

US Korea Collaboration Opportunities in Entertainment

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요약

- 한미 엔터테인먼트 산업의 공동제작 현황과 문제점 등을 검토하고 향후 발전 방향과 공동제작 가능성 등을 분석함
- 지난 20~30년 간 한국의 애니메이션 산업은 급속히 성장하였으며 뒤지지 않는 우수성 있는 작품들을 제작하고 있음
- 기술적인 면이나 디자인 등에서는 앞서고 있지만 스토리텔링과 마케팅 전략의 개선이 필요함
- 누구나 쉽게 애니메이션을 제작할 수 있으나 우수한 스토리와 기술이 결합된 작품이어야만 성공할 수 있음
- 한국의 우수성을 알려 funding 채널을 넓힐 수 있는 마케팅 전략이 필요함. 예를 들어 Pixar의 1억5천만달러의 애니메이션 예산은 Pixar 이 뛰어난 작품을 제작할 수 있는 기반이라 할 수 있음
- 영화“The Forbidden Kingdom” 의 900VFX shot 담당자는 캐나다, 뉴질랜드, 중국, 홍콩 등의 경쟁 상대가 있었지만 한국의 R&D 와 Raw talent 의 우수성을 인정하여 한국에서 VFX제작을 결정하였음
- “The Forbidden Kingdom” 은 매크로그래프사 등 3개의 업체와 정부의 지원을 통해 만들어진 성공적인 공동제작 사례로 볼 수 있음
- 미국적 정서로 이해할 수 있고 흥미 있는 스토리라인과 디자인 개발에 힘쓰고 한국 문화 산업의 우수성을 설득력 있게 알릴 때 한미 공동제작 사례가 증가할 것으로 전망됨

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II. Korea animation business collaborations

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V. Co-production considerations

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I. Introduction

- This report will focus on the recent collaboration efforts in the entertainment industry between Korea and the United States.
- More specifically, it will focus on information obtained from Korean and American animation and visual effects experts.
- The report will use excerpts from these contacts of KOCCA USA in the United States who are involved in animation and visual effects.
- Finally, this report will be useful to the reader in learning more about the latest trends in co-production structures, the opportunities for improvement in storytelling, and recommendations that Korean firms can follow to achieve future success in Hollywood and the global market.

II. Korean animation business collaborations

- There has been considerable transgression of Korean animation from the late 1980's. Prior to the 1988 Seoul Olympics, Korean animation

companies were mostly known as subsidiary companies in Asia.

- Currently, Korean animation firms are a stand-alone business with the ability to handle numerous co-productions. They have, in other words, now grown to become world-class players.
- Government organizations in Korea have also helped develop the animation industry domestically. For example, the city of Gwangju supports companies in office space, hardware and software through its government-funded programs.
- In addition, a number of venture capitalist firms in Korea enable animation firms to access money, thereby providing the opportunity for co-production and financial structuring in different ways.

III. Current joint projects in animation

- Today, in animation between Korea and the US, co-production still mainly involves work-for-hire jobs between American and Korean firms.
- Although the creative, design and technical aspects in Korea are tremendous, the weakest link remains to be storytelling. Experts agree that there is a learning curve for storytelling and marketing that Korean companies need to improve on.
- In any entertainment genre, it is all about how to produce intelligently and compete on a higher level. The goal in animation is for both sides to collaborate in a healthy environment.
- Much of the animation market today is driven by licensing and marketing. Technology is now ubiquitous and cheaper, so almost

anyone can make an animation production. The key is to find the right property, right idea, and technology, and combine these three aspects.

- A lot of companies cannot compete against Pixar's 150 million budget per animation film. So Koreans must try harder to know the marketplace and the target audience.
- Koreans are creative with good production skills, but many have to figure out how to market it and what the funding channels are.

IV. Visual effects collaborations – case study

- For "The Forbidden Kingdom" there were 900 VFX shots. There was competition in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, London, China and Hong Kong. VFX supervisors looked to Korea to make these shots because they found comfort with the talent, R&D and raw talent.
- Although there was skepticism at first, those trepidations were calmed after preliminary tests of the shots showed that there was indeed a convincing talent pool.
- The Korean company, Macrograph, had much government backing, R&D and technical resources. There were three separate Korean companies that worked on the movie, but they all worked well together.

V. Co-production considerations

- In co-productions, it is all about the philosophy of making money. You start with an idea, then finance it. This requires a huge leap of faith, as everything is weighted on the financial aspects. The only

way to have good business meetings in Hollywood is if you have the money first.

- Although the creative and technological aspects are important, it is most important to secure a budget. Korean animation firms have been losing OEM projects to India and China.
- Although Korean animation companies have strong work ethics and talent, it really requires convincing foreign investors to invest a little more for better results down the line. If the investor is solely focusing on the short-term without thinking about a better final product, then it is a lose-lose situation for both sides.
- It is proper to stick within the budget range, but many clients tend to request extra creative retakes. It is an ongoing process to keep clients on track throughout the entire process. If not, companies can, and do, go out of business
- Hence, it is important to set proper limits in the beginning to avoid these types of unwelcoming situations.
- It is important to create a good business model that factors in topics such as overall business sense and production facility capabilities.
- These days, concept artists are trying to be more globally appealing in the type of work they produce. For example, Semo Logic employs American animators to get the proper look and feel for the animation. This way, they can create drawings that are globally appealing.

VI. Conclusive remarks on collaboration efforts

- Experts agree that Korean companies need to constantly realize that

US culture is different from Korean culture.

- When doing business with the West, Koreans need a Western producer or consultant to work for them.
- To have a better understanding in making a good final product, you will also need someone from the target audience of the animation to serve as an advisor.
- When working on "The Forbidden Kingdom" there were some staff members who spoke English well to communicate on VFX topics.
- There were also those who had studied in the US before, making it easier for communication between both sides.
- If you are aiming to make an entertainment property with global positioning, you need people with that type of sensibility.
- In other words, you need good writers, executives with years of experience, and those who understand Hollywood bureaucracy. Sensibility is important to get to where you want to go.