



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title : Physical Production Technology Manager
Pillar : Production

Function of the Role

The role will support the Chief Technical Officer in managing all technical aspects of Physical Production across the Studio with a strong focus on Stop Frame Technology. This Technology Manager will oversee the technical teams, procurement and development of technical equipment, and production technology support involved with physical production on Stop Frame Features, Specials, and Short Form/Commercials projects as well as any live action, virtual production, or other camera captured projects. Success in this role will rely upon enabling the physical production technology teams to reach their unincumbered potential in both efficiency and innovation as well as their personal growth and career goals.

The role will provide advice and guidance from their respective teams on best technical practice, budgeting, and cross-functional considerations in Physical Production to Producers, HoDs, and any other relevant teams across the company. It is integral that the Technology Manager is an effective conduit between Productions and their Physical Production Technology Teams to assist in scheduling and resource management. Agility and flexibility to operate within a constantly changing production environment is paramount to the success of this role.

The role will oversee the scaling and efficiency of all physical production workflow, technology, and equipment provisioning to support the demands of an expanding stop frame and trans-media slate. The Technology Manager will work with the Head of Stop frame Production, the CTO, and Senior Technology Management to provide cost estimates and managing capital / other expenditure with the aim of achieving maximum reliability and expertise without limiting the creative intent. Constant high-level coordination with all other teams within Technology is required with a specific emphasis on Digital Production Technology.

Duties and Responsibilities

Management of Crew

- To be responsible for the planning, budgeting, and employment of technical staff across multiple Stop Frame projects in liaison with the Head of Stop Frame, Head of CG and relevant Producers. The same responsibilities also apply to any other projects requiring physical production (camera captured projects or captures that use physical production resources).
- Supporting the stop frame and short form technical teams – overseeing the recruitment, training and line management of camera crew, lighting and LX teams, motion control operators and stop frame engineers and technicians.
- Ensuring that the technical teams are structured and supported in such a way that individual crew members are not overstretched in terms of workload and that the schedules and deadlines set are achievable without crew having to regularly exceed their contracted hours.

- Ensuring there is strength and depth to our crewing plan with training initiatives and succession planning to ensure appropriate levels of production support across an expanding slate and if necessary to offer crew more flexibility in how they work
- Where appropriate ensuring a pro-active approach to identifying and developing new talent across all areas of the technical team.
- Working closely with the Head of Stop Frame Production, other production-focused company HoDs (e.g. short form), the Technology Resource Management Team, and HR to plan and implement training initiatives with a view to expanding the current talent pool
- Ensuring existing crew feel supported and valued – this should include honest constructive feedback relating to their work and how we see their roles developing in the future. An understanding of their professional ambition is essential to ensure we are offering (where appropriate) the correct opportunities for training and professional development.

Equipment

- To oversee the planning, budgeting, provision, and maintenance of lighting, camera and motion control equipment for overlapping stop frame and any other physical productions in liaison with CTO and Head of Stop Frame Production. At the same time maximising reliability of process and delivery of shots, within the limitations of the budget, without constraining creativity
- To facilitate and promote the testing of new equipment/ work-flows with a view to increasing the creative scope of our projects balanced with the need to reduce costs and improve productivity in all areas of production.
- In coordination with the Technology Resource Management Team, ensure the timely disposal of obsolete equipment in an environmentally sensitive manner, also maximizing any residual value and potential for re-sale

Studio and Equipment Hire

- To maximize and manage rental income from studio space and equipment during and between Aardman productions
- To ensure equipment is safe & tested prior to any hire
- To ensure appropriate contractual / insurance agreements are in place for studio and equipment hire and that any 3rd parties adhere to health and safety procedures in liaison with the Facilities Manager and Business Affairs manager

General

- To prepare and manage capital and studio budgets and keep relevant parties informed on progress and timing of budget spend
- To take an active role within the technology vision for the technology department to ensure a cross company, unified production technology approach. This includes a focus on Research & Development initiatives and problem spaces of value to the Physical Production productions and technology teams.
- Ensuring that all planning and strategy gives consideration to the long-term sustainability of a multi project slate and succession planning

- To be responsible for ensuring the Heads of Production and CTO are kept appropriately informed in matters regarding the Physical Production Technology Teams and to represent physical production technical activity for stop frame (long and short form) within the Technology Organization.
 - To represent the Company in the promotion of its physical production technical activities as appropriate
 - To keep abreast of all relevant industry developments – attend seminars, conferences as required and as budget allows
 - To bring ideas about the long-term direction of film-making particularly through contact with external processes and industry personnel
 - To observe the provision of the Health and Safety at Work act, both as an employee and in a supervisory capacity. To implement appropriate systems of work to ensure effective and safe management of all technical department activities in accordance with Aardman's H & S policies.
-

Responsible to:

Directly reporting to the Chief Technology Officer and supporting all Physical Technology Teams
Collaboration with all HoDs, Producers, and Technology Managers on Studio Needs

Responsible for:

Lighting crew
Camera crew
Motion Control Operators
Electronics, Computing and Motion Control Engineers
Development Engineers and Machinists
Camera Preparation Technician/ Trainees
Studio Gaffer & Supervising Camera Asst
Stills crew

Physical Production Technology Manager person specification

Essential Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required:

- 5+ years of experience in physical production
- Proven management skills and the ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously
- Working with camera, lighting, motion control and grip crews on all types of shoots, as well as stop frame projects, with an understanding of individual roles as well as overall structure
- Knowledge of workflow from camera through editorial to postproduction
- Professional expertise in the basics of film equipment design, build, test and preparation, repair, and maintenance
- Budgeting and planning equipment development and build
- Managing teams working across different disciplines is important

- Developing and maintaining key production relationships
- Working within a film production environment
- Juggling multiple projects across different formats, establishing priorities, and thriving within a fast-paced and high-pressure environment

Desirable Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- 12+ years of experience managing multiple, varied disciplined technical teams
- A clear and thorough understanding of cameras, both still and film, and an understanding of photography and cinematography
- A broad understanding of lenses and optical engineering, as well as a basic understanding of lens testing and repair
- An understanding of mechanical engineering, particularly as it applies to the film industry
- A basic understanding of electronics and electrical engineering
- A basic understanding of cinema projection and projector installation and setup
- An understanding of the grading and VFX processes

Specific Functional Contacts

- Project Producers, Production Accountant, Production Manager
- Other Heads of Department & Directors
- Post Production and VFX/CG HoDs
- Studio wide technical team