BUDGET CATEGORY LIST FOR INDEPENDENT DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKERS

One of the hardest things for independent documentary filmmakers to get a handle on is managing finances. It is also one of the most important areas to master. There is every reason to do so: to avoid paying more money in taxes than is necessary, to keep track of film-related expenses to make reports to granting agencies, etc., etc. I have used the following income and expense categories for many years. Collectively, they have accounted nicely for every income and expense dollar and for every film need. The categories can be entered into any financial management software. The tax categories refer to the U.S. federal tax schedules B and C. In passing them on for you and your accountant to review, I do so while expressly taking no responsibility whatsoever for any legal or financial consequences that might incur (you knew that was coming, didn't you).

Peter Thompson

CATEGORY NAME	TYPE		TAX CATEGORY
Film	Income	Detail	Receipts or Sales [C]
Grants	Income	Detail	Other Income [C]
Interest Earned	Income	Detail	Interest Income (Taxable) [B]
Other	Income	Detail	Other Income [C]
Writings	Income	Detail	Receipts or Sales [C]
Auto	Expense	Detail	Car & Truck Expenses [C]
Bank Reconciliation	Expense	Detail	
Bank Service Charges	Expense	Detail	Bank Service Charges (C]
Books/Pubs/Dues	Expense	Detail	Dues & Publications (C]
Business Gifts	Expense	Detail	Other Expenses [C]
Cleaning	Expense	Detail	Laundry & Cleaning (C]
Depreciation- 5 yr Macrs	Expense	Detail	Depreciation [C]
Equip Purchase	Expense	Detail	Other Expenses (CI
Equip Rental	Expense	Detail	Rent (C]
Equip Repair	Expense	Detail	Repairs [C]
Film Supplies	Expense	Detail	Supplies [CI
Film Services	Expense	Detail	Other Expenses [C]
Film Labor/Consultants	Expense	Detail	Other Expenses [C]
Film Travel/Location	Expense	Detail	Travel [C]
Legal/Prof Services	Expense	Detail	Legal & Professional Services (C]
Meals/Entertainment	Expense	Detail	Meals & Entertainment (C]
Office/Supplies	Expense	Detail	Office Expense [C]
Office/Repair & Maint.	Expense	Detail	Repairs [CI
Other	Expense	Detail	Other Expenses [C]
Parking	Expense	Detail	Other Expenses [CI
Postage	Expense	Detail	Office Expense [C]
Prof Development	Expense	Detail	Other Expenses (C]
Telephone	Expense	Detail	Utilities & Telephone (C]
Utilities	Expense	Detail	Utilities & Telephone (C]