

Television Production Glossary

Compiled 2002 by Joel Johnson

For educational use only.

¼" audio-plug

—Popular audio connectors and cables. Typically these are used to plug into non-portable devices like home stereo equipment.

¾" tape (U-matic)

—U-matic tape is a three-quarter inch format. It is fairly heavy-duty. A U-matic recorder can record video, time code, and two tracks of FM-radio quality audio. U-matic offers 350-400 lines resolution, but the quality tends to degrade quickly since it does not support separated recording. Time code can be on a separate track or VITC.

16:9

—The aspect ratio of wide-screen-format television.

2D (Two-dimensional)

—All television is by its nature 2-dimensional (the viewers' screens are flat), but the use of lighting, blocking and effects help to achieve a three dimensional look.

3 CCD

—This is a term used to describe a camera with three (as opposed to one) Charged Coupled Devices.

3D (three-dimensional)

—The world around us has 3 dimensions width, height, and depth. On a flat screen lighting, blocking and effects (e.g. spinning 3D animations).

3-pin XLR

—(Ground-Left-Right) Three-pin plug for three-conductor "balanced" audio cable, employed with high-quality microphones, mixers and other audio equipment.

4:3

—Aspect ratio of the NTSC television standard.

8mm

—A compact videocassette format that uses magnetic tape and is eight millimeters wide. 8mm is a world-wide standard and offers high-quality recording and playback of video and audio.

A/B-roll linear editing

—Recording edits from two video sources, such as two VCRs to a third, to achieve transition effects. See also, B-roll

Abekas A42 Still Store

—The Abekas A42 is a still store from Abekas.

Abekas A72 Character Generator

—The Abekas A72 is a character generator from Abekas.

Action axis

—The action axis is an imaginary line drawn between two subjects or along a line of motion as an aid in maintaining continuity of screen direction. It is sometimes referred to as the "180-degree rule."

Active tense

—Broadcasters usually write in active tense, rather than passive. Active tense sentences are shorter and use words more efficiently, and their meaning is more apparent. Avoid prepositional phrases. When possible use possessives in their place (e.g. Mrs. Johnson plans to open a dress shop instead of Mrs. Johnson plans to open up a shop of dresses).

After Effects

—Software originally created by COSA, since bought and developed by Adobe. More advanced than Premiere, it allows you to create layers (as in Photoshop) and animate with pixel precision any effect over time by use of key frames on a timeline; it can work with most all of the Photoshop & Kai filters.

Alpha channel

—The fourth channel of a 32-bit RGB image that creates transparency in the image. The other three channels are red, green, and blue.

Analog

—Information stored or transmitted as a continuously variable signal (as opposed to digital, in which the analogue signal is represented as a series of discrete values). Analogue is often technically the more accurate representation of the original signal, but digital systems have numerous advantages which have tended to make them more popular.

Anchor

—The anchor is typically the lead news personality. Some formats use two anchors holding equal status.

Animation

—The recording of a sequence of still artwork or objects in a way that makes them appear to move on film or video. 24 fps is considered the appropriate speed for animation.

Anti-aliasing

—Anti-aliasing is the manipulation of edges (e.g., those between areas with contrasting colors) in an image, graphic, or text to make the edges appear smoother. Anti-aliased edges appear blurred up close but smooth at normal viewing distance. Anti-aliasing is important when working with high-quality graphics for television use. Contrast with aliasing.



Aperture

—Aperture literally means "opening". The camera iris; the opening which lets light through the lens. By adjusting the size of the aperture, the amount of incoming light is controlled. The aperture size is measured in f-stops.

A-roll

—Unwanted visual distortions that appear in a video image, such as cross-color artifacts, cross-luminance artifacts, jitter, blocking, ghosts, etc.

Aspect ratio

—The ratio of width to height of an image. Can be expressed as a number, or a relationship between two numbers. For example, the standard television screen ratio is 4:3 (4 units wide by 3 units high) or 1.33 (the width is 1.33 times the height). The new "wide screen" television ratio is 16:9 (1.78), and many new video cameras have the option to record using this format. Theatrical film aspect ratios vary, but the most common is 18.5:10 (1.85).

Assemble edit

—Adding material that has a different signal to the end of a pre-recorded section of a video tape. Adding an assemble edit to the middle of an existing segment causes an abrupt and undesirable change in the sync of the video signal. Contrast with insert edit.

Assistant Director (AKA, AD)

—The AD is the first Assistant Director, 1st Assistant Director. An assistant director's duties include tracking the progress of filming versus the production schedule.

Assistant Producer (AKA, AP)

—The AP shares responsibility for stories and business of the production.

A-to-D converter

—An electronic device that converts analog signals to digital. An A-to-D converter is an integral part of digital-video-related technology.

ATSC

—Advanced Television Systems. Committee formed to establish technical standards HDTV and other U.S. digital television systems.

Audio

—Sound. Specifically, the range of frequencies which are perceptible by the human ear.

Audio board (audio effects board)

—Similar to a switcher, an audio effects board is the primary router and mixer for source audio, and for adjusting, mixing, and filtering audio. Usually, a digital audio workstation is used to perform more complex audio work.

Audio Engineer

—An audio engineer who performs the sound mix.

Auto-focus

—Camera feature that uses an infrared (IR) beam or sonar to set its focus.

Auto-iris (auto-exposure)

—Circuitry that monitors light levels and adjusts camcorder iris accordingly, compensating for changing light conditions.

Auto trans

—Auto trans is the mix key on the RVS 630 Video switcher.

AV

—Short for audio/video.

AVI

—"Audio Video Interleaved". A common digital video format, in which the audio is interleaved as "packets", into the video frames.

Avid

—Manufacturer of a popular non-linear editing system. Often used to refer to the system itself, as "AVID editor".

Back focus

—The focus between the lens and the camera. Adjusted by a ring at the rear of the lens (the closest ring to the camera body). If the camera appears focused when zoomed in, but becomes out of focus when zoomed wide, the back focus needs adjusting.

Back light

—A light which is positioned behind the subject. It's primary purpose is to make the subject stand out from the background by highlighting the subject's outline.

Balanced Audio

—An audio signal which consists of two "hot" signals plus the shield. The hot signals are 180 degrees out of phase with each other as they travel along the balanced cable. They are placed back in phase when entering an audio device - this has the effect of placing any unwanted interference out of phase, thus eliminating it.

Bandwidth

—A bandwidth is a range of frequencies. AM, FM, UHF, VHF, and 2.4GHz are all frequencies. Bandwidth is also a term used to describe available space on a network. The amount of data that can be passed through the wires that connect us to the Internet. Because our phone lines have low-capacity bandwidth, web video is still at a primitive stage. As ADSL lines and cable modems become more widespread, so will web video and tele-conferencing.

Balanced composition

—Compositional balance is achieved when objects in the frame hold an appropriate amount of space. Objects in frame can be appropriately balanced using either aesthetic or message driven needs.

Barn Doors

—Metal projections attached to the front of a light, which can be positioned in various ways to control the dispersal of the light.

Batch capture

—The automated process of capturing groups of media clips.

Betacam

—A tape format and transportable combination camera and recording (camcorder) system developed by Sony and introduced in 1982. Betacam uses a variation of the Y, R-Y, B-Y analog component format.

Betacam SP

—An improved version of Betacam. Introduced by Sony in 1987, Betacam SP features superior picture quality and signal to noise ratio, a metal particle tape, and increased bandwidth.

Bit

— **Binary digit.** One piece of binary (digital) information. A description of one of two possible states (e.g. 0 or 1; off or on).

Black (blackburst)

—Blacking a tape records an image with no luminance (or black) or sound, but containing the timecode. Blacking tapes prepares them for later use in editing.

Black balance

—A camera function which gives a reference to true black. When auto-black balance is activated (by a switch, positioned with the white balance switch), the iris is automatically shut, and the camera adjusts itself to absolute black.

Black level

—Voltage in a video signal which corresponds to black.

Blanking level

—Blanking Level is also known as the pedestal, it is the voltage level produced at the end of each horizontal picture line which separates the portion of the video signal containing the picture information from the portion containing the synchronizing information. This voltage makes the electron beam "invisible" as it moves to draw the next visible line.

Bleeding

—Video image imperfection characterized by blurring of color borders; colors spill over defined boundaries, "run" into neighboring areas.

Block

—Programming is divided into blocks or areas between the breaks. A typical half-hour program would have 4 blocks.

Blocking

—The working out of the physical movements of the scene.

Blue screen

—A bright blue background used for chroma-keying. Weathermen everywhere do a nightly weathercast in front of a blue screen (green screens are also used).

BNC cable

—(bayonet fitting connector) Durable "professional" cable connector, attaches to VCRs for transfer of high-frequency composite video in/out signals. Connects with a push and a twist.

Bridge

—A joining element in a production. In news production a bridge is like a stand-up that is used in the middle (rather than the end) of a piece.

Brightness

—(1) The intensity of a color as determined on a scale from black (no brightness) to white (maximum brightness). The combination of brightness, hue, and saturation determines the appearance of the colors of a polychromatic image, whereas the brightness alone determines the appearance of a monochromatic image's color. (2) The luminance of a video signal. (3) The brightness of a monitor or video projector measured in lumens.

Broadcast quality

—A quality standard for composite video signals set by the NTSC and conforming to FCC rules. If you plan to record video signal or videotape for broadcast, it is important to note that devices providing NTSC signals do not necessarily meet FCC broadcast standards.

B-roll

—cuts of raw footage offered to the news media for their use in stories. Video that would be difficult for an urban news station to shoot on short notice—sea turtles, alpine clear cuts, spawning salmon—makes for valuable b-roll. The term "b-roll" is also used to refer to "cover video," meaning everything except for interviews.

Bump

—A piece of animation that is used either before or after a commercial break. It's called a bump-out leaving the show, and a bump-back upon returning.

Bus

—Pathway which a signal passes along. For example, the main output of an audio mixer is referred to as the master bus.

Byte

—A group of eight binary (digital) bits.

Cable/community access

—Channel(s) of a local cable television system dedicated to community-based programming. Access centers provide free or low-cost training and use of video production equipment and facilities.

Call to action

—Call to action is a term for the copy in an ad that implores the viewer to do something specific in response to an advertisement.

Camcorder

—A video camera with an attached recording device (deck).

Cameo lighting

—The type of lighting that will only accentuate a specific performer and a few objects in the immediate background. For the most part, all other portions of the set are blackened.

Camera card

—White type on a black background; either laid to tape or an actual piece of artwork mounted on a card.

Camera Operator (AKA: Cameraman)

—The person who operates the camera to the specifications dictated by the production. A director or a director of photography sometimes may assume the role of camera direction in a production.

Capturing

—Refers to capturing source video for use on a computer. If analog, the captured video is converted to digital.

Cardioid

—Cardioid is the term used to describe a microphone that picks up sounds in a heart shaped pattern.

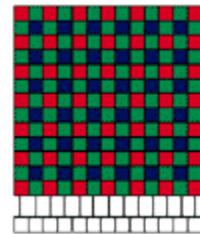
Cart (cartridge machine)

—Cart machines use a continuous loop of 1/4-inch (6.4mm) audiotape within a plastic cartridge (known as a cart). Unlike an audiocassette that you have to rewind, in a cart the tape is in a continuous loop. This means that you don't have to rewind it, you simply wait until the beginning point recycles again and the tape stops and is cued up to its beginning point.

CCD

—The image sensing device of video and television cameras -- the component which converts light from the lens into an electrical signal. Made up of pixels—the more pixels, the higher the resolution.

Charged Coupled Device, a light sensitive chip used for image gathering. In their normal condition these are grayscale devices. To create color a color pattern is laid down on the sensor pixels, using RGBG color mask. (Red, Green, Blue, and Green) The extra Green is used to create contrast in the image. The CCD Pixels gather the color from the light and pass it to the shift register for storage. * CCD are analog sensors, the digitizing happens when the electrons are passed through the A to D converter. The A to D converter converts the analog signal to a digital file or signal.



CCD Shift

CCDs are commonly referred to simply as "chips". They replaced previous tube technology in the 1980's. Larger CCDs can naturally accommodate more pixels, and therefore have higher resolutions. Common sizes are 1/3" (prosumer level), 1/2" and 2/3" (professional level). Consumer cameras generally have a single CCD which interprets all colors, whereas professional cameras have three CCDs -- one for each primary color.

C-clamp

—C-shaped clamp with tightening set screw that's used to hang lighting instruments from the ceiling grid of TV studio.

CCQ-AR cable

—Camera to CCU cable connector used in studio camera operations.

CCU

—Camera Control Unit Used for remote camera adjustments.

CD

—Compact Disc. Optical storage device, currently capable of storing about 700 Mb/s.

CDR/W

—Recordable (CDR) or Re-Writable (CDRW) CDs. This format allows for low cost storage and transport fairly large files (about 700 Mb/s.).

Cell (cel)

—A hand drawn sheet representing a single animation frame, traditional animators usually made animations using a clear material like cellulose or Mylar to allow several layers of composition. In computer context a cell can be any single animation frame.

Character Generator (CG)

—The character generator is responsible for titles and some screen graphics. Over-the-shoulder graphics are generated by the Character Generator.

Chiaroscuro lighting

—Chiaroscuro lighting is low-key, selective lighting with fast falloff. This is a very dramatic form of lighting focusing great attention on the selectively lit areas.

Chief Photographer

—Photographer in charge of all on staff photographers, equipment, and ENG/EFP training.

Chroma

—Short for chrominance (color). The color portion of a video signal that is a mixture of hue and saturation, but not of luminance (brightness). Every color signal has both chrominance and luminance.

Chromakey

—An electronic/computerized technique that allows for specific color elements (chroma) to be replaced with different picture elements. See also bluescreen and greenscreen.

Chrominance

—Chroma, or color. In composite video signals, the chrominance component is separated from the luminance component, and is carried on a sub-carrier wave.

Chyron

—Chyron is a very common brand of character generator, so common titles are sometimes referred to as “Chyrons”.

Clip

—A single distinct piece of media.

Clipping

—The cropping of peaks (over modulation) of the white or the black portions of a video signal.

Close up (CU)

—A shot in which the subject is larger than the frame, revealing much detail. The abbreviation is often used in a slug line.

Co-Anchor

—The co-anchor plays a similar, sometimes supporting role to the anchor in a broadcast.

Coaxial cable

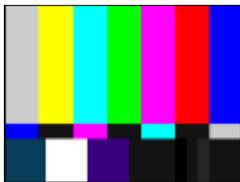
—Coaxial cables contain an insulated wire conductor wrapped in another conductor made of metal foil or mesh. Both conductors share the same axis; thus the name. They are used for cable TV transmission.

CODEC

—Contraction of compression/decompression algorithm; used to encode and decode, or compress and decompress data, such as sound and video files. Common codecs include those that convert analog video signals to compressed digital video files (e.g., MPEG), or that convert analog sound signals into digital sound files (e.g., RealAudio).

Color bars

—The pattern comprising eight equal-width color bars generated by an NTSC generator. The color bars are used for calibration and as a reference to check transmission paths, signal phase, recording and playback quality, and monitor alignment.

**Color correction**

—The electronic altering of the coloring of a video image.

Color temperature

—Color temperature measures light in degrees Kelvin. Many video cameras use two or three basic color temperatures to balance the lighting in a scene. 3000° Kelvin (indoors) and 5500° Kelvin (outside) +/- 500° are typical settings.

Temperature	Typical Sources
1000K	Candles; oil lamps
2000K	Very early sunrise; low effect tungsten lamps
2500K	Household light bulbs
3000K	Studio lights, photo floods
4000K	Clear flashbulbs
5000K	Typical daylight; electronic flash
5500K	The sun at noon.
6000K	Bright sunshine with clear sky
7000K	Slightly overcast sky
8000K	Hazy sky
9000K	Open shade on clear day
10,000K	Heavily overcast sky
11,000K	Sunless blue skies
20,000+K	Open shade in mountains on a really clear day

Commands

—Commands are instructions given to a crew by a director.

Component video

—A recording method that does not require NTSC encoding of RGB signals, but records and routes luminance and color signals separately. Because component video neither reduces bandwidth nor compromises the RGB components, it produces images of higher resolution and better color than composite video. Although component video was originally designed for high-end television production, similar recording methods are now available with consumer-level equipment. Contrast with composite video.

Composite video

—A signal in which the luminance, chrominance, and sync information are combined into one signal using one of the coding standards (e.g., NTSC, PAL, or SECAM). The signal must take the form of composite video before it can be broadcast or recorded by standard means. Until recently, most monitors and projectors accepted only composite video signals, though many presently accept RGB signals. Contrast with component video.

Compositing

—Compositing is the combining of two or more images into a single frame or display.

Composition

—Composition is the thoughtful arrangement of elements in a frame. Many elements of composition come into play, simplicity, balance, rule of thirds, dynamic/active lines, etc.

Compression

—The translation of audio or video data into a format that requires less storage space than the original data. See also, codec.

Condenser microphone

—A microphone that generates an electrical signal when sound waves vary the spacing between two charged surfaces: the diaphragm and the back plate.

Contrast

—The range of difference between the lightest and darkest values of a picture, or maximum and minimum brightness values.

Control room

—The control room is the center of broadcast operations from which programming originates; air studio.

Control track

—The portion along the length of a video tape where sync control information is placed and used to control the video signal's playback.

Cookies

—Cookies are objects (i.e. metal grids) used with lights to create shadows within a scene.

Cover shot

—An establishing wide-angle or long shot of a set used both to establish the relationships between subject matter in a scene and to momentarily cover problems with lip sync or mismatched action.

Crawl

—The movement of credits or other graphic material across the screen.

Crew

—A team made up to create a media production.

Cross shooting

—Shooting two people at roughly the same angle from opposite but corresponding positions.

Cue (stand-by, cue, wrap, speed up, stretch, 30 seconds, minutes)

—A cue is a signal by the floor director given to someone on set.

Cut

—An instantaneous transition from one shot to the next.

Cyclorama

—AKA cyc/cyclorama the cyclorama is a large, curved, seamless, background generally white or light gray.

Definition

—The aggregate of fine details of a video image on-screen. The higher the definition, the more discernable the details.

Depth of field

—The zone between the nearest and furthest points at which the camera can obtain acceptable focus.

Digital

—Digital information is information in the form of binary data. Computers are digital machines that use a binary system. That is, at their most basic level, computers can distinguish between just two values, 0 and 1 (i.e., off and on). There is no simple way to represent all the values in between, such as 0.25. All data that a computer processes must be digital, encoded as a series of zeros and ones. Digital representations are approximations of analog events. They are useful because they are relatively easy to store and manipulate electronically.

Digitize

—To convert analog video, audio, or both to digital form.

Director

—The principle creative and motivating force in any production. The director communicates to the actors, guests, cameras, etc. how things should be done. Ultimately all products are team generated, but these teams are led by directors.

Dissolve

—A transition in which one shot dissolves into the next.

Distortion

—Anomalies. Any undesirable alteration in an audio or video signal.

DiTech Router Switcher

—A router switcher from DiTech.

Dolly

—Any apparatus upon which a camera can be mounted, which can be moved around smoothly. Also used by the director to tell the camera operator to move the camera right or left (as opposed to panning, which is just turning the camera).

Drop-frame

—The timecode adjustment made to handle the 29.97 per second frame rate of color video by dropping certain, agreed-upon frames to compensate for the 0.03 fps discrepancy. Drop-frame timecode is critical in broadcast applications. Contrast with non-drop-frame.

Dropped frames (drop out)

—The area of a magnetic tape where information is missing. This will show up as glitches on playback. Drop-out may occur due to dust, lack of oxide, or other causes.

Dub

—Copy of a recording; duplicate.

DV

—DV is a quarter-inch tape format. There are actually three formats: MiniDV, the consumer format; DVCAM, the Sony format, and DVCPRO, the Panasonic format.

DVCPRO

—Professional digital tape format from Panasonic, introduced in the mid-1990's.

DVD

—(Digital Video Disc or Digital Versatile Disc)—A DVD is an optical disc format which provides sufficient storage space and access speeds to playback entire movies.

DVE (Digital Video Effects)

—DVE is a term used to describe digital video effects processors. These devices work as part of or in conjunction to video switchers. The DVE can be referred to as a "black box" which digitally manipulates the video to create special effect. Common DVE effects include inverting the picture, shrinking it, moving it around within the frame of another picture, spinning it, and a great many more.

Dynamic tracking

—A video head's ability to find and follow an adjacent track by bending back and forth. Dynamic tracking offers true freeze-frame instead of freeze-field, variable-speed playback, and playing in reverse.

Edit—

The process of assembling video clips, audio tracks, graphics and other source material into a presentable package.

Edit point

—A point on a piece of media marked for editing (e.g. in-point).

EDL (Edit Decision List)

—A list of all in points and out points for an editing task. Can be stored on a removable disc (e.g. floppy disc). This enables an edit to be constructed in one edit suite, then taken to another (better) suite to make the final version.

EFP

—Electronic Field Production. Electronic Production of a television program or program segment by using portable video cameras, VTRs, and sound equipment outside the studios. EFP is characterized by generally higher production quality than ENG.

ENG

—Electronic News Gathering. This term was introduced with the evolution of video cameras for shooting news in the field (as opposed to film cameras). It is still widely used to describe mobile news crews.

Engineer

—In a broadcast station the engineer(s) maintain the broadcasting equipment, and deal with all of the technical aspects behind the scenes in broadcasting. Program servers, satellite connections, broken cameras, etc. all can fall to the engineer.

ENR

—Electronic News Room. ENR is broadcast newswriting software that facilitates daily news programming. ENR connects with wire feeds, sets up blocking and timing for a show and is also used for archiving of show rundowns.

Establishing shot

—An establishing shot is used near the beginning of a scene to establish the inter-relationship of details to be shown subsequently in closer shots.

Exposure

—The amount of light which is passed through the iris, and which the CCD or film is exposed to.

F-stop

—Measurement of aperture. The higher the f-stop number, the smaller the aperture.

Face time

—Face time is the amount of time someone is seen on camera.

Fade

—A transition to or from "nothing". In audio, to or from silence. In video, usually to or from a color such as black.

Fall off

—The gradual reduction in luminance from the screen center to the edges and corners.

Feedback

—(1) In video, feedback is an infinite loop of visual patterns from signal output being fed back as input; achieved by aiming live camera at receiving monitor. (2) In audio, feedback sounds like an echo effect at low levels, and a howl or piercing squeal at extremes, from audio signal being fed back to itself.

Female

—Female and male are terms used to describe cables and adaptors. The female end is the end that accepts the male end. Think of a male plug and a female outlet.

Feral Effect DVE—Digital video effects processor built by Feral Effect.

Field

—Half a video / television frame. A field comprises every second horizontal line of the frame, making a total of 312.5 lines in PAL and SECAM, 262.5 lines in NTSC.

File footage

—Common footage -- city traffic, a rainbow – archived to be conveniently accessed as needed.

Fill light

—Supplementary illumination, usually from a floodlight positioned midway between camera and subject and about 45 degrees off center, which lightens or eliminates shadows created by key light (see three-point lighting).

Final Cut Pro

—Prosumer grade digital video editing software built by and for Apple Computer.

FireWire (IEEE1394)

—High Performance Serial Bus, is an electronics standard for connecting devices to your personal computer. IEEE 1394 provides a single plug-and-socket connection on which up to 63 devices can be attached with data transfer speeds up to 400 Mbps. IEEE1394 is hot-swappable, extremely fast, and chainable.

Flat lighting

— Illumination characterized by even, diffused light without shadows, highlights or contrast. May impede viewer's sense of depth, dimension. An image is said to be "flat" if its contrast is too low. Flatness is a defect that does not necessarily affect the entire density scale of a reproduction to the same degree. Thus, a picture may be "flat" in the highlight areas, or "flat" in the shadow regions or both.

Floor Director

—The floor director makes sure talent is cued, and helps with equipment and props during taping/filming.

Floor plan

— The two-dimensional ground plan which helps to define the stage or scene positions.

Flying Erase Head

—In video recorders, an erase head which is mounted on the drum assembly. The erase head wipes any previous recordings as new ones are made. "Normal" erase heads are stationary, and mounted to the side of the head drum. Because of their close proximity to the record heads, flying erase heads provide cleaner edits.

Focal length

—The distance from the centre of the lens to the camera CCD. Typically this is expressed in millimeters and represents how wide or narrow (wide-angle or telephoto) the lens' field of view is.

Focus

—To adjust the lens in order to obtain a sharp, clear picture.

FPS

—Frames Per Second

Frame

—1. The edges of a television / video / film image. 2. To compose a camera shot. 3. One complete video, television or film picture. In video and television, each frame is divided into two interlaced fields. PAL and SECAM systems deliver 25 frames per second, with 625 horizontal scan lines. NTSC delivers 30 fps with 525 lines.

Frame rate

—The number of video or film frames displayed each second (frames per second; fps). PAL frame rate is 25 fps, NTSC is 30 fps, film frame rate is 24 fps.

Framing

—Framing is using on-screen objects to create frames for other content. Looking through a doorway at a scene is an obvious framing example.

Fresnel

—A spotlight with step-like concentric rings commonly used as a key light. The fresnel Named after the inventor of its lens.

Gain

—The control which regulates the amount of sound an individual channel preamp is receiving. Do not confuse with "Fader, or Pot" which comes after the channel preamp and controls the amount sound being delivered to the output groups.

Gels

—Semi-transparent heat-resistant material which is placed in front of a light source in order to modify its color temperature or other characteristics.

Generation loss

—Generation loss is used to describe the loss of quality in a recording when it is necessary to re-record the original for editing purposes. Each successive generation will produce lower quality results until the recording is unusable. Digital media are essentially free of generational loss.

Gigabyte

—One thousand megabytes is a gigabyte. Because of the relatively large size of AV production many space requirements for projects are measured in gigabytes.

Green screen

—A bright green background used for chroma-keying. Weathermen everywhere do a nightly weathercast in front of a green screen (blue screens are also used).

Grip

—Person who is responsible for constructing and dismantling film sets, as well as laying down dolly tracks.

Guest

—A guest is someone brought into a production area to be interviewed.

Handheld

—Handheld is a term used to describe the camera technique of shooting images without a tripod.

HDTV

—High-definition television. Includes various digital broadcast television standards of more than 1,000 lines, plus the 720-line interlaced format. A format is generally considered high-definition if it has at least twice the horizontal and vertical resolution of standard definition TV (SDTV).

IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)

—An organization responsible for creating a number of technical standards in television.

Iris (aperture)

—The iris is an adjustable diaphragm that controls the amount of light passing through a lens.

Head room

—The amount of space between the top of the subject's head and the top of the picture frame.

Headset

—headsets are listening and talking devices used in a production to keep multiple crew members (usually in the same studio/area) in constant contact.

Hi8

—Hi8 is an eight millimeter tape format. Hi8, like SVHS, uses separated recording to achieve resolutions from 400-500 lines. However, the thin tape is fragile and can produce dropouts easily.

High key lighting

—Lighting characterized by minimal shadows and a low key-to-fill ratio.

Host

—An on camera interviewer (usually on the set).

Hot

—An image or part of an image, or a sound which is excessively bright, or loud (ie. Overexposed).

HSB

—Hue, Saturation, Brightness.

Hue

—Color. Refers to specific color only without the dimensions of brightness or saturation.

IEEE 1394

—IEEE 1394, High Performance Serial Bus, is an electronics standard for connecting devices to your personal computer. IEEE 1394 provides a single plug-and-socket connection on which up to 63 devices can be attached with data transfer speeds up to 400 Mbps. IEEE1394 is hot-swappable, extremely fast, and chainable.

IFB (interrupted feedback system)

—A small earpiece worn by talent that carries program sound or (when interrupted) instructions from a director.

IN point

—The beginning point of an edit.

Interface

—The point of contact between a tool and it's operator. A human/computer interface could be a keyboard or a mouse.

Interlace

—The method of dividing a video frame into two fields; one made up of the odd-numbered horizontal lines, the other made up of even-numbered lines.

Iris

—The circular opening (aperture) which controls the amount of light passing through to the camera's sensing element or film.

Jib

—A removable camera mounting arm, which can be attached to a dolly or crane.

Kelvin

—A unit of temperature measurement. Color is measured in degrees Kelvin.

Key

—The replacing of part of one television image with video from another image.

Key light

—The brightest frontal light on a scene. A light which establishes the form, dimension and overall appearance of a subject.

Kilobyte

—One thousand bytes.

Lavaliere microphone

— A type of miniature microphone that is usually worn fastened to clothing somewhere near the user's mouth. Also referred to as a clip-on., lav, or lapel microphone. Can also be used in live sound to pick up the sound of various acoustic instruments.

Lead time

—Period of time that reporters and producers need to prepare stories and information for publication or broadcast

Lens

—A structure made of transparent glass or other material, with at least one curved surface, which causes the light rays passing through it to converge or diverge in a controlled fashion.

Lens Flare

—An anomaly caused by bright light entering the lens directly. Lens flare looks like light concentric circles in the shape of the aperture (iris).

Lens shade (lens hood)

—A round or rectangular black hood that fits over the end of a camera lens to shield the lens from strong sidelight or inclement weather.

Letterbox

—Term used for one method of adapting a 16X9 aspect ratio to 4X3 which results in a black or patterned bar at the top and bottom of the 4X3 image. Since this technique does not involve altering original images or scenes in any way, it is considered the "most honest" form of conversion.

Levels

—The strength or amplitude of an audio or video signal.

Light

—That section of the electromagnetic spectrum which is visible, ie. perceptible to the human eye. Specifically, white light contains the wavelengths from 400nm (nanometers) to 700nm. Light travels through a vacuum at approximately 300,000 km (186,000 miles) per second.

Lighting board

—A centralized control system for studio lights. Most lighting boards allow for the dimming of lights and include provisions for controlling each AC outlet in a studio lighting grid.

Light grid

—A criss-crossing grid of supports placed on the ceiling creating a matrix on which to place multiple lighting devices and configurations.

Line sources

—Line sources are sources that come into the audio board that do not have additional power sources.

Linear editing

—As opposed to non-linear editing (random access), an editing approach that requires edits to be entered and done in the sequence required for the final edited version. Each segment has to be found, cued and then recorded in sequence, which necessitates the stopping of both tapes as each segment is located and cued.

Live shot

—A live shot is a broadcast news shot in which a reporter or anchor outside the studio is connected via wire, satellite, microwave, or radio transmission.

Location

—1. where a scene takes place. 2. Any non-studio shoot.

Log

—An operational document for broadcast operations, generally issued daily, which includes information such as program source or origin, scheduled program time, program title and other program-related information.

Logging a tape

—The listing of time-code numbers of video and audio segments prior to editing.

Logo

—Identifying symbol, generally associated with a product brand name or trademark.

Lossless compression

—Picture compression method that discards nothing and therefore does not degrade picture quality.

Lossy compression

—Picture compression method that discards some data and to some degree degrades picture quality.

Low key lighting

—Lighting characterized by a high key-to-fill ratio which results in predominant shadow areas. Typically used for night scenes in dramatic productions.

Luminance

—Measure of brightness. The black-and-white aspect of a television signal. Also called the Y-signal.

Macro

—Macro is a term applied to lenses (and lens settings) that allow focusing at points very near the lens. Standard (non-macro) lenses typically need at least 2-3 feet to focus clearly. Some macro lenses allow focusing within several inches.

Magnetism of the frame

—The edge of the visual frame (TV/movie screen, or photograph) has a kind of magnetism to objects that don't seem to have enough space. Images become cluttered and imbalanced easily when the focal point sits too close to an edge. Leaving noseroom and headroom is a big part of the solution.

Male

—The male is the companion to the female cable, adaptor, etc. Male ends will fit inside their female components.

Mark (in/out)

—Marking “in” and “out” points allows for precise editing by identifying the exact length of a clips and the exact point to insert them into a production. This is true when editing linearly or non-linearly.

Master clock

—A clock usually based on atomic time standards that are accurate, allows the broadcasts to go out on time, every time.

Master control

—An audio and video control center which is the final switching point before signals are sent to the television transmitter.

Master gain

—The control which regulates the amount of sound the entire board is receiving.

Master tape

—A master tape is the first-generation tape edited from raw footage. The first-generation tape edited from raw footage.

Matte

—(1) An area that denotes a keyed effect. (2) Also referred to as a mask, an area to be filled on a subsequent pass or in composite.

Medium shot

—Object seen from a medium distance (waist/hips up for people). Normally covers framing between long shot and close-up.

Megabyte

—One thousand kilobytes.

Menu

—In computer terms, an on-screen index of possible choices.

Mike (mic)

—Mike is short for microphone. A mike is used to pick up live audio.

Mike sources

—These are sources that have some power requirements, typically microphones (hence the name). It is important that microphones are connected to a mike source.

Mini-DV

—Mini-DV is a video format using very small video cameras and tapes.

Mini-plug

—Standard portable audio plug. Mini-plugs are the most common types of audio plug for most portable consumer devices (including camcorders).

Mix

—To combine two or more sources of audio or video.

Mixer

—A device which accepts multiple signal inputs (video or audio), processes them, and provides one or more outputs. The outputs are "mixes" of the input sources.

MLE (Multi Layer Effects, ME)

— Effects busses on a video switcher. These are used for chroma keying, matte effects, wipes, etc.

Modulate

—To "change". A signal can be transmitted via a carrier wave, by modulating the wave to represent the signal.

Moiré

—A unintended wavy, moving pattern in a picture often caused when an interaction occurs between striped wardrobe patterns and the TV scanning system.

Muddy (In the mud)

—Audio levels that are low are referred to as muddy. Muddy could also apply to video with a low brightness or saturation level.

Multi-camera

—Simultaneous use of more than one camera in a production.

Mute

—Mute is to silence. An audio board typically has multiple sources that can be muted until they are needed.

NAB (National Association of Broadcasters)

—The primary trade organization representing the interests of commercial broadcasting.

Nanosecond

—One-billionth of a second.

Nat (natural) sound

—Natural sound is ordinary sound within a situation. All places regardless of how quiet they seem have natural sounds that make the space "normal" to the ear. Traffic, air conditioning, other people, all need to sound cohesive for a piece to sound right.

News director

—The person responsible for the content, production and presentation of a newscast. Exact responsibilities depend on the news organization.

Newsroom

—The newsroom is where the reporters, editors, copy, and producers create the news. The story assignment board(s) is usually located in the newsroom of a television station.

Noise

—Noise is undesirable sound. Noise can be a product of bad wires, or snowblowers.

Non-linear

—Any method of video editing which doesn't require all shots to be assembled in a linear fashion. Avid, Premier, and Final Cut Pro are non-linear editing systems.

Nose room

—Nose room refers to leaving space in front of a person in a shot.

Neutral density filter (ND filter)

—A filter that reduces the light coming into a camera lens without altering its color.

NTSC

— National Television Standards Commission. Video/broadcast standard used in the USA, Canada, Japan, Mexico, and other countries. Delivers 525 horizontal lines of resolution at 30 fps (frames per second).

Off-line editing

—A "draft" edit, usually prepared in an off-line edit suite (at a lower cost), then taken to an on-line facility to make the final cut.

Omnidirectional

—Omnidirectional is a term applied to microphones meaning working in all directions.

On-line editing

—The final version of an edit, prepared in a professional edit facility.

Oscilloscope

—An oscilloscope is a device which accepts an electrical input, and represents the variations of the input as a display on a CRT screen.

OUT Point

— The end point of an edit.

Overscan

—(1) The portion of a television picture that extends beyond the normal screen size. (2) The method for scanning a video image beyond the normal viewing area of a screen. Contrast with underscan.

PAK (PKG, Package)

—A pre-recorded and edited story that includes sound bites, video, and anchor or reporter track.

Pan

—Horizontal camera movement.

Pan arm

—The pan arm(s) are handles (usually mounted to a tripod) used to assist camera movements.

Patch

—To patch is to put a signal through (e.g. Patch VTR 1 into Program).

Pedestal

—1. A movable mount for studio cameras. 2. The black level of a video signal.

Persistence of vision

—Tendency of human vision to retain images for a fraction of a second. Discrete images presented at a rate of about 16 or more per second--even when change takes place between them--blend together, creating the illusion of motion in TV and film.

PFL

—PFL is Pre-Feed Listen, is an audio board function allowing preview of audio signals while simultaneously playing another audio source on air.

PGM

—PGM is short for program. Program is the main on air (or recording) source.

Phantom power

—Power which comes from a mixer that is used to operate a condenser mic.

Phonetically

—Spelled out for ease of pronunciation (pro-nun-see-ay-shun, fone-et-ic-lee)

Photog

—Short for photographer. Photog is a common name for field (ENG/EFP) photographers.

Photoshop

—Photoshop is the premier image editing software.

Plate

—A plate is an adaptor made to allow the camera to mount quickly and easily to a tripod while simultaneously being thoroughly locked down.

Playback

—Videotaped material viewed and heard as recorded, facilitated by camcorder or VCR.

Posterization

—Electronic special effect transforming a normal video image into a collage of flattened single-colored areas, without graduations of color and brightness.

Postproduction

—Any production work done after all the main taping has been completed. The term typically refers to editing.

Potentiometer (commonly referred to as a Pot, or Fader)

—Used to regulate variable settings (e.g. audio).

POV (Point Of View) shot

—A point of view shot tries to put the viewer in the drivers seat. Looking out at the action as an immediate participant.

Pre-roll

—The "lead-in" time at the beginning of a tape edit. When performing an edit, the tapes are rewound a few seconds, then played back before the edit begins. This ensures that the tapes are running at exactly the right speed.

Premier

—Adobe's inexpensive prosumer grade video editing software.

Pre-production

—The vital phase of production in which the script, budget, locations, actors and props are planned.

Pre-roll

— The "lead-in" time at the beginning of a tape edit. When performing an edit, the tapes are rewound a few seconds, then played back before the edit begins. This ensures that the tapes are running at exactly the right speed.

Preview monitor (PVW)

—The preview monitor shows the control room what is prepared to be on air next.

Producer (news)

—Although responsibilities vary widely, producers are generally under the news director and in charge of specific newscasts. Producers often write basic transitional news copy.

Production

—The actual filming and creation of the raw elements as required by the script.

Program monitor (PGM)

—The program monitor shows the control room the main on air (or recording) source.

Progressive scanning

—Progressive scanning is sequential scanning, or non-interlaced video scanning. A television scanning system in which each scanning line follows its predecessor in a progressive fashion, rather than skipping intermediate lines to be filled in by the next field.

Prompter

—1. An electrical device for displaying a script that can be read by talent during a production. 2. Someone who operates a prompter device.

Props (property)

—Something that is handled or used within a set by talent during a production.

PSA

—Public Service Announcement. Essentially a commercial for a non-profit organization. PSAs are usually cut to fit into standard commercial time slots of 10, 30 or 60 seconds.

PVW

—Short for preview, this is typically used to check media/talent prior to air/tape.

Quartz lamp

—Tungsten-halogen lamp. Widely used in television and film production, an incandescent lamp with a number of internal improvements over standard lamps, including a consistent color temperature and uniform light output over its life.

QuickTime

—Apple Computer's multi-platform, multimedia software architecture. QuickTime includes support for Real Time Streaming Protocol (RTSP).

QWERTY

—Used to describe a standard typewriter keyboard configuration.

Rack focus

—Shifting camera focus from one part of a scene to another in a single shot, thereby forcing a shift in audience attention.

RAID

—Redundant Array of Inexpensive Drives. A system of teaming together numerous computer hard drives, generally for storage in non-linear editing systems.

Range extender

—An optical attachment to a lens (or an internal device) that increases focal length.

Raster

—The area of a TV picture tube that is scanned by the electron beam. Also the active area of visual display on a TV, monitor or any cathode ray tube (CRT).

Raw footage

—Original, unedited videotape footage.

RCA

—These are the cables that connect consumer video equipment. Basically you'll need a BNC to RCA adapter to use any RCA equipment. They usually connect consumer video equipment and consumer audio equipment. Standard markings are yellow female ends for video and red/white or red/black for right and left stereo audio.

Reaction shot

—A cut to performer's face that registers a response. Generally a close-up of someone reacting to the central dialogue or action.

Reader

—Story read on camera by the anchor without using video.

RealMedia

—Architecture designed specifically for the Web, featuring multimedia streaming and low data-rate compression options. RealMedia works with or without a RealMedia server.

Real-time

—1. Anything which occurs without delay. A real-time effects processor will add effects instantly, without having to wait to render. 2. The actual time during which video recording occurs, distinguished from the tampering of time via editing.

Rear projection (RP)

—Screen used for video effects onto which images are projected from the rear. When actors are photographed from the front, it appears as if they are part of the projected scene.

Reflectors

—Reflectors are silver or bright white surface used to reflect light onto a subject. Generally used outside to soften and fill in the light from the sun.

Release form

—The release form is a legal document releasing to the producers of a project the rights to use someone or something privately owned in a production. It is a standard form signed by all performers before appearing on a television production.

Remote

—Any multiple-camera telecast from outside the studio.

Rendering

—The process of mathematically calculating the result of a transformation effect (e.g., resizing) on an image, graphic, video clip or sound.

Reporter

—A reporter is a professional who gathers information and writes reports for newspapers, magazines, newsletters, or television and radio broadcasts

Resolution (horizontal resolution)

—The amount of detail in an image or signal. On a computer screen, the resolution is the number of pixels. In an analogue video signal, the resolution is the number of horizontal lines. In digital audio, the resolution is the number of samples per second. "Color resolution" refers to the color depth of an image (i.e. how many colors are present).

Resolution chart

—A test pattern used to set up and check a camera which shows camera sharpness and the condition of the camera system.

Reveal

—1. Uncover effect used with graphics and wipes. 2. To dolly or zoom back a camera to show additional material.

Reverse-angle shot

—Used in dialogue scenes where a shot of someone speaking is followed by a shot of a person who is listening. Normally taken from over the shoulder at an angle of about 140 degrees.

RGB

—Red, Green, and Blue are the primary colors of light used to form the image on television and computer screens.

Riser

—A small platform used as a set piece.

Robotic camera

—Any one of several types of remotely-controlled, automated camera positioning systems. Most allow for camera pans, tilts, dollies and trucks.

Roll(ing)

—Rolling is a term used to describe a moving source or starting a play or record deck.

Ross RVS 630 Video Switcher

—Ross studio production video switcher.

Router (router/switcher)

—A connection device used to connect a variety of equipment together.

Royalty fees

—Royalty fees are copyright fees paid to artists for the use of their work.

Rule of thirds

—Composition theory based on dividing the screen into thirds vertically and horizontally and placing the main subject along the resulting intersecting lines.

Rundown

—The list of stories in a newscast, including anchor, video, graphics, writer and timings. A producer creates rundown to be a blueprint of how the show should look.

Safe title area

—The inner 90 percent of the video frame. Since the outer 10 percent of a broadcast picture is typically cut off by overscanning, this area is considered safe for most subject matter.

Saturation

—The level of color in a vision signal. A highly-saturated signal has very strong colors.

Sample

—A near-instantaneous recording of a signal, measured in thousandths of a second. Digital signals are constructed by sampling analogue signals thousands of times per second. Each of these individual samples are strung together to make a close approximation of the original signal.

Scene

—A script designated locale in single-camera production which typically constitutes a basic setting for a series of shots.

Scoop light

—A floodlight, often used as a fill light, which has a deep, diffuse, and generally elliptical reflector.

Scrims

—A spun-glass material placed over the front of a light to reduce intensity.

Script

—The written blueprint for a production.

Scroll

—To move onto the screen vertically like credits.

Scrubbing

—Scrubbing is the backward or forward movement through audio or video material via a mouse, keyboard, or other device.

Servo

—A servo is a remote control of camera functions such as zoom and focus, by means of a motor. Servo controls can be mounted on the lens housing, on the tripod/pedestal handles, or on a remote-control unit.

Set

—The set is an environment used for filming/taping. When used in contrast to location, it refers to one artificially constructed.

Shot

—A continuous piece of video or film footage. Everything you get between pressing "record" and "stop".

Scene

—All the shots which make up a segment of a program.

Shock mount

—A device that holds a mic and protects it from handling noise.

Shotgun microphone

—A type of highly-directive microphone having a very narrow elliptical pattern and extremely reduced pickup from the sides and rear. Some shotgun mics are capable of picking up sounds over long distances.

Shoulder brace (shoulder mount)

—A support for a video camera that rests on both the shoulder and the body.

Shutter speed

—The length of time that a single frame is exposed for. Slower shutter speeds allow more light to enter the camera, but allow more motion blur. Faster shutter speeds allow for better images of fast moving objects.

Shuttle

—The rapid movement on a tape or digital video clip forward or backward through the clip.

Signal-to-noise ratio (S/N)

—The degree to which a desired signal stands out from background noise or interference. The higher the signal-to-noise ratio, the better the quality of the resulting sound or picture.

Silhouette

—A silhouette is the effect in which the subject is rendered as a black shape without detail against a bright background.

Single-camera production

—Production technique using only one camera.

Slate

—A board (or digital equivalent) on which script information, such as scene and shot numbers, is written. The slate is then filmed at the beginning of each shot to make the editor's job easier.

Slug

—The title/name of a story in a rundown.

SMPTE (Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers)

—A professional engineering society responsible for establishing technical standards in film and television. The SMPTE is the largest such society in the world.

Smurf video

—Video shot under indoor lighting, but balanced for sunlight.

Snoot

—Open-ended cylindrical funnel mounted on a light source to project a narrow, concentrated circle of illumination.

Snow

— Random patterns of black and white dots on a TV screen or vision monitor. Snow can be caused by an improperly tuned television (or very poor reception), an unrecorded video tape, or dirty VCR heads.

Soft light

—A soft light is a light that is highly diffused usually by using reflectors. A soft light will generate very soft shadows.

Sony BVU 900

—A Sony Umatic (3/4") video tape deck.

Sony BVU 920

—A Sony Umatic (3/4") video record deck.

Sony PVW 2800

—Sony Betacam video tape deck.

Sony PVW 2900

—Sony Betacam video record deck.

SOT (Sound on tape)

—A SOT is videotape that includes a sound track. Typically this will be a story sound bite.

Sound bite

—Videotape segment where the corresponding audio remains intact and in lip-sync with the video.

Sound Forge

—High quality audio editing software.

Source

—Where media comes from. Tape decks, studio cameras, character generators, and still store, are all potential sources. In videotape editing, the machine(s) that contain the original footage that will be edited onto the edited master.

Special effects / video effects

—A wide range of electronic video transitions and methods of combining video sources including wipes, keys, mattes and inserts.

Split screen

—TV or computer screen electronically divided to show two or more images at once.

Spotlight

—Lighting instrument that focuses its beam of light.

Stand-up

—An on-location shot of a reporter talking to the camera, often used to introduce or conclude a news piece.

Still frame

—A graphic of any kind presented as a single, static video image.

Still Store (SS)

—A device used to capture, store, and play back still frame images.

Storyboard

— Pictures (generally drawings) that illustrates the proposed sequence of shots in a production.

Strand Lightboard-M lighting control system

—Strand brand lightboard.

Streaming

—The process of sending video over the Web or other networks to allow playback on the desktop as the video is received, rather than requiring the entire file to be downloaded prior to playback.

Strike

—To take down and remove scenery after a production.

Striping

—Preparing a tape for editing by recording continuous control track, timecode, and a video signal (e.g., black). Also known as black stripe (blacking, blackbursting).

Strobe

—Digital variation of fixed-speed slow motion, with image action broken down into a series of still frames updated and replaced by new ones at rapid speed.

Studio

—The studio is the area where scenery and props, lights and cameras are located.

Sweetening

—Audio postproduction where audio is corrected and enhanced. Music, narration and sound effects are mixed with original sound elements.

Sub-master

—A volume control which enables an operator to group a number of different audio or lighting sources together and then to control them with one fader.

Super (Superimposition)

—A double-exposure effect. The simultaneous showing of two pictures in the same area of a video screen.

Superblack

—A value on the wave form monitor of 0 or less luminance units. 7.5 units is standard TV black. Graphics and logos placed on superblack are much easier to work with.

SVHS (Separated Video Home System)

—A half-inch videotape format. SVHS video is recorded in two parts, the luminance (brightness) and the chrominance (color burst) parts. It offers anywhere from 350-400 if it records from an S-video (Separated Video) source. Standard VHS mixes the luminance and chrominance together into a composite signal capable of only about 250 lines max. Time code can be added later on one of the linear audio tracks (LTC) or during original recording in the vertical interval as part of the video signal (VITC).

S-video

—A video signal format that separates the signal into luminance (brightness, or Y) and chrominance (color, or C). Also called Y/C or SVHS. Can yield up to 700 lines from a camera and 500 from a VTR. Passed over one cable with four separate wires.

Sync

— A video signal consisting of a full screen of only black that is multiplied and sent out to video equipment so that certain effects can work. Sync is important for studio work, anything done in Edit Bay 2, and for programming. Also called genlock.

TAC B-2 Audio Board

—TAC audio mixing board.

Tag

—On camera talent appears on camera in studio after a story, to read a close to the story.

Take

—1. A single shot. 2. Cut

Talent

—Any on regular on-camera personality.

Tally light

—The red light on a video camera that indicates the camera is on the air or that videotape is recording.

Tape storage

—area in a station or production house where archived tapes are stored.

Target Audience

—The intended viewers. Successful business videos must define and address this audience.

TBC (timebase corrector)

—A timebase corrector takes a video signal from a VTR (which is fairly unstable) and locks it to an external sync signal. The Video Toaster requires that all incoming video from VTRs be timebase corrected.

Technical Director

—The individual who operates the control room switcher and is in charge of various technical aspects of a production.

Telephoto

—A lens that seemingly brings subject matter closer to the camera. A prime lens with a focal length of more than twice the camera's normal focal length.

Teleprompter

—Device which scrolls text on a screen, to provide cues for a television/video presenter.

Test Pattern

—A test pattern is a pattern of colors, lines and/or shapes designed to assist equipment calibration.

Three-shot

—A video picture containing three individuals.

Tilt

—Vertical camera (framing) movement.

Time code

—A method of marking each individual frame on a tape. There are many different methods of time code. SMPTE/EBU time code uses a series of eight numbers identifying the hours, minutes, seconds and frames related to a specific video frame on a tape.

Timeline

—A visual line stretching across a computer screen representing intervals of time on which video clips can be placed during non-linear editing.

Titling

—The process of creating the opening and closing credits of a production. Sometimes refers to process of creating subtitles for dialogue.

Tone

— An audio test signal. Used to set signal levels, test signal quality, identify signal pathways, etc.

Tone generator

—Electronic circuit which can create an even, standardized reference tone for test and setup purposes.

Track

—1. A single piece of audio. 2. To follow something or someone with the camera across the field of vision.

Tracking

—An adjustment to the playback heads of a videotape machine to make them match the phase of recording heads. Sometimes the adjustment is necessary because the tape was recorded on another machine. Tracking problems cause video breakup and aberrations at the top or bottom of the picture.

Transition

—The change from one video clip to another.

Transmitter

—In television, an electronic device that modulates the audio and video signals onto a carrier wave for broadcast.

Traveling shot

—A traveling shot is a moving camera shot.

Trim

—To adjust the in and out points marginally to achieve tighter edits.

Tripod

—A three-legged stand for mounting equipment such as a camera, etc.

Truck

—A left or right movement of the camera along with its mount.

Turn

—An on camera movement from one camera to a second. This movement is much easier to capture with two cameras, but some careful planning can allow a turn using a single camera.

Tweening

—Tweening is an animation tool feature that fills in the frames between two images so the movement appears smoother.

Two shot

—A picture showing two individuals.

UHF

—UHF is Ultra High Frequency radio waves.

Unbalanced Audio

—An audio signal which consists of one "hot" signal plus the shield. This is common in home entertainment systems, as well as other systems with short audio cables.

Unbalanced audio cables are prone to external interference, and are not preferred in professional situations.

Uncompressed video

— Raw digitized video displayed or stored in its native size.

Underexposure

—An inadequate amount of light from the lens being transmitted to the camera's target resulting in a dark picture specifically, a loss of shadow detail and a compressed gray scale.

Underscan

—Video display scanning technique in which the entire video signal, including black parameter retrace portions, is displayed on the CRT.

Unidirectional

—A microphone that is primarily responsive to sound coming from one specific direction.

Unity gain

—A condition in a sound system or component in which the output level is equal to the input level-- there is no amplification or attenuation, or a gain of 0dB has been achieved. Operational amplifiers operating at unity gain do the least amount of work and introduce the least amount of noise into the circuit; this situation is optimal for setting proper levels and setting proper gain staging.

VCR

—Video Cassette Recorder.

Vectorscope

—A device which graphically displays information about the chroma (color) part of a vision signal. Used in conjunction with a waveform monitor (in fact, many devices are switchable between waveform and vectorscope modes).

VHF

—VHF stands for Very High Frequency. This is a popular television broadcast band. It is lower than

VHS

—Vertical Helical Scan. In the late 1970's, VHS became known as Video Home System, but this is merely a marketing name. VHS won the format war against Betamax, despite being technically inferior. There are many arguments about why VHS won, mostly involving availability of movies and licensing issues.

Video

—(1) A means for reproducing moving visual images by representing them with an analog electronic signal. The images are decomposed into a series of horizontal scan lines. In this way the signal can be stored, transmitted and reproduced. (See rasterization, field, frame.) (2) There are various standards that define this signal, See NTSC, PAL, SECAM, RGB. (3) Referring to the NTSC composite video standard. This is a widespread standard such that the video in of one machine is compatible with the video out of another.

Video gain

—Amount of amplification for video signals, expressed in decibels (dB).

Video Level

—The strength of a video signal. Level is measured in volts/millivolts - the standard broadcast vision level is 1V peak-to-peak, of which 700mV comprises the picture information and 300mV comprises the timing and sync information.

Video switcher

—The main production video control device capable of handling and manipulating numerous sources of video and selecting which video source is recorded or goes on the air.

Video tape operator

—A video tape operator maintains, organizes, plays, and records tapes on the directors (or scripts) commands during a production.

Video Toaster

— software that lets users perform many of the functions of video editing systems on a computer. Video toasters let users edit separate video clips into a single program, retouch video images, add video transitions such as wipes and fades, add titles and credits, and transfer the images back onto videotape. Developed by NewTek for the Amiga Computer, Video Toasters made special effects affordable for the low budget producer in the early days of non-linear editing.

Viewfinder

—A video monitor attached directly to a video camera.

VO (Voice Over)

—Talent's voice, live microphone over a piece of video.

VO/SOT (Voice Over/Sound On Tape)

—A voice over with a sound bite.

VTP/R

—Video Tape Player/Recorder

Waveform Monitor (WFM)

—An oscilloscope specifically designed to display the waveforms of video signals. Used to monitor signal strength, sync timing, etc.

White balance

—White balance is a camera function which gives a reference to "true white", in order for the camera to interpret all colors correctly.

Wide angle lens

—A lens or a scene that represents an angle of view significantly wider than normal angle of view (about 47 degrees field of view). A wide-angle lens or shot is either a prime lens with a focal length significantly less (at least 25 percent less) than a normal lens, or a zoom lens used at a focal length significantly less than normal.

Wide shot

—A shot representing a broad field of view (usually using a wide angle lens). A wide shot brings a great deal of surrounding context to the central focus of a shot and can be used as an establishing or cover shot.

Windows Media Player

—Windows Media Player is a computer media player bundled with Windows systems that allows users to create, deliver, and play streaming media files.

Wind screen

—A thin soft foam cover for microphones which reduces the noise made by wind striking the microphone.

Wipe

—A transition in which parts of one shot are successively replaced by equivalent parts of the next shot.

Wireless microphone

—A microphone that has a built-in, low-power transmitter, or that is connected to a transmitter. Wireless mikes are commonly used when a mike cord would create a problem.

Wire service

—News stories, features, etc., sent by direct line to subscribing or member newspapers and radio and television stations

XLR

—A lockable connector, available with various numbers of pins (the most common being the 3-pin XLR).

Zebra

—A feature of professional cameras, which places diagonal lines across any over-exposed parts of the picture in the viewfinder. These stripes will not show on the output/recorded picture, they are only there as a guide for the camera operator.

Zoom

—The act of changing the camera's focal length (e.g. zoom in or zoom out). Framing movement, in which the focal length of the zoom lens is altered to make the subject appear closer to, or further away from the camera. Note that this effect is similar, but not the same as moving the camera itself closer to or further away from the subject.

Zoom Lens

—A zoom lens is a lens with a moveable element, which is able to "zoom" between various focal lengths. This has the effect of making the subject appear closer to, or further away from the camera.