

INSIDER GUIDE

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FERROCITY

MAGAZINE



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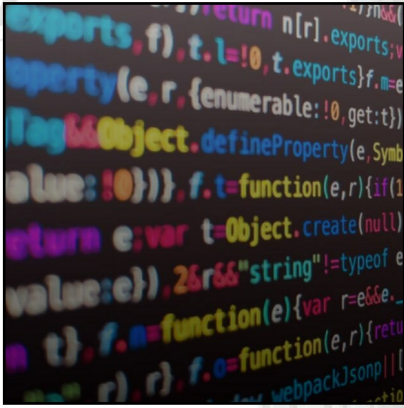


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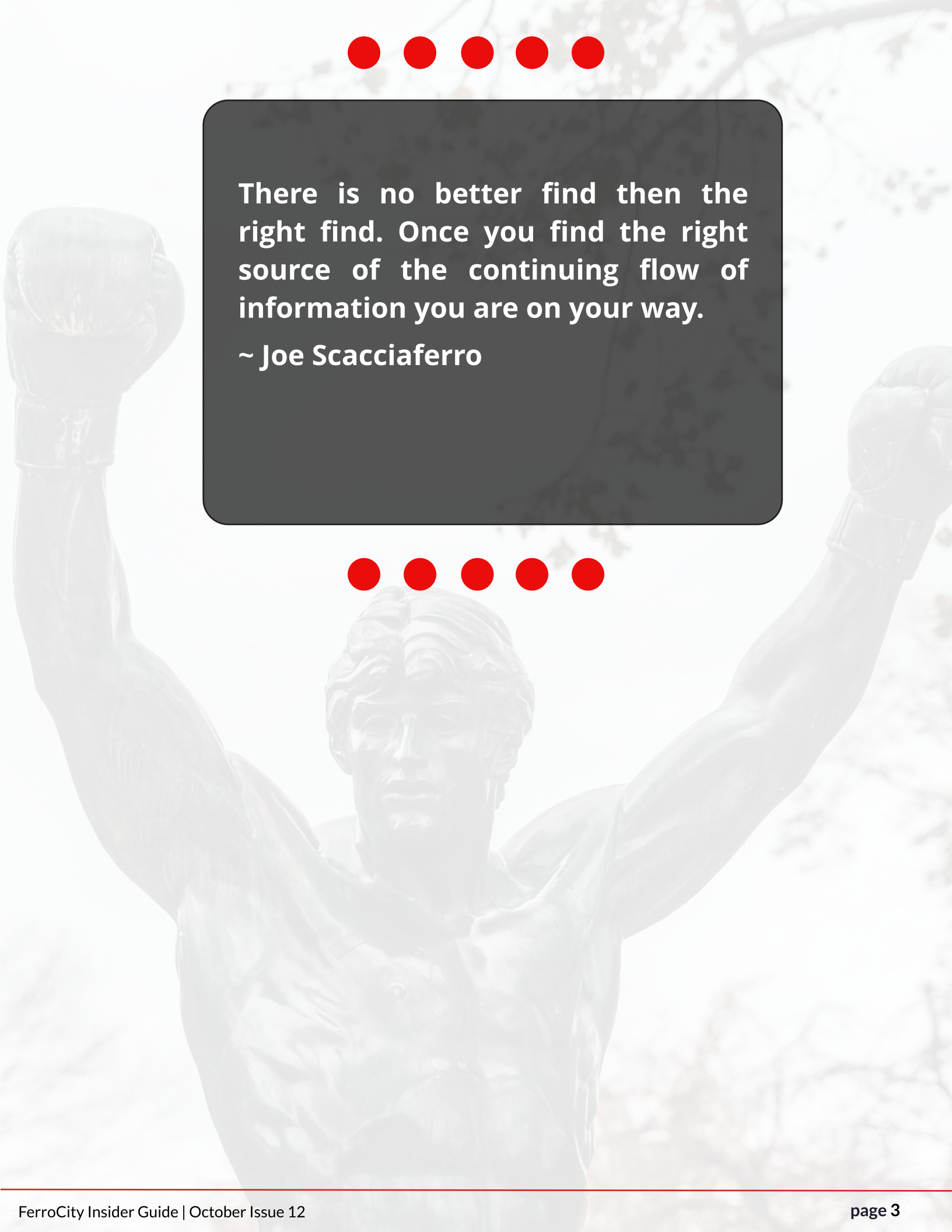
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Unsung but not unheard audio sweetening.



There is no better find than the right find. Once you find the right source of the continuing flow of information you are on your way.

~ Joe Scacciaferro

FROM JOE

EDITORIAL

With the launch of the newly expanded FerroCity only a few months old, the reaction from the community has been overwhelming, Thank You. As we all know FerroCity was built to help you develop the skills that matter and introduce you to a community of professionals who are excited to help you succeed and grow in the entertainment production industry. All of those goals have been established and are growing faster than we ever imaged thanks again to your input. Input like wanting a deeper understanding about relevance of new technologies, how to use your existing skills in other sectors, where are the global opportunities, the list goes on and on. We have already begun responding to those requests and will continue to enhance Ferro City as our community grows.

FerroCity was not created to be an experience based on our ideas and desires. It is a "city" driven by the community's input and needs. You have become an inspiration for us to reach further, expand into new areas and provide you with opportunities unimaginable prior to FerroCity. All of this has happened in just the last few months. I can't image how cool this will be as the years pass.

Thank you for making our community a valued resource. As you all may know, I've been in this business for over 30 years. My career spans many diverse sectors of the biz both vertically and horizontally. Meaning I have held positions from sweeping floors in recording studios to executive producing network programming. I've worked as a stagehand nailing flats together, to being part of the engineering team at ITT Defense / Avionics assigned to the Space Shuttle projects.

Some might think the reason I have done all those gigs was

because I couldn't hold a job. Based on the average person's list of opportunities they are aware of, I could see why they would draw that conclusion. Fortunately, for me the truth was born from curiosity.

I always wanted to know how and why things were the way they were, like the gear box on my three speed Sting Ray bicycle or why when I was at the movies there was a white light coming out of the wall in the back of the theater. As I got older my curiosity never diminished, it actually became the core of my existence.

This was all before the internet or search engines. You couldn't just grab your phone and ask Siri "how does this work". There weren't hundreds of articles or video clips waiting for you to discover. If you really wanted to know you had to do the work.

At the time my research path consisted of striking up conversations with anybody I could find who might know the answer to my curiosity of the moment. Like when I was young and playing in basement bands (where I lived we didn't have garages). Not having a clue how to record a band, I tried recording our bands to a cassette player using the one small mic that came with the unit.

My recordings never sounded like the album. They were always distorted and hard to distinguish the instruments. No matter how hard I tried I never got it right. I started thinking about who might know what I was doing wrong? At the time no one I knew was recording their bands.

I figured maybe the guy at the music store where I bought my guitar might have a clue. That conversation led me to a four track recorder and an audio mixer.

FROM JOE

CONTINUED

My recordings were better but still not right. One day I was hanging in another musician's basement talking about my bad recordings. He went upstairs and came down with a copy of his brother's Audio magazine. It was exactly what I was looking for, a source for learning about audio recording. DONE.

There is no better find than the right find. Once you find the right source of the continuing flow of information you are on your way. Although I learned how to record my band better and found out I could make a living doing it, I learned a more important lesson that day. I learned that if I was curious about something I needed to find a way to the right source. Harley riders have a phrase, *It's not about the destination. It's the journey that matters.* The right source will always provide you with the right answers while opening your mind to hundreds of new possibilities for you to explore on your journey. FerroCity was built to be your source. A source for answers to your questions and a guide to help you explore new possibilities on your journey. We are not here to tell you what to become or what your career path you should take. We are here to be your right source for the information you need to make an informed decision, guided by those who have arrived and have cleared the path for you.

Thanks again for being a part of this amazing community and helping others while they help you.

Ciao

Joe Scacciaferro



Membership is a Privilege...

Why?

- #1 Knowledge
- #2 Community
- #3 Results

FERROCITY

**LEARN
WORK
EARN**

+
+



**FOUNDING
MEMBERSHIP**

COMING SOON

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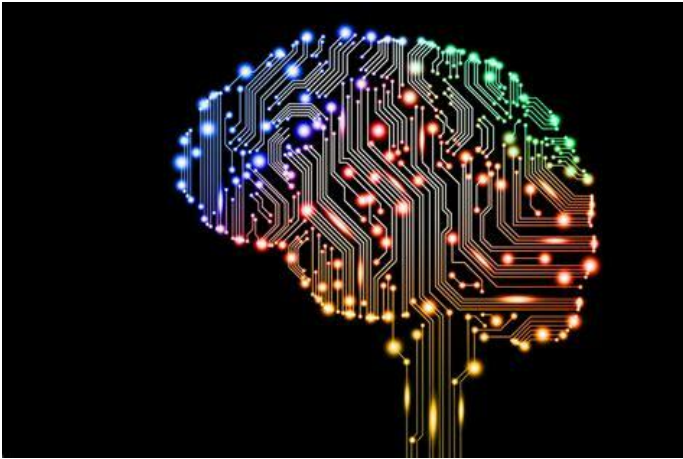


Simplifying live broadcast operations using AI and machine learning

By Andrew Broadstone, Zixi
August 16, 2021

Pulling back the curtain on AI and machine learning in live broadcast workflows

Artificial Intelligence and machine learning are seen as pillars of the next generation of technological advancement in broadcast media for a variety of reasons, including the ability to sift through mountains of data while identifying anomalies, spotting trends and alerting users to potential problems before they occur without the need for human intervention. With the more data they ingest these models improve over time, meaning the more ML models utilized across a variety of applications, the faster and more complex the insights derived from these tools become. But to truly understand why machine learning provides enormous value for broadcasters, let's break it down into use cases and components within broadcast media where AI and ML can have the greatest impact.



How can AI and machine learning reduce complexity?

The promise of our interconnected world means video workflows are interacting, intertwining, and integrating in new ways every day, simultaneously increasing information sharing, agility and connectivity while producing increasingly complex

challenges and issues to diagnose. As more on-prem and cloud resources are connected with equipment from different vendors, sources, and partner organizations distributing to new device types, there is an enormous, ever-expanding number of log and telemetry data produced.

As a result, broadcast engineers have more information than they can effectively process. They routinely silence frequent alerts and alarms because with too much data overload it can be impossible to tell what is important and what is not. This inevitably leaves teams overwhelmed and lacking insights.

Advanced analytics and ML can help with these problems by making sense of overwhelming quantities of data, allowing human operators to sift through insignificant clutter and to focus and understand where issues are likely to occur before failures are noticed. Advanced analytics provide media companies the unprecedented opportunity to leverage sophisticated event correlation, data aggregation, deep learning, and virtually limitless applications to improve broadcast workflows. The benefit is to be able to do more with less, to innovate faster than the competition and prepare for the future – both by increasing your knowledge base and opening the potential for cost reduction and time savings, honing in on the crucial details behind the data that matters most to both their users and organization.

Setting the stage: Issues every broadcaster wants to avoid

Imagine a live sporting event stops streaming, or that frames start dropping for no apparent reason. Viewers are noticing quality problems and starting to complain. Technicians are baffled and customers may have just missed the play of the year. Revenue therefore takes a hit and executives want to know what is to blame.

These are situations every broadcaster wants to avoid, and in these tense moments there is no time to lose – viewers are flipping to other services and ad revenue is being lost by the second. What went wrong? Who or what is to blame and how can we get this back up and running immediately, while mitigating this risk in the future? Modern broadcasters need to know before problems happen – not be caught in a crisis trying to pick up the pieces after an incident.

INSIDE THE BIZ DEEP DIVE



The critical role of anomaly detection in modern broadcasting

One of the biggest challenges facing broadcast operations engineers is to recognize when things are not working before the viewers' experience is affected. In a perfect world operators and engineers want to predict outages and identify potential issues ahead of time. Machine learning models can be orchestrated to recognize the normal ranges based on hundreds to thousands of measurements – beyond the ability of a human operator – and alert the operator in real time when a stream anomaly occurs. While this process normally requires monitoring logs on dozens of machines and keeping track of the performance of network links between multiple locations and partners, using ML allows the system to identify patterns in large data sets and helps operators focus only on workflow anomalies – dramatically reducing workload.

Anomaly detection works by building a predictive model of what the next measurements related to a stream will be – for example, the round-trip time of packets on the network or the raw bitrate of the stream – and then determining how different the expected value is from the next measurement. As a tool to sort through normal and abnormal streams, this can be essential, especially when managing hundreds or thousands of concurrent channels. One benefit of anomalous behavior identification would be enabling an operator to switch to a backup link that uses a different network link before a failure occurs.

Anomaly detection can also be a vital component of reducing needless false alarms and reducing time waste. Functionality such as customizable alerting preferences and aggregated health scores generated by threat-gauging data points assist operators to sift through and assimilate data trends so they can focus where they really need to. In addition, predictive and proactive alerting can be orders of magnitude less expensive and allow broadcasters to be able to identify the root causes of instability and failure faster and easier.

The challenge of data collection and value of data aggregation



A major challenge to any analytics system is data collection. When you have a video workflow comprised of machines in disparate data centers running different operating systems and tools, it can be difficult to assimilate and standardize reliable, relevant data that can be used in any AI/ML system. While there are natural data aggregation points in most broadcast architectures – for

example if you are using a cloud operations and remote management platform or common protocol stack – this is certainly not a given. Although standards exist for how video data should be formatted and transmitted, few actually describe how machine data, network measurements, and other telemetry should be collected, transmitted and stored. Therefore it is essential to select a technology partner that sends data to a common aggregation point where it is parsed, normalized and put into a database while supporting multiple protocols to support a robust AI/ML solution.

Realizing the true value behind machine learning

Once you have a method for collecting real-time measurements from your video workflow, you can feed this data into a ML engine to detect patterns. From there you can train the system not only to understand normal operating behavior for anomaly detection, but also to recognize specific patterns leading up to video degradation events. With these patterns determined you can also identify common metadata related to degradation events across systems, allowing you to identify that the degradation event is related to a particular shared network segment.

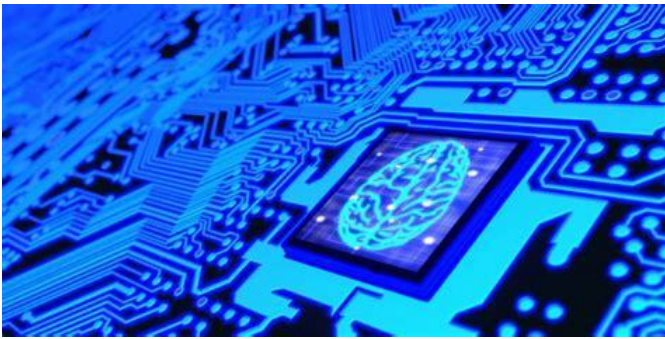
For example, if a particular ISP in a particular region continues to experience latency or blackout issues, the system learns to pick up on warning signs ahead of time and notifies the engineer before an outage – preventing issues proactively while simultaneously improving root cause identification within your entire ecosystem. Developers can also see that errors are more often observed using common encoder or network hardware settings. Unexpected changes in the structure of the video stream or the encoding quality might also be important signals of

impending problems. By observing correlations, ML gives operators key insights into the causes of problems and how to solve them. Not all issues are avoidable, but ML assisted root cause analysis helps prevent future risk

Predictive analytics, alerts and correlations are useful for automated failure prediction and alerting, but when all else fails, ML models can also be used to help operators concentrate on areas of concern following an outage, making retrospective analysis much easier and faster via root cause analysis.

With workflows that consist of dozens of machines and network segments, it is inherently difficult to know where to look for problems. However, ML models, as we have seen, provide trend identification and help visualize issues using data aggregation. Even relatively straightforward visualizations of how a stream deviates from the norm are incredibly valuable, whether in the form of historical charts, customizable reports or questions as simple as how a particular stream

Machine learning points to the future of successful broadcast workflows



Leveraging AI and ML to improve operational efficiency and quality provides a powerful advantage while preparing broadcasters for the future of live content delivery over IP. Selecting the right vendor for system monitoring and orchestration that integrates AI and ML capabilities can help your organization make

sense of the vast amounts of data being sent across the media supply chain and be a powerful differentiator.

As experiments to test hypotheses are essential to the traditional learning process, the same goes for ML models. Building, training, deploying, and updating ML models are inherently complex, meaning providers in cooperation with their users must continue to iterate, compare results, and adjust accordingly to understand the why behind the data, improving root cause analysis and the customer experience.

Machine learning presents an unprecedented opportunity for sophisticated event correlation, data aggregation, deep learning, and virtually unlimited applications across broadcast media operations as it evolves exponentially year to year. As models become more informed and interconnected, problem solving and resolution technology based on deep learning and AI will become increasingly essential tools. Broadcast organizations looking to prepare themselves for such a future would be wise to prepare for this eventuality by choosing the right vendor to integrate AI and ML enabled tools into their workflows.

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HOW TO PREPARE AND ANALYZE YOUR NEXT MOVE IN THE BUSINESS



Screenwriters Need a Change of Scenery Too: The Importance of Writers Residencies

by SONYA ALEXANDER
September 1, 2021

Script contributor Sonya Alexander shares three reasons why screenwriters should consider participating in a writers' residency to focus, network, and find complete isolation in your work.

When people hear about writers' residencies, they usually associate them with novelists, poets, scholars or essayists. However, most writers need a change of setting, even screenwriters. In some circles, screenwriting isn't considered as "serious" as novel writing or poetry. What makes screenwriting unique is that after a script is read, it not only lives on in our imaginations, but is transferred to a whole new medium, visual, on the big or small screen. It's no minor fete to accomplish this in 90 to 120 pages.

Sometimes that local coffee shop is too noisy or there are too many distractions at home to get the appropriate amount of focus. Writers' residencies present the opportunity to network with peers. They also provide an environment that's conducive to being creative, whether it's the quiet of nature at rustic farmhouse or the buzz of urban activity in a city. There are residencies that cater exclusively to women and those that are fashioned for certain age demographics.



Here are the top three reasons to attend a retreat:

You might wonder what the difference is between a residency and a retreat. They're virtually the same with minor differences. Retreats are places that are specifically for writing and for a designated amount of time, where you can commune with others, but you pay for it much like you would a vacation or getaway. Residencies vary, with different stipulations and atmospheres. Sometimes you have to pay for them, other times they offer a stipend or grant.

Commune with nature. If Thoreau did it, so can you. Residencies that are in the woods or forests and on farms and ranches provide a particular type of atmosphere for writers to tap into. Crisp, clean air, birds chirping, and a lush landscape might be the catalyst for the inspiration you need. Following are some of the best residencies if you want to commune with nature and cranking out your script.

The Vermont Studio Center is nestled in scenic Johnson, VT. Of course, there's no part of Vermont that isn't scenic and beautiful, but according to Sarah Audsley, the center's Writing Across Media Facilitator, "The gorgeous natural scenery of northern Vermont invites contemplation and provides an ideal setting for focus and productive writing time. VSC's Visiting Writer Program invites prominent professional writers to join our community during each residency session to offer readings, craft talks, lectures, and one-on-one mentorship to writing residents.

The Visiting Artist/Writer Program events are free and open to the public as well. Finally, writing residents are invited to present their work each session and are encouraged to participate in open studios." Some other nature escapes are Jack Kerouac's Cabin in Orlando, Florida, stylish treehouses in Switzerland at Fondation Jan Michalski, lush vineyards in Canada and California with Writing Between the Vines or in a rustic cabin in the woods at Maine's Hewnoaks.

To get feedback from peers. Many writers' residencies don't just provide solitude, they provide a sense of community where you can share your work with other writers and get their thoughts on yours. There are some online sites, like American Zoetrope, where you can upload your work and get feedback from other writers, but that's not the same as breaking bread with someone and getting to know them before they give their opinion on your possible masterpiece.



The Bellagio Center offers the Arts and Literary Arts Residency in a setting that's conducive to creating and communicating. Known as the "Pearl of Lake Como," Bellagio is a coastal village with sett streets and cultivated gardens. Artists of all stripes are invited to apply for the residency. Their work should align with that of the mission of this Rockefeller Foundation-sponsored residency: "Foundation's mission of promoting the well-being of humankind and produce work that enhances our shared understanding of pressing global or social issues. Successful applicants will demonstrate decades of significant contributions to their artistic field or show evidence of being on a strong upward trajectory for those earlier in their careers." The Bogliasco Foundation Fellowships, Hedgebrook, Mineral School, and the Camargo Foundation are a few others where working solo then presenting your work to others is key.



Getting off the grid. Sometimes putting away the comforts of modern life can ignite raw inspirations. No cellphones. No internet. No distractions. The Arctic Circle has got to be one of the most remote places to consider for a writer's residency. And, yes, there's a residency there! You'll be on a Tall Ship that navigates the icy international waters of Svalbard. You're opting out of comfort for an experience that can keep you on your toes, literally,

and provide a unique adventure. You might freeze your heinie off, but you may also be motivated to finally finish that gestating script.



Other isolated, unique environments to work on your screenplay include the Shetland Island Lighthouse Residency, the Offshore Residency (at sea on a sailboat), the Civitella Ranieri Foundation 15th Century medieval castle in Italy, and The Creative Centre in Stöðvarfjörður's fish factory. Voices of Wilderness in Alaska doesn't only present seclusion but makes you an active participant of the wilderness by sending you on hikes with a park ranger. An encounter with a grizzly bear could certainly get the creative juices flowing!

There are tons of writers' residencies to suit every need. Do a little research on what appeals to your proclivities. Just because you're a screenwriter doesn't mean you have to be limited in the environments that you work in. And while those more advanced in their careers can pay to go wherever they want to write, residencies provide an inveterate setting with new people to meet. Screenwriting, unlike other artforms, is as much about being social as being isolated. A residency is a salubrious conduit for creativity and a new avenue for networking.



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Networking in More Ways Than One

CONTRIBUTING MEMBER SUBMISSION

Editor Note: *The FerroCity Family is very excited to present with great honor, a third article written by FerroCity community member, Dawlat Chebly.*

Dawlat came to our attention via a post she placed on the FerroCity's Community page. Her honesty, passion and sincerity for our craft could not be denied. Our CEO, Joe Scacciaferro, reached out to her directly. During several conversations Joe realized Dawlat's journey was a story that needed to be shared. A journey many Millennials are currently experiencing.

Dawlat is a brilliant young Muslim woman, fiercely passionate about craft and her heritage. She recently completed her Master's Degree in Media Studies and Media Management from New School. She was poised to begin her career until the pandemic altered those plans. All traditional methods of initiating a career or seeking direction from professionals have been deleted. The new rules have yet been established, leaving this generation in freefall.

We decided to give Dawlat a voice. A voice to tell her story thereby giving a voice to the generation trying to find their way in the dark. She will be a regular contributor to the Insider Guide as well as a featured guest on an upcoming FerroCity: Skills and Technology Podcast.



**DAWLAT
CHEBLY**

Anyone who has asked for career advice within their lifetime was most likely encouraged to network. Exchanging information amongst those with similar interests and goals is a great opportunity to expand your inner circle, find job opportunities you wouldn't be able to find online, and even keeping you in the know within that social world. However, when you are first starting in this culture it can be a bit overwhelming. Similar to 25 - 40% of the population, I'm someone who would relatively describe themselves as an introvert. With that being said, networking was and still is a huge hill I, amongst others, am struggling to overcome. This is when preparation, practice, and knowledge can help reduce our anxieties on the topic.

There are far more benefits to networking than just finding a new job. To truly stick out and succeed within your career networking has to be a crucial and consistent part of it. Forming those relationships and building that trust over time can benefit you even when you are not trying. Making yourself well known within the community can also help keep your name in the conversation even when you are not the one doing it. By doing that you can build trust and form relationships strong enough where you can be comfortable sharing your ideas.



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Within the creative field having a social group is crucial for our creativity. Developing the trust required for you to share your ideas can influence a new strategy or improvement on a project.

“Like-minded people that have been able to share ideas have strongly developed their intellect to foster growth in their career path and unleash the creative talent in them,” says Bianca Miller Cole, a business, personal branding, and entrepreneurship writer for Forbes Magazine.

Individuals are not the only ones who can benefit from networking opportunities. Small businesses and corporations alike often use this tactic to establish a rapport and trust with consumers, potential business partners, and others within the community; this can even open up an opportunity for free advertising.

Like almost everything these days, networking has slowly adapted in order to meet today's social world. Now, there are so many different ways to work on your professional social circle. No longer do you need to attend awkward events, clutching a business card and repeating the same pitch you practiced in the mirror the night before. With the proper use of the digital world, users can amplify their network. Now we all know the basic tips like joining LinkedIn and promoting your content, but there is still an array of options to choose from before you can say you've tried it all. Joining specialty groups that pertain to your career is a great way to find job opportunities you wouldn't have access to anywhere else, and join the conversations your colleagues are having. While you can typically find these groups on social media sites like Facebook, FerroCity is also a great example of this for the media and production industry. With the community aspect of our site, users are able to connect with and learn from others in the industry.

Direct messaging is another innovative tool that is now being used to connect with others. Whether it is asking for advice, wanting to develop a relationship, or simply wanting to hear about their experiences, it doesn't hurt to send out a one-on-one message. We can't forget to mention the increase of virtual networking events since the start of the pandemic.



All it takes is a simple Google search, and some strategic planning before you have scheduled your first virtual event. Virtual Opportunities are a great way to share and get personal contact information from colleagues, as well as get intel on what is to come in the industry.

Another great way to network that doesn't feel like networking is by doing it within the job or community you already have. Especially when you are working in production where jobs can constantly be changing, but if done right the employees may stay the same. This is usually a result of proper internal networking. Forming relationships with co-workers can open up a variety of opportunities for you before anyone else gets the chance. One good conversation with the boss can be the key ingredient needed for you to move forward.

If done right, you never really stop networking. From beginners just starting out, to veterans long retired from the industry, networking can always connect you with people you would never expect to meet. From joining specialty groups, participating in virtual events, and even promoting your content through social media, there's a way to network for everyone. Over time this can help develop long-lasting relationships, grow your self-confidence, and open up a variety of opportunities you wouldn't find in a public job posting. So regardless of how you feel when it comes to socializing, make sure you figure out the best way for you to network.

Halloween Kills' Review: It Will Feed Your Nostalgia...for Mediocre Slasher Sequels



After his clever 2018 reboot, director David Gordon Green fumbles the ball in a follow-up that falls back into the numbing forgettability of sequel formula.

By Owen Gleiberman

Sep 8, 2021 1:00pm PT

[variety.com](https://www.variety.com)

In 2018, when David Gordon Green was given the hallowed mission of rebooting the “Halloween” series (that the director of “All the Real Girls” would embrace becoming the showrunner of a slasher franchise says a lot about the 21st century, but let’s leave that for another time), his job was to wipe away 40 years of bad sequels and to restore the lurchy cinematic gamesmanship, the perfectly-timed-shock-cut ingenuity, and the scary-classic mystique of the 1978 “Halloween.” (That the original was, itself, a mayhem-by-the-numbers knockoff of “The Texas Chain Saw Massacre” says a lot about the state of horror movies back then, but let’s leave that for another time.)



HALLOWEEN KILLS

The mission was accomplished. “Halloween: The Reboot That We Promise, This Time, Is Actually Good and Not Just a Cheap Ripoff Imitation” had the same relation to the 1978 “Halloween” that “The Force Awakens” did to “Star Wars.” It wasn’t the real thing but an incredible simulation. Green had the craft and spirit to mimic John Carpenter’s elemental midnight B-movie canniness. The movie was just diverting and scary enough, and it got to remind the whole world of how cool, in her stalwart fear and fight, Jamie Lee Curtis always was.

Set 40 years after the first film, the 2018 “Halloween” took us back, in spirit, to the innocent garishness of the late ’70s, and that was a (minor) triumph. But in “Halloween Kills,” which picks up immediately after the last film, with Curtis’s Laurie Strode being rushed to the hospital after having trapped Michael Myers in her trick basement and burned him alive, Green more or less abandons the previous film’s enjoyable retro flavor.

Michael, who was no more killed by Laurie than he was in all the other “Halloween” installments (“Halloween Kills” is the 12th), proceeds to go on his latest kitchen-blade stalker rampage, and the new movie becomes all about fusing the “Halloween” formula with the tropes and obsessions of today. Which turns out to be a real fear-killer. The damage caused by Michael is now spoken of in the language of recovery. This starts when Tommy Doyle (Anthony Michael Hall), who was one of the two kids Laurie was babysitting on that fateful 1978 Halloween night, stands up before the costumed crowd at a bar and, in between talent-show acts that are more terrifying than anything else in the movie, he says, in solemn tones of sharing, “Please join me in commemorating the victims, and the survivors, of that Halloween.”

The victims this time include a middle-aged biracial couple and also a gay couple, named Big John and Little John (really?), who live in Michael Myers’ old house, which they’ve renovated to within an inch of its dark polished floorboards. That these two treat Halloween night as an occasion to eat fancy hors d’oeuvres and watch “Minnie and Moskowitz” makes one realize there are clichés you wish Michael Myers could kill off.



Laurie, confined to her hospital bed, gets up out of it by giving herself a double injection of opioids. “It’s all happening,” says Laurie. “Michael’s masterpiece!” What she means is that Michael isn’t just a mad killer anymore — he’s an orchestrator of chaos, a terrorist. His intent is not simply to murder but to cause ripples of fear (you know, like ISIS and Al Qaeda!). And then there’s the mob that forms. Anthony Michael Hall, who in his crewcut looks like the kind of Middle American lout who cheered on the Capitol Riot, picks up a baseball bat out of the bar and heads after Michael. A crowd forms behind him, and by the time Hall gets to the

hospital the crowd has swelled to a furious, surging, unruly metaphor for The Angry America Of Today. Everyone starts to chant “Evil dies tonight!” And as a demonstration of how this kind of thing can go awry, they target the wrong killer, thinking that Michael, unmasked, is the other crazy dude who just escaped from the local mental institution. That’s a twist so preposterous it’s high camp, since the guy who isn’t the killer is a homunculus who looks like Danny DeVito in a hospital gown. (Did they forget that Michael Myers is six-foot-five?)

Halloween night may be Michael Myers’ masterpiece, but “Halloween Kills” is no masterpiece. It’s a mess — a slasher movie that’s almost never scary, slathered with “topical” pablum and with too many parallel plot strands that don’t go anywhere. Green, as clever a job as he did on the first film, wastes no time cutting back to where the “Halloween” series ultimately landed: in a swamp of luridly repetitive and empty sequels, with Michael turned into such an omnipresent icon that his image gets drained of any nightmare quality. He’s more like someone who belongs on a lunchbox. Curtis, so good in the last one, is mostly wasted this time (you can feel the film trying to think up things for her to do), as Laurie’s daughter (Judy Greer) and granddaughter (Andi Matichak) do most of the heavy lifting.

The relentless nattering about the past — Michael is evil! And evil can never be killed! — is the sure sign of a desperate, bottom-line-fixated sequel. The other sign is that Michael Myers, stabbing knives and broken light fixtures into people’s faces, may not be scary anymore, but he’s still a charismatic figure of darkness. You’re relieved every time he shows up, and it’s all about that doleful, rubbery-gray, Hamlet-of-psychos mask. After 40 years, that mask is more expressive than any of the actors in “Halloween Kills.”

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UNSUNG BUT NOT UNHEARD AUDIO SWEETENING

BY JOE SCACCIAFERRO

The next time you watch TV, go to the movies, or view any professionally produced video close your eyes and “watch” it. If you are able to appreciate and “see” the story you rest assured the Wizards of audio sweetening had their hand in that production.

As a producer and a former audio engineer / producer one of the most fascinating phases of visual production is the Sweetening phase. The term Sweetening to a baker means the ingredients added to give their goods that “yummm yummm” flavor that brings their creation to life. It’s the ingredients that make you close your eyes and smile after taking your first bite. In video production it’s the same process, except this time it’s a team of audio engineers and produces adding their secret ingredients to the audio portion of the video project. These are the artists / engineers responsible for adding the “sweetening” to the final video and bringing the project to life.

Without revealing the treasured secrets for these audio Wizards, let me walk you through the production process from my vantage point. For the sake of discussion let’s say we have been contracted to produce a segment for the Science Channel’s “Through the Worm Hole” series. After the storyboards are drafted and the basic script is accepted we begin the capture process. Several small crews are dispatched globally to capture key on-camera interviews (usually: a basic camera operators; a camera operator / DP (Director of Photography) who doubles as LD (lighting director); audio engineer; and producer.) In a local recording studio our narrator records the “voice over” or narration, which will be used to guide the viewer through our story.



Simultaneously, an animation team gets to work on creating a visual reproduction of the universe scenes needed throughout our story. Once all these elements are completed they are loaded into the final editing system and then cut together in accordance with the script. VOILA ! We are done! AT THIS MOMENT THE AUDIO WIZARDS WOULD HAVE ADDED A "SCREECHING TIRE" SOUND. That would alert you to SUDDENLY STOP whatever is being said and regroup.

The reason they would have added that sound and halted my writing is because at this point the project is far from done. In fact at this point the segment would be unwatchable by entertainment networks' standards (yes, I said the Science Channel is an entertainment network. More on that at another time.) Let's review what our segment looks like at this point:

1. A bunch of interviews recorded at dozens of acoustically varied environments all with a wide range of sound properties.
2. A narration that was recorded in a pristine sound booth, which usually creates very a sterile and flat recording.
3. Then we add a track of music the producer selected during the edit that was just dropped in for reference.
4. Finally, we have dozens of animations and visual transitions that go past us in silence or with loops of music placed as reference.

Obviously, this would be unacceptable by anyone's standards. So this cacophony (cool word huh!) of multi tracked audio sources is then blended, mixed, colored and nudged into a beautifully sweetened 2 track final master mix. The result should be something the viewer will never notice YET always FEEL. It should create and support the producer's vision of the story's flowing emotions. It should be the secret ingredients that create a masterful desert and never let the viewer identify a single taste.



Tips and Tricks to Enhance your Creativity

By Meenakshi Mamgai

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If you think that people who are presenting the ideas that are catching an eye of the audience or are creative leads in the organization who are responsible to present the creative ideas are born in that way than you are totally wrong.

Most people think that being creative is something that you are born with. Creativity is something that makes your idea and solutions liked by people. An idea that is unique in the world is the best example of creativity.

You can enhance or modify someone's else idea and can give a totally different outlook to the same will also be considered as creativity. But, do you know that creativity is the skill and can be developed overtime? There are different ways that can be used to enhance this skill. If you want to be creative, you can make it happen- you just have to put in some effort and time to achieve so.

For the starters, you can opt for searching for new opportunities, or can pursue creative activities such as painting, art and craft and see how different people respond to that. You can also focus to create mood boards and change your diet plans, in order to get things started as a healthy mind resides in a healthy body.

Music is the best therapy

You can have a very busy day in your life- filled with meetings and high priority items. But what can make you feel a bit relaxed is some nice soothing music. For ages, music has been known as the best therapy to diminish pain. It relaxes certain brain cells and allows you to go deep into a mode that enhances the level of thinking. You will feel more creative when you are calm and composed.



Learn from others

Do you know that when you listen to people or watch their actions, how they respond to different situations that makes you think the way they think? You can learn so much from reading, and watching videos and people that you consider to be experts in your field, then you can definitely learn something from them. The process can be a little time taking but it is definitely worth it.



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Tips and Tricks



Go remote

In today's world, our mobile devices have kept us so busy that whenever a problem arises, we are in the habit of instantly looking for a solution on the web. But, as we can see, the mobile devices can inhibit creative thinking. It will be better to take a break from the devices as they propose overloaded information. Going remote will give an exercise to the brain and you will be able to think with a very different perception. It will be unique and will not be copied from anywhere on the web. Moreover, you will see yourself getting free and think more broadly.

Think out of the box

What is inappropriate to the audience can be a unique solution for an issue. Thinking out of the box will definitely get you some cons but in the end, it will be the best thing. Thinking out of the box includes ideas that are unique and unusual. When you are able to find something in a pile of data then you are definitely thinking out of the box. The out of the box solutions may be interdisciplinary in nature. you can increase the thought process by gaining a broad set of perspectives from diverse areas.

Work for a company that needs creative

Few workplaces are very much strict about their culture, org charts, and chain of command. It is important for someone to work in an organization that allows you to think and imply creativity. The ability to imply something creative depends on the work culture of an organization. So, always remember to work for a company that doesn't raise an issue when you are being creative. For instance, content creation should be there and not content marketing should be avoided for the best in an organization.

Seek new challenges

Always be ready for some challenges in your work. Challenges make you work more interesting as you will take a step forward to achieve them with some mind-bending exercises. Rethink of the space that you have and try to challenge the unknown. The best of creativity comes out when you start from scratch as you try to wander it from a different eye or perception.

Tips and Tricks

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Work with something that you've haven't done or tried before, it will be challenging and interesting for you, as you will find different different ways to achieve them.



Take it into daily practice

Try to take the creativity factor into daily practice. Suppose, if you work in a jewelry shop or you are a chef, try to go a step forward. Make some new designs or try some recipes with your own creation. Give yourself some time and try to implement the creative you in your profession.

Take part in team creativity

This is a very interesting method to check out. When we are working in a group, we get to know about the different ideas that pop up in various heads. This can be considered more like a brainstorming session that can result in benefits for you, the team and the organization. Take part in team creativity to enhance your skills.

Take all suggestion, then go for one

Now, creativity is something that you can't force onto someone. Take all the suggestions regarding new ideas and then go for one. You can mix your ideas along with others and make some new creative stuff.

Flex your muscle and meditate

Meditation is known for ages to relax the mind and increase the thinking capability of a person. Meditate and flex your muscles as a healthy mind resides in a healthy body. Better ideas will come if you stay healthy and fresh.

Conclusion:

Creativity is all about combining knowledge in new and unique ways. You can paint your room or create a mood board for everything. The most important factor is that you need to keep a consistent pace and different ideas and tactics will cross your mind sooner or later.

