

Postworks Los Angeles

(www.postworks.com)

Autodesk® Smoke® software
Autodesk® Lustre® software
Autodesk® Incinerator® software

Our Autodesk workflow is just blazingly fast. It doesn't matter what the clients ask for; we can do it quickly.

—Pankaj Bajpai
Colorist
Postworks LA

Blazingly Fast.

Postworks Los Angeles Brings Digital Intermediate Tools and Workflow to Broadcast and Studio Mastering with Help from Autodesk Smoke and Autodesk Lustre Software.



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Summary

Already well-known in New York, PostWorks has done more than just expand into the Los Angeles market. In addition to currently completing construction of two facilities in Southern California, the new company has already implemented a unique workflow which prominently features Autodesk® Smoke® and Autodesk® Lustre® software. PostWorks hopes to bring this highly specialized digital intermediate (DI) workflow process to a much broader spectrum of clientele. In what amounts to a post company actively leveraging data-centric and future-looking technologies, PostWorks Los Angeles is also bringing tomorrow's techniques to film and television clients.

The Setup

"We're building something new," says PostWorks LA senior vice president Marco Bario. "We feel strongly that this is the way the market is going, so it makes sense to take advantage of the concurrent workflow between Smoke and Lustre. We basically want to bring the DI workflow to everyone, particularly applying it to broadcast and studio mastering. This is one workflow that services and satisfies a number of different areas. This is the future."

The "future" so far includes two Autodesk Smoke systems for picture conform, three Autodesk Lustre systems for color correction, and in excess of 200 terabytes of SAN storage. The SAN maintains and provides uncompressed frames to the Smoke and Lustre suites. This way, the footage remains flexible to changes and adjustments right up until final delivery.

What's more, all PostWorks LA Lustre systems are supercharged by a 16-node version of Autodesk® Incinerator® software, a system that brings real-time performance and interactivity to Autodesk Lustre, especially for complex color correction. The combination has come much to the delight of PostWorks colorist Pankaj Bajpai and his customers:

"Our workflow is just blazingly fast," he says with enthusiasm. "With this many Incinerator render nodes, we can interact with our clients and implement their changes in real time. It doesn't matter what the client asks for; we can get it done quickly and to their satisfaction."

Autodesk®

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PostWorks' Autodesk workflow has so far performed admirably on several broadcast projects and studio remasters. The systems' biggest test, however, came with managing conforms and color correction for the decidedly atypical HBO series “In Treatment.”

The Challenge: In Treatment

Directed by Rodrigo Garcia, with whom PostWorks' colorist Bajpai also worked on HBO's “Carnivàle,” “In Treatment” starred Gabriel Byrne as a psychotherapist with troubles of his own. During the nine week run, the daily series boasted no less than 43 half-hour episodes. Following the treatment of four patients, as well as that of Byrne's character, the series dedicated one night per week to each patient, reserving Friday night for the therapist himself. The unique concept brought a number of significant challenges to the PostWorks LA team.

After ingesting the series' HDCAM footage into the SAN, PostWorks performed all conforming and color correction on uncompressed data. Autodesk Lustre and Autodesk Smoke shared the source data from the SAN, moved metadata between them, introduced huge speed and flexibility for revisions, versioning, and color correction, while all the time maintaining the highest possible picture quality, without duplicating data.

Working with four different directors of photography for the “In Treatment” series, sharing metadata that was completely open to change, proved to be a critical part of the creative process. As looks were suggested by the client, Bajpai was able to work at the end of the reel while picture changes were happening at the front end. Both Bajpai and his client were able to make and see changes quickly and efficiently, while also exchanging and comparing color metadata between episodes, simply by pulling up references from other episodes.

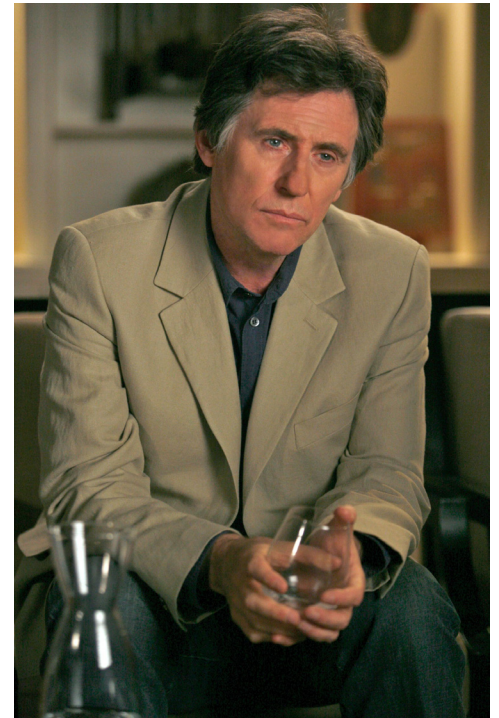
The Result

With all 43 episodes complete, “In Treatment” debuted at the end of January 2008 and generated considerable buzz. For PostWorks LA, the show represents the inauguration of a whole new tapeless way of working, especially for broadcast networks:

“A shift happened as a result of the DI process,” says Bario. “A large segment of the market moved from analogue workflows to completely file-based digital workflows. Thanks to today's tools such as Autodesk Smoke and Lustre, together with more powerful technology in general, we've been able to provide broadcast and studio mastering with the convenience and flexibility of DI, which has only been available to theatrical productions. It's a powerful combination.”

To learn more about Lustre, visit www.autodesk.com/Lustre.

To learn more about Smoke, visit www.autodesk.com/Smoke.



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With the volume of episodes on a show like “In Treatment,” speed is invaluable. The interactive nature, dynamic tools, versatility, and speed of Autodesk Smoke and Autodesk Lustre definitely get the job done.

—Marco Bario
Senior VP
PostWorks LA

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