

How to make your audio slideshows better

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Artificial Eye Maker



When Joe Weiss released his audio slideshow production tool called [Soundslides](#) in August of 2005, I quickly produced [my first slideshow](#) of a grand entrance at a Native American powwow. I was amazed at how easy it was to put together. I didn't need to know Flash or have programming skills. I had a feeling back then that this little program was going to change photojournalism forever, and it did.

Now two and a half years later, I think it's time to take a constructive look at audio slideshows and review ways to make them better. One of the raps on audio slideshows is that they can be boring and predictable. I agree. I've watched hundreds of audio slideshows and it can be painful at times. [But then I hit one that just nails it and my faith in the genre is restored](#). I have probably produced 75 or so audio slideshows. I understand the challenge of making a compelling narrative resonate with viewers. Here are some of the lessons I've learned over time:

- I shoot the photographs for my slideshow like I shoot a video sequence—by taking wide, medium and lots of tight shots. This gives my shows visual variety and allows me to cover my audio by opening with a wide shot, then transitioning to a tight shot of the same scene.
- It's best to open your show with a bit of natural sound rather than with a subject talking. The ramp up into your story is important. If you don't pull the viewer in fast they will bolt. Natural sound eases the viewer into your story without jolting them with dialogue.
- Stop having the subjects introduce themselves. Really, stop it! The biggest cliché in audio slideshows is the “Hi, my name is...” intro. Instead, use a lower thirds title.
- Use passionate subjects for the narrative of your story. If your subject has a boring monotone voice, then maybe you should write and voice some narrative bridges yourself to help move the story along.
- Like video, try to match up photos to what the narrator is talking about. The same goes for the natural sound. When you do this, your story will really start to crackle.
- Get yourself a decent flash card recorder. The cheap one makes your show sound amateurish. You use a \$3000.00 digital camera to shoot the pictures. A [\\$200.00 recorder is a small price to pay for decent sound quality](#).
- When you record an interview, make sure to do it in a quiet spot. Then add your natural sounds (at a reduced level) under the narrative to give it sound depth.
- Record a minute of room tone wherever you are taking photographs. Use it to cover the sound gaps between or under the narration.
- Never, I mean NEVER have dead air sound gaps in your audio narrative. Cross-fade your audio between clips or add room tone to prevent this at all costs.
- Use a multi-track sound editor to do your audio edit. It allows you to add the layers of sound that helps you create a soundscape that rocks the viewer of your show.
- Your final audio edit should be as smooth as butter. Nothing should take you out of the moment. I like to close my eyes and just listen to my edit without looking at the timeline. Hit stop when you hit a bump and fix it. The difference between a great edit and a poor edit is in how you do your final audio tweaks. Make sure to normalize your audio so that there are not low and high dropouts in the mix.
- Make sure your show is paced correctly. Too fast and you make the viewer mad, too slow and you bore them visually.
- [Use music for a reason](#), and not because you need to make a boring show more interesting. Don't use music to manipulate emotion. If it is not in the narrative or photos, don't force it with music.
- Finally, create what I call a [nat/narrative weave with your audio edits](#). Start your show with natural sound, and then weave your narration and ambient sound in and out. The worse thing you can do is have one subject drone on for three minutes without stopping.
- Other suggestions? Let's hear them.

Great audio starts in the field

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You've probably heard it a thousand times before—viewers will forgive you for bad video, but they'll bolt if forced to listen to bad audio. Wind noise and distorted audio hurts the ears. Have a video where the subject can't be heard over distracting ambient noise? I, like most people, just hit the back button on my browser. Here are some audio tips I've learned from my time behind a video camera:

- I've watched too many videos and audio slideshows where wind noise has ruined an interview or mucked up the ambient sound. It is important to use a quality microphone with a windscreen to minimize this horrible sound. A couple of years ago, [I climbed windy Mount St. Helens](#) with my video camera. I bought one of those fuzzy windscreens [that looks like a tribble](#) (yes that is a Star Trek reference.) It worked brilliantly. For reporters stuck with a point and shoot cameras, good luck. Your audio is at risk every time the wind blows.
- If you use a lavalier or wireless mic on a subject, the rule of thumb is to place it at the second button on a dress shirt. Don't place the mic inside the shirt or against skin, as that will add a rustling noise every time the subject moves. Listen closely with headphones for noisy clothing like ski jackets or jingly jewelry. You will beat your head against your keyboard trying to edit around these distractions.
- Nothing screams amateur like a dangling mic cord on the outside of a subject's clothing. Take the time and run it up inside the subject's shirt or top. If it is a tee shirt, run the mic out the collar, and down a couple of inches. Pinch the shirt and clip the mic so that it is facing up. It doesn't always look the best, but will give you better audio quality than if you just clipped it to the collar. Also, take charge of placing the mic. The subject usually has no clue of how to clip it correctly. Stringing it under their shirt, well, I'll leave that to my subject.
- If you are using a wireless mic, make sure to turn off all cell phones near the transmitter and receiver. Our company's Palm Treos interfere with our Sennheiser G-2 wireless kits. This random interference will happen only when the subject says something profound.
- When I shoot interviews with a wireless mic, I record in two channels of audio (I use a Sony Z1U with two XLR inputs.) One channel is the wireless mic and one channel is my on-camera shotgun microphone. That way if I get interference or distortion, I can use the other channel in a pinch. This has saved me countless times. This also works well for [stories where you have one subject that you need to wire up](#). I have that channel always recording, even if I'm just shooting b-roll of something else. I can always drop that channel when I'm editing. Great things are said when the camera is not in the subjects face. Just remember to turn off the receiver if your subject heads to the restroom...
- Get a curly cord extension for your on-camera shotgun mic. That way when you do a quick on tripod interview with someone, you won't have to stick the camera so close to his or her face. A TV news shooter once told me that sound falls, so place that shotgun mic about a foot out and below the subject's mouth. In other words, let the sound fall into the mic.
- Always wear headphones to monitor your audio. Everybody that shoots video knows that, but not everyone does it. Nothing is worse than realizing you captured crappy audio and then having to spend way too much time trying to make lamb chops out of ground beef. Ok, I admit it. I hate wearing headphones. Sometimes I get lazy, but one thing I don't ever compromise on is wearing them during an interview. You can always fudge your b-roll audio by lowering levels, but rarely can you do this with your [a-roll audio](#).
- If you're doing an interview with a subject outside, turn them away from noise like traffic. Shotgun mics tend to amplify the noise from behind the subject.
- Nothing is worse than trying to edit a sequence with music playing in the background of several clips. The ambient music will jump around like a goldfish on a carpet. Which brings me to the first

- thing you should do when walking into a room you're going to record in. Listen. Listen for hums, clock tics (my favorite), traffic noise, music etc. Try to minimize these distractions if you can.
- Record a minute of room tone. You'd be surprised at how handy it comes in when you're editing. Need a bit of breathing room between two clips of someone speaking? Room tone to the rescue.

Got an audio gathering or editing tip. Share it here!

How best to approach a video story

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Many beginning newspaper video producers tell me they feel overwhelmed by everything they have to learn. Audio, video sequencing, composition, keeping the camera steady, can drive a brain into overdrive during a shoot. But what about the storytelling? What happens to your creativity if you're spending most of your brainpower on the technical aspects of videography? Here are some tips I learned along the way (mostly through making mistakes) about how best to approach a video story:

- Master the technology first. Your video camera needs to become your third eye. You should instinctively know how to operate it without a lot of fumbling. You can't begin to tell an effective story if you don't understand how your camera works. Read the manual. Then read it again. Don't know what every button or menu setting on your camera does? Then you will be at a disadvantage when shooting in the field.
- Next, master the fundamentals of shooting video. If you are lucky enough to attend a video workshop like the [Multimedia Immersion](#), or [Platypus Workshop](#), then listen closely and take lots of notes. Review them often. When I am shooting, I am always reminding myself to look for sequences, hold the camera steady, monitor my audio, and look for action and reaction shots.
- Watch a lot of news and feature video to learn what works and what doesn't. There are tons of great resources and aggregators of newspaper produced video on the Web. Start with the [NPPA Monthly Multimedia Contest winners](#). Check out [Kobre Guide](#), [Interactive Narratives](#) and [MediaStorm](#). Also, look at what the best of TV news does by viewing the five star stories on [B-roll.net](#). On videos you like, deconstruct the stories. [Look at how the video starts](#). Does the story have surprises woven throughout to keep the viewer interested? Is there good use of natural sound? Did it have an effective ending? The more you watch, the more ideas you will generate later when you are shooting your own video.
- Understand that video storytelling is different than telling a story in print or in a tightly edited picture story. Video is about [sequencing images](#). You become the eyes for the viewer of your story. Take them on a journey. Long talking head narratives, with lots of fact and figures and little supporting b-roll video, will put the viewer to sleep. Video is visual. Learn to tell a story with sound and imagery that works together.
- Respect the viewer's time. Like a reporter that always writes long or a photographer that puts too many photos in a picture story, many videographers suffer the same fate with their video stories. Tell what is most important and get out. We're talking 1-3 minutes for most stories, 4-5 minutes only if its really compelling stuff. Leave the long form documentaries for special projects or the film festival circuit.
- Before you shoot, have an idea of what your story is. Sometimes I'm not sure what direction my video story should take until I get about a third of the way into shooting it. It is important to pause for a moment and define in your mind what your story is. Make a mental list of shots and interviews you'll need to tell your story effectively. Look for shots that could be great openers or enders in your video. The bookends are the really important in video storytelling. Don't pack up until you made the mental checklist of all the video you'll need. Nothing is worse than being knee-deep in an edit and realizing you forgot to get a simple, but crucial shot.
- I can't stress enough the importance of defining your story early for the viewer. Viewers can be a fickle crowd. If they don't know what your story is in the first 20 or 30 seconds, chances are they will bolt.
- Pacing matters in video storytelling. Visuals for most stories should move along at a pretty good clip. This is where sequencing shots is important. Just keep reminding yourself to shoot: wide, medium and tight. I like to keep most of my video clips in my edited stories to about 1-5 seconds if I can. Don't let the viewer have a chance to be bored.

- Short form stories (one to five minutes) need to be tightly focused. Avoid tangents that lead the viewer into dead ends. Focus on a central idea and stick with that.
- [Strong central characters](#) meshed with [killer natural sound](#) make the best video stories.
- Visuals that connect to your narrative are important. When the fire chief says: “We gave mouth-to-mouth to six kittens”– I don’t want to see his face, I want to see the kittens. This is an important fundamental in video storytelling: Show the viewer what your video subjects are talking about.
- Visual variety and shot selection keep eyeballs glued to your video. When I’m shooting, I remind myself to be more creative with my shots. Get your camera low or high. Shoot on a tripod and zoom in tight on something interesting. Do a slow pan, or a tilt, break some rules. Learn to manually control (master) the camera.
- Understand light. Photojournalists already master this. If you are a word person, then you will need to learn to read the light in a scene. Ask yourself is it warm light or cool? Contrasty or flat? Learn to use quality light to your advantage.
- Finally, in whatever form, a good story is a good story. Conflict, twists, surprises, interesting characters, resolution all revealed in a dramatic structure will captivate the viewers of your video story to the end.

Sequencing: The foundation of video storytelling.

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After judging several regional multimedia contests recently, I'm mildly discouraged by what I saw being entered in the video categories. I believe the people who shot these videos tried their best. Yet, entry after entry suffered one fatal flaw- They lacked the basic sequencing of video clips.

The sequence is the foundation of all video storytelling. Sequences compress time in a video story. Without this compression, what you're left with are long video clips that visually bore viewers to death.

Proper sequencing gives the video editor a better way to pace a story by using a variety of wide, medium and tight shots. This helps move the viewer through a story efficiently. Unfortunately, it seems the sequencing lesson did not stick with people after whatever training (if any) they might have had.

You can't be great basketball player like Michael Jordan if you don't master the fundamentals of ball handling. The same goes for video storytelling. You have to drill the fundamentals of sequencing into your head or you won't be able to tell an effective video story.

So let's review the basics.

Sequencing helps compress time in a video. If you videotape someone leaving their house, walking down a path, getting on their motorcycle and driving off, it might take a minute or more to show all the action in real-time. We don't have that amount of time for our video, so we do a three-second shot of the subject coming out of the house, a two-second tight shot of his feet walking into and out of frame. A four second shot from behind of the subject walking up the bike. Then a shot of the subject sitting on the bike, cut to a tight shot of his foot kick-starting the engine. Then another tight shot of his hand revving the throttle. Finally, we get a shot of the subject riding off in the sunrise. Whew. That was hard work. But you know what? Edited together, you can compress that one-minute real-time clip into 20 seconds or less. The cool thing is the viewer understands this sequence and buys into your compression of time. Why? Because they see time compression everyday when they watch TV or a movie.

When shooting a sequence you have to anticipate the action. Still photojournalists are skilled at this. But if you are a word person, it might be a bit foreign to you. When I'm shooting, I'm always running scenarios through my mind. I asking myself: Where's the action headed? Where do I need to position myself to be in the right spot? What shots do I need to get me from point A to point B?

Try to remember to shoot a variety shots. Shoot the action and then the reaction. It's most important to hold your shots for about 10 seconds each. Don't pan or zoom; just let the action enter or leave the frame. I had a video editor once tell me

that if a cameraperson shoots a wide, medium and tight shot of every composition, then he could edit anything.

As I have incorporated more sequencing into my video, I've found that I have cut down my editing time considerably. The other thing you should remember is to weight your shots to the tight and super tight end of the shooting spectrum. Tight shots make great transitions between two wide shots or two medium shots. They prevent the infamous jump cut (two shots that look the same) that annoy and confuse people viewing your video.

Once you've mastered the fundamentals of sequencing, you can begin to tell a more effective video story. [The master video sequencers are our brothers in TV news](#). Time is tight for their stories. They compress time until it squeals.

Now for your homework assignment. Check out some of the sequencing done over at [B-roll.net](#) TV. Dissect the sequences. Look for the wide, medium and tight shots and how they move you through the story.

How to make your video editing easier

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Every time I start a new project in Final Cut Pro, I get an anxious feeling as I stare at that blank timeline. This is a critical time for all editors, because it means you have to finally commit to the story you want to tell. Unlike video editors working on long-term documentaries, newspaper videojournalists have to turn and burn pretty quickly. Most of the video projects I produce, I have less than one or two days to shoot and edit. That means I'd better have the story structure sketched out in my brain even before I put the tape in my camera. Here are some of the things I do to make my video edit easier later:

- When I am shooting a story, I'm always asking myself: "How am I going to get into my story (opener), and how am I going to get out (ender.)" The way you shoot your story will either lead to an efficient edit, or a nightmare, where time falls through the rabbit hole, as you try to create a story from a mishmash of clips.
- I've written about this ad nauseam, but will continue to preach it—**Define your story** before you start to shoot. Simplify your grand plans. If you're not doing some definitive documentary, then you will only have one to three minutes to get in and out of your story. Beware of tangents that can lead you off on a different path.
- Identify your subjects early. I ask myself: "Who is going to help me tell this story?" The person that becomes the narrative thread needs to be compelling. I look for characters first—[people who ooze personality](#). When I'm at an event, I start asking people, "Who has the biggest mouth?" Usually all fingers point to one person. That bigmouth is where I start first.
- How you interview a subject is critical. Being a one-man band, I don't have the luxury of having a reporter to do the interview for me. That means I need to get the narrative I will need to construct my story later. Long, rambling interviews, will slow you down when you start to edit. Ask the right questions that elicit tight answers full of information and passion. It's important to keep eye contact with your subjects. If they stare at the lens, they will have that deer in headlights look. I like to give exaggerated facial cues to my subjects to let them know what they are saying is right on. Getting a subject to open up quickly will only help you later when you do your edit.
- [Shoot video of what your subject talked about](#). This is hugely important. When you can connect related video with the narrative, your video edit will crackle. Don't forget to shoot b-roll of the people you interview. This will help you cover the talking head later.
- Shoot more b-roll than you think you will need. As I learn more and more about story pacing, I realize that 5 to 8 second video clips are just too long. Editing shorter sequences of wide, medium and tight will really help keep your viewer engaged in the story. Don't give them a chance to be bored. I have to remind myself at this point to be creative. Your b-roll is where your vision comes into play. Get your knees dirty, think in layers, shoot lots of tight details. Put your camera on a tripod and shoot long telephoto shots that fill the frame. Doing so will help you craft an edit with lots of visual variety. Finally, make sure you have a couple of wide establishing shots. You **will** use them in your edit later.
- Shoot the action, but don't forget to shoot the reaction. Let's say I am shooting someone making a widget. I would shoot a wide shot of them in the room, then move in and shoot a medium shot of them working on the widget. Then I would capture a tight shot of the hands working on the widget. The next shot is what many inexperienced video shooters fail to get. Turn the camera up and shoot the face (reaction.) Later, when you're assembling this sequence, you'll have that face shot that will rock on your timeline.
- Shoot lots of nat sound pops. This TV term is something newspaper videojournalists need to master. A nat sound pop is a short video clip—maybe a second or two long—that has a compelling burst of sound. It can be someone's reaction to a fire, a cheer at a football game or a quick blast of

natural sound like a train whistle. Be on the lookout for these pops. Trust me, they will help your edit later.

- Finally, look for transitional pictures that will help you deal with changes in time. Going from day to night in your story? A sunset shot will help your viewers make that leap in time.

Get creative with your video camera

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As newspaper still photographers transition to shooting more video, they can get overwhelmed by all the non-creative tasks they have to do. With white balancing, audio monitoring and sequencing chores at hand, many new videographers forget to be creative with their video cameras. Here are some of the techniques I use to add a little visual variety to my videos:

- Get on your knees or climb a tree. Take the viewer to a place they wouldn't normally go. I love putting the camera on the ground to get that unique perspective. The ground also serves as a decent tripod. Shooting high will give you that overall establishing shot that you know you need, but like me, sometimes forget.
- Don't just shoot a tight shot. Instead, go super tight—as tight as your lens can focus tight. These shots are gold because they are as visually jarring as they are visually interesting. They also make for excellent transitions between scenes. I learned this from master TV news shooter Dave Werthelmer. His favorite line is: “Don't shoot the donut, shoot the donut hole.” I try to remember that line each time I start shooting.
- Look for that subject perspective shot. An example of this would be a shot following the feet of a mailman trudging through snow, or following a toddler around from their low perspective. I think too much of what we shoot tends to be tripod or eye-level. You just have to anticipate when to drop the pod and move with the action.
- Which brings me to rule number 134 from the manual of good video shooting. Let the action leave or enter your frame. Doing so allows you to compress time in your video. You can quickly transition to a different scene after the subject leaves the frame. [It also helps you with sequencing, allowing you to edit together a wide, medium and tight shot of your action.](#)
- Turn off your autofocus and try a manual shift-focus shot. Try starting with a blurry shot, and then quickly bring your subject into focus. Or try racking your focus from a foreground subject to a background subject. It is pretty effective when done right. Just make sure you are rock solid on a tripod!
- Layer your shots with foreground elements, just like you would as a still shooter. They are more complex to see, but done well, they really ratchet up the visual variety of your video.
- I don't do this often, but at times it can be effective. Use a slow shutter speed to blur movement. I've used it on people dancing and it gave the video clip an interesting romantic look, especially if I followed the action in time like a pan shot with a still camera.
- Try speeding up the action or slowing it down either in camera or in your video editing program. Here, I am careful how I use this. Like the slow shutter shot, it has to be done for a reason. Don't speed up the action just because it is cool. Do it because it adds something to your story such as compressing time. Over and under cranking your video is already overused, so be selective.
- Shoot more telephoto shots. One thing I've learned since I got the tripod religion is that a solid, tight telephoto shot will fill your frame with intimacy. Because video cameras have so much depth of field, anytime you can make the background go soft so that our subject pops, you should do it. While tight on your subject, don't forget to pull out and shoot a medium and wide shot. It's an instant three shot sequence.

What do you do to get creative with your video camera? Please share.

Opening your video: How not to lose viewers

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Finding a good opening to your video is critical. Far too often, newspaper produced video fails to quickly grab the viewer's attention. Online viewers are a fickle bunch, where the click of a mouse button will lead them to some other cooler destination. The key is to smack 'em upside the head and wake them up. Your first 15 seconds better be good or they won't stick around long. Here are some of the things I do to let the viewer know that my video is worth watching:

- I avoid at all costs, opening with a talking head. That is the kiss of death. You have to warm the viewing crowd up some before you bring in narrative. Use strong visuals from your b-roll instead.
- One of my favorite things to [start my video with is a series of quick sound bites interspersed with nat sound pops](#). A nat(ural) sound pop is a quick hit of sound like a ball hitting a bat, the sound of a shovel digging into a sand pile, the closing of a car door.
- Try using the classic literary device of opening your video by teasing with the middle or [end of your story](#).
- One of the suggestions I learned at the Platypus Workshop is to [lead with your strongest](#), or second strongest video first. Works great in breaking news videos.
- It's important to define your story in the opening 15-20 seconds. If viewers have to wait too long they'll be gone. [If needed, use objective \(facts\) narration to move the story along](#).
- Or...don't define the story quickly. [Instead make your opening vague and mysterious](#). But be careful with this. Don't try the viewer's patience or they'll bolt.
- Open with great natural sound. I sometimes open my video with black and just play sound. It's mysterious and hopefully makes the viewer want to follow the sound into your story.
- Finally, [look at picking up the pace to capture the viewer's attention](#). Long (five seconds or more) clips won't stimulate the viewer's brains—especially the ones with ADHD.

Random Final Cut tip #2—Lower thirds

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I think it's time for everyone to banish that ugly black bar used to display lower thirds titles in Final Cut Pro/Express. For the longest time, I struggled with what to do with white text on a light background. I usually ended up using the standard black bar, which is so wide it usually lands across the speaker's chin.

Experimenting, I learned to change the bar's color by using the color sampler. I also tried lowering the bar's opacity until it was almost transparent. That lipstick didn't help. It was still an ugly bar mucking up my shot. I'm not a fan of motion titles—they're distracting and look too much like the snappy graphics in TV. So what to do?

I finally discovered that by clicking the motion tab when my lower thirds title generator is loaded in the viewer, I could add a drop shadow to my text. It was one of those "duh" moments, that I just couldn't believe I didn't connect the dots earlier. Now my lower thirds text floats and are much more readable. Make sure you click the drop shadow check box and click the triangle for more settings. Here's the numbers I use — 1.5 to 2 for inset. Softness, 20-30 and opacity 90.

What we can learn from TV news shooters

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For the longest time, still photojournalists loved to talk smack about the TV [lenslingers](#) that would often get in our shots. But as newspaper photojournalists transition to shooting video, they should realize our TV brethren have something to teach us. The cultures of TV news and newspapers are finally starting to blend. We are both looking to achieve the same things– bring our viewers news and information in the quickest way (form) possible. For newspaper journalists, it means changing newsroom workflows, where deadlines are **now** and not in the late afternoon.

When I first started shooting video, there weren't a lot newspaper videojournalists working full-time. I looked for inspiration in TV news stories. I realize that most of what TV news does is not something I or any other newspaper video shooter would want to emulate. Stand-ups and live shots are not for us. But back in the early 90's, lenslingers of old, were able to do some incredible nat sound pieces. That was before the insultants and producers got a hold of the newscasts and jammed Eleven-Stories-in-Eleven-Minutes into our collective eyeballs. I think too many of us believe, as we're huddled in our supply closet video editing suites, that we're actually inventing a new way to tell a video story. The fact is, the cream of the TV shooter crop, has done this for decades. Do a search on You Tube for of any of Charles Kuralt's [On the Road series](#). He was a master storyteller. In the hay-day of the TV nat sound piece, TV news shooters were able to roam their communities alone, looking for those small stories that rarely got told. The boy hawking lemonade (a classic– anybody have a link to this?) where a wireless mic and a young boy was all that was needed to create TV magic.

Last month, at the Northwest Video Workshop, my co-instructor Kurt Austin of [KGW](#) in Portland, Oregon, showed his recent nat-sound pieces. A story on how Nintendo Wii is being used by senior citizens for exercise, and a fun story of a guy who dresses like a clown, blowing a trumpet from a traffic island for morning commuters, reminded me of the nat stories I watched in my youth. Both these pieces connect to viewers in ways the new style of live-shot journalism doesn't. The sad thing for a talented videojournalist like Austin, is that he only gets to do these type of stories rarely now.

Thankfully, newspapers are picking up the torch for the lost art of the natural sound piece. We are giving it our own spin. What we can learn from TV photojournalists, is how to tell a more effective story. One of the things I, and most every newspaper shooter needs to learn, is how to edit for pacing. Many of our stories wander around, never getting to the point. We fail to edit in the little magic moments and surprises that keep a viewer staying to the end of our masterpieces. We create epics, because we can. We are afraid to use our own voice to objectively narrate our stories. So where do we turn for help?

For me, I like to watch the masters work. Checkout the yearly [BOP TV news winners](#), dissect the edits. Watch closely how a story is paced. Is it frantic or precise? Does it

match what is going on in the story? Look at the sequencing of the video. Count how many seconds a b-roll clip stays up. How many of us have used a one-second video clip? Not many I bet. Look for the nat sound pops. That one or two seconds clip where a subject says something profound or the camera focuses on a tight shot with great audio. These make great transitions, but we on the newspaper side rarely use them. Does the narration work? Or does it get in the way?

For other inspiration, check out this Youtube like [site for professional storytelling video](#). There are some gems to dissect and help you improve your editing and storytelling.

All of this are blog posts from the blog *Mastering Multimedia* by Colin Mulvaney.

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