

Post-production: less about tools, more about talent, service, delivery

By [Tracey Williams](#)

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2010 was all about the FIFA World Cup, so 2011 will be about brands re-establishing themselves and promoting themselves by their own intrinsic qualities. In post-production, it is becoming less about the tools (as that outdates itself so quickly) and more about the talent, service and delivery.



1. 3D Stereoscopic:

S3D has captured both local and international cinema audiences, with audiences returning to cinemas and box office sales increasing. However, when it comes to creating S3D commercials, there has been little local activity.



A change of thinking is required, as a client would produce a 3D stereo ad first and then create 2D pictures for television from that picture. Normally, television campaigns are converted to go onto cinema, but now cinema would be considered before television.

In anticipation of this, our online grading suite (Baselight) and VFX suites have been upgraded to handle 3D Stereoscopic.

2. Film vs digital:

Digital camera acquisition has become extremely popular across South Africa in terms of cost savings on productions. In the ever-changing world of digital camera technology, there are post-production implications, as workflow processes vary hugely. Being able to handle both film and digital formats has allowed us to remain accessible for all types of filmmaking options.

The biggest issue in this digital world is the safety and future-proofing of the material. There is still a very strong case to be made for film acquisition, as digital cameras still cannot match the quality of it. Commercial clients still need to further explore the cost saving of film with 2-perf and 3-perf.

3. Turnaround time:

Faster turnaround time has always been a trend in the industry. We need to be able to produce top quality work in the shortest amount of time - as deadlines seem to be getting shorter and shorter.

There are treatments that require extensive and elaborate finishing and which cannot be rushed, so it comes down to more thorough planning and an integrated, efficiently networked facility. Having a number of talented artists who can work together efficiently across networks dramatically reduces finishing times.

The trend going forward is that of being able to maintain standards and timing expectations without compromising on our clients' and artists' vision.

4. African continent:

As seen during the world cup, the African continent is definitely feeling a lot more united. We are forming partnerships and getting our feet in doors that were previously closed. The undiscovered talent and creativity that exists within our region is exciting, adding a new dimension and realness to a global market that sometimes struggles to deliver surprising and exciting content.

5. Procurement

Globally, the trend of international procurement and sourcing preferred suppliers continues.

Historically, the SA commercial market went through a trend of simply using international ads. While this creates continuity of brands internationally, there is a stronger trend when re-versioning to make it relevant to the local market.

Local production and local agencies now produce work that is used globally.

6. The artist and technology:

Historically, post-production has tended to be more about technology, which gets cheaper and faster and everyone believes they can do it themselves (at home), but it is becoming more and more about the talent and the solution.

Detail and crafted pictures require talent. Technology is accessible to everyone and talent is now being appreciated as a valuable commodity. The trick is to get the best out of both.

As technology changes, education and training remains paramount - using existing technology to its best advantage, while making way and training up on new innovations will allow us to maintain equilibrium between the "tried and tested" and "new and exciting".

7. Creative collaborations:

Historically and globally, post-production facilities tried to focus on every aspect of the post-production process. While it is important to be a comprehensive one-stop shop, there is more collaboration with smaller specialised entities happening, where everyone comes together focusing on what is best for the job at hand.

This does need to come together in a seamless workflow, to reduce any glitches and errors. It is a balance as to where to outsource and how to glue it together. Facilities have a strong role in this process.

8. VFX with intent:

There is a move away from glitzy, big VFX and "VFX for the sake of VFX" commercials. They must be real and enhance the telling of stories. VFX and animation must be part of the storytelling and support the storytelling of the

brand.

9. Web-based advertising:

Brands are looking at integrated solutions across all distribution platforms. Internationally, we have been exposed to many great Internet campaigns with high production value, which then drive the television campaign.

No longer is the "television" department addressing what only goes on television, but they are becoming a "broadcast" department that handles all aspects of media across a variety of platforms.

We will begin to see more money being allocated to "moving-picture" platforms and how it can all work together as an integrated whole.

10. Feature films:

2010 saw 21 local feature films being made with some good box office successes - films like Schucks Tshabalala (Leon Schuster), Spud, Liefing and Bakgat 2 - and we are seeing local audiences supporting local content.

2011 seems set to continue this trend, with numerous productions being scheduled. Local feature films are being beginning to compete with each other for screen time.

11. One-on-ones:

In this fast-moving world, the importance of relationships is critical. One-on-ones sort out many issues and allow for a lot of creative brainstorming. Client and creative collaboration is key to our production schedules, as it saves time and allows for an even greater scope of exploring possibilities.

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