

AUDIOVISUAL GLOSSARY

There are many unique terms used for audiovisual production. The list below is intended to cover many of the terms you may encounter during an audio recording or multimedia project with CTS LanguageLink.

A	Accent	Pronunciation that is common to a group of people. A stress on a certain syllable or word, or an emphasis placed on a particular note. See also: Native Speaker.
	ActiveX	A set of standard controls that can be used by web developers to infuse websites with functionality that more closely resembles application-level software than traditional static web content. It is not a program or a programming language, but a set of tools that can be used to enhance Internet delivery of information and functionality. While ActiveX is a means to deliver very rich content to remote Internet users, it is not supported by all browser/client environments.
	ADR (Automated Dialogue Replacement)	ADR is the process of recording or replacing voices for a motion picture. Most commonly used in reference to voices recorded which do not belong to the original actors, or that speak in a different language than the original actor is speaking. This is also referred to as dubbing or looping. In ADR, an actor re-speaks his or her lines in a recording studio in sync with the original on-set recording, and the new recording is used in place of the original audio.
	AFTRA	The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists; the talent union that has jurisdiction over radio and audio.
	Agent	A person responsible for the professional business dealings of an actor or voice talent. An agent typically negotiates the contracts on behalf of the talent.
	AIFF (Audio Interchange File Format)	A file format for storing and transmitting sampled sound. It was developed by Apple Computer and is the standard audio format for Macintosh computers. Files are 8-bit mono or stereo and generally end with a .AIF or .IEF extension. Normal AIFF does not support data compression so files tend to be large, but another format called AIFF-Compressed (AIFF-C or AIFC) does support compression.
	Ambience	The acoustic qualities of a listening space; room tone.
	Analog	The process of taking an audio or video signal (in most cases, the human voice) and translating it into electronic pulses.
	Artifact	A defect in the audio caused by limitations of or the malfunction of audio equipment. These defects can often be seen on the waveform.
	Audio	Relating to the sounds that humans hear; the broadcasting or reception of sound.
	Audiobooks	A recording of the contents of a book read aloud and is also referred to as books on tape. It is usually distributed on compact discs (CDs), cassette tapes, or digital formats (such as mp3).
	Audio editing	The process of taking recorded sound and changing it directly in the recording medium. Changes can include removing unwanted sound and enhancing the sound by adding or changing elements.
	Audio Studio	Audio Studios or Recording studios generally consist of at least two rooms: the studio itself, where the sound for the recording is created, and the control room, where the sound from the studio is recorded and manipulated. Recording studios are carefully designed so that they have good acoustics and that there is good isolation between the rooms.
	Audition	This is a trial performance used in the casting process to demonstrate the level and range of a performer's talent. A typical audition involves the prospective talent displaying their ability by reading a piece of copy.
	AVI (Audio Video Interleave)	The file extension and common nickname for a "Video for Windows" file.

B	Bit Depth	Pertains to sample size. The bit depth is the level of detail at which a computer samples analog audio to create digital audio. Generally, you can choose between 8 and 16 bit sampling. 16 bit audio generally sounds better (each sample is described by 16 bits of data instead of just 8), but takes up twice as much disk space when stored. Bit depth is closely related to sampling rate.
	Bitrate	The number of kilobits per second of data in your audio file. The bitrate you choose when creating an MP3 file determines the size and quality of the resulting MP3. The highest commonly available bitrate is 320 kbps. A file created using this bitrate will have excellent quality, but will be fairly large. The standard bitrate for MP3s is 128 kbps. A file created using this bitrate will have good quality, and take up about 1 Mb per 1 minute of sound.
	Buy-out	When a client arranges a one-time payment or flat fee for a commercial instead of paying residuals for the job.
C	Caption File	A digital data file that stores a program's caption information, including the text, timing and placement information. The caption file is used in conjunction with an encoder to create the captioned master.
	Captioning	The process of converting the narration, dialogue, music and sound effects of a video production into text that is displayed on a television screen. Captions are synchronized with the video image so that viewers have equivalent access to the content that is originally presented in sound, regardless of whether they receive that content via audio or text.
	Captions – Closed	Captions can only appear with the use of a decoder. The decoder may be either attached to a TV or built in. Closed captioning allows caption users to enjoy the same broadcast and recorded video materials that other television viewers enjoy. Closed-caption information is carried in Line 21 of the vertical blanking interval of the television signal, and can be turned on and off by the viewer.
	Captions – Open	Open captions always are in view and cannot be turned off, and are visible without using a set-top decoder or a TV with a built-in decoder chip. When a video is open-captioned, the captions are permanently part of the picture.
	Captions – Pop-up	Individually-placed lines of type, used when visual aesthetics are important to the project. Each line is carefully positioned to the on-screen image and timed to fit the spoken word. A phrase or sentence appears on the screen, stays there for a few seconds and then disappears or is replaced by another full caption. The captions are timed to synchronize with the program and placed on the screen to help identify the speaker. Pop-on captions are used for prerecorded captioning.
	Captions – Roll Up	Captions roll onto and off the screen in a continuous motion. Usually two to three lines of text appear at one time. As a new line comes along, it appears on the bottom, pushing the other lines on the screen up. Roll-up captions are used for all live captioning and can also be used for prerecorded captioning.
	Casting	This is the process by which a production chooses who will perform roles. Talent audition for a part and the client or casting director choose which performer will be best for that role, thereby casting them in the role.
	CD-R, CD-RW	Stands for "CD-Recordable," and refers to a CD that can be burned. Recordable CDs can be one of two types - CD-R discs, which can only be written one time, and CD-RW discs, which can be written and erased numerous times.
	Character Voices	Voice Actors and Talents who can manipulate their voice tone, pace, and expression into different identities.
	Chops	Slang for voice technique.
CODEC (or Codec)	CODEC stands for compression / decompression. A codec is a small program which allows Windows to compress and/or decompress audio to and from certain formats.	
Compression	The process of reducing the dynamic range of a given analog audio program by making the loud parts quieter and the quiet parts louder. A means of encoding a digital file so that it occupies a smaller amount of disk space than the data contained within the file. In order to make use of a compressed file, one must employ a codec (coder-decoder).	

	Corporate Presentations	Corporate Presentations are used to present new ideas, or annual reports to a client or company. Often these presentations will include multi-media and incorporate professional voiceover to deliver the message in a clear and concise manner.
	Cue	The signal given to the talent to indicate the start of their read.
D	Delivery	The effective and affective speaking of lines using cadence, timbre, quality, volume, etc. to imbue the voiceover with meaning, emotion, or interest; the method or system by which a program or product is provided to the client.
	Dialogue	The words and lines given to voice actors to speak.
	Diction	The clear pronunciation and enunciation of consonants and vowels during a voiceover session.
	Digi-Beta, Beta, BetaCam, Beta SP, BetaCam SX, VHS, HD Cam	Digital and Analog tape video tape formats.
	Digital	The method of turning sound information into computer or electronic information and then back again for taping and playing back; cleaner than analogue reproduction. Digital technology breaks your voice (or television) signal into binary code—a series of 1s and 0s—transfers it to the other end where another device (phone, modem or TV) takes all the numbers and reassembles them into the original signal.
	Direction	Direction is a group of instructions given to the voice Talent by the voice producer to assist in reading the script or copy. Direction can include expressive terms such as: fast, slow, loud, soft, happy, sad, joyful, emphasis, scary, ominous, comedy, serious, business like, professional, etc. The better the direction given, the better the actual read is by the Talent. Professional voice Talents take direction well.
	Dry Voice/Dry Read	When the voice actor reads the script without any other sound effects or music added. They term Dry refers to "voice only" with no sound effects or music added.
	Dubbing/Looping	See ADR.
E	eLearning	eLearning is a method of facilitating and enhancing learning based on the use of computer and communications technology. The term is commonly used to refer to learning or training that is delivered over the internet or intranets. A more recent development is mLearning: referring to learning that takes place via mobile phones, PDAs etc.
	Encoding / Decoding	Refers to the process of converting audio to or from a compressed format such as an MP3 or WMA file. The encoding and decoding processes are often incorporated into programs called CODECs.
F	Flash	Adobe Flash, or simply Flash, refers to both the Adobe Flash Player, and to the Adobe Flash Professional multimedia authoring program. Adobe Flash Professional is used to create content for the Adobe Engagement Platform (such as web applications, games and movies, and content for mobile phones and other embedded devices). The Flash Player, developed and distributed by Adobe Systems, is a client application available in most common web browsers. It features support for vector and raster graphics, a scripting language called ActionScript and bi-directional streaming of audio and video. There are also versions of the Flash Player for mobile phones and other non-PC devices. Since its introduction in 1996, Flash technology has become a popular method for adding animation and interactivity to web pages; several software products, systems, and devices are able to create or display Flash. Flash is commonly used to create animation, advertisements, various web-page components, to integrate video into web pages, and more recently, to develop rich Internet applications.
	Foley	Sound effects created and laid in during mastering or overdubbing. Foley is required because little actual production audio is used as there is often too much camera/crew noise and unwanted environmental noise for location audio to be useful. Shooting on a sound stage reduces the problem of unwanted sounds, but Foley recording is still necessary because the sounds produced on the stage may not be the same ones the director wants in the film, or may not be sufficiently clear due to the necessity of keeping microphones out of the scene.

	Foley Studio	Foley artists record in a specially-designed recording studio with the necessary props to recreate the sound made by whatever the characters are doing in a scene. If a person was walking across a gravel road, the Foley artist would put shoes on his hands and "walk" them through a shallow container filled with gravel, making certain he is doing it in sync with the action. Often, Foley sounds become better-known to moviegoers than the real sounds; an example is the traditional use of coconut shells for horses' hoofs.
	FTP (File Transfer Protocol)	The method or protocol by which data is sent to public folder that can be accessed from two computers on the Internet. Audio files recorded by CTS LanguageLink are typically delivered via ftp.
	Hz (Hertz)	A measurement unit for frequency that is equal to the number of cycles per second of a waveform. Replaces 'cycles per second' and means the same. Usually measured in millions as Megahertz (MHz) or in billions as Gigahertz (GHz).
I	Industrial Video	Also know as Industrial Training, CD, DVD, Industrial Multimedia, PowerPoint Presentations, and others. Produced audio and sometimes video that informs and/or trains staff and employees of a company in jobs and tasks. This is an effective way to teach staff new information in an informative and entertaining format.
	Infotainment	Website, television series or other presentation that combines information with entertainment, using a combination of traditional elements such as audio, video, film, graphics, animation, music, and text for the purposes of providing information and/or entertainment. Often involves the use of hyperlinks within a web site.
	IP (Internet Protocol)	The rules and encoding specifications for sending data.
	IP Video	An encoding mechanism that is used to transmit motion video clips over an IP network.
	IP Voice	A technology that enables voice traffic to be transmitted over any network that uses IP (the Internet Protocol), including LANs, WANs, and the Internet.
	IVR (Interactive Voice Response)	A computerized system that allows a person, typically a telephone caller, to select an option from a voice menu and otherwise interface with a computer system. Generally the system plays pre-recorded voice prompts to which the person presses a number on a telephone keypad to select the option chosen, or speaks simple answers such as "yes", "no", or numbers in answer to the voice prompts.
	Internet Presentation	Any audio, video, animation, or multimedia presentation that resides on the Internet. This includes ads, marketing, sales presentations, Podcasts, internet radio, tutorials, instructional presentations, and more. Common formats are flash, PowerPoint, QuickTime, RealAudio, streaming audio, and others.
	ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network)	A circuit-switched telephone network designed to allow digital transmission of voice and data over ordinary telephone wires, resulting in better quality and higher speeds. In an audio recording session, ISDN allows a producer at one location to hear, in real time, the Talent who may be in a different location. ISDN requires 2 separate phone lines for operation and is typically used when the actual recording is done in a different location than the talent. We offer ISDN through our partner studios.
	Iso Booth	Isolation Booth. A small room, often adjacent to or within a larger studio, for recording a sound in isolation from other sounds.
K	Kbps	Kilobits (or thousands of bits) per second. When used in reference to transmission rates, the prefix kilo means exactly one thousand.
L	Lay Down	Studio slang meaning to record something.
	LD (Linguistic Director)	The Linguistic Director is a native speaker of the same language being voiced by the talent. The LD gives instructions to the voice Talent to assist in the interpretation of the script being voiced, and is often responsible for making any necessary changes to the script during the recording process.
	Looping	See ADR.

M	MOH (Messages/Music On-Hold)	Refers to playing pre-recorded message to fill the silence that would be heard by telephone callers that have been placed on hold. Messages can be custom-created to suit the particular needs of a business in English or foreign languages. The announcements can be scripted to emphasize particular attributes of the business such as location, store hours, or special promotions or services.
	Microphone (Mic)	An acoustic-to-electric transducer or sensor that converts sound into an electrical signal. Most microphones in use today for audio use electromagnetic generation (dynamic microphones) or capacitance change (condenser microphones).
	Mono	Single channel audio, as opposed to stereo or multi channel.
	Mono to Stereo	Mono to Stereo tool takes a single channel of sound, splits it in two, and modifies the resulting data so it sounds like it was recorded in stereo.
	MP3 (MPEG Audio Layer 3)	A popular compressed audio format used to transfer audio over the internet. An MP3 file is smaller than a wave file - a one minute piece of audio will take up 10 Mb as a wave file, but less than 1 Mb as an MP3 (depending on the bit rate), but will still sound virtually as good as the original.
	Multimedia	The use of several different media to convey information (text, audio, graphics, animation, video, and interactivity). As the information is presented in various formats, multimedia enhances user experience and makes it easier and faster to grasp information. Multimedia generally implies presenting information in various digital formats. The term "rich media" is synonymous multimedia.
	Multimedia engineering	The engineering process of decompiling an eLearning or similar multimedia product into its components, sending these components for localization, reintegrating the localized components and testing the translated product.
N	Narrator	The Narrator is the human voice or guide for the material being presented in a video or audio project. The most important attributes of a narrator is his or her acoustical characteristics. Speech must be clear, easily understood, and free of any elements that might become a distraction.
	Narration	Narration is the manner in which a "story" is told and refers to dialog used in everything from marketing, advertising, sales, and training productions. It is often referred to as translating the written word to the spoken word in a way that is as consistent as possible with the intent of the writer.
	Native Language	The language of a person's birth and upbringing. While many people are fluent in several languages, their native language is their main language, and was the language they used most throughout their lives. CTS uses only native-speaking voice talents, LD's and translators.
	Non Union Voice Talent	A Voice Performer who is not obligated to abide by the practices of a union such as AFTRA or SAG in the US (ACTRA in Canada).
	Normalization	This effect permanently adjusts the amplitude (volume, essentially) of your audio to a certain value. Normalization is particularly useful when creating a CD using tracks from many different CDs or MP3 files. The volume of each track will be slightly different from the others; normalization will set them each to the same volume for a consistent final CD.
P	Phone Patch	A device that connects the voice talent (at the studio) and a client (at his or her office or another studio) via a standard telephone. The purpose of a phone-patch is to allow someone (usually the client or a director hired by the client) to participate in the production of the voice over recording without physically needing to be there. After booking the talent and recording session at a pre-arranged time, the client calls the studio by telephone and is able hear and direct the session, or give feedback to the talent as if they were in the studio during the recording process.
	Pickup	The term used when at the competition of a project, a new piece of audio needs to be recorded and inserted in the original audio file. This may be due to the client adding new material to the script or due to an error during the original recording.

	Pop Filter	Also called a windscreen, it is a device that fits over or directly in front of the microphone, reducing unwanted sounds from sibilant letters such as "s" and "p", lip smacks, exhalations and wind or air flow.
	Post Production	Post is the general term for the last stage of audio production in which recorded material, such as voice, sound effects and music are put together into a complete form.
	PPT (PowerPoint Presentation)	Microsoft Office PowerPoint is a presentation program developed for the Microsoft Windows and Mac OS computer operating systems and may include narration by a professional voice Talent, adding to the effectiveness of the presentation. Being widely used by business people, educators, and trainers, it is among the most prevalent forms of presentation technology. It is a component of the Microsoft Office system.
	Production	The project or job to be voiced. This is the overall description of presentation including the voiceover work and other components such as video, multimedia, etc. As a general term, it refers to the management of an entire project. More specific types of production include PRE and POST Production. Pre-production are the events leading up to a project, such as casting the voice talent, while Post-Production is the work done after the initial is complete and can include adding sound effects or music to the final product.
	Professional Voice Talent	Also known as the voice actor and is the person who provides voices for the material being recorded. Professional Voiceover delivery is definable by the effectiveness of its delivery and understanding of the genre. Many radio announcers are typically not considered professional voiceover, pertaining to commercial work, due to their "Announcer" delivery. A professional voice actor may specialize in a certain genre rather than perform for all forms of voiceover, and considered an expert in their industry. A professional voice can make the difference between a quality narrated product and an amateur production.
R	Raw audio	Refers to audio voice recorded with no editing. All recorded noise is still present in the audio including, unwanted sounds, breaths and mouth clicks.
	Recording Studio	Recording studios consists of carefully designed rooms that usually include an isolation room where the recording is created (this is here the talent speaks into the microphone), and a control room where the sound engineer records and manipulates the sound from the isolation room.
	RA (Real Audio)	A streaming audio format often used for posting sound files on the internet. Real Audio files are smaller than MP3 files, but are of lower quality if compressed enough to play over a slow connection (such as a 56 kbps modem).
S	SAG (Screen Actors Guild)	A talent union representing over 120,000 film and television performers worldwide. SAG claims exclusive jurisdiction over motion picture performances, and shares jurisdiction of radio, television, internet and other new media with its sister union AFTRA, with which it shares 44,000 dual members. Also affiliated with Associated Actors and Artistes of America (AAAA) and the AFL-CIO
	Sample Rate	See also Bit Depth. The sampling rate is how many times a second the audio recording software "listens" to the incoming audio signal. The choices are 11, 22, or 44 kHz. If you selected 11 kHz, the sample of the incoming audio signal is approximately 11,000 times per second. 44kHz audio is sampled 44,000 times per second. Audio recorded at 44kHz sounds better, but again, takes up more disk space.
	Script	A script is a blueprint for recording an audio project. This is a written account of what needs to be said or voiced by the voiceover actor. In order for the voice component of project to be translated and recorded, the script containing text, character names and time-codes needs to be provided. Scripts should be in formatted in MS Word or Excel in 14 point Arial.
	Self-Guided Audio Tours	A type of tour commonly used in museums or tourist sites using a headset and playback device supporting mp3 or wav files.
	Session Fees	Payments paid to a performer for their initial work. Future payments may include residuals for the continued broadcast of the performance (similar to royalties) for union projects.

	Sibilance	The distortion of sibilants during the recording process. High frequency sounds in speech, such as "S", "SCH", "CH", "F" & "T" are referred to as Sibilants are the cause of sibilance. An example of a well-know sibilant sentence is "Sally sells seashells by the seashore."
	Slate	Used in an audition to identify an actor's name on a demo reel or during an audition. This information is voiced first, followed by the demo material.
	SFX (Sound Effects)	Special audio effects used in the film, television, and entertainment industry that may include the addition of pre-recorded sound effects and foley, or distortion effects such as echo.
	Sound Check	The process by which the sound engineer establishes the appropriate balance between the voice talent and the recording and monitoring system prior to performing.
	Sound Effects	Sound effects or audio effects are artificially created or enhanced sounds, or sound processes used to emphasize artistic or other content of movies, video games, music, or other media.
	Sound engineer	The person working the control room and responsible for sound production. An audio engineer must be proficient with different types of digital software and hardware, including recording media such as analog/digital tape, multitrack recorders and studio recording workstations.
	Streaming Audio	Streaming audio refers to the way that audio is delivered through a computer Streaming audio transfer data in a way that it can be processed as a steady and continuous stream. Streaming technologies are often used on the Internet because most users do not have fast enough access to download large multimedia files quickly, so the client browser or plug-in can start displaying the data before the entire file has been transmitted. Rather than being downloaded first to a machine's hard drive from which it is then played, streaming audio can be listened to while it is being downloaded. The two most popular formats used for streaming audio are RealAudio and Windows Media.
	Sample Rate	The number of times per second the program converting analog to digital "listens" to the analog signal. See Bit Depth.
	Subtitle	Instead of recording a target language version of the source language voice over, text or sub-titles can be added to a video or eLearning application. Sub-titles generally summarize what is being said - allowing the target audience to capture the main points of what the speaker is saying.
T	Talent	Refers to those performers contracted to verbally deliver copy. Voice Talent or voice actor. See Professional Voice Talent.
	Timbre	The combination of harmonic frequencies in voices which give them their characteristic qualities. Synonyms: 'Quality', 'Sonority', 'Tone Color'.
	Time Code	A sequence of numeric codes associated with a script, which describes the start time, end time and length of an audio sequence. The time-code is used to ensure that translated subtitles, captions or audio is the same length as the source audio, allowing it to be inserted into the translated application.
	Transcript/Transcription	To make a full written copy, line by line, of recorded voice material from an audio or video source.
	Tutorials	A tutorial may simply refer to a list of instructions or tips for how to do any of a wide variety of tasks. In computing, a tutorial is a computer program whose purpose it is to assist users in learning how to use (parts of) a software product such as an office suite or any other application, operating system interface or programming tool. There are two kinds of software tutorials: movie tutorials that are viewed by the user, and interactive tutorials where the user follows on-screen instructions, does the tutorial exercises and receives feedback depending on their actions or choices.
	Type of Voice	There are voices that range from the "real every day" type voice to character voices. The choice of voice type can include age range, male or female, and regional accents. This may also depend on the type of read, which can include hard sell, soft sell, narrative, instructional, conversational, sultry, happy or dark, or a voice impersonation.

U	Use of Recording	The actual use of the final produced project is an important factor in determining the Voiceover Talent rates. Use of recordings may be for something as simple as a telephone greeting, or a more elaborate project such as a television commercial or movie trailer. The scope of the recording is also important, as a commercial may be used in a local television or radio market, a larger regional market, or nationally. An audio book CD may be distributed to a small audience, or sold nationally through major booksellers. Both the Use and Scope of the final production are used by to determine fees for a particular project.
	Unicode Fonts	(Also known as UCS fonts and Unicode fonts). Typefaces containing a wide range of characters, letters, digits, glyphs, symbols, ideograms, logograms, etc., which are collectively mapped into the standard Universal Character Set derived from many different languages and scripts from around the world. Unlike most conventional computer fonts, which are specific to a particular language or legacy character set and contain only a small subset of the UCS characters, these fonts attempt to include many thousands of possible glyphs, so that they can be used as a single typeface across multi-lingual documents.
	U-Law Format	A method of digitally encoding analogue audio signals. Also known as MU-Law (pronounced yoo-law and myoo-law). Most telephone quality codecs use mu-law encoded samples.
V	Virtual Tours	Interactive tours combined with video, 3D imagery, audio and other multimedia effects., Commonly used for real estate, internet or television tours. Not to be confused with self-guided audio tours commonly used in museums through the use of a headset and playback device supporting mp3 or wav files.
	Voice Demo	A Voice Demo consists of various types of voiceover samples by one talent, in order for a perspective client to have an understanding of the prospective talent's abilities. It is common for a Voice Actor to have a number of demos to showcase different types of voice work.
	Voice Talent	See Professional Voice Talent.
W	Waveform	A visual representation of the audio signal as displayed in recording and editing software.
	WAV (Waveform Audio Format)	A wave file is uncompressed data, as close a copy to the original analog data as possible, and is much larger than the same file would be in a compressed format such as MP3 or RealAudio.
	Web Based	Training and educational materials accessed through the internet. Corporate training is increasingly taking the form of online web-based self-learning, as staff members access corporate training materials through their internet browser.
	Wild Track	To record a portion of a script out of sequence, usually to correct an error. See also "pickup".
	Wind Screen	See "pop filter".
X	WMA (Windows Media Audio)	A proprietary, compressed audio file format developed by Microsoft. It is part of the Windows Media framework. Files in this format can be played using Windows Media Player, Winamp and many other alternative media players.
	XML (Extensible Markup Language)	A type of file which combines text and additional information about the text, such as HTML and RSS feeds. Common in podcasting.