AUDIO QUICK TIPS

ASSESS: Audio Needs for a Shoot

Bug the Buggers!

Always mic as close as possible to the sound source. How many sources do you have? Will they be stationary or mobile? Do you need an audio assist (crew)?

ASSESS: What Kind of Microphone?

See No Mic, Hear No Mic…

Figure out if it's okay for the mics to be visible in the shot—where will you put them? What's the best mic to use — Lavalier, Handheld, or Shotgun?

TECHNIQUE: Input Levels

My Hero, Zero

Use manual settings and test levels! VU meters should peak at 0. Monitor audio during the shoot. All switches at MIC (-60dB) unless you receive a line feed.

TECHNIQUE: Multiple Mics & the Mixer

The 3 to 1 Rule

With more than one mic, the distance between open mics should be at least *three times* the distance from each mic to the nearest speaker.

TROUBLESHOOTING: Quality Control

Come On Feel the Noize

Distortion occurs when the levels have been recorded too high. Too much room noise means you've selected the wrong type of microphone, or you haven't placed it close enough to your subject. Humming or buzzing can be caused by a weak or dead battery, or by a short in one of the cables or connectors. Radio interference occurs when part of the audio line is acting as an antenna: make sure no cables are touching metal or power; run wires in a serpentine fashion.