



Organizing EUVL Conferences in the Era of COVID-19

Final Agenda for the 2020 EUVL Workshop is now online at www.euvlitho.com.

Vivek Bakshi, EUV Litho, Inc., May 15, 2020

This is indeed a new world, especially for activities that will involve large group of people getting together like conferences. In this blog, I will tell you about my experience in moving conferences of EUV Litho, Inc. to online. I also will briefly describe the highlights of the agenda for the upcoming EUVL Workshop, with technology leaders giving the keynote talks.

Dawn of COVID-19 Era and Move to Online

I first heard about the seriousness of COVID-19 while I was already at the SPIE-AL conference in San Jose, CA in late February. Except for a couple of people who did not want to shake hands and some changes of speakers, everything else was as usual. After returning to Austin at the end of February, it was no longer a casual matter. I did my last in-person grocery shopping around March 10th and have been practicing “social distancing” since then. Austin has been in “shelter in place” mode, schools are closed for the year (kids are at home) and my family has become an Instacart customer.

A few days after starting the “quarantine,” I asked myself what I was going to do about my in-person workshop that’s supposed to be held in Berkeley in June. No one could tell me when and if things would get better. It was clear that people getting together in a large group was not happening at least through summer, or maybe even this year. If so, I could move the workshop online — but would it offer the same value, and would people come? So I decided to investigate moving my conference to Zoom and find out for myself.

I had used Zoom before to teach a small group of about 30 people, but I was not hosting that event myself. So, I decided to have a “trial” run by organizing an EUVL Webinar. In about two weeks, I was able to pull together an agenda with six technology leaders from (the U.S., Europe, Korea, and Japan). I wanted it to be a global conference to show that we all still can come together in these difficult times. I expected 20-30 people to attend, but over 110 people registered and showed up. The biggest thing for me was that more than 50 people from Korea, Japan and Singapore joined the conference at midnight their time. I realized from this response that our virtual conference was something of value to the community. Of course, I had some technical difficulties during the conference. I had never seen those problems before, but since then I have learned to manage them, and I now have had a sharp learning curve. Last week I organized another webinar for a client with 113 people from around the world, and it all went fine. One of my colleagues pointed out that even during in-person meetings, AV issues always pop up — so expect even more in the online version, as this is newer technology. We will just need to work through it.

It also made me look more carefully at the value EUV Litho, Inc. workshops offer to the community. The main advantages are that papers are mostly invited, and so are carefully “curated” to bring the EUVL community the latest on EUVL R&D in a more intimate setting; and proceedings are offered at no cost to the broader community after the workshop. From continued growth and support of EUV Litho workshops over the last 12 years, I am confident they are valuable to the community.



2020 EUVL Workshop Goes Online

So, we now have announced the workshop agenda for the online workshop. This year's online EUVL Workshop is co-organized with EUV-IUCC (a new EUVL consortium in Korea - <https://euv-iucc.org/>) and CXRO (<http://www.cxro.lbl.gov/>). We expect a global audience at this live conference, so we have AM and PM sessions to accommodate people in Europe, the U.S., and Asia.

This year we have ~ 50 papers with keynotes from ASML, Intel, LAM, IMEC and LBL. We also have a new EUVL Short course, offered online for the first time. Cost of this year's online workshop is less than one third of previous gatherings, and without travel and related expenses, plus most of us homebound, I expect many more people from a lot more companies will be able to attend the workshop than in previous years.

We will cover the latest research on Infrastructure Readiness, High NA, Patterning, Resist, Mask, and Sources. We will also have a special CXRO EUVL Program Showcase session (Co-chaired by Patrick Naulleau and Isvar Cordova), with a dozen papers on their recent lab results.

I expect the present situation to be a win-win for everyone. Not only can people join the meeting while homebound, more can join at smaller expense to their company. I am happy that EUVL development continues and we can bring together the EUVL community in these times of travel restrictions. I wish everyone well! Please visit www.euvlitho.com for the final agenda, registration, and sponsorship information!