the DiCentra competition window at any time just click on any exposed part of the competition window to see the full image and to ensure keyboard characters for marking etc. are handled by DiCentra.

Note: Even though Zoom shares the competition window it does not always switch keyboard input to DiCentra, just **click on the competition window** to fix this.
11. Once the competition has finished, use the red **Stop Share** button at the top of the screen to hide the screen from the audience, and select another competition to be judged if necessary.

The Audience View

Scaling: Sharing DiCentra's competition screen with the audience means that the whole screen is scaled to fit each of the participant's screens. It will fill as much of each participant's screen as possible, but if their screen has a different aspect ratio to the projectionist's the competition screen will be padded with black top and bottom or left and right to centre it.

Participants see the whole image without clipping or distortion. However, images may have been scaled so they may appear softer than if they were projected.

Colour management: DiCentra's colour management works as normal for the projectionist's competition screen if it has been profiled and the profile is selected in DiCentra before the competition is run.

However, the view seen by the other participants will not be completely colour accurate. Probably the best that can be done is that participants be encouraged to calibrate and profile their monitors and set the profile as the default for their screen.

Judging and Pre-Judging

The two points above could affect the judge's assessment of an image if they are judging "on the night". (It is unlikely to be acceptable for the judge to act as the projectionist other than in exceptional cases.)

A good alternative is to let the judge pre-judge the images and then announce the scores on the night. To extract images and the blank scoresheet for the judge:

1. Create an empty folder on the desktop called 'Temp for Judge'.
2. Once the competition has been made, use **Competition > Extract Images ...** and rename images to contain just the **Image Number** and **Title**, then **Extract**.
3. Save the output when prompted to the folder 'Temp for Judge'.
4. This will contain three folders. Rename the one called **Images** as '**Comp XXX For Judge**' and move it to the desktop. The 'Temp for Judge' folder can now be deleted.
5. In DiCentra, **File > Reports > Printable Reports** and select **Blank Scoresheet**. Select **For Judge** and click on **Save As ...** and save it as '**Competition XXX Scoresheet**'.
6. Send the scoresheet and the competition images to the judge and remind them that they should assess the images on a profiled and colour managed monitor using an application such as Adobe Bridge or Lightroom.

Other Points

Reducing Image Size: I have been asked if it is possible to show images slightly smaller than full screen in DiCentra. This would be to avoid the "End Share" button at the top or thumbnails at the side. There are two ways to do this:

1. Get the projectionist to use a larger monitor. For example, for 1400 x 1050 px images, if a 1920 x 1200 px or 1600 x 1200 px monitor is used there will be a 75 px unused border top and bottom and 260 or 100 px border to the left and right respectively.
2. Set a smaller image size in the DiCentra rules before loading and making the competition. If you want pixel dimensions other than those listed in the drop-down list in the Rules dialogue, just type them in.

Recording: Before the Zoom era, I was occasionally asked if it would be possible to add audio recording to DiCentra so that judge's comments can be heard by club members unable to attend. With Zoom you can. You can produce video and audio or audio-only recordings, although the files might be large for a 1- or 2-hour meeting.

You can turn on recording before sharing the DiCentra competition screen using the Zoom command bar which appears when you move the cursor over the Zoom window. You can also start it after the Competition screen is shared, by **hovering over the green "ID" bar** at the top of the shared screen. Select **More (three dots)** on the menu that appears and click **Record**. That same menu can be used to pause recording.

When the meeting finishes, Zoom converts the recording(s) and puts them in your **Documents\Zoom** folder.

Caveat

I have not used DiCentra and Zoom for other than evaluation purposes with up to 3 participants. If you notice any errors or have issues or observations not covered here, please let me know so that this FAQ can be improved.

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