

Scriptwriting for TV News

The illustration below shows a computer program used to write TV news scripts. The various stories in the newscast are listed in the lower half of the screen and the corresponding script for each entry is displayed in the top section. The window in the top left lists the various news shows during the week.

The screenshot shows a software window titled 'La Crosse Kidnap Case - [Tuesday 11pm News]'. The main text area contains a script snippet: 'An Illinois woman faces charges that she tried to lure a 16-year-old La Crosse girl to run away to Chicago. #1 Take VO () Runs : 12 # 27-year-old C Club Hills, Illini La Crosse Cour of being party t with the custod'. A dialog box titled 'SOT' is open, showing 'Tape No :', 'Length of SOT : 0:21', and 'Out Cue : unharmed'. Below the script, a table lists various news items with columns for #, Talent, Lk, Slug, Format, Tape, Notes, ERT, SOT, TTL, D, Dummy, Fill Time, and Cume.

#	Talent	Lk	Slug	Format	Tape	Notes	ERT	SOT	TTL	D	Dummy	Fill Time	Cume
B-3	Sue		IRA Arms				00:00:26	00:00:00	00:00:26		00:00:00	00:07:13	00:07:05
B-4	Sue		Catholic WWII Records				00:00:26	00:00:00	00:00:26		00:00:00	00:07:39	00:07:31
B-5	Rob		Columbian Drug Chief Re				00:00:28	00:00:00	00:00:28		00:00:00	00:08:05	00:07:55
B-6	Rob/Sue		Tease Segment #2				00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00		00:00:15	00:08:33	00:07:55
			Break						00:02:00			00:08:33	00:09:55
C-1	Rob		Tire Problems				00:00:43	00:01:10	00:01:53		00:00:00	00:10:33	00:11:55
C-2	Sue		La Crosse Kidnap Case				00:00:48	00:00:00	00:00:48		00:00:00	00:12:26	00:12:40
C-3	Sue		Wisconsin Highways				00:00:23	00:00:00	00:00:23		00:00:00	00:13:14	00:13:02
C-4	Rob		Viterbo Play				00:00:30	00:00:00	00:00:30		00:00:00	00:13:36	00:13:32
C-5	Rob		Schafield Robbery Case				00:00:39	00:00:00	00:00:39		00:00:00	00:14:06	00:14:10
C-6	Sue		Driveby Shooting Trial				00:00:28	00:00:00	00:00:28		00:00:00	00:14:44	00:14:38
C-7	Rob		Guardman Honored				00:00:23	00:00:00	00:00:23		00:00:00	00:15:12	00:15:01
C-8	sue/Rob		Tease - Weather				00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00		00:00:15	00:15:36	00:15:01
			Break						00:02:00			00:15:36	00:17:01

TV Script Writing Vocabulary

- 4CG Computer generated graphics (will be on different computer than the SS)
- MAP WIPE Going to a shot of a map (probably a computer graphic) using a wipe effect.
- PKG Package – this is an entire news story that is pre-taped and includes all video and audio needed. It gives the crew a breather, like a commercial break.
- TFXWALL Traffic wall – using chroma key screen with effects
- REM-LIVE Remote shot done live
- ROBOCAM Robotic camera shot (might be a camera mounted on a building)
- SS Still store – this is a computer that has a bank of still photos. No moving shots.
- VO Voice Over – anchor or reporter will continue to talk over b-roll
- VO TOPS Instead of going to video of an anchor/reporter and then to the b-roll footage with voice over, we will go from the previous story directly to the b-roll with voice over (no anchor/reporter shot)
- VO WIPE Voice Over using a wipe effect
- WXWALL Weather wall – will use the chroma key screen with effects

PETERSON HOMICIDE-1-SHOT

AN UPDATE IN THE SEARCH FOR STACY PETERSON - THE ILLINOIS WOMAN MISSING FOR TWO WEEKS.

HE HUSBAND, POLICE SERGEANT DREW PETERSON IS NOW CONSIDERED A SUSPECT IN WHAT INVESTIGATORS HAVE UPGRADED FROM A MISSING PERSON CASE, TO A POSSIBLE MURDER.

NBC'S LEE COWAN REPORTS.

PETERSON HOMICIDE-PKG

IT WAS ANOTHER LONG WEEKEND OF NO NEWS ON THE WHEREABOUTS OF STACY PETERSON -- MORE FLYERS DOT HER NEIGHBORHOOD -- AND HUNDREDS TURNED OUT TO SEARCH -- BUT SHE HASN'T BEE SEEN OR HEARD FROM IN TWO WEEKS.

".WE'RE STILL TRYING TO REMAIN OPTIMISTIC."

THE SEARCH EVEN WENT HI-TECH -- WITH THOUSANDS OF HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES TAKEN FROM AN AIRPLANE.

"THEY'VE ASKED US TO LOOK AT SPECIFIC TARGETS AND LOOK FOR SPECIFIC OBJECTS. Q: CAN YOU TELL US WHAT THOSE ARE? A: NOT YET."

FOR NOW, STACY'S HUSBAND DREW - REMAINS IN THE COUPLE'S HOME. HE TOLD FOX NEWS REPORTER GERALDO RIVERA THIS WEEKEND -- THAT THE FOCUS ON HIM - ESPECIALLY FROM THE MEDIA - IS GETTING TO HIM.

BUT NEIGHBORS SAY IT'S PETERSON'S BEHAVIOR THAT'S BOTHERING THEM - NOT THE MEDIA LINED UP AND DOWN THEIR STREET.

THIS WOMAN SAYS SHE FOUND PETERSON STARING IN HER DINING ROOM WINDOW IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT LAST WEEK. SHE'S NOW STAYING AT A HOTEL.

ARNOLD SURGERY-VO

CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER WILL BE ON CRUTCHES FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

SCHWARZENEGGER HAD SURGERY TO REMOVE A METAL PLATE AND CABLES FROM HIS LEG. THE HARDWARE WAS USED TO HELP HIS UPPER THIGH BONE HEAL AFTER HE BROKE IT SKIING NEARLY A YEAR AGO.

THE MINOR SURGERY TOOK ABOUT 20 MINUTES, AND SCHWARZENEGGER'S DOCTOR SAYS THERE WERE NO COMPLICATIONS.

TEASE FOUR-2-SHOT

HE IS BLAMED FOR GUNNING DOWN EIGHT PEOPLE IN A FINISH HIGHSCHOOL.

THIS AFTERNOON, FIND OUT WHY INVESTIGATORS THINK THE GUNMAN MAY HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH A TEEN RIGHT HERE IN THE U-S, WHO HAD HIS OWN PLANS OF VIOLENCE.

DIABETES IS A BIG DISEASE - SOME VERY *SMALL CHILDREN HAVE TO DEAL WITH.

NEW AT NOON, IN TODAY'S HEALTHBEAT - HOW A MOM - SAW A NEED AND MOVED IN TO HELP HER YOUNG DAUGHTER, COPE.

BUT FIRST, HERE'S CHRIS.