Framing Decision List

1-Sheet

Created by The Advanced Data Management Sub-Committee

Introduction

Conveying framing in the television/film industry is a challenge that affects many departments. Cinematographers are looking to ensure their framing originally conceived on set is carried into post production and maintained accurately. The complexity of accurately preserving the filmmakers framing intent, has become much more challenging over the last decade. Cameras record in a myriad of resolutions, very often not mirroring the final delivery of the content. As an example, a camera may record in 6K, with an aspect ratio of 4:3, while a 4K 2.39 frame within is their intended frame for audiences. With each job and or camera having different protection areas such as this, along with many other factors, ensuring framing metadata is carried between departments is more important than ever. Even though this process has become much more complicated over recent years, the process for providing framing information between departments has for the most part, remained the same.

The traditional method for conveying framing decisions on set, for people in post production, has been to shoot a framing chart. A physical chart is placed in front of the camera and the operator does their best to position the camera, so the frame lines shown on the output display from camera, will line up with the rectangle on the framing chart.

The recorded video of the framing chart, is often sent to varying departments including but not limited to; the dailies lab, editorial, VFX and finishing teams, to ensure they understand how to crop and make adjustments to the captured image to ensure they're working on the cinematographers intended frame.

Getting all 4 corners of the frame to line up perfectly, along with the 4 sides of your frame is near impossible. Things like lens distortion and the chances of your camera operator placing the chart perfectly 90 degrees to the camera, are a few factors in what make this process never pixel accurate. So what does that mean? If two different people or companies were to receive the chart without any additional information, (which is common) they will need to scale and reposition the image by hand, visually. The chances of them aligning are incredibly slim.

Solution

The ASC Framing Decision List (FDL), will standardize the necessary metadata required to translate framing between Production through post. A more efficient, reliable and mathematical method for conveying framing information between any department will be possible with the use of this metadata that can be passed between departments directly in camera files, or as sidecar files created through post production.