

Lesson Plan

Shooting a Nat Sound Package

Project Summary

Nat sound packages are popular because they remove the narrator/voiceover and helps make the viewer feel like the story is more authentic and that they are *there*. The challenge, however, is that a good nat sound package *must be clear*. Video storytelling needs to inform and engage. Great sound and video may be entertaining – but if the viewer is confused, then the package fails. The challenge is two-fold: Get enough engaging video and audio *and* provide the necessary information.

- Total Lesson Time - 10 Hours
- Standards: STN B1.1, B1.2, B1.3, B1.4, B1.5, B2.1, B2.2, B3.1, B3.2, B3.3, B3.4, B3.5, B4.1, B4.2, B4.3, B4.4, B4.5
- Subject/Pathway/Industry
 - A/V Technology & Film Career Pathway (CTE)
 - Broadcast Journalism

Project Outline

ESTABLISHING SHOTS

An establishing shot is always important – it allows the viewer to see where we are and what the general situation is. It is all the more critical in a nat sound package. Every time you move to a new location think establishing shot. Wide shots, right? You should get them anyway. But you REALLY need them because your visuals need to provide as much clarity and information as possible. Say the story is at a park. Get an establishing shot outside of a park. But then you move to two different locations inside the park... one on the water, and one at a campsite. You want establishing shots for those locations as well.

THE FIVE Ws AND THE H

There's no narration, so you need to get people to provide information the reporter usually gives: who, what, where, when, why and how.

At the start of any interview – no matter how brief – ask them “Could you introduce yourself? Who are you and why are you here?”

Questions:

1. Could you tell me where we are and what’s going on?
2. Who is here and why are they here?
3. Describe to me what’s happening (or what is about to happen).
4. How are things going to happen? When?
5. What are you doing now?
6. What are you going to do next?
7. Tell me why you think this is important.
8. What are you thinking right now?

SHOW AND TELL INTERVIEWS

While a formal interview is always valuable, especially for information you need, consider “show and tell” interviews. Particularly in nat sound packages, which tend to be very visual, there’s a lot going on. Get a wireless on a person you want to talk to –and then capture b-roll of them doing what they do. You can ask them, “Show me what you’re doing,” or “could you explain what you’re doing here?” and they will then show and tell. Then, at the right time, throw out other questions. Don’t stop them and say, “Let’s do the interview, now.” Just talk to them. They’re more likely to talk to you in a natural way.

VISUALS

Any time someone in an interview mentions what or who – you should try to get video to match. Basically, you need video for the first 3 questions listed above.

NAT SOUND

You need the microphone close to the action, whether it’s a wireless, boom or camera mic. And think about the edit – without narration to help change the topic or transition to a new part of the story, you need a nat sound break, volume up full for a few seconds, to help create those transitions. A nat sound break up full is like punctuation: it’s either a comma (short pause), semicolon (longer pause), period or an exclamation point (even longer). It can be used to help establish a new scene or can be used after a particularly funny, engaging, or

emotional soundbite. This allows the viewer a moment to reflect on what she or he just heard.

Resources & Equipment

1. Camera
2. Tripod
3. Light kit (if available)
4. Handheld mic, boom mic and/or lavalier mics
5. Headphones
6. Nat sound packages examples:
 - “5,000 Kids To Get Free Bikes This Weekend”
 - “Water Rescue Drill”

Industry Testimony

“A meaningful 2-second nat sot moment from someone special can say more than 30 seconds of track.”

- Dave Wertheimer, Award-winning Photojournalist and Trainer

Assessment

1. Were there appropriate establishing shots?
2. Did the crew ask people the 5 Ws and H?
3. Did the crew capture anyone doing “show and tell?”
4. Was the microphone choice appropriate to capture the audio?
5. Did the story make sense or was there any confusion due to lack of information? If there was something unclear, what question needed to be asked or piece of video captured to provide clarity?

Contact

Shared by Ken Stone

Email: kenstone.media@gmail.com