



SHARING INTELLIGENCE FOR THE POST PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTION COMMUNITIES



Bling Digital: proving the value of LTO data archiving

Bling Digital designs and manages digital workflows for film and television productions. They also provide digital lab services, edit systems and post services. Working with their parent company SIM Group, Bling has the ability to provide complete production packages — from the camera through final delivery — so they understand the importance of archiving. More on that later.

Bling provides services for film and television productions everywhere, and the company now has offices in Toronto, Vancouver, Los Angeles, Atlanta and New York. Additionally, Bling has virtual teams around the world and last year worked on jobs in 21 different cities. Their reach is long.

Bling's workflow supervisors and workflow producers have come to play a major role in decision-making regarding metadata and color management for their clients — with the aim of maximizing production efficiency. Bling typically has about 30 scripted, long-format jobs running at any given time, split between television shows and feature films, and the goal is to safeguard its post customers against surprise bills after they begin their work.

To help meet that goal in terms of data archiving, Bling uses PreRoll Post from Imagine Products for all master media in its LTO archives. PreRoll Post automatically indexes camera originals — complete with thumbs, proxies and metadata — while backing up full-resolution media to local disk and long-term LTO tapes, a Sony Optical Disc Archive, or a local disk or server. PreRoll Post uses an LTFS system, which mounts a tape as a volume (hard disk) within OS X or Windows. This makes it possible to write and read from the tape as if it were a disk, without proprietary software or formatting.

Bling made the transition to PreRoll Post after its clients began asking for LTFS tapes, which have since become the standard for all of the studios Bling works with.

For one thing, PreRoll Post lets Bling scale up or down quickly, which is hugely important when dealing with as many as 30 jobs at any given time, each with its own unique requirements. For example, one production might travel to a new city every couple of days, which necessitates backups every day at every location. Another production might be managed from an office that is always connected to local storage, while yet another might be run out of one of Bling's facilities off of a SAN or NAS.



Jesse Korosi

“With the number of remote jobs we do and how quickly we have expanded, we needed software that was easy for new crews to learn,” explains Jesse Korosi, director of workflow services at Bling. “We have found that one of the biggest benefits of using PreRoll Post is how easily we can roll it out. When you’re talking about servicing 30 shows at a time, all in different cities or countries,

we're constantly hiring new, local crews, and knowing that they will be able to learn the software easily is a huge relief."

Narcos

Bling provides dailies, LTO archival and edit systems on the Netflix television series *Narcos*. The show has an on-set data manager who backs up the master files from the Red Epic camera to three hard drives that are part of a backup system on the camera truck. One of those hard drives is a rotation drive that gets sent to the Bling lab at both break and wrap, depending on that day's production locations.

Once Bling's dailies tech receives the drive, he mounts it and backs up the files to two LTF5 tapes simultaneously using PreRoll Post. One of these copies will eventually be sent to the studio and the other will be held in Los Angeles at the finishing facility. When writing to the LTO tapes is complete, the Bling technician notifies the camera crew that the files are secure. Then, using Imagine's Shot-Put Pro automated offloading application, the camera crew can wipe the camera cards and put them back into rotation.

"After all of the money the production company spends on crew, locations, props, wardrobe, cameras — all of the millions of dollars — eventually everything is left only on these tapes. So it is very, very important that we trust the software writing them without a shadow of a doubt," says Korosi.