AUDIO POST GLOSSARY OF TERMS

GENERAL TERMINOLOGY

ADR Automated Dialogue Replacement. The process of re-recording dialogue after a shoot to improve audio quality, address performance issues and/or accomodate narrative changes in the edit. Also known as “Post-sync”.

Dialogue Otherwise known as “sync dialogue”. The dialogue spoken on screen (separate to VO).

Foley The reproduction of everyday sound effects (SFX) that are added in postproduction to enhance audio quality, replace location sound or aid the sound design process ie footsteps, breaking glass. Named after the sound-effects artist Jack Foley.

Library Music Production music or “stock” music; music recorded in multiple styles by a variety of musicians that are owned by music library labels and licensed for commercial use.

Location Sound The audio recorded on set, ideally by a Location Sound Recordist.

Post-sync See ADR.

SFX Sound Effects. A sound (other than dialogue or music) artificially created or enhanced for artistic effect - to make a specific storytelling or creative point. SFX libraries are commonly used by most Audio Post facilities.

Sound Design The art of crafting sound to create a desired tailored “soundscape”.

Sync Synchronisation. Used to refer to location sound and/or dialogue. Also to music - a music synchronisation license (“sync”) is a music license granted by the holder of the copyright of a particular composition, allowing the licensee to synchronize ("sync") music with a commercial / film etc.

Tracklay All audio contributing to the final master mix; music, VO, SFX, dialogue.

VO Used to mean both your voiceover artist and also a script’s narration (additionally recorded script ie not sync / dialogue nor character in terms of Radio). Can also be referred to as Narration.

Immersive

3D Sound See Immersive Audio

Ambisonics A 3D, surround sound format. In addition to the horizontal plane, it covers sound sources above and below the listener.

Atmos® / Dolby Atmos® See Cinema Formats & Terminology

Binaural A method of recording sound using two microphones, to accurately replicate human hearing, which is usually listened to on headphones. However emerging technology now allows for binaural listening out of headphones.

Immersive Audio The umbrella terms for surround sound and immersive formats such as binaural, ambisonics and Dolby Atmos®. Immersive audio combines 3 key elements: enhanced height surround sound, object-based audio (sound is pushed into a 3D space) and a higher speaker count (a larger listening area). Also known as 3D Sound, immersive audio allows the listener to be fully enveloped in the sound environment.

FACILITY TERMINOLOGY

Bookings Also known as Scheduling or Production dependent on your facility. An Agency or Production Company Producer's point of contact for your audio post requirements - from budgeting the campaign, to scheduling your time with the Sound Designer (also known as your "pencils") and managing the process until playout.

Elements Lift Also known as a Lift. The process of retrieving elements from a mix.

Engineer / Op Your Sound Designer / Re-Recordist / Mixer

Overtime Likely to be charged outside a facility's standard working hours (early morning, evening, weekends). Speak to your facility about additional charges - important to factor into your budget if your Client and/or VO are not UK-based.

Transfer The technical hub of a facility. Transfer Engineers ingest assets, QC deliverables and support the Sound Designers and Production in all technical matters. Known as the Machine Room in the USA.

ASSETS & DELIVERABLES

.AAF A media file type similar to .OMF, exported by offline or online audio and video editors primarily used to transfer sequence and timeline information from software to software. See OMF.

AIFF Stands for 'Audio Interface File Format'. Standard AIFF files contain two channels of uncompressed audio (Left and Right) and be used for what is known as CD Quality Audio. The format was developed by Apple and is therefore used in iTunes as the highest quality audio.

Broadcast WAV See WAV. A Broadcast WAV refers to an audio file that adheres to audio broadcast specifications. Generally, only the WAV audio file type (rather than Mp3 or AIFF) are accepted for broadcast.

Compressed / Uncompressed file types These terms relate to data compression within file types. A WAV (see below) is an uncompressed file type resulting in high quality audio but hefty file size. An Mp3 (see below) is a compressed file type resulting in smaller file size but subsequently with not enough fidelity to be suitable for broadcast.

Elements Refers to the separate parts of a mix, commonly split out as SFX (Sound Effects), Music, VO (Voice Over - Off Screen), Dialogue (On Screen). See Elements Lift.

Guide mix A work-in-progress mix often sent for feedback and/or to gain approval. Guide mixes will not be fully mixed to spec and are not intended for playout. See Mp3.

Mix / Full Mix / Mix Master A single WAV that comprises all the relevant elements (SFX, Music, Dialogue, VO, etc) audibly mixed together to create a whole or full mix.

Mp3 Stands for the company that developed it (Motion Picture Experts Group) and refers to an audio file primarily designed for email transferral, although it is often debated as to what the audible difference is between Mp3 and high quality WAV file types. Mp3 is not an accepted file type for broadcast, however it's often used for mixes with the intention of approval (see Guide Mix). See also Compressed / Uncompressed file types.

MPEGs In audio post, MPEG refers to a deliverable video container (commonly known as MP4) which is compatible with both PC and Apple systems. MPEG stands for the company that developed the codec - Motion Picture Experts Group).

OMF An older media container file type similar to AAF exported by offline or online audio and video editors primarily used to transfer sequence and timeline information from software to software. OMFs hold less data than AAFs but will also often be used to share assets between editing systems.

Pre-mix Individual elements of the master mix. Can be grouped together to form "pre-mixes" or "sub-mixes" ie Music Only, SFX Only, VO Only.

QTs QuickTime refers to a video container called a .mov that was designed by Apple, hence QuickTime Media Player on Mac Computers. Video files supplied or exported to and from studios will most commonly be .movs or .mp4s.

Stock Also known as ingests / assets. Any audio or visual files that an Audio Post facility, VFX Studio or offline/online Editor may need for a project i.e. Audio Post houses will often record voiceover to the video it will eventually be used for, so even though the Audio Post houses will be creating audio assets, they may need video assets to do so.

WAV Stands for Waveform Audio File Format. Refers to an uncompressed, high quality audio track which is the standard audio file type for broadcast delivery. See Compressed / Uncompressed file types.

AUDIO LEVELS, SPECS & FORMATS

6PPM Not to be confused with Loudness, PPM (Peak Programme Meter) is the standard way of measuring Maximum Peak Volume for Radio in the UK. The standard level for UK Radio adverts can be no louder than 6 PPM (see Peak). 6PPM used to be the measurement standard

for TV before the introduction of R128 however 6PPM is still used as a generic TV spec in many parts of the world.

Bit Depth (bit) In digital audio, a value describes the resolution of the sound data that is captured and stored in an audio file. This attribute is called Bit Depth; the higher the bit depth, the more detailed the recording. Common bit depths are 16bit for UK Radio and TV, and 24bit for Cinema.

Loudness In Audio post, Loudness describes the perceived audio level created inside the listener's brain. In the UK and most of Europe, Loudness is measured by R128 (see below). If the same mix were to be shipped internationally, international specs need to be considered. The implementation of Loudness meters was to prevent jumps in volume between commercials and between commercials and TV programmes.

Mono One channel audio - not suitable for content that needs a sense of space. Nb all voice over recordings are normally in mono.

Peak Refers to the loudest point in an audio track. For UK Radio the loudness specification is measured by its ‘’Peak’’ (loudest point) not going above a certain threshold. See 6PPM.

R128 Also known as **EBU R128 -23 lufs** The standard TV audio specification for the UK (and most European Countries). If not adhered to, a mix will not pass for broadcast on TV (see Loudness).

Sample Rate (kHz) This refers to the frequency in which audio samples are recorded - generally the higher the sample rate the more samples will be recorded over a period of time. Typical sample rates are 44.1khz for UK Radio, 48Khz for UK TV.

Stereo 2 Channel Audio with Left and Right channels.

CINEMA FORMATS & TERMINOLOGY

5.1 6 Channel format most commonly used in cinema and home surround sound entertainment. ‘5.1’ refers to the layout of the speakers the audio will be played from (Left, Centre, Right, Left Surround, Right Surround, and Low Frequency “Bass”). Bass is the ‘.1’

6 Track Master Refers to the 6 audio tracks used for standard surround sound cinema mixes. These tracks are Left, Centre, Right, Left Surround, Right Surround, and Low Frequency “Bass” tracks. Mixes in the UK measure 82 LEQ (another version of Loudness measurement).

7.1 8 Channel format. Similar to 5.1 but with additional Left and Right side speakers.

Atmos® / Dolby Atmos® An object-based 3D sound mixing platform / format, created by Dolby, which uses many more speakers than 5.1, giving a much more immersive experience and feel than 5.1. Many feature films and cinematic trailers are now mixed in Dolby Atmos®, and commercial distributors around the world, including DCM in the UK, now accept Dolby Atmos® mixes for commercials.

DCP Digital Cinema Package is a collection of digital files (Audio and/or Video) to be delivered and played in cinemas.

Dolby A company specialising in audio, particularly audio for Cinema. All audio created for UK Cinema must be quality controlled by Dolby before reaching cinemas. Creators of the surround sound platform / format Dolby Atmos®.

REMOTE CONNECTIONS

ISDN Integrated Services Digital Network is a set of communication standards used for transferring data down telephone lines - mainly used to send and receive audio data with third party facilities for the purpose of VO / ADR records. It also has the capability to sync the picture at two different facilities in different locations. See Source Connect + LTC.

LTC Linear Timecode is a noise signal with specific intervals - mainly used to lock a

recording session to an external video source. In audio post the main application of LTC is to sync two systems together (via ISDN or Source-Connect), allowing them to both playback simultaneously.

Source-Connect Internet-based connection software used to connect with third party facilities for the purpose of VO / ADR records and with the capacity to sync to picture. Can also be used to link up a Director and/or Client to “listen in” to a VO record / session. See LTC.

Session Link Pro Session Link Pro is a browser based emote audio recording, dubbing and adr solution that works through broadband internet connection

Clean Feed Clean feed is also a browser based remote recording solution which works through your broadband internet connection.

TBU Telephone Balance Units provide an interface between audio mixing consoles and telephones. Essentially they can be used to send the output of an Audio studio down a telephone line - meaning you can hear what is being mixed/recorded down a telephone line.

Timecode Timecode is a way of measuring and referencing time and location within a project, commonly used in digital audio workstations and longform projects. Timecode can also be ‘’locked’’ between two systems which is especially useful for ADR and remote voice over recording sessions. See ISDN and Source-Connect.