Module 3

Unit 6: Workflow

Core video transcript

Module 3

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Transcript

Slide 1

Hello. I'm Louise Fryer, from Utopian Voices. In this ADLAB PRO video I will give an overview of the workflow in the traditional audio description of live events. This is Unit 6 in Module 3.

Slide 2

As a describer you will be contacted by a theatre or a production company.

Slide 3

You'll need to agree what model of AD they want you to provide: a traditional or an integrated approach and using one or more describers. You'll need to negotiate a fee and organise for them to provide the tools you need. These are: a programme either in hard copy or an electronic one; tickets to watch the show; a video of the show; an e-version script (if available).   You'll also need to agree a date for a dry run and whether or not a PSL can attend.

Slide 4

Then go to watch a live performance. Take notes on the sets, characters and costumes for the AI and notes of any on-stage action that you think might be hard to see on a video. You might also meet the Stage Manager and walk the set before the show.

Slide 5

The next stage is to write the AI, usually in collaboration with another describer.

Slide 6

The AI is recorded three weeks before the described performance. Send your script in advance to the recording engineer (and the producer if there is one). It is usually up to the theatre to distribute the AI or upload it to their website.

Slide 7

The dry run usually takes place the night before the performance (or earlier for more complex shows such as dance/opera), the theatre technicians should have set up the equipment before you arrive. About an hour before the show starts, carry out a sound check.

Slide 8

After the dry run, you will have a debriefing session to discuss your AD script with whoever was listening.

Slide 9

On the day of the described performance, arrive early for the Touch Tour.
Before the performance carry out another sound check.
If there's to be more than one described performance of the show, note any changes as you go.

Slide 10

At the end of the show, announce the next described production. After the

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performance, report any technical issues to the technicians, pick up any feedback you can, from Front of House staff or direct from users.
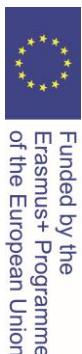
Slide 11

All of the following might be involved in an AD performance

Access officer

Sound technicians

Recording engineer/producer

Front of House Manager

Slide 12

Stage Manager

Assistance Ushers

AD users or evaluators

Describer(s)

Slide 13

The buck stops with the Describer(s). You are not responsible for all the steps, but you need to check that all the steps are covered by ensuring the venue knows what to expect and what to provide.

Slide 14

The whole process takes place over a much longer time period than writing AD for screen. For a long-running show, the work may begin 3-4 weeks before the described performance. You may be booked several months before. In some places, you have to turn it around much more quickly. That might mean seeing it in another venue (if it's a touring production) or watching a

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performance on a Tuesday night with the dry run on the Friday evening and the described performance on the Saturday.

Slide 15

Some theatres record the AD performance, so the AD can be triggered live at future performances by a technician. Some French theatres use this "semi-live approach". This will require a different way of working. An integrated approach involves the describer in rehearsals and more conversations with members of the company.

Slide 17

That was unit 6 "Workflow" in Module 3 "Describing live events." With me Louise Fryer.

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