

Star East Digital ramps up productivity with SCRATCH Data and 4K Workflows

As the largest post production facility in South Korea, Star East Digital Lab does the post for an average of 25+ feature films each year. To handle their increasing workload, CEO Yoon Kim and digital artist Kevin Kang chose ASSIMILATE's real-time SCRATCH® Digital Process Solution in November 2007, and by the following January they finished two long-form films that released the same day – January 31, 2008, Korea's New Years' Day. They also did the post production for "Take Off", Korea's current #1 box-office hit.

With two SCRATCH licenses, Star East Digital initially used one system as a one-stop solution for these films in the managing of data, editing, conforming, color grading, adding in VFX, and finishing.

Kang notes, "We had both *The Game* (2008) and *Radio Days* (2008) in post production at the same time, with the same release dates, so our team put in some very long hours, including 24-hour days to get everything just right. One artist did the conforming, and while he was resting, I did the color grading, and then we would go back and forth. We had SCRATCH set up on a XSAN network with fiber channel so we were easily able to transfer files back and forth. SCRATCH proved to be a very fast and very reliable data workflow."

A second SCRATCH system was used for the conforming process. Kang says, "We have found SCRATCH to be the fastest and easiest to use as a conforming tool, so the process goes very quickly and smoothly. It also offloads workload from our big-iron traditional post systems, and this adds to cost efficiencies for a film project. We can conform on SCRATCH and then send the files on to SCRATCH color grading on one of our other systems for any given project."

"With *The Truck*, we realized the value of SCRATCH's real-time performance," says Kang. "The director was going for a specific look and so we experimented with different versions of the grading. Because we were working in real-time, we could immediately see the variance of hues and tones. We were able to easily create and stack three versions for

comparison, which helped the director make the final selection to match his vision."

"The resolution independence of SCRATCH is another advantage for us," says Kang. "Since we're working in all data, we can output to any format, such as 35mm, HD, or digital cinema. We can also render out to DPX files for film output to cinescope."

#1 Box Office Hit and the SCRATCH-RED 4K Digital Workflow
Yong Hwa Kim's *Take Off* (July 30, 2009) is the first Korean feature film shot using three RED ONE™ 4K Digital cameras. Star East used the SCRATCH-RED 4K Workflow for full post production of the project.

"The SCRATCH-RED workflow easily handles the native REDCODE data in a real-time, streamlined workflow. The VFX shots are easily imported into SCRATCH and dropped into the film's timeline," says Kang. "The overall time savings and ease of use of this workflow, as well as the high quality results and cost efficiencies, are going to change the way films are made in Korea. This workflow is truly revolutionary – a hard-to-believe story that ends up exceeding your expectations."

Korea's #1 box office hit, Yong Hwa Kim's *Take Off* (July, 2009); image courtesy of Star East Digital Labs



Image courtesy of Star East Digital Labs; Director Heyoung-jin Kwon's *The Truck* (2008)

Kang adds, "The one thing that I want to emphasize is that *Take Off* contains more than 5,000 RED shots, and without SCRATCH, I am sure I would not have been able to finish this project on time."