

digest

Apple opts for open H.264

LAS VEGAS—Apple showed sneak peeks of an advanced HD video codec known as MPEG-4 Part 10, or H.264, on the exhibition floor at NAB. Unlike other proprietary codecs on the market — such as those from Microsoft and Real Networks — H.264 is scalable, allowing content creators to write their own content for everything from 3G phones to HD broadcast.

"We're focused on open standards because we believe the industry doesn't want to follow any one company around," said Frank Casanova, Apple's director of QuickTime product development. Apple's implementation of H.264 will be available in the upcoming version of QuickTime.

Discreet smokes NAB show

LAS VEGAS — Discreet closed two key sales of Lustre, its nascent digital intermediate software system, during the first day of the NAB exhibition. Pacific Title & Art Studio and Oktobor visual effects facility in New Zealand have purchased the digital grading and color correction system for undisclosed sums. After using the Montreal-based firm's Lustre system for DCI STEM testing, Pacific Title & Art Studio decided to buy it. Oktobor invested in Discreet's Lustre system to expand its visual effects services to include digital color grading and DI for SD, HD and 2K film projects. Discreet also has sold four Flame visual effects systems, three Smoke editing and finishing systems and one Inferno visual effects system.

Pandora picked by post leaders

LAS VEGAS — Pandora International, a manufacturer of telecine controllers and color processors, has connected with two major players in the film postproduction world at NAB. Lucasfilm Ltd. has purchased a second Pandora color correction system known as PiXi. The real-time 2K corrector connects to the Quantel iQ. Meanwhile, Peter Jackson's Film Unit, New Zealand's foremost post house, has purchased a Pandora Pogle corrector to power its digital intermediate facility. New York's PostWorks has bought Pandora's MegaDEF Evolution color corrector system for 2K/HD digital intermediate mastering.

HDV makes Final Cut

LAS VEGAS — Filmmakers interested in shooting HDV (a new digital video format that produces HD-quality imagery under MPEG-2 compression) with either of the new JVC or Sony camcorders can now take that footage into Final Cut Pro editing systems. Because the HDV format is so new, filmmakers have previously had difficulty exporting HDV footage for cutting. Now two small companies, Lumiere HD and Heuris, are showing export products that encode HD MPEG-2 transport streams for Final Cut Pro. Lumiere HD is being shown in the JVC booth and Heuris' Xport HD is being demonstrated at the Heuris booth. The NAB exhibition floor closes Thursday.

Castings

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"Rocky Point," from Warner Bros. TV, centers on a young woman living with her friends on Hawaii's North Shore who reluctantly takes in her estranged father (Campbell).

If the project goes to series, it will be Campbell's first since his Golden Globe-nominated turn on ABC's critically praised "Once and Again."

Campbell's recent credits include the features "Enough"

and "Gods and Generals" and the USA Network telefilm "The Stranger Beside Me." He is reped by CAA and IFM.

"The Catch," from Touchstone TV, revolves around two bounty hunters (Greg Grunberg, Orlando Jones). Rickles is expected to play the twosome's boss.

Rickles, whose credits include the series "The Dean Martin Show" and "C.P.O. Sharkey," recently voiced the grouchy Mr. Potato Head in the "Toy Story" movies. ■