

This Guide shows you how to manage your media files, safely store and backup data, and setup an efficient NLE workflow. Some guidelines will vary based on the scope of the project and the types of files you're working with.

Building a Data Storage System

First thing's first: data storage! Before you open up your memory cards, you should make sure you have a safe, reliable data storage system in place. No editor wants to experience hard drive failure. Having a good storage system will give you peace of mind in the event something happens. We recommend using the 3-2-1 system for your data storage needs:



The 3-2-1 storage system requires you to maintain at least 3 copies of your files - 2 on-site on two different types of media (Backup Hard Drive or a RAID system), and 1 copy offsite. Some editors keep their onsite drives mirrored by using a recurring backup and then update offsite data on a weekly schedule while in active production. You can use programs like Carbon Copy Cloner or SuperDuper to help facilitate disk-based backup efficiently so you're only updating files that have changed or been added without having to re-copy things like RAW footage. Don't erase your camera cards unless you have everything saved on at least 3 different mediums. Alternatively, you may rely on cloud storage options like Dropbox or Google Drive to keep a copy of smaller assets - like your project files - as an additional protection. You can never have too many backups!

Organize Your Hard Drives

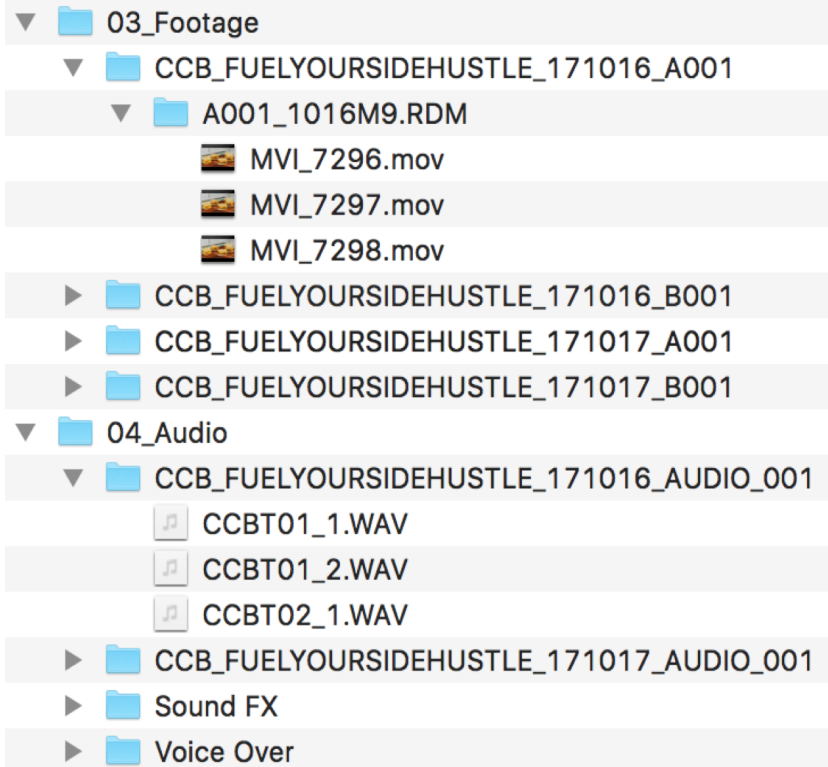
Now that you've figured out your storage system, you're ready to dump all that footage onto your drives and begin organizing.

- ▶ 01_Exports
- ▶ 02_Project Files
- ▶ 03_Footage
- ▶ 04_Audio
- ▶ 05_Graphics
- ▶ 06_VFX
- ▶ 07_Color Grading
- ▶ 08_Production Documents

Here's an example of a well-organized file structure. Numbering your folders helps maintain a specific sort order. Save this folder as a template for future projects.

- ▼ 01_Exports
 - ▼ Masters
 - ▼ Facebook
 - ccb_fuelyoursidehustle_30_1920x1080_v05_prores422hq.mov
 - ▶ Instagram
 - ▼ Rough Cuts
 - ▼ 2017_11_15
 - ccb_fuelyoursidehustle_facebook_171115_v01.mp4
 - ▶ 2017_11_18
- ▼ 02_Project Files
 - 20171119_ccb_fuelyoursidehustle_pl.prproj
 - ▶ Adobe Premiere Pro Auto-Save
 - ▶ z_archive

Your "Exports" folder contains multiple versions of your roughs and masters. Use descriptive titles so each file's delivery purpose is clear (i.e. master, for sound editor). Stick with version numbers instead of labeling as "FINAL" and include key specs (duration, aspect ratio) in the file names, especially for cut-downs. Last but not least, date everything using YYMMDD format!



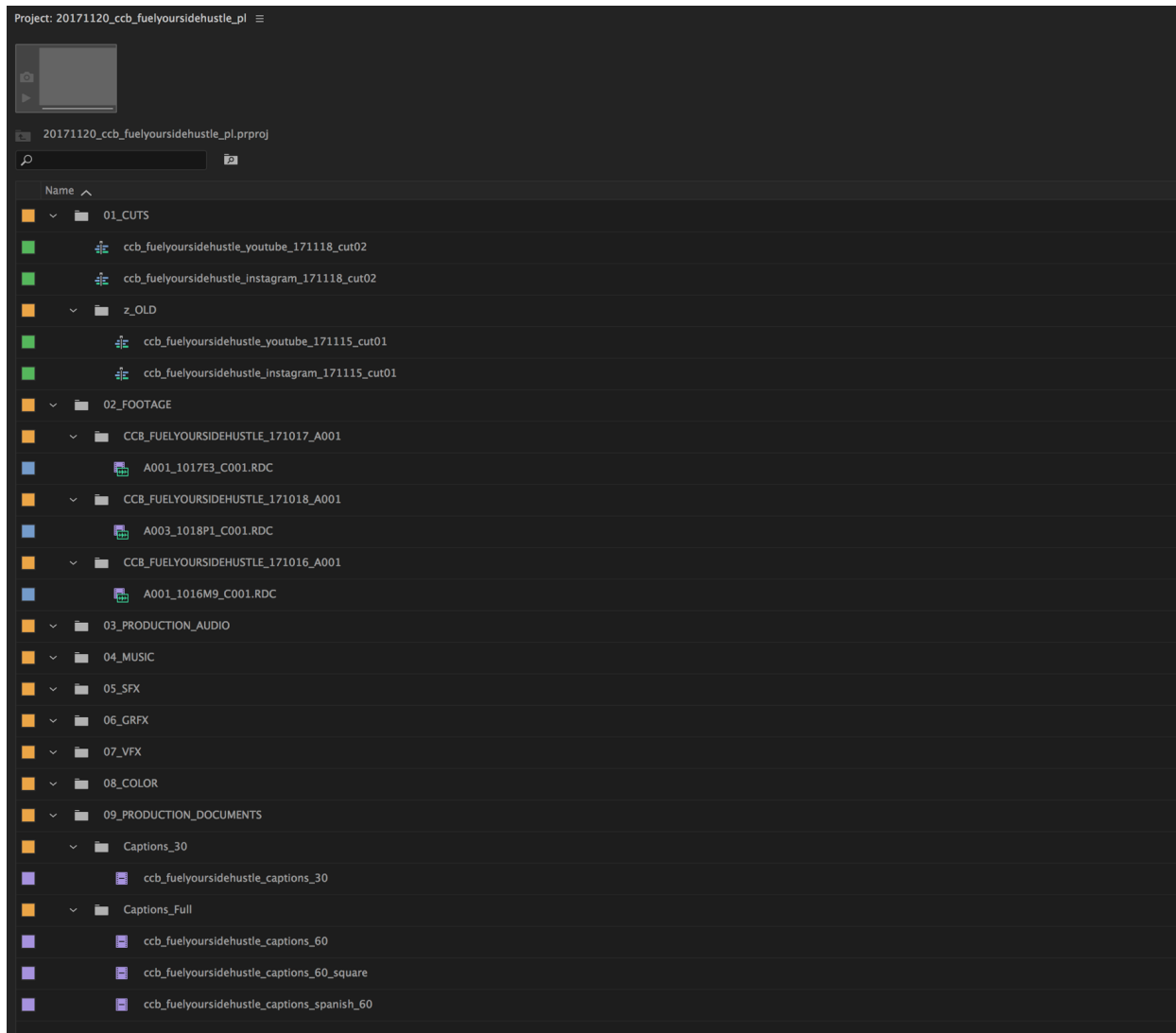
Organize your footage by camera ID, camera roll and shoot date. In the example, we've organized the main footage file by CLIENT_PROJECTNAME _DATE _CAMERA & ROLL. ("RDM" stands for RED camera). Audio is done similarly. The key is to make sure the clip and audio file names in your drives match the ones in your NLE system so they can sync up properly each time you open your timelines.

Setting Up Your Non-Linear (NLE) Workflow

Some editors like to mirror the way their drives are set up in their NLE system, while others structure things a bit differently depending on the scope and the types of assets they're working with. Here's a list of some of key differences and techniques for streamlining the editing process, along with a sample of an organized NLE workflow:

1. **Bins:** Bins are similar to folders – they keep your clips and sequences in order. Sort bins by shoot date, scene number, actors in the frame, subject matter - whatever makes the most sense for your project. Avid and Final Cut Pro X manage their bin systems a little differently, but the principles for organization are the same. We suggest creating bins for RAW footage, merged clips, selects, and archive or rejects to manage your footage.

2. **Sequences:** Editors create sequences to assemble their final edit and to store and organize their video footage. Previous or outdated sequences should be placed into an archive folder for reference, but out of the way of the current version.



3. **Clips:** Clips represent your media in the NLE. This will encompass video, audio elements, and graphic pieces you will import into the project. Some editors rename their media clips so they can quickly identify their content. For scripted projects, use scene numbers, camera setup ID (“A” for Medium Shot, etc.), take number and camera ID to rename clips based on script order – and preserve the original clip titles as metadata for backup.

4. **Subclips:** Subclips allow you to select and use the best parts of your footage without altering the main clip. Generate a subclip by tagging the part of the clip you want to use and hold the “CMD” key (“CTRL” Key on PC) to drop into a new bin. Rename the subclip in the dialogue box. Creating subclips is an especially efficient method for identifying the best footage for documentary and interview projects.

5. **Versioning:** Leave yourself some breadcrumbs throughout the editing process by versioning up your project file every time you make a significant change or revision. Keep old cuts in an archive bin.

6. **Metadata:** Most modern media encompasses some form of metadata. At the most basic level, this would encompass time of day timecode and can scale to something as complex as a look-up-table. Metadata can be a powerful tool in your arsenal for working with other creative partners in your process such as audio mixers and colorists as it adds additional information to reference when transferring files to them and also gives them a better understanding of how you were working with the media during the editorial process.