VE CAM
THE STORY BEHIND THE PRODUCT
(TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO INTERVIEW)

Following the recent successful launch of VE Cam we caught up with Graham Mercer, Design & Development Director to discover the story behind the product.

Q: What initially prompted you to create VE Cam?

A: Our customers like the range of digital inspection products that we have today, but occasionally they appear expensive. And when the global pandemic hit it put a lot more pressure on budgets so we've responded by creating a feature-rich product at an affordable price.

Q: What were the key design criteria you worked to and what were you looking to improve compared to other products that are out there?

A: Well firstly to produce a fully integrated system that was easy to use. When I say fully integrated I mean including the lighting and all the other accessories. There are a lot of other systems out there on the market already but they're definitely not integrated in the way that the VE Cam is.

At the same time we wanted to use digital solutions in place of more expensive optical alternatives. This allowed us to reduce the cost price whilst maintaining excellent high quality images.

We also wanted to provide a wide field of view which is controlled by a touch screen or mouse or other device.

In addition we wanted to offer image capture in the form of still images or screen sharing over Wi-Fi. This is is a novel feature that's not available with other systems that are already on the market.

Q: Apart from budget considerations, what other problems were you trying to solve for customers?

A: I think workspace is one of the most important. Workspace is at a premium for many of our customers. So a product where the footprint was very small and where the display could mount on top rather than taking up desk space was important. This system doesn't

require a PC and monitor desk space, so that helps to answer that problem.

We focused on creating an intuitive system that's very easy to operate for any user. Something with very limited training requirements and something that's user programmable. So VE Cam can be programmed to the specific needs of each application to increase efficiencies.

Q: Can you give us an idea of the sectors and applications that this is suitable for?

A: Well we tried to make it as versatile as we possibly could so that it would allow it to be used across a very very broad range of applications and environments. So the answer that is probably 'everywhere'.

Q: Given that there is a wide range of potential users for this new product, how did you ensure it would work for different applications and in different environments?

A: Well starting with the stands and the illumination, we've got a broad range of those available so that allows it to adapt for different usage.

Adaptability was a key part of the design so the users can interface however they wish with the system. For example users that are familiar with mobile devices tablets phones etc. they can use touch screen controls. Whilst users who prefer PC type interface can use a mouse and keypad. We've even considered users who need both hands to manipulate the subjects, and provide a foot pedal option to control the system.

Q: Do you have any tips and tricks you would like to share?

A: Well if you need to discuss a feature you can see in the image with a colleague, there's a facility for screen capture or Wi-Fi screen sharing that's also really useful.

Additional magnification is available, using the magnification window which can be positioned anywhere on the image and provide localised magnification of the features you want to look at. Also without moving the subject (which is an important point) you can position the image and zoom in and out on any area of the large field of view by just simply sweeping your fingers over the display.

About Graham Mercer

As an innovative Opto-Mechanical Engineer with over 40 years' experience in optics, design and manufacturing Graham has an unrivalled, far-reaching understanding of ergonomic microscopy and 3D visualisation.

He has overall responsibility for the design and development of Vision Engineering's wide range of products and is a driving force in our commitment to continued innovation. This has seen Graham being named inventor of multiple international patents during his career with Vision Engineering.