

Screening, Logging and the Paper Cut

Screening and Logging

Watching the raw footage — called rushes — and choosing good chunks of video is the essence of screening and logging. Because you may have original footage to work with and limited time with editing equipment, the most efficient way to begin the edit is to carefully log the material you have recorded. This allows the editor the most control over the footage. If the footage is logged carefully, any area of the production or selected take can be referred to quickly, maximizing accessibility to the material and minimizing the time it takes to locate specific segments. To make a log of the footage, everything that has been shot, from the beginning to the end of each reel, including what the set looks like, who is talking and what they are saying, how it sounds, and any technical problems that may have occurred, should be written down. Any special comments or ideas about the footage also should be included. A log form, which includes specific notes that are most relevant to the production, can be created and used. Information to include on the form could include message content of audio and video, type of shot (e.g. close-up), length of shot in seconds, and any technical problems.

Paper-Cut

The paper cut is a valuable technique where you can prepare how the edit will work before you even get into the editing room. This process can save time and/or money that would otherwise be wasted in the editing room. Each editor devises their own process, creating the most efficient way to work the edit. Some different methods to use are laying out each edit, from the first to the last, in a notebook, a computer, or a blank wall in your work space.

Transcripts are often written and used in the notation segment of the editing process, when there is interview footage or dialogue. This allows you to refer to the script, and in a documentary, create a script by finding moments in the tape that you want to put in a special order

Try copying the log sheets and/or transcripts and then cut up the elements that you know you want to include in the edit. Paste them up in the order you think could work the best. Sometimes drawing diagrams or pictures of the shots can help in this process of imagination; add the pictures to the side of the new list of shots. Read over your paper edit, imagine how it will really work when assembled, and try to adjust the order until it feels right. Now, with this "game plan," you are more prepared to go into the edit room with greater focus.