



## Crews Control: Where “Shots” Are Heard [of] Around the World

Whether it’s in the back roads of New Zealand shooting a television show or inside a Chicago conference room taping a corporate video, Crews Control’s seasoned cadre of camera people not only provide the world’s best shots to clients near and far, they often supply the most innovative shots.

Seattle-based T.J. Williams, who has been with Crews Control for nearly ten years, has what some might call a primal instinct for developing new methods for getting the great shots.

When booked by Crews Control to shoot - motorcycles, bicycles, runners and automobiles in motion – T.J. designed a “T.J.”-made vehicle mount for his Steadicam.

Welded from steel and equipped with a racing car seat and lap belt, the mount fits into any van or SUV. It fits into the 2" trailer hitch receiver – the mount, built from two inch square steel tube is attached with the normal thru rod like any trailer hitch. In addition, on the truck’s hitch receiver, there is a tightening bolt which keeps it from making any slop movement in the trailer hitch receiver.

The Steadicam, system combines the stability of tripod mounting with the smooth motion of a dolly, and allows the flexibility of a hand-held camera when it is mounted to the operator.

The vehicle mount takes advantage of the Steadicam’s stabilization but hard mounts the camera to the vehicle so that it can be safely used. This crew-designed vehicle mount allows T.J.’s Steadicam and SUV truck to get many shots which would otherwise demand a very expensive camera car.

His spirit of innovation didn’t stop at a vehicle mount. When our clients needed stabilized aerial shots, and budgets were too lean to allow expensive. Wescam or Tyler type systems, T.J. invented his own aerial mount.

“The aerial mount is much smaller than the vehicle mount and hangs from a loop of elastic bungee cord fixed to the upper, outer end of the inverted L shaped frame. The frame is adjustable for height and extension. The long end of the L frame tube sticks straight up beside the operator’s hip and the top arm of the L is horizontal, crossing, just above the his eye level,” said T.J.

He went on to explain that the aerial mount and camera hangs suspended just above the

operators lap. The bungee prevents vibration of the helicopter from being transmitted to the mount. The Aerial mount itself, is adjustable and pivots at the center of mass of the

on-board camera. The mount uses several Gyros made by KEM, to provide the stabilizing influence. The aerial mount works better with smaller cameras or larger gyros, since the total weight is less as a proportion of the gyro weight, which allows the gyros to exert a greater stabilizing influence.

This mount is not bolted to the helicopter, it is held in place by the operator's weight and hands. As freight it doesn't require the expensive FAA approval process. For safety it is strapped to the seat belt mounting brackets.

"It is so small it can fit in small helicopters or fixed wing aircraft," said T.J. "We have shot both air to ground and air to air video with the mount.

"The most technically challenging shoot to date was out of a sky diving airplane shooting a Lear jet. Our plane was going as fast as it could go and the Lear was going as slowly as it could go – it was quite a challenge for the pilots."

"The most beautiful footage we've shot was atop the "Remarkable" mountain range in New Zealand. We landed the helicopter on the glacier, dropped the producer on the very top of a glaciated mountain and circled him as he stood on the summit."

On the ground, on the run or in the air, Crews Control's globetrotting team are more than just camera people, they are problem-solving innovators.