
Welcome to Production.Ink

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Thu, Apr 4, 2024 at 10:03 PM

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By Editorial • 5 Apr 2024

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Hey there, and welcome to the inaugural edition of [Production.Ink's](#) newsletter. We're here to give you quick reads and resources on the business of production without crushing your inbox. If you're an industry video content maker, it's news and commentary you can use. We'll be coming to you every other week with smart takes and the latest info on production news and services and job changes. We want to hear from you on what you want to read about and who's going where in our world, so please email us at info@production.ink.



Deal or No Deal? Predictions for the next IATSE and Teamsters labor agreement

We're starting with what's on all our minds: the **below the line union situation**. We'll be on the labor beat often.

You know that the IATSE, Teamsters, and Hollywood Craft Locals deals with the AMPTP are now expired, and unions are bargaining together on the major issues. Some locals have reached guild-specific agreements, but nothing else is certain. We'll talk more about strikes in future editions but, strike or not, what can we expect to see in the next deal?

The Writer's Guild and SAG-AFTRA deals last year are a good guide. They struck for 148 and 118 days, respectively, and the key gains in their contracts were outsized wage increases, bonuses based on streaming

success, staffing minimums (for WGA), and guardrails for AI. For more details on the WGA and SAG-AFTRA deals, see our summary [here](#).

Expect negotiations to focus on the same four key areas. One more to add: IATSE and Teamsters also are prioritizing improvements to health and pension plans from residual increases, which weren't fully funded in prior contracts.

What will the basic terms be for IATSE, Teamsters, and Crafts? Will the new deals look more like the WGA or SAG-AFTRA deal?

For **wage increases**, likely closer to the WGA model: 3-5% increases over a three-year period. The 2021 deal raised the minimum wage to \$26 and won a 3% annual wage increase. Another minimum wage increase is unlikely, but a 3% or more bump is precedent.

Streaming bonuses will be tough because there aren't (yet) streaming residuals to base bonuses off. A smaller bonus than the writers' might be the best they can hope for, and expect it to be distributed like the actors', with a portion going to a joint fund for members.

AI and minimum staffing concerns overlap. The unions will be trying to keep humans from being replaced by AI or autonomous cars, for example. Similar to the minimum staffing for writers' rooms, we should see minimum staff requirements correlated to the size of the production. We will likely see a minimum number of humans for each job function, depending on size and budget of the project.

PH&W plans weren't a key part of WGA or SAG-AFTRA deals, but the unions also want streaming-based funding mechanisms for the plans, increasing retirement accrual, and eliminating cuts to health coverage. The DGA got a .5% increase in consecutive years from employers to their

PH&W plans in their new deal, so a 1-2% total increase seems reasonable. The IA will be under pressure to get a win here for their members.

One more wrinkle: **working conditions**. We're still seeing complaints of 15+ hour days, weeks of consecutive work, and full days without meal breaks, despite the 2021 deal focusing on conditions. Again, the unions will want to make progress here and want a safety coordinator on each set, but it may not be as big a priority.

We asked [Michael Maizner](#), a management-side labor relations attorney specializing in the entertainment industry, if there is anything else we should be considering. He pointed to the **hybrid and remote work**. According to Maizner, in negotiations he's been a party to, existing language around things like meal periods and other working conditions aren't totally applicable to remote workers. He expects landing more particular, fact-dependent language for remote production workers, specifically around deadlines for when work has to be performed, to be an important issue in discussions of working conditions.

Here are our core predictions for the next below the line labor deal:

- 5% / 4% / 3% wage increases over a three-year period
- A flat-fee bonus for streaming shows that hit 20% total audience views within 90 days of release on the platform, with a portion going to a general fund
- Minimum staffing numbers that correlate to overall project budget size
- 0.5% / 0.5% / 0.5% increases in PH&W contributions

What do you think? Would you be happy with it, or nah?

We'll be on the labor beat until deals get done and beyond. Tell us what else you want to hear about at info@production.ink, and subscribe below to get the latest delivered.



Hollywood Contraction in General: You know jobs are scarce and productions are down, but to quantify it: overall industry employment is down 26% since August 2022. Work rates are showing limited signs of recovery since the the WGA and SAG-AFTRA stoppage. Let's hope we can avoid another one for jobs' sake.

Hollywood Contraction Hits Entertainment Executive Jobs: It's hitting execs, too. By some estimates, 20%+ of executives in media and entertainment are unemployed. Scripted series production fell 12% to 516, and may drop to 400 in the next few years, so there is limited space for numbers to return.

Cinematographers Guild and Artists Guild Reach Agreements: IATSE Locals 600 and 800 both reached tentative deals with the AMPTP on their guild-specific issues. So did Local 729, the set painters and sign writers, [and Local 695](#), which is the production sound, video assist, video engineering, and studio projection technicians. And Locals 80 (Motion Picture Grips, Crafts Service, Marine, First Aid Employees, and Warehouse Workers) and 706 (Make-up Artists & Hair Stylists Guild) just came through this week. Negotiations are ongoing for the big issues we talk about above, but maybe there is reason for optimism.

[Neon is Expanding](#). The studio darling is bringing on Jon Read and Allison Rose Carter to do more of their own productions, and partnering with Ken Kao's Waypoint Entertainment to make them happen. Remember that Read and Rose Carter produced "Everything Everywhere All at Once", which used RunwayML extensively and with success. Don't be surprised to see more. Our list of other AI production tools you'll see and use is [here](#).

Have a hot tip? Send it our way at info@production.ink.




Tim Clawson stepped down as Head of Worldwide Production and Post at [Amazon MGM](#); **Kim Rach** is Head of TV and **Peter Oillataguerre** is Head of TV there...[Warner Bros Pictures Animation](#) hired **Kim Mackey** as EVP of production and **Jessie Carbonaro** as VP of production talent. ... **Lourdes Diaz** became a partner and board member at [AGC Studios](#). ... **Nathan Fillion** launched a new production company, [Collision33](#). His longtime partner **Michelle Chapman** joined him. ... **Jonathan Yunger** became the sole president at [Millennium Media](#) when **Jeffrey Greenstein** left and launched a new production and sales company called "[A Higher Standard](#)." ... For those considering branching out, **Gene Rogers** became SVP of Production and Operations for [Lionsgate's](#) "Global Products and Experiences" group. He creates games and live, immersive events based on Lionsgate productions. ... **Samantha Racanelli** was named president of production for Dakota Johnson's and Ro Donnelly's [TeaTime Pictures](#). ... **Mike Blanchard**, [Lucasfilm's](#) VP of post-production, is stepping down

after 30 years.

Humble brag about your moves by sending us info (and/or a press release) to info@production.ink and we'll do our best to post newsworthy *below the line* job changes.

We'll be back in a few weeks. Thanks for joining us on this journey so far.

- The Production.Ink team

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KEEP READING

WGA and SAG-AFTRA 2023 Deal Terms

Here is a quick reference of key terms from the 2023 WGA an...



Remote Control: Collaboration Tools for Hybrid & Remote Production

With more and more productions going virtual and remote, an...



Privacy Please: Protecting Production Data

As we learned with the Sony Pictures hack, keeping your pro...



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