D'You Know What I Mean?: Oasis video was rescanned at 4K

What's the story in archive?

From storage solutions to restoration, cloud working and rescanning an Oasis video in 4K, **Jake Bickerton** rounds up the highlights from the recent *Broadcast TECH* Archive Forum

BROADCAST TECH'S Archive Forum at the BFI in November explored issues relating to both restoration and best practice when it comes to archiving essential production files and rushes.

Hot topics in the panel sessions included the benefits of cloud-based archiving, when and what content to archive, the value of keeping an easy-to-access and well-maintained archive, and how to monetise content.

There were also practical demonstrations of the processes involved in cleaning up and restoring irreplaceable old film, tape and digital archives.

ARCHIVING ASSETS

One of the standout sessions of the day concentrated on how best to archive production files and rushes, with production company heads debating the pros and cons of different approaches to managing long-term storage. Digital Production Partnership managing director

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>
> STEVE OAK
> RAPID PICTURES

Steve Oak: discussed benefits of cloud storage

Mark Harrison chaired the session and the speakers were Tinopolis head of post-production Edurne Bengoa, Sprat TV managing director Dan Gable and Fremantle Media UK head of post-production Donna Mulvey-Jones.

The technology used by the panel members to archive content varied substantially, from well-organised LTO archives through to archives on Professional Disc, and rushes and production files stored on external drives with a limited shelf life.

The choice of archive format varied depending on budget, the value of the archive and how frequently it needed to be accessed, and it was widely agreed that there is no right or wrong way of storing the content.

Sticking with production archives, Quantum sales director, Northern Europe, Christo Conidaris and LaCie channel marketing supervisor Stephane Jamin discussed tech developments in archiving and asset management in a session chaired by Film Locker chief executive Keiren O'Brien.

Conidaris talked about how Quantum storage adds value through the use of artificial intelligence learning tools that analyse media, faces, objects, words and sentiments. It also offers

real-time transcription, to enable sophisticated, detailed searching of production archives. Jamin talked about how LaCie drives are prominently used in production to store and safely move around assets during the production process.

CREATIVE SHOWCASE

Following a busy networking lunch, facilities companies presented a captivating series of case studies. Pinewood Studios head of picture post-production, creative services, John Pegg kicked off by taking the audience through a number of restoration projects carried out by the studio.

Next up was R3Store Studios chief operating officer Jo Griffin and commercial director Matt Wills, who showed clips and talked through their work restoring vintage film *The Apartment*, which was meticulously restored for Blu-ray from new 4K scans.

Finally, Cinelab managing director Adrian Bull showed his 4K rescan of Oasis' 1997 pop promo *D'You Know What I Mean*, which looked superb on the big screen. Following the presentation, he went through numerous positive fan comments from YouTube about the new version, which confirmed that the quality of the rescan hadn't gone unnoticed.

CLOUD-BASED ARCHIVING

The penultimate session was dedicated to the industry's evolution to cloud-based archiving, with post house Green Rock managing director Simon Green explaining how and why his company now archives everything onto the cloud.

The key drivers for Green are making workflows faster, more convenient, efficient, scalable and cost-effective. He said: "The speed at which we can transfer data and capture it back into our system is so much faster than before."

Meanwhile, Object Matrix chief executive Jonathan Morgan talked about how cloud storage enables more sophisticated searches of archives. "The biggest difference when it comes to the cloud is with searches," he said. "You can drop a shot of a street into an engine and immediately be able to find all your footage that has that street in it. This can save a huge amount of time when relocating clips."

Providing a seamless transition to cloud storage is essential, said Avid senior director, global centre of

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> PAT HORRIDGE
> VET

Archive Restoration panel (from left to right): Patrick Morgan, Jenny Hammerton, Jo Griffin and chair Pat Horridge

ARCHIVE RESTORATION

The opening session on restoration was chaired by Pat Horridge, broadcast and post-production consultant at training company VET. Speakers included Associated Press archive account manager Jenny Hammerton, R3Store Studios chief operating officer Jo Griffin and Nucoda product manager Patrick Morgan.

The panel discussed the different stages involved in getting content restored, how to handle fragile film, and the time-scales and costs associated with getting irreplaceable archive content scanned, restored and distributed.

Clips of the 1981 wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer, from Associated Press's Movietone library, were screened, showing the original SD broadcast side by side with 4K images from a recently rescanned version.

It was a perfect demonstration of the benefits of the enhanced detail provided by capturing at higher resolution.

The session also discussed the shelf life of material on tape, with Horridge revealing that it has a maximum usable life of around 30 years: "Tapes are going out of date faster than they are being digitised and whole cultural archives are being lost. Studios have millions of assets on tape that simply won't ever be digitised."

Morgan, meanwhile, presented a live demonstration of how Digital Vision's Phoenix software cleans up and restores archive content.

Royal Wedding: SD broadcast was shown alongside rescanned 4K version

excellence, Craig Dwyer : "At the creative level, people want these features infused into the workflow. With ProTools, for example, you can invite people to a session and the whole thing is synced behind the scenes into the Azure cloud."

POST-PRODUCTION FOCUS

The final session of the day looked at how post-production houses take care of their clients' archives. The panel featured Envy head of operations Jai Cave, Evolutions operations director Owen Tyler and Rapid Pictures technical manager Steve Oak. It was chaired by Jigsaw24 solutions and business development manager Jamie Allen.

The cloud was once more under debate, with the panel expressing mixed feelings on its benefits for large post houses dealing with substantial volumes of 4K content, which are struggling to see the value in moving their storage.

"We keep 4K content local as there's too much of it to keep going to and from the cloud," said Tyler. "There are security issues too, so it's far better to have it in our own domain."

"There's half a petabyte with a 4K show, and we're not going to push all that up to Amazon," agreed Envy's Cave. However, Oak said: "As a smaller player, we're looking to the cloud as we believe the benefits are outweighing the downsides, particularly when it comes to expandability."

Other topics discussed related to ensuring archives can always be accessed in the future, and whether film remains the best long-term option for storing archive content. ⓑ