

## PRODUCTION NEWS SPOTLIGHT

**Assembly Comes Together** - It's been nearly two years since **David Fish** and business partner **John Knapich** formed Assembly in a converted factory building at the North end of Manayunk. "Deciding on a name for the company was challenging," says Fish of Assembly. "We wanted it to suggest what we do literally, but also convey a sense of something else, a nuance or subtext, not unlike what we do in the editing room." The name refers to the old film editing term for a first cut, and is a nod to the collaborative nature of production and post. The two partners had known each other for years before teaming up. "We knew and respected each others' work," said Knapich. "The idea was to form a modern, nimble production-post company with great technology and a focus on client service."

While Fish and Knapich are established editors and fixtures in the Philadelphia post-production scene, the new company is not a traditional post-production facility. Its spacious offices include three multi-function suites (editing/graphics/DVD & Blu-Ray authoring/compression) that have a relaxed, open vibe designed for collaboration & flexibility. "The producer isn't sitting behind us on a raised platform dictating instructions," said Fish. "We deliberately chose to get away from the formality and artifice of that when we were designing the space." In fact, for much of the Post work done at Assembly, producers are working remotely and collaborating on-line. While the Internet and broadband has made this possible from a technical standpoint, it's Assembly's client relationships that really foster the comfort and trust to work this way. "Our clients rely on us to get the job done responsibly, and we go out of our way to service them and the project in the most efficient way," says Fish.

In recognizing some of the challenges faced by today's producers trying stay on top of all things digital, Assembly has positioned itself as a well-respected resource for helping clients make informed decisions. Agencies and other clients are turning to the team at Assembly before production for advice on formats, compatibility and other

aspects of production that will impact Post. Explains Fish, "Workflows in video production and video post-production



David Fish

John Knapich

are not only changing rapidly, they are morphing together. Now more than ever, digital video acquisition, editing and delivery require careful attention to compatibility and consistency, with the technical considerations of one stage impacting the next. Clients rely not only on our creative instincts, but also on our ability to communicate and share technical expertise for the greater good." For example, making sense of the many "flavors" of high-definition (P2, XDCAM, RED, and now even DSLR video) is something the company is often called upon for. The result is a more streamlined, intentional process from production through post. "We take our responsibility to be plugged into these issues very seriously" said Fish, "and we view the consulting aspect of what we do, as a major added value."

Though editing is their bread & butter, production has been a steady part of Assembly's services from the beginning. In fact, the company sees great value for certain clients in serving as a combined production and post resource. "Our approach to production and directing is steeped in editorial skills," Knapich explained, "which not only creates efficiency, but also takes full advantage of our fundamental instincts as focused and intuitive storytellers." This model has served Assembly well, having recently completed production and post work for local agencies such as MRM Worldwide, Cadient Interactive, DiD, and Domus as well as The University of Pennsylvania.

Assembly is also gaining a reputation as a one-stop shop for savvy web video marketers. From the start of their partnership, Fish and Knapich have had their keen eyes on the opportunities that the growth of broadband has brought to video production. "We are living through a truly remarkable time in world of video. Never before have we seen such a diverse clientele able to leverage video on the web for marketing, outreach, training and other purposes," says Fish. With video on the web now vastly beyond the novelty stage, to a point where it is often

expected, production value is becoming a key differentiator. "Thankfully, we're not hearing the phrase 'well, it's just for the web' anymore," said Knapich.

"That's become an old school mentality." The vision at Assembly is decidedly new school.



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