

Video Journalism : Editing Software Options

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Andrew Lih @fuzheado,
Lam Vo @lamthuyvo

Choosing the right nonlinear editor (NLE) for video news is not simple, as there are many excellent options available. Apple's infamous remake of the market leading **Final Cut Pro** (FCP) has been polarizing, but we try to provide a fair comparison of features, including the comeback kid, Adobe Premiere.

SHORT TAKE: FCP 7 is a dead end that cannot multitask well or take in new formats. Move away from it ASAP. Looking to stick to the same paradigm of marking in/out points and three point editing? Take a serious look at **Adobe Premiere**. Its integration with the Adobe programs is a major advantage and its auto speech to text transcription can be a huge plus for news gathering. It also has better support for media asset management (MAM) and newsroom systems.

While **FCP X** works very differently ("iMovie on steroids") people have found it's incredibly fast to cut together short pieces with its skim-select-drag-drop operation. Its simpler, faster to learn interface could be a huge advantage for folks just starting out, and its ease of exporting to popular services like Youtube and Vimeo is a major plus. It has a powerful metadata/keyword system, but is its own beast (ie. closed standard)

AVID? If you're considering **Avid**, you likely have other external considerations, such as integration with an existing broadcast workflow, or prior expertise of team members. That goes beyond the scope of this document, which is meant to give advice to new or individual editors. Avid may be the right choice even for beginners.

CRITERIA	FINAL CUT 7	FINAL CUT X	ADOBE PREMIERE
Editing paradigm	Traditional NLE with bins for footage and sequences with tracks. Two-up display: Viewer and Canvas windows	Skimming (mouseover) the quick way to preview footage in Events. Projects contain one "magnetic timeline" pushing items to the left. Can act as traditional NLE	Traditional NLE with bins for footage and sequences with tracks. Two-up display: Source and Program windows
Ease of use	Medium	Simpler to start	Medium
Advantages	Existing base Training materials Runs on older hardware	Skimming very quick Magnetic timeline intuitive Multicam support Simpler exporting Powerful metadata system	Familiar for FCP7 users Adobe suite/workflow integration Cheap, as part of suite Speech to text transcription Media asset (MAM) integration
Disadvantages	Dead end product Ingest/transcode slow No new codecs or features	Magnetic timeline not for all Can't open FCP7 projects (!) Import/EDL/OMF via 3rd party External device control limited Media asset (MAM) support? Unpredictable Apple	Older paradigm Adobe subscription pricing may be turnoff Rendering engine while impressive, can be slow
Typical user	Legacy or existing projects Existing software Need to control older tape decks	For novice video learners Quick turnaround on stories Metadata/keyword junkies	Want to stick to traditional NLE paradigm. Power users of Adobe suite and After Effects (almost a no brainer to choose Premiere)

Final Cut Pro X

Skimming footage in Events. Only a "one-up" display needed



Magnetic Timeline

Adobe Premiere Pro CS6

Familiar two-up Source/Program windows



Traditional track-based editing