



albert: year one report

carbon footprinting the TV industry

Report prepared by The Sustainable Business Practice in partnership with BAFTA

November 2012



Happy first birthday to Albert – a healthy, growing one year old!

Albert, the carbon calculator for on-screen media production, was first introduced to the world one year ago (November 2011). Albert is a partnership project administered by BAFTA and run with the support of a cross-industry consortium.

The mission of the consortium is to measure and then reduce the carbon footprint of the television production industry across the UK. This ambition has been made possible by the development and use of Albert. In this, our first year report, we want to share with you some of the initial findings.

The consortium partners, as well as many small independent production companies, have supported this project through the collection and reporting of data. This has been pivotal to ensuring industry wide representation and disclosure. You can see who is involved in the consortium on the back of this document.

We think Albert has achieved a lot for a one year old. After a year of collating data, the consortium has now arrived at a figure against which future productions can be benchmarked. This will also help us achieve the key outcome of a resource- efficient and low carbon television production industry. After all, it is only by understanding what contributes to a production's carbon footprint that we can begin to focus on efficient and targeted carbon reduction...

What is the big headline?

For **every hour** of on-screen media production the industry is responsible for an average of **5.8 tonnes** of associated carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (here by referred to as CO₂). This is a very similar figure to the average annual carbon footprint of a person living within the EU but that probably does not help create a mental image of what 5.8 tonnes might look like in practice. 5.8 t CO₂...

...is the equivalent emissions to one passenger flying around the equator in an aeroplane

...would fill the volume of the London Olympic pool.

...weighs approximately the same as six MINI Coopers (other small cars are available!)

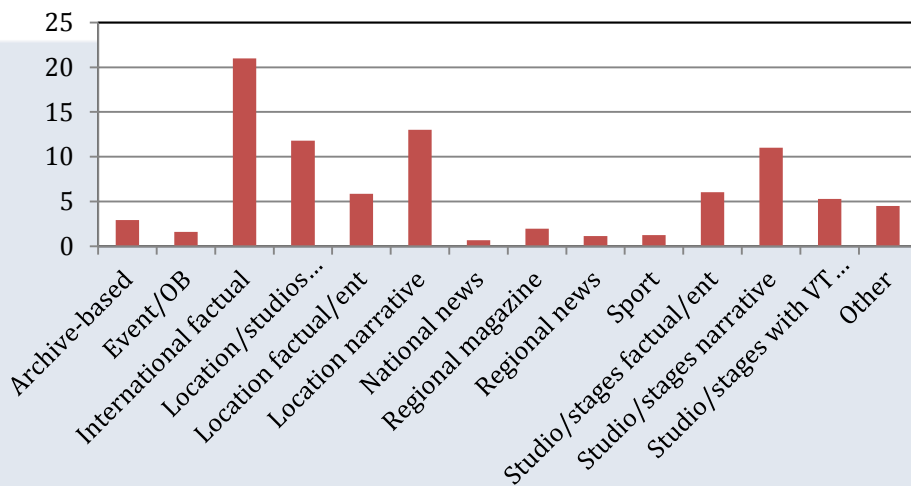


How did we arrive at this number?

While we can't claim to have footprinted every single hour of programming that was made last year, we did gather a lot of data that was crunched down to give us the figure of 5.8 tonnes. The graphs show you the numbers but here is where the detail came from:-

- Albert has 818 registered users who represent 50 member companies.
- During our first year, 15 of the registered companies filed at least one carbon footprint.
- We gathered together the data from an impressive 266 TV productions and footprinted 1297 hours of output.
- We were able to capture footprints representative of many of the main TV production methods

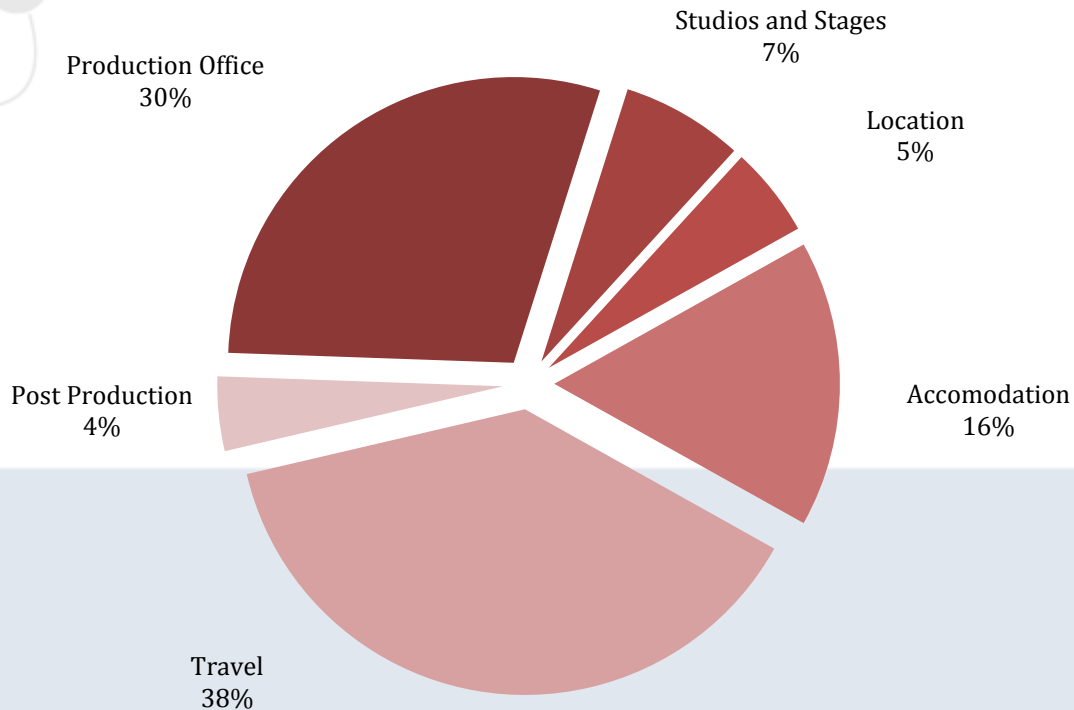
Average CO₂ per hour, by production method



What else did we find out?

We were able to take a close look at which parts of the production process contribute the most carbon dioxide to our average figure of 5.8 tonnes per hour. As you can see from the graph, Albert looks at the six components that make up the majority of activity in most productions. For this report we have not separated out the data on a genre-by-genre basis although it should be no surprise that some differences do exist, particularly where international travel is involved. Here is a quick summary of what we discovered:

Breakdown of the 5.8 t CO₂ average



- The biggest carbon impacts per hour were associated with travel and the production office. Between them, these two categories represent the first 3.9 tonnes of our 5.8 tonnes per hour average. That's a whopping 68% of the carbon footprint average.
- Next in line is accommodation – hotels and other overnight accommodation for cast and crew represents 1 tonne of carbon per hour.
- Studios contribute a surprisingly modest 0.4 tonnes per hour of production, although this is in part due to the fact that many of the footprinted programmes are filmed outside or on location and that as yet not all our studios have meters needed to give readings.
- The final part of the 5.8 tonnes is made up of location work – particularly diesel generators - and post production, each of which contributes less than 0.5 tonnes per hour.

How Albert has already made a difference

It's still too early in Albert's young life to show a direct reduction in carbon emissions as a result of people using it. Obviously we hope that will come further down the line! However we believe that the process of using Albert will encourage programme makers to think about what the environmental impacts of their production are and how they can reduce them.

The BBC's Volcano Live, for example, hired local production staff when filming in Hawaii to help keep their costs and carbon down. Albert showed them they saved 14 tonnes of carbon by reducing the number of flights. And their decision has wider sustainability benefits too – hiring staff out in Hawaii meant work for local people, meaning the production was of benefit to the people living where it was filmed.

Closer to home, the crew and presenter of Our Food decided to travel together from location to location rather than in separate cars. Again, this cut cost and carbon while increasing the productivity of the team who established a good working relationship while travelling.

Small steps perhaps, but indicative of how cutting the carbon can have unexpected benefits to people, profit and the planet.

What will happen next year?

Next year we are going to go into even more analytical detail. We will have more data to work with and a benchmark against which we can compare next year's figures. Hopefully we will be able to report some real improvements in the amount of carbon dioxide associated with each hour of programming – though as we get better at gathering and recording the information Albert needs, we know it might not be as simple as that!

We're not claiming that Albert is a magic wand. Productions won't cut their carbon just by entering data onto a website. But we believe that using the tool is a first step towards carbon reduction and developing a standard against which all productions can measure their impact. We hope our work will expand further in the next year into developing and promoting sustainable production methods. Technology may ultimately provide us with many of the tools we need to move towards low-carbon production, but this will not happen without the support and commitment of the industry.

Now is a great time to join the movement around sustainability in TV. If you haven't already done so, please join us by signing up to use Albert. Remember, it's free.





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