

Independent Animated Feature Film Development & Production Plan



Formation

- **Define and establish production company**
 - Assemble executive team members & advisory committee
 - Define roles, contributions, equity & compensation in writing
 - Write company mission statement (short & long forms)
 - File company formation documents & pay fees
 - Get government ID number & set up tax withholding
 - Get production accounting and legal counsel
 - Obtain applicable insurance (liability, worker's comp)
 - Hold first meeting

- **Prepare development activity and cash flow projections**
 - Specify number and pace of films in development
 - Determine amount of development investment required
 - Forecast potential investment return

- **Prepare the development investment offering, including:**
 - Introductory letter
 - Production company mission statement & team biographies
 - Activity and cash flow projections, w. associated notes
 - Use of proceeds, tax ramifications, etc...

- **Raise development financing**
 - Compile lists of investors, brokers and finders
 - Meet with attorney to review legal regulations
 - Establish escrow account for receipt of investment funds
 - Conduct brief investor presentations (solo and/or group)
 - Sign deals with interested investors

- **Announce company to domestic & international distributors**
 - Include personal letters to distributors with announcement
 - Outline company mission & development activity
 - Define desired relationship with distributors
 - Launch press releases & trade advertisements

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Development

- ❑ **Continue communication with investment partners**
 - Send personal updates to investors on a quarterly basis
- ❑ **Proceed according to the development activity plan**
 - Daily story work (research, reading, writing, analysis)
 - Executive team & advisory committee meetings
- ❑ **Greenlight first story**
 - Select strongest script
 - Determine economic feasibility
 - Evaluate target audience
 - Identify studio/distributor with successful profile of similar films
 - Outline production funding structure, schedule & release
 - Review chain of title & assign rights to production company
 - Obtain copyright report & clearance report
- ❑ **Create 30-second teaser**
 - Analyze script for compelling teaser elements
 - Assign experienced copywriter to write teaser script
 - Analyze teaser for emotional beats & determine primary target audience
 - Assign experienced advertising entity to produce teaser
- ❑ **Compile comparative film analysis**
 - Identify a half-dozen similar films over past 5 years
 - Include studios, creators & cast, release dates, earnings, etc...
- ❑ **Compile comparative advertising analysis**
 - Base on comparative films
 - Include ad spending, release patterns, promotion, brand alliances...
- ❑ **Forecast global revenue**
 - Gross & net earnings
 - Producer's share of profits
- ❑ **Identify proposed creative team**
 - Director and other principals, including bios
- ❑ **PITCH FILM TO STUDIOS/DISTRIBUTORS**
 - Including teaser, story pitch, business plan, analyses, forecasts & team
 - Gather distributor feedback & willingness to collaborate
 - If domestic distributor response is *positive*, proceed to international meetings

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- **If domestic distributor response is *negative*, REVISE OR ABANDON FILM**
- Send confirmation letters to interested studios/distributors

- **Continue film project development**
 - Determine film's initial branding & advertising presence
 - Set basic development/production/marketing plans & schedules
 - Assign development/production/marketing tasks to executive team members
 - Review directors, art directors, voice actors & production department heads

- **Attach director**
 - Summarize executive team's director recommendations
 - Obtain advisory committee's notes & suggestions
 - Create short list of director candidates
 - Obtain distributor feedback on candidates
 - Create final prioritized list of director candidates
 - Conduct creative meetings with director candidates to discuss story
 - Review meeting results with executive team and advisory committee
 - Choose director, and begin negotiations
 - Satisfy applicable guild requirements
 - Sign production deal with director
 - Notify distributors of director attachment
 - Announce director attachment in a press release

- **Create shooting script**
 - Comprehensive script & storyboards

- **Attach voice actors**
 - *(Follow same process as director attachment)*

Pre-production

- **Physical production preparation**
 - Attach associate producer (line producer)
 - Create production assumptions, schedules & budgets
 - Review final department head candidates
 - Conduct creative meetings with department head candidates
 - Negotiate and attach department heads
 - Revise script & storyboards
 - Create workbook

- **Prepare and refine the film's marketing materials**
 - Incorporate demo reels of creative team

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- ❑ **Obtain production insurance**
 - General liability
 - Error & omissions
 - Entertainment package
 - Worker's compensation

- ❑ **Prepare the film production bank financing**
 - Update film's distribution liquidation breakdown
 - Compile & approve a fresh budget, bank loan analysis & presale plan
 - Prepare completion bond memo & bank loan memo, with imminent elements
 - Meet with completion bond organization & receive contingent commitment
 - Meet with bank & receive contingent loan commitment

- ❑ **Engage the domestic studio/distribution agreement**
 - Evaluate & compare final studio/distributor proposals
 - Determine best course of action with executive team & advisory committee
 - Negotiate and sign domestic & international distribution deals
 - Announce distribution deals in a press release

- ❑ **Plan and engage the film's presales, including:**
 - Domestic broadcast networks
 - One or more major international territories
 - Preferred licensees
 - Ancillary presales

- ❑ **Activate the completion bond**
 - Request completion bond in writing
 - Include current script, budget, presale documentation & supporting materials
 - Process & activate production completion bond (allow up to 8 weeks)

- ❑ **Activate the bank loan**
 - Draft letter of credit
 - Include collateral and completion bond documentation
 - Process & activate production line of credit

- ❑ **Complete the final pre-production**
 - Scrutinize creative elements of film
 - Identify special needs for media coverage & international territories
 - Establish novel & comic book publishing relationships
 - Cultivate promotional tie-in relationships, as appropriate
 - Prepare film promotion and advertising ramp-up with distributors

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Production

- ❑ **Exercise material agreements**
 - Facilities
 - Equipment
- ❑ **Music**
 - Attach composer
 - Prepare music package
 - Obtain outside music clearances
- ❑ **Producer's duties:**
 - Initiate reading, scoring & recording
 - Commence visual production
 - Review production reports & dailies
 - Update director on distribution & marketing progress
 - Update distributors on production progress
 - Stage consumer press releases in domestic & international territories
 - Supervise workreel assembly
 - Supervise new theatrical trailers & advertisements
 - **CONDUCT AUDIENCE TEST SCREENINGS OF WORKREEL AND TRAILERS**

Post-production

- ❑ **Producer's duties:**
 - Supervise trailers and advertisements
 - **CONDUCT AUDIENCE TEST SCREENINGS OF WORKREEL AND TRAILERS**
 - Final market testing of film's title
 - Title clearance
- ❑ **The picture's domestic branding**
 - Begin television advertising campaign (3-4 weeks prior to theatrical release)
 - Coordinate novel & comic book publishing release
 - Begin promotional tie-in commercials
 - Full-scale publicity & advertising saturation during opening week
- ❑ **Selling the open global ancillary markets and international territories**
 - Deliver access letters to prebuy distributors
 - Arrange special screenings for other international distributors
 - Arrange special screening for ancillary rights partners

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Delivery

- **Producer's duties:**
 - Register copyright
 - Negotiate delivery requirements
 - Obtain errors & omissions insurance certificates
 - Draft laboratory access letters
 - Provide credit requirement lists for screen and advertising
 - Deliver visual and audio masters of film and trailer(s)
 - Finalize key production and music contracts
 - Organize chain of title documents, copyright reports & title reports
 - Provide advertising stills, key artwork and music cue sheets
 - Provide certificate of origin, as requested
 - Execute applicable rights transfer assignments