

Sinefekt Grows DI Business with Versatility of SCRATCH

Come with us to Istanbul, where Sinefekt, one of the biggest post production houses in Turkey uses ASSIMILATE's SCRATCH® Digital Finishing Solution to grade almost every feature film, commercial, music video and documentary that passes through its facility.

Along with having a Kodak Imagecare-accredited film lab, telecine, offline and online editing, VFX, CG animation and SCRATCH DI color grading and finishing, the facility also rents RED ONE™ cameras to local and regional clients. Although the RED/SCRATCH connection began as a key attraction, SCRATCH has proven it has greater pulling power among local and international clients, as Dilek Er, head of color grading, explains.

Why SCRATCH: We saw SCRATCH at IBC a few years ago, just when the RED ONE camera systems were launching, which we had planned to purchase. SCRATCH was the best option for handling 4K R3D files, and it still is. RED cameras are very popular in Turkey, and we work on RED-originated features and commercials a lot. But being resolution independent, SCRATCH has proven to be more versatile. It has very good DI tools to complete jobs from start to finish, and with an amazingly affordable price point we can offer clients more competitive rates.

Projects: We attract filmmakers from Turkey, and our freelance colorist, Ester Nagy, did a SCRATCH DI on R3D RED material for the historical comedy *Seven Husbands For Hurmuz*, directed by Ezel Akay. I did the DI for another film, the thriller *Sound*, directed by Umit Unal. But we are also now luring international filmmakers from Egypt, Dubai, Hungary, Slovenia and Russia.

More projects: We work with local production companies and advertising agencies on ads for brands like Nike, Samsung and Pegasus Airlines. Recently I graded a commercial in SCRATCH for Bakcell, the cellular network operator in Azerbaijan. What all our clients discover is that the quality they get from SCRATCH is great from start to finish, whether they bring in DPX, 4K RED RAW, or footage from newer cameras like the ARRI Alexa, or even DSLRs like the Canon 7D and 5D.

Project Samsung; image courtesy of Sinefekt



Project Seven Husbands; image courtesy of Sinefekt

LUTs: Cinespace is the heart of our color management, and works well with SCRATCH. Commercials and music videos typically don't need dramatic grading, but feature films are different. I often do a lot to finesse or enhance the look intended by the cinematographer. We grade feature films with SCRATCH at 2K or 4K, in real-time, using a JVC DILA projector and a 3m-wide screen, where we emulate the film print with our custom 3D LUTs. Our set-up means that the director, DP, and editor know what they see on the screen is what will end up on film.

Key features: SCRATCH is simple to learn. It's very quick and interactive to work with too, and integrates well with the Tangent Wave Control Panel we are using. I use the Trays capability a lot, especially when grading versions of commercials because allows me to compare shots, and copy and paste grades between sequences and versions.

Grading features: On feature films, the SCRATCH Matrix provides two toolsets – the Color toolset for primary grading, and Scaffolds for secondary color grading. For primary grading, once I am happy with a grade on a shot, I copy and paste that grade onto other shots in a timeline in the CONstruct module. Scaffolds is excellent when I need to work on areas of the picture that need special treatment. I can use each Scaffold differently – to key a skin color, add a defocus or a vignette, track a grade through a shot – and can choose which Scaffold to copy between shots. These are very useful and practical features that I use a lot.

In the workflow: We use Avid Media Composer for offline and Autodesk systems for online editorial. SCRATCH works perfectly well with EDLs coming from Avid and provides DPX files for our Autodesk systems.

Support: We run our SCRATCH on a REDboxx2 system, with an Nvidia Quadro FX 4600 SDI card, which is integrated into our custom-built NAS so that we can share media between editorial, grading and VFX departments with ease. We get excellent e-mail support from ASSIMILATE on the rare occasions that we've ever encountered any problems, and the hardware is well-supported by Boxx.

Satisfaction: As a colorist, I'm very happy working with SCRATCH because it gives me a lot of capability for grading and finishing, and it's really easy to use. SCRATCH is a very useful color grading and finishing system.



Project Nike; image courtesy of Sinefekt



Project Pegasus; image courtesy of Sinefekt