

Stock Footage & Video Licensing Business — Workbook

This workbook accompanies the Stock Footage & Video Licensing Business course and gives you a practical execution layer for every module. Work through each section after completing its corresponding course module — the exercises, worksheets, and checklists translate the course concepts into real portfolio decisions, shoot plans, and submission-ready metadata. Complete the action plan and templates to have a functioning contributor workflow in place by the time you finish.

Understanding the Stock Footage Market

Validate your niche choice with real marketplace data and establish the legal foundations before your first shoot.

Exercise: Marketplace Demand Research Sprint

Open Pond5 and Shutterstock in two browser tabs. Choose one subject you are considering shooting. Complete this research exercise for that subject to determine whether it has viable commercial demand.

- Search your subject on Pond5. How many results appear? What is the price range of the top 10 clips? What resolution and frame rate do the top sellers use?

- Search the same subject on Shutterstock. Open the top 3 clips and note the number of downloads shown. Are these clips shot on a professional set, or are they achievable with your current gear?

- Type your subject into the Pond5 search bar and note the autocomplete suggestions. List 5 related subjects that appear — these are what buyers are actively searching for.

- Based on your research, write one sentence stating why you will or will not pursue this subject, with one specific piece of evidence from your search.

Worksheet: Niche Evaluation Scorecard

Score three potential shooting niches across five criteria. Use a 1–5 scale for each. Leave the total column blank and calculate totals yourself after scoring.

Niche / Subject

Demand signal (search volume, downloads visible on Pond5)

Supply gap (existing clips: low supply = 5, saturated = 1)

Equipment match (can you shoot this with current gear? yes = 5)

Release complexity (people-free = 5, needs many model releases = 1)

Personal access (easy to access this location or subject = 5)

Total score (calculate yourself)

Decision: Pursue / Research More / Skip

Notes

Checklist: Legal Readiness Checklist

- Downloaded at least one model release app (Easy Release or Snap&Sell) on my phone
- Reviewed the model release template accepted by Pond5 and Shutterstock
- Created a cloud folder for storing release files (Google Drive or Dropbox)
- Identified any planned shoot locations and researched permit requirements
- Listed any branded or copyrighted elements in my planned shooting environments and made a plan to avoid or clear them
- Created a naming convention for linking release files to clip filenames

Shooting for the Marketplace

Set up your camera workflow, plan your first cluster shoot, and establish a post-production pipeline that produces submission-ready clips efficiently.

Worksheet: Camera Configuration Sheet

Record your specific camera model settings that you will use as your stock footage shooting preset. Fill in the fields based on your camera's menu system and the course technical specifications.

Camera make and model

Chosen resolution (4K or 1080p)

Chosen frame rate (24/25/30/60fps) and intended use case

Shutter speed (for chosen frame rate, at 180-degree rule)

Maximum ISO you will allow before rejecting a clip

Codec and container format

Target bitrate (Mbps)

Stabilisation method (tripod / gimbal / IBIS)

ND filter range owned

Notes on any camera-specific limitations to be aware of

Exercise: Cluster Shoot Planning Exercise

Plan a single one-hour shoot session using the cluster shooting strategy. You should produce at least five distinct submittable clips from one location setup.

- Describe your shoot location and primary subject. What is the specific commercial use case a buyer would have for this footage?

- List all five clips in your planned cluster: wide establishing shot, medium shot, two close-up inserts, and one motion clip. Write a one-line description of each.

- What time of day will you shoot and why? How does the available light match the mood buyers would expect for this subject?

- Write down any potential release or copyright issues for this specific location and how you will handle them before shooting.

Checklist: Pre-Submission Export Checklist

- All clips trimmed to usable content only — no camera startup frames, focus hunting, or tail drift
- Neutral correction grade applied — white balance set, highlights not clipping, blacks at 0 on scopes
- No stylistic grade or LUT applied that would limit buyer flexibility
- Audio track reviewed — no copyrighted ambient music audible
- Export settings match target platform minimums (resolution, codec, bitrate)
- Files named using my defined naming convention (YYYY-MM-DD_subject_take##.mp4)
- Releases saved to the corresponding shoot folder and named to match clip files
- Final clip quality check: noise level, stabilisation, and horizon alignment reviewed on a monitor at 100%

Metadata, Keywording, and Marketplace Submission

Build a complete metadata package for a batch of clips and submit it to all three platforms using the CSV workflow.

Exercise: Keyword Research Drill

Choose one clip from your planned portfolio. Build a complete 50-keyword list using the four-layer method from the course. This exercise takes approximately 20 minutes.

- Write your 10 literal description keywords — what is physically visible in the clip, named precisely.

- Write your 10 context keywords — location, time of day, season, industry sector, geographic region.

- Write your 10 demographic and concept keywords — who is in the clip (age, diversity descriptors) and what emotion or concept the clip evokes.

- Search your primary subject on Pond5, open the top-ranked clip, and read its visible keyword tags. List 10 relevant terms from that clip that you had not included in your list — add these to your master list and note which layer they belong to.

Worksheet: Metadata CSV Template Builder

Use this worksheet to draft the metadata fields for one clip before entering them into your master CSV. Completing this per-clip draft first prevents inconsistencies when doing bulk entry.

Filename (exact, including extension)

Title (8–15 words, following the Action + Context + Mood formula)

Description (2–4 sentences: visible content, context, suggested commercial use)

Keywords (comma-separated, minimum 30, maximum 50 for Shutterstock/Getty)

Category (choose from marketplace category list)

Model release attached? (yes / no)

Property release attached? (yes / no)

Editorial use only? (yes / no)

Pond5 price (your set price in USD)

Pond5 exclusive? (yes / no)

Notes or flags

Checklist: Multi-Platform Submission Checklist

- Master metadata CSV complete for all clips in this batch
- All model and property releases uploaded to each platform's release manager
- Clips uploaded to Pond5 contributor portal with pricing set
- Metadata CSV imported to Pond5 and verified per clip
- Clips uploaded to Shutterstock contributor portal
- Metadata CSV imported to Shutterstock and editorial/commercial type confirmed per clip
- Clips uploaded or queued for Getty/iStock contributor portal
- Submission confirmation received from each platform
- Submission date and batch details logged in master portfolio spreadsheet
- Rejection notification alerts enabled on all three platform accounts

Portfolio Growth and Revenue Optimisation

Analyse your earnings data, set pricing strategy, and build a quarterly growth plan based on what your best-performing clips reveal.

Exercise: Portfolio Pareto Analysis

Once you have at least 20 clips live and 60 days of earnings data, complete this analysis to identify your portfolio's Pareto clips and define your next shoot direction.

- Export your Pond5 earnings data (Earnings Report CSV). Sort by lifetime earnings descending. What are the top 3 clips by total earnings? What subject, composition, and time of day do they share?
 - Look at your bottom 10% performers (zero or near-zero downloads). Is the problem likely metadata, pricing, quality, or oversupply in the category? Write your hypothesis for each and the one change you will make.
 - Compare your top earner's keyword list against a bottom performer in a similar category. List three specific keyword differences that might explain the performance gap.
 - Write a one-paragraph shoot brief for your next session based on what your top performers reveal about buyer preferences. Be specific: subject, composition style, time of day, and any talent or location requirements.
-

Worksheet: Quarterly Revenue Tracker

Record your portfolio metrics at the end of each quarter. Fill in actual figures from platform dashboards. Leave all calculated fields (totals, averages, change columns) blank — compute them yourself to catch data entry errors.

Quarter (e.g., Q3 2024)

Total clips live — Pond5

Total clips live — Shutterstock

Total clips live — Getty/iStock

Total portfolio size (all platforms)

Revenue — Pond5 (USD)

Revenue — Shutterstock (USD)

Revenue — Getty/iStock (USD)

Total quarterly revenue (calculate yourself)

Downloads — Pond5

Downloads — Shutterstock

Downloads — Getty/iStock

Average earnings per download (calculate yourself)

New clips submitted this quarter

Acceptance rate this quarter (accepted / submitted, calculate yourself)

Top-earning clip title

Top-earning subject category

Next quarter target: clips to submit

Next quarter target: revenue goal

Notes

Checklist: Portfolio Scale-Up Action Checklist

- Weekly shoot day and weekly submission day scheduled in calendar
- Master portfolio spreadsheet created with all live clips, submission dates, and earnings
- Backblaze B2 or equivalent cloud backup configured for original footage archive
- Pond5 subscription bundle participation decision made and setting confirmed in contributor account
- Price review scheduled for all clips older than 90 days with 3+ downloads
- Seasonal content calendar built for the next three months ahead of peak demand periods
- Adjacent revenue opportunity assessed (stock music, motion graphics, direct licensing) and decision noted
- Monthly earnings report export and spreadsheet update added to calendar as recurring task

Your Action Plan

1. Complete the Niche Evaluation Scorecard for at least three subjects and choose one primary niche to launch with
2. Set up your camera shooting preset and confirm it meets the minimum technical specs for Pond5 and Shutterstock
3. Download a model release app and create your cloud release storage folder before your first shoot
4. Execute your first cluster shoot session and produce at least five distinct clips from one setup
5. Complete the neutral correction grade and export all clips using your defined naming convention
6. Build your first complete metadata CSV with titles, descriptions, and 50-keyword lists for all clips
7. Create contributor accounts on Pond5, Shutterstock, and Getty/iStock and complete identity verification on each
8. Submit your first batch of clips to all three platforms using the CSV bulk import workflow
9. Log all submissions in your master portfolio spreadsheet and set up earnings report alerts
10. After 60 days of live clips, complete the Portfolio Pareto Analysis and plan your second shoot based on earnings data

