

"A WORD ABOUT FORMAT"

SFX:

Sound effects should be called out and right justified -
make sound effects and visual effects easy to spot

FADE IN:

Transition effects (FADE IN / CUT TO) are used sparingly.
This editor's job - not the writer's.

- 1 EACH LOCATION GETS A SCENE NUMBER.
- 2 INTERIOR. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Description of specific action goes below the scene number
and can be a sub-point if you like. It is upper/lower case.
Describe the action (your job) but not the camera angle
(Director's job).

DO THIS: Angle on woman's work-worn hands as she fidgets
with Kleenex.

NOT A SPECIFIC SHOT LIKE THIS: CLOSE-UP OF THE WOMAN'S HANDS
HOLDING KLEENEX FROM THE BELT BUCKLE P.O.V.

Any words or text to be character-generated onto the screen
should be called out and put in quotes like this:

TITLE: "A DAY AT THE FARM"

Subtitle: "Milking comes early"

CHRIS JONES (V.O.)

The voice-over narrator and characters
may go in the center of the page.

Most actors prefer the use of upper/lower case. USING ALL
UPPER CASE IS A HOLD-OVER FROM 1950S NEWS PROGRAMMING DAYS
AND IS HARD TO READ.

NARRATOR:

Most scriptwriters use the screenplay
format (available as software) or a
modified screenplay format in which
the voice over goes in the right 1/3
of the page.

CHRIS JONES (V.O.)

The software program I've used is
"Movie Magic Screenwriter"
(formerly ScriptThing)
Screenwriter has a nifty option for
writing interactive programs. Scripts
in a screenplay format can also be
written quite easily with a word
processing program. Word is a clumsy
solution, but you can make it work.

AND ANOTHER THING

Interview subject - tape 3, sound bite @ 3;22;15. On-camera.

INTERVIEW SUBJECT:

Editors really like it if you can
put the time code for your sound
bites right into the script, but
sometimes that isn't possible.

(or is included as
part of the editing
budget - not the
writing budget)

Most often, I give the editor a rough
time code [Answer starts at 3;20;00]
or a rough idea of where they can
find the sound bite [Sound bite is
part of the answer to the fourth
question]. Give the editor a place
to start. They like that.

3 SEQUENCE.

When there is a program that is heavily graphic in nature,
or one which uses a single location for the entire program,
then the scene numbers can be used to separate different
concepts or sections. Example:

4 "INTRODUCTION"

5 "WHY PLAN FOR RETIREMENT"

6 "BENEFITS PACKAGE"

7 WORD ABOUT TIMING -- MOMENTS LATER

When I use the screenplay format, I can usually plan on my script pages being about :50 in edit run-time. It may take longer to read the page carefully than to actually watch it after it has been shot and edited. Using the screenplay format helps me advise the client if their program is going to be too long (quite often) or too short (hardly ever happens).

EFFECT: FIREWORKS

AUDIO: TRUMPETS BLAST

8 CONCLUSION.

The words scroll across the screen and off into the distant star-studded future.

DONNA MATRAZO:

A script is not narration. A script
is "the complex and artful integration
of visuals, non-verbal messages,
music, sounds and spoken words."

Herring falls from the ceiling. The cops are called.

FADE TO BLACK