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THE POWER LIST

Meet the 100 most influential
people in the industry

PRESENTED BY



RAMKI SANKARANARAYANAN

FOUNDER AND CEO, PRIME FOCUS TECHNOLOGIES

As a CEO and technocrat, Ramki Sankaranarayanan cannot underline how important it is for media companies to digitize their business processes. "Content enterprises can no longer afford to ignore the realities of an industry that is experiencing such rapid change and break the shackles of isolated media asset management systems to embrace digital transformation," he said emphatically.

He reiterated that media and entertainment companies cannot nurture islands of automation anymore. Doing more with less while increasing profit margins through business efficiencies is critical. If they need to battle low margins and build operational efficiencies, they need to digitally transform and build a connected enterprise.

Prime Focus Technologies (PFT) was able to convince some companies to do this and add new clients to its list, including Cricket Australia, HOOQ, Miramax and Global Eagle Entertainment. Last year, it also worked with RSG Media to automate its digital supply chain and maximize monetization for content owners.

PFT and deltatre also announced an 'End-to-End Live Sports OTT Platform' to provide an immersive sports viewing experience for customers looking for proven live sports solutions. Additionally, it secured an Apple iTunes certification for direct content delivery. With this qualification, PFT can assist Apple and its content partners in delivering highly engaging content on the Apple Store with world-class quality.

Coming to international affiliations, PFT joined the advisory board of the Media & Entertainment Services Alliance (MESA) on its mission to support service providers in building efficiencies in the creation, production and distribution of physical and digital media and entertainment. It was also inducted as a gold member of the International Association of Broadcasting Manufacturers (IABM).

Last year, the company launched DAX Production Cloud and offered SecureScreener as the industry's first digital and safe screener application, a substitute to DVD and online channel distribution. It was also honoured by Frost & Sullivan with the 2015 Global Growth Excellence Leadership Award. From the look of it, PFT had a very 2015, and 2016 would be a replication of it.





KEITH DEVLIN
VFX SUPERVISOR, PRIME FOCUS

Snow played an important role in *Bajrangi Bhaijaan*, but also caused some unusual issues. Since transporting the several hundred extras for the climax scene became difficult, about 75% of them had to be graphically generated using a crowd simulator called 'Miarmy'. "Sometimes the CGI characters were walking right next to the real extras we had on location, and even I could not tell them apart. I would critique one guy for having a funny walk only to be told that it was actually a real person, not CGI!" Keith Devlin revealed.

Many scenes had to be digitally manipulated to ensure Kashmir's visual splendour. Devlin also pointed out how the climax would not have been possible without extensive VFX use. "It wasn't realistic, or possible, to build a full border fence that extended as far as the eye can see," he recalled. To facilitate this, Prime Focus worked with around 100 artists, handling approximately 800 VFX shots for the movie. It went on to win the 'Best VFX in Feature Film – India category' at the 24 FPS Annual International Animation Awards 2015. But for Devlin, the biggest reward is that few moviegoers noticed the VFX shots in this film; the true hallmark of good CGI.

RC KAMALAKANNAN
VFX SUPERVISOR, PULI

The release of *Puli* was much-awaited, not just because it was a big budget film (its production budget was said to be around INR 120 crore) to hit Tamil cinema screens after a long time, or because Sridevi was appearing in her first Tamil language film after 29 years. It was because this Chimu Devan-movie packed a wallop of visual effects by veteran RC Kamalakannan.

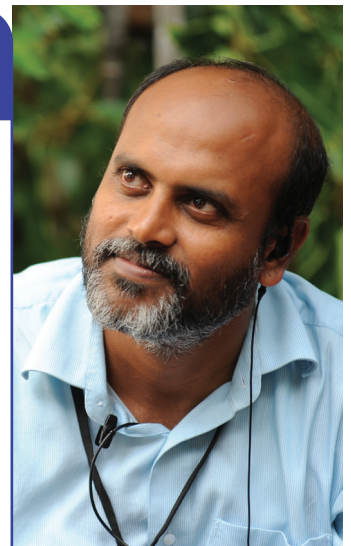
The entire castle, even Sridevi's hourglass silhouette was crafted by VFX. Kamalakannan and the director had initially planned to merge 2,600 scenes with graphics, but later brought it down to 2,200 scenes. Given *Puli*'s mammoth scale and tight schedule, Kamalakannan collaborated with around 160 freelance animators in Russia, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Netherlands, Iran as well as studios in Chennai and Bangalore, splitting the work into smaller portions to ensure it got done faster.

Having worked with companies like Makuta VFX and Prasad EFX, Kamalakannan has won two National Awards. He is currently working with SS Rajamouli on *Bahubali – The Conclusion* and we can hope to witness his skill in fusing VFX adeptly into the movie's scenes so well that a viewer can barely discern where reality and technology coalesce.

SRINIVAS MOHAN
VFX SUPERVISOR, BAHUBALI

When SS Rajamouli narrated the story of *Bahubali* to Srinivas Mohan, he showed him an image of a 3000-foot waterfall cascading from the sky. That gave Mohan an idea of the grand scale at which he visualised the movie. Mohan also realised that 90% of *Bahubali* would comprise visual effects. "I consulted all technicians in the movie to create 16,000 images in five months on how the characters, sets, weapons, etc, would look in the movie," he recalled.

Mohan worked with 16 studios, including three international ones, to blend 2,200 VFX shots into the movie. These included 800 complex shots, 500 simple shots and the remainder were medium. "The biggest challenge was delivering Hollywood-esque VFX with limited budget. But we did it and the results are for all to see," Mohan proudly claimed. Today, *Bahubali* has set a benchmark for VFX in Indian cinema and has literally owned the box office, raising the expectations for the final version that is likely to be released this year. Though Mohan is not part of the sequel, he hopes it will get a nod from the audience once again for its visual imagery.





SHIVKUMAR V PANICKER

KAPOOR & SONS

Director Shakun Batra chose ad film editor Shivkumar Panicker for *Kapoor & Sons* after he saw that how well he cut a story in 30 seconds. "Handling a machine is easy, but it is tough to tell a story well. When I showed him the script, he returned with lot of notes; this curiosity excited me."

Panicker, on his part, ascribes Batra's precise vision to his ease in fulfilling his role. "The scenes were not overly shot," he commented. "Only the sequence where the whole family gathered to sing 'Haa tum bilkul waisi ho' was elaborately shot with two camera set-ups. That was a difficult to cut since it had nine-odd characters."

Initially, Panicker was unsure how his editing efforts would be accepted. But with *Kapoor & Sons* having cracked it at the box office, he is looking forward to more cinematic challenges. He has recently edited the Manoj Bajpayee-fronted *Budhia Singh: Born To Run*. Meanwhile, the commercials continue to roll.



TE KISHORE

VISARANAI

Those who knew the late TE Kishore remember him as a hardworking and genial chap who literally lived for his work; which is why by 36 years, he had almost 30 films to his credit. It was while working at a studio last year that he suffered a brain stroke and soon passed away. The world lost an adroit technician, who was as adept at snipping films as he was at winning friends.

Kishore began his Kollywood career in 2007 by assisting editor B Lenin. He took charge of editing *Eeram* two years later, which incidentally got him the Vijay Award nomination for Best Editor and went on to edit his friend and mentor, Vetri - maaran's, *Aadukalam*. This Dhanush-starrer helped him bag the National Film Award for editing in 2011.

As fate would have it, he won the National Film Awards for Best Editing this year for *Visaranai*, again directed by Vetrimaaran. "I am very happy that Kishore got this award, as his last conscious thought was about *Visaranai*," the director had said. "This award could bring some solace to his family. I definitely miss working with Kishore." He is not the only one; the entire film fraternity misses him.

ANAND SUBAYA AND MANAN MEHTA

DIL DHADAKNE DO

Set largely on a cruise ship, *Dil Dhadakne Do*, lurches back and forth in time to unravel the tale of a dysfunctional family. What pleases you is the easy way multiple stories are interwoven without letting the viewer's interest flagging for a second. But then again, Anand Subaya and Manan Mehta are practised hands at editing.

Subaya's editing calendar has been choc-a-block, fashioning films including *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*, *Talaash*, *Fukrey*, *Don 2*, *Luck by Chance* and *Lakshya*. Mehta has been a part of his editorial team for most of these films, the two having struck up a good working relationship.

Subaya regards editing as "an art for which there are no rules." In *Dil Dhadakne Do*, the duo have done a masterly job of allocating just the right space to each of the central characters so that their stories and emotions shine. The slowly mutating nature of human relationships comes across beautifully through the film's editing.