StratusCore’s creative connector

DENISE MUYCO IS MODERNIZING BEHIND-THE-SCENES FILM PRODUCTION

BY DREW ATKINS
Contributing writer

Before anyone could conceive of watching action movies on a phone, Denise Muyco was pioneering new ways to connect people with creativity.

As a product manager at AtomFilms in the ’90s, Muyco helped produce some of the first internet-exclusive films and animation, paving the way for Amazon’s and Netflix’s efforts.

With the first company she founded, OneView Technologies, she offered software to manage rights for films played on airplanes, cable networks, and on-demand hotel services.

Now Muyco is modernizing behind-the-scenes content creation with her new effort, StratusCore, working with companies that include Warner Brothers, Disney, Sony, Netflix, Amazon and Paramount.

The concept behind StratusCore is similar to the construction industry, Muyco says. Like the construction of buildings, much of the work on movies is handled by contractors and independent vendors. Whether it’s the storyboards created before a film begins to shoot or the special effects added after cameras stop rolling, a free agent likely does it.

Much of this visual effects work takes extremely powerful computers, internet networks capable of transferring terabytes of data, and suites of expensive software. StratusCore offers the first two at co-working spaces in Los Angeles, and access to the latter at those locations and on the cloud.

Beyond saving money for freelancers and small vendors, Muyco says it expands their access to the industry and the industry’s supply of resources available to all members, regardless of size, but the rise of cloud computing and the ability to allow access to software suites remotely, presented a solution.

Muyco traces the company’s origin to a 2009 call from Steve Arnold, a former right-hand man and manager for Star Wars creator George Lucas. Arnold was on the board of a film studio in Vancouver at the time, and asked for her help on a “big visual effects challenge.”

That led Muyco to create a co-op of sorts in the city, bringing together 30 or so studios and “FX houses” that would have access to high-grade computing equipment and connections.

That structure limited the resources available to all members, regardless of size, but the rise of cloud computing and the ability to allow access to software suites remotely, presented a solution.

Muyco later opened a space in Los Angeles, and has plans to become more involved in the growing and contractor-heavy gaming and virtual reality industries in Seattle.

“The volume and velocity at which visual content is being created today is astronomic,” Muyco said. “It’s mind-boggling. ... We’re trying to make everything a bit easier for the people making it all.”

DENISE MUYCO
Title: CEO and co-founder
Company: StratusCore Inc.
Headquarters: Seattle
Locations: Vancouver and Los Angeles
Founded: 2010
Employees: 20
Projects completed: Nearly 140,000

LESSONS LEARNED

► “Have resilience in the space you’re carving out with your business. Just keep working at it, and when you’re talking to the customer, if the answer is no, it means not right now, not necessarily in the future.”

► “The cardinal rules are to know thy customer, and outwork everyone else in serving them. Take the sports mentality and put in the hours to work harder, prepare more and work smarter.”

Copyright © 2017 Puget Sound Business Journal with all rights reserved. Reproduction or use, without permission, of editorial or graphic content in any manner is prohibited.