

WORKFLOW WORKSHEET

It's important to understand the technical parameters of your workflow from start to finish before you go into production. Understanding your particular workflow usually involves three areas of research:

- 1) Discuss your production formats with your principal crew and ideally have them all communicate with one another as well.
 - Cinematographer (shooting format, frame rate and resolution)
 - Sound Mixer (audio recording format, frame rate and sampling rate)
 - Editor (edit format and frame rates, audio formats and sampling rates, mastering format (s), and distribution format (s)).
 - Sound Designer and Composer (audio formats, frame rates and ancillary SFX or music or music recording formats)
- 2) Find people who have produced films with similar workflows and seek their advice. You can learn a lot from the experiences, mistakes and hard won information of those who have blazed the format trails before you.
- 3) Talk to your lab. If your film requires any lab work at all – whether it involves transferring film, or color grading, or creating program masters, or creating distribution masters, or any combination of these – you should discuss your *complete* workflow with them (from start to finish). Lab work is usually the most costly step for an independent filmmaker so you want to deliver precisely the audio and video materials that the lab needs to do their work.

Also remember, the *complete* discussion about workflow needs to happen during preproduction. Many of your postproduction and distribution decisions can have an impact during the production phase. For example, distribution choices can have a significant effect on technical choices for shooting such as composition and frame rates. Also, many lab processes can have an impact on how a DP might choose to light and expose a scene (a common practice, for instance, involves purposely underexposing video if it will be transferred to film as a distribution format).

WORKFLOW QUESTIONNAIRE

Here are a few pertinent questions to get you started on outlining your project workflow.

IMAGE AND AUDIO GATHERING:

- 1) What is your principal shooting format? (i.e. film, HD video (720p, 1080i), uncompressed or RAW video (2K, 4K)?
- 2) If you are shooting on celluloid, what will your transfer format be?

- 3) What is your shooting frame rate (frames per second)?
- 4) Are you using a secondary format? If so, what is it?
- 5) Are you importing ancillary footage or graphics from another format? If so, what are those formats?
- 6) What are your sync sound / field audio settings (format, fps, sampling rate, bit depth)?
- 7) Are you importing or using other audio like sound effects or pre-recorded music? If so, what are those formats?

POSTPRODUCTION:

- 1) What video settings will you be using to edit (format, codecs, frame rate, resolution)?
- 2) What audio settings will you be using to edit (format, frame rate, sampling rate)?
- 3) Does your editing software recognize and work with your shooting format?
- 4) If your footage needs transcoding so that you can work with it in your editing system, can your editing software accomplish this?
- 5) If your editing software cannot transcode your original footage, is there third-party software that can accomplish this?
- 6) Is there any loss of quality caused by transcoding your footage?

MASTERING AND FINISHING:

- 1) What are the audio formats required by your postproduction sound mixer?
- 2) Does your project require professional color grading? If so, what formats does your facility need?
- 3) How do you want to finish and master the project (film, HD video (720p, 1080i), uncompressed media files, (2K, 4K))?

- 4) How do you want to exhibit and distribute the project (Broadcast HD format (720p, 1080i), Blu-ray, DVD, web, or a combination)?
- 5) Do you intend to distribute your film for D-Cinema theatrical projection? If so, what files and formats does your facility prefer to work with?

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