The No-Fear Guide To Multimedia Skills

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Mindy McAdams | University of Florida
E-mail — **mmcadams@jou.ufl.edu**
>>> All **links** — http://mindymcadams.com/guest/gsun/ <<<
My **blog** — http:// mindymcadams.com /tojou/

Step 1: Audio

Start out with a proper microphone and a small digital recorder that is capable of recording audio at "CD quality."

Links to gear (under "Audio") — http://astore.amazon.com/mojogear-20/

Gathering

1. Let the subject do the talking.
2. Collect relevant natural sound, e.g., hammers, crowds, water, traffic, street musicians.
3. Don't say "Uh huh" or "Mm hm." Learn to nod silently and make great eye contact so they *know* you are listening closely.
4. Hold your own mic, and don't move your hand.
5. Carry spare batteries.

Editing

1. Never destroy or overwrite the original audio file. Make a copy. Keep it safe.
2. Practice with different MP3 **export** options in your audio editing software. Write down the settings that give you the smallest file size that still sounds good.
3. **Numbers to use:** 22.05 kHz (sampling) and 16-bit (**bit** rate) and mono (channels). The **data rate** might be 48 Kbps or 56 Kbps (96 is probably too high; 128 is *definitely* too high!).

4. Always listen with headphones—*good* headphones that cover your ears.
5. What you need to know: **Cut. Copy. Paste.** That's 90 percent of it.

More audio help	http://plaza.ufl.edu/mmcadams/audio.htm
Recorders we like (for $100 or less)	**Olympus** WS-300M, DS-2 and WS-200S. **Warning:** All Olympus recorders are NOT created equal.
My favorite microphone	Electro-Voice 635 A, A/B or N/DB (all good)
Audio editing software 	▪ Audacity (free!) ▪ GarageBand (comes with every Mac) ▪ Audition (Adobe) ▪ Soundbooth (comes in Adobe CS3 video bundles) ▪ ProTools (expensive!) ▪ Soundtrack Pro (in Final Cut Studio)
Where I like to buy gear	▪ Amazon.com ▪ http://www.bhphotovideo.com/ ▪ eBay! (Used gear is okay!!) ▪ NEVER at Best Buy!

Step 2: Soundslides

Download the FREE demo at http://soundslides.com/
(Mac or Windows, no problem).

What You Need to Make an Audio Slideshow

1. The Soundslides software.
2. One edited, final MP3 file.
3. Your photos, already cropped and toned, saved in the JPG file format. Copy them into a folder before you begin, and make sure the JPGs for this slideshow are the *only* JPGs in that folder.

Four Key Tips

- When you first start a new project in Soundslides, you are asked to choose and name **a new folder** for this project. Pay close attention to *where* you are saving that folder and *what* you are naming it.
- You must **Save** and then **Export** the Soundslides slideshow before you can put it online.
- The "publish_to_web" folder (inside your named project folder) can be renamed after you copy it to your Web server. The contents of this folder come from **Export**.
- To change or edit your project later, all the files in the named project folder must be **intact** and have the same names they had when you first worked on the project.

Rules of Thumb

1. About 5–6 seconds per photo is good, on average.
2. The *longest* an audio file should ever be: 2 min. 30 sec.
3. A total of 18 to 20 photos is good.
4. If you have 20 photos, you should have *between* 1 min. 40 sec. *and* 2 min. of audio, roughly speaking.
5. If you have 2 min. 30 sec. of audio, you'd better have 30 great photos.
6. Nothing is more boring than redundancy.

Step 3: Video

The most important thing to remember: garbage in, garbage out. If you shoot bad video, it will only get worse after you compress it for the Web.

Cameras

- You can start shooting video with a decent point-and-shoot still camera. See below for model numbers. Advantage: It's easy (and fast) to copy files from camera to computer!
- A "real" video camera might capture lesser-quality video than a new-model point-and-shoot still camera. (There are some really lousy video cameras on the market!)
- A decent video camera should have **input jacks** for both an external mic AND headphones.
- Mini-DV tape will require a fair amount of time for capture (to a computer). *It is not possible* to "copy a file" from tape.
- HD-quality video is mainly important if your photojournalists want to get frame grabs off the video to use in the printed newspaper.

Shooting

1. No panning (that is, do not "sweep" the camera from side to side).
2. No zooming.
3. Get in close. Very close.
4. Hold it steady. Use a tripod if possible.
5. Shut up. Don't talk. At least, don't talk while your subjects are talking.
6. Look for action and movement. Shoot that.
7. Learn about B-roll—and shoot it. Lots of it. At the scene!
8. Wear headphones while you shoot, and use an external microphone—*whenever* possible.

You Don't Need to Buy a Book!
You can learn *everything* here, and it won't make your brain hurt—
http://makeinternettv.org/

Editing

- Everybody starts with iMovie.
- If you're not on a Mac (no iMovie), then start with Windows Movie Maker. Same kind of program. And free.
- Should reporters learn to edit video? Maybe not.
- Should reporters sit beside someone who is editing video? Yes. Why? It will help them learn to shoot better.

Video Cameras w/ Mic and Headphone Inputs

These are the lowest of the **low end** that still have these crucial inputs.

- Canon HV10 HDV ($800)
- Canon HV20 HDV ($1,000)
- Sony HDR-HC7 ($1,200)

More links to gear (under "Video") —
http://astore.amazon.com/mojogear-20/

Point-and-Shoot Cameras That Capture Nice Video

Canon PowerShot SD700 **IS** Digital Elph (**note** the "IS")

- 6.0 megapixel
- 4x optical zoom
- Image stabilization
- 2.5" LCD screen and optical viewfinder
- Video: VGA (640 x 480 pixels) and QVGA (320 x 240 pixels) modes, with frame rates of 30 fps and 15 fps for recording up to 1 hour or 1GB (whichever comes first)
- Rechargeable lithium-ion battery
- USB 2.0 (high speed file transfer)
- About $300

Canon PowerShot A570 **IS** (**note** the "IS")

- 7.1 megapixel
- 4x optical zoom
- Image stabilization
- 2.5" LCD display (no optical viewfinder)
- Video: VGA (640 x 480) and QVGA (320 x 240) resolution, with frame rates of 30 fps or 15 fps
- AA batteries
- USB 2.0 (high speed file transfer)
- About $220

Panasonic Lumix DMC-TZ1

- 5.0 megapixel
- 10x optical zoom
- Image stabilization
- 2.5" Polycrystalline TFT color LCD Display (no optical viewfinder)
- Video: Standard VGA (640 x 480) at 30 fps and DMC-TZ1 also records stunning full-size movies in wide aspect VGA (848 x 480) at 30 fps
- Rechargeable lithium-ion battery
- USB 2.0 (high speed file transfer)
- About $220