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CASE STUDY

Leading Animation Studio invests in the Evolution of IT

ABOUT BROWN BAG FILMS

Brown Bag Films (BBFS) is a computer animation studio founded in Dublin, Ireland in 1994. Since then it has expanded its operations to include a production studio in Los Angeles.

BBFS has secured two Oscar-nominations in the category of Best Animated Short Film for Give Up Yer Aul Sins and Granny O'Grimm's Sleeping Beauty.

GEMINI & BROWN BAG FILMS

In 2010, BBFS met Gemini Technology with a view to evolving the entire IT infrastructure. To kick this off, they engaged in a series of comprehensive workshops, team meetings, needs analyses and cost benefit analyses.

Since then, Gemini Technology has provided BBFS with state of the art workstation technology, server technology, storage technologies, Microsoft licensing and general product sourcing.



MAIN PROJECT BENEFITS:

- >Increased uptime
- >Improved SLA's
- >Trusted partnership
- >Future proofed technology roadmap
- >Single end to end vendor relationship

Initially BBFS used a leading hardware vendor and found its overseas support system frustrating, slow and adversely impacting on the production output of the company as a whole.

"Our 3D artists are a crucial part of our pipeline. If one workstation fails, this has a domino effect across all departments", says Darren Hyland Head of Research and Development.

If a machine broke down, it took 3-5 working days to arrive at the repair centre, with additional time required for diagnostics, repairs and returning the machine.

On Gemini Technology, BBFS found a work-ethos and compliance to a mission statement that ticked all the right boxes.

IDENTIFYING SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Understanding the everyday requirements of the creative team and projects in the pipeline, Gemini Technology used state of the art technology to create a standard build that was tested to ensure the environment and operating platforms would support a variety of projects.

In 2010, under the guidance of Gemini Technology, BBFS moved from 2D technology to newly appointed 3D equipment. BBFS benefited immediately from a one-to-one consultancy and an account management system that appoints a dedicated account manager with a proficient understanding of this highly specialised area.

The working relationship between Gemini Technology and the chosen hardware vendor also ensures repairs and replacements are in place within a 24-hour period.

Gemini Technology has the skills-set and industry understanding that BBFS had not encountered with the larger resellers that had been trialled.

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Since engaging the services and expertise of Gemini Technology, the IT department has reported a consistent decline in the number of support calls it receives from the production team.

Reliable technology has increased the number of assets the studio's artists can work on, which has positively impacted the business development team as new contracts are secured and talent is recruited to meet increased workflow demand.

ADDING A PERSONAL TOUCH

Good business is ultimately about delivering on promises and having sound relationships with the people you work with. Gemini Technology account managers and IT experts have achieved this with the collective team at BBFS. Today, the two companies enjoy a close and informal relationship developed by delivering on promises made and regular communication (along with the occasional end-of-project night out and the annual Christmas dinner!).

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Originally hired to consult on new workstation technology for the production floor, the relationship between BBFS and Gemini Technology continues to evolve. BBFS now regularly consults with Gemini Technology on all of its IT requirements, including its ever-changing storage needs.

With the accelerated pace at which technology is changing, especially in the cloud, the expert advice of Gemini Technology has proved to be invaluable when it comes to making decisions on IT investment that matches the strategic objectives of the company.

"Gemini Technology pro-actively encourages us to consider the implementation of newly identified and researched cutting-edge technology, and always at the right time, because they understand our business so well", said Darren Hyland.

The production team now has the state of the art technology required to produce a greater volume of award worthy work and the studio's IT department is supported by experts with the know-how to react fast.

"As BBFS prepares to more than double its workforce from 60 to 130 in 2011, the new technological infrastructure introduced with our guidance has given the business development team the confidence to secure multiple new contracts," says Jonathan Browne, Managing Director of Gemini Technology.

The future continues to look very bright for both BBFS and Gemini Technology as they strive to creatively adapt to the industry's changing business and technological needs.

