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HD Essentials



Carolyn Giardina

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Cineworks Building HD And Data Workflows

May 05, 2006, Carolyn Giardina ---

Cineworks Digital Studios in Miami is a film lab and postproduction facility for indie films, commercials (clients include Coca Cola, Pepsi, Bud Lite, Toyota, and Verizon, to name a few), music videos, television, documentaries, and they also work on numerous projects with film schools throughout the U.S.

With a varied client base and growing production options available to filmmakers, Cineworks—like an increasing number of commercial post houses—needed to support a variety of formats including 16mm, 35mm, Super 35mm, HD and SD. To do this, the company decided to develop a datacentric workflow that could handle any resolution, both input and output. It also decided to build a Digital Intermediate (DI) theater that could support 2k resolution for client reviews, dailies, and real-time color correction. At the same time, the workflow had to be affordable for clients.

Today there are many technical possibilities and each facility is challenged to configure a custom system. After researching its options, Cineworks came up with one that fit its needs. It now features a main theater, equipped with an NEC 2k digital projector, a 14 x 7 ft. screen, and Assimilate's Scratch—an all-in-one, datacentric postproduction system that includes real-time, multiresolution review/playback, assemble/edit, conform, primary color grading, audio, visual effects, data management, and final output to film or HD. Cineworks also uses Scratch's Scaffolds module for secondary color grading/correction.

The company begins its DI pipeline by doing a flat scan in its Sony Vialta telecine; the footage also goes through Kodak's Telecine Calibration System, and into an HDCAM SR deck. The pictures are then converted to data for postproduction in the Scratch theater, or in one of the company's additional color correction suites, one of which centers on an Avid Nitris DS and the other on a da Vinci 2K Plus.

Using these capabilities, Cineworks recently completed director Jonathan Wyche's indie film *Planet Ibsen*, which was accepted into the Santa Barbara International Film Festival. The film was shot in 16mm, and Cineworks completed the job with Scratch, doing front-

end work and then finishing in HD.

Another recent indie project, *The Way Back Home*—produced by Michael King and Paul Sirmons, and directed by Reza Badiyi—was lensed in Super35mm; the negative was converted to 1920 x 1080 HD video and recorded to the HDCAM SR deck over a dual-link connection, so that the image was recorded with the full 4:4:4 color space. The company reported that the Bluefish444 LUST board, capable of converting the 10-bit RGB video directly to 10-bit DPX files during capture, enabled the importing to Scratch, as well as the final output to HD.

Editor/colorist Bradley Greer used Scratch and its CONstruct data management module as the basic user interface. Each shot within a scene was organized into a folder of sequential image files, in which each file was a frame. These folders were assembled into a timeline according to an EDL. Scratch handled the shot matching, adjustments for time-of-day lighting, as well as created black-and-white images from color negatives for flashbacks which added a classic touch.

Vinny Hogan, founder, president, and co-owner of Cineworks, reports that further expansion of datacentric services are planned in order to support a variety of options.

While it is the independent film market where the demand started, Hogan said he wishes to introduce this random access postproduction workflow to commercialmakers. "The nonlinear workflow it the biggest advantage," he said, "whether a cut spot or raw footage."



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