Introduction to Script Writing using Celtx

Welcome to my first online video tutorial about using a Script Writing Software called Celtx.

I want to give you some background information about the process of writing a script and introduce some terminology.

Transition.

Because if you're not at all familiar with script writing lingo, you'll have a bit of trouble figuring out how to put the building blocks together to create a well-formatted story.

So let's talk about what scripts are and those script conventions that will help you build and focus your story.

Think about a script as a blueprint or roadmap that outlines your story through visual descriptions, actions of characters and dialogue.

Transition to Celtx splash page.

In Celtx, there's different kinds of 'scripts' or roadmaps that allow you to create and align your stories with visual media. You can create a Film Script, you can create a Theater Play, you can create a Comic Book or Storyboard. All of these 'script' templates come loaded with the conventions required to tell your story in the right format. It's important because it frees you up to just get in and write.

I'm going to pick the 'Film' or 'Screenplay' template, as it really has the building blocks that I can use for multimedia projects at my work.

So let's now look at the terminology here to set the foundation for writing a script in Celtx.

Transition to blank Screenplay page/project in Celtx.

When we first open our 'Screenplay' you notice that it preloads the main content pane with an element called the **'Scene Heading'.** This area is our Script Editor Toolbar.

This is one of the key building blocks to inform your reader there's a change or transition to the story. Basically, we're setting up the 'scene' of where our story is taking place on a point in time.

What you want to do here is write a short description of the location and time of day of a scene. This is also known as a "slugline."

For example: INT. HOME OFFICE – DAY.

Create a Scene Heading or Show an Example.

This means that the action takes place inside a home office during daylight hours.

The next element is **Action**.

This is supposed to describe what we see on the screen. You typically write in prose, describing all the relevant information within a scene concerning the location and the characters in it if you have them. You can be as descriptive as you need to be. Just remember it's to describe the scene and the important plot points.

Create an Action or Show an Example.

I don't have any further details about the action in the scene. So here's where if you have characters in the scene you want to introduce them. So we're going to select the **Character** element here.

This is the name of the person in our story that we are going to be consistently referring to.

Enter a Character Name or Show an Example.

The next element is **Dialog**.

Once you identify a character, you just need to hit return and Celtx gives you the dialog element. This is the spoken word the character is going to say.

We could put in another character – that means we'd have to go back and update our scene or we can just move on.

Enter Dialog for Character or Show an Example.

I'm going to use the **Parenthetical** to describe the movements of this character during a piece of dialogue. These always appear in brackets. These are often frowned upon because the idea is that the action can carry this. They can be adverbial or not, there's different ways to use if you need to. Here I'll just demonstrate one way.

Enter Parenthetical or Show an Example.

So if we're done with this scene, we'll use the **Transition** element.

Enter Parenthetical or Show an Example.

These mark the end of the scene and describe a transition within the telling of the story. For example, DISSOLVE TO: means the action will blur and refocus into another scene. This can help you denote a passage of time in the telling of the story.

I'm going to use FLASHBACK:

Enter Transition or Show an Example.

Then I need to set up my Flashback scene. If I have more than one I need to set it up, so I'm going to just have one single scene where I go back.

And I'm going to use this last element, called **Shot** to help develop this scene and tell the reader the focal point has changed. Basically, it's what the camera sees.

Enter Shot or Show an Example.

Ok, so this was a high-level overview of the key building blocks of a script and how to use them in the Celtx Script Editor.

When you're done you can click PDF to create a version of your script in a print-ready format.

Demonstrate.

Thanks.

Note: Lastly, the **Text** element is any part of a script that is not a meaningful script element.