Making an OMF file from Final Cut Pro

There are a number of methods for transferring the audio from your timeline sequence in FCP (or Premiere) to an Adobe Audition multitrack sessio, but only one method really makes the audio editing process easy. I recommend using the OMF (Open Media Format) file method.

An OMF file is a format originally created by Avid to transfer audio from their picture editing software into an audio editing program, but most other video and audio software use the method as well.

Here's how OMF files work: FCP will create one big file that contains many audio files inside of it. The first part of the OMF file is your edited sequence, noting all of your audio cuts. Then, every audio clip that you used will be stripped down to just the part you actually used in your sequence (with a little extra at the beginning and end) and put inside that OMF file.

Then, Audition will take the OMF file and make a multitrack session, then recreate all the original audio clips from FCP.

Notice that nowhere in the last few paragraphs was video mentioned. You have to send a separate video file from FCP to Audition so that you can edit in sync to the picture. OMF is used for sending Audio Files ONLY.

Finally, when you're finished with the soundtrack in Audition, you can export an AIF from that program, and lay the AIF back into your project in FCP.

So that's a lot of the ideas, but what are the actual buttons to press? Here's the step-by-step directions:

First, start with your completed sequence in FCP.

- Select the correct Sequence in your Browser
- Select "File > Export > Audio to OMF"
- An "Audio OMF Export" window will open up
    - Set the Data rate to "48 KHz" and bit depth to "16-bit"
    - Set handles to "00:00:05:00" (or 5 seconds)
        - "Handles" are extra audio (5 secs in this case) that the OMF file will include at the beginning and end of each edited audio file.
        - This allows for extra editing in STP
    - Check "Include Crossfade Transitions"
    - If you want to keep the original levels and stereo panning from FCP
        - Then check those setting on
        - Most of the time, you want to start in STP from scratch so you leave "Levels" and "Pan" off
    - Click "OK"
- FCP will now ask you what to call the file and where to create it.
    - You can put the file anywhere, but your FW drive is probably the smartest place for it (make sure to make a folder specifically for this project!)
- Don't forget to also render a video file from FCP.
    - Usually, the DV codec works best