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The Showbiz Show
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Ben Affleck's
directorial
debut takes
advantage
of new
technology.

Gone Baby Gone taps **DAX** for dailies approval

BURBANK — Ever need to get film dailies from the US to Europe France faster than customs can approve the shipment? That was exactly the dilemma facing Sean Cooney, director of post production for Miramax Films, who needed to get dailies from Boston to Cannes for Ben Affleck's directorial debut, *Gone Baby Gone*.

The solution? The DAX (Digital Asset Xchange) production workflow accelerator from Dax Solutions (www.daxsolutions.com). Dax provides immediate viewing online over an encrypted SSH tunnel, allowing the user to upload not only rough cuts and dailies, but also still photography, accounting documents and even scripts with their format agnostic system. It accepts virtually any file placed on the server.

HOW IT WORKS

So how does it go from Boston to Cannes? Well, through Los Angeles. For *Gone Baby Gone*, film dailies are shipped from Boston at 4pm and arrive at LA's Modern VideoFilm at 7am, where they're then telecined to Sony HDCAM SR and Digi Beta. At 11am the HDCAM SR tapes are encoded to Windows Media 9, and by 12:30pm, are uploaded along with the Avid

view the dailies, and soon after, receive the tapes to cut with." People view and make notes, they can take scenes, rearrange them, and even make a rough cut directly on DAX.

Because speed is essential in production, DAX provides an Intelligently Distributed Asset System (IDAS), which uses Edge Accelerators — local proxy servers — to speed up transmission of large files, whether they are needed to be streamed or downloaded. Servers are strategically placed in order to offload stress from one central server to as many local servers that are available. The system will look at the IP address and redirect the user to a closer file enabling a faster speed. DAX's digital asset management system receives the file, uploads it, then redistributes it to their worldwide servers. From there, the files are loaded onto the Edge Accelerators located more locally to the production, allowing for the fastest access to files possible.

While it's nice to have all these dailies readily available for viewing online, Cooney does not want to release clips too early to certain groups of people. In order to solve this, DAX uses a system known as the graduated release of materials. DAX software creates a "green approval button." When Affleck presses it, access emails are immediately sent to the next level of people for approval. Along with the approval, notes can be made directly through the DAX DAM interface with referencing timecode in order to give the editors precise notes.

A huge benefit for Cooney is the time and money saved delivering dailies. Instead of DVDs having to be run to every part of the world, clips are available as soon as they are encoded and uploaded. "The delivery timeframe went from two to three days to one day, instead of receiving and viewing one set of dailies a week, the executives would now receive up to four."

Behind the Windows Media Files uploaded to the DAX servers is Microsoft Media Rights Management. A security key is embedded into each file that prevents unauthorized viewing outside of the DAX

system. On top of that, DAX offers DWI, Dynamic Watermark insertion, additional security that does not allow any video to be captured from the monitor without a burned in watermark.

This is the first time Cooney has used DAX and he complimented not just the software, but also the service they received



Sean Cooney says the dailies delivery timeframe on *Gone Baby Gone* "went from two to three days to one day."

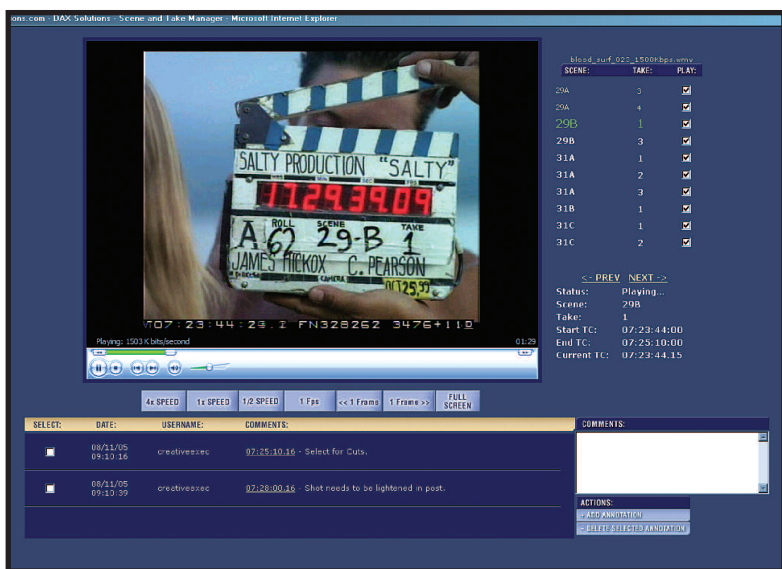
along with it. "They are really on the ball," he says. "For example, we had to add a new user to the system in the middle of the night. We called them and within a half hour the new user was added and able to use the system."

DAX also came in handy, says Cooney, "When we were working on another project and had an alternate ending that we needed to get from the UK to the United States ASAP and couldn't wait for the DVD. We called DAX and they solved our problem, even though it wasn't part of the deal."

SET-TOP BOXES

The future of digital production is heading toward the HD environment, and DAX is introducing set-top boxes that can handle 720p and 1080i. So when there needs to be an HD viewing of a shot across the world, anyone with the correct rights and clearances can see it. And with HD requiring a huge bandwidth, the set-top box will still be able to handle high-speed transfers at from up to five to 10 gigabytes.

Current companies using DAX's production workflow are Lions Gate, MGM, Lifetime, Fox, Marvel, Turner Broadcasting, TNT, FX and Disney. TV shows include *House*, *Ghost Whisperer* and *Grey's Anatomy*. Film projects that used DAX include the Oscar-winning *Crash* and the upcoming Disney film *Enchanted*. **POST**



DAX allows users to upload dailies and rough cuts, as well as stills and scripts.

Flex Files. By 4pm the dailies are online and ready for secure viewing around the world.

"Not only are the executives included on the viewing of dailies," says Cooney, "once everything is ready for edit, the editors can