



Logo Program Task Force

Submission Authors

Marc Zorn, Chair
Daniel De La Rosa, Vice-Chair
Steve Tobenkin, ACES Adoption Lead

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Background

The ACES Logo Program was originally created to promote adoption of ACES throughout all segments of the industry. The Program initially focused on production and post-production equipment and tools ("Product Partners") because without consistent, high-quality ACES support in products, facilities and productions could not benefit from ACES.

The Logo Program was also initially conceived to eventually cover facilities ("Service Partners") such as dailies providers, VFX studios, DI and mastering facilities. The Logo Program also was planned to provide means for motion picture and television productions to earn a Logo (i.e. an ACES 'bug' at the end of a movie.)

To date, only the Product Partner Program has been administered. However, there are a few ways in which the Product Partner Program has fallen short of its intended goals. Dozens of companies signed up, but only a handful have actually completed the required paperwork to fully qualify for the Logo. The applicants are still listed as Product Partners but many of the Products have incomplete ACES implementations, which is confusing for end-users.

The original goals of the Logo Program were:

- Encourage consistent, high-quality ACES support in products and services
- Encourage Product Partners to work together on interoperability of inputs and outputs to support current and future multi-vendor workflows. (Education is a key component in everything.)
- Communicate to end-users (including content owners, creators, craftspeople) that products and services meet the Logo qualification criteria which should translate to a satisfying and reliable ACES experience
- Educate about ACES and promote (and encourage Partners do the same) ACES as a preferred or, at minimum, a reliable choice for a color managed framework among their other offerings

Description of the problem or question(s) of the Task Force

In response to the Logo Program's incomplete components and the shortcomings of the existing pieces, the Logo Program Task Force was created to both review the current ACES Logo Program goals and practices and plot a course to improve the Logo Program in conjunction with the planned rollout of ACES 2.0.

The Task Force prescribed a timeframe of 3-4 months to meet with industry leaders and come to consensus opinions that could be used to formulate actionable recommendations for the Logo Program and ACES in general. The timeframe was meant to give the task force ample time to consider the issues, and publish recommendations (this document).

Areas of exploration (from proposal)

1. Map out Task Force scope, timing and deliverables
2. Discuss and give recommendations on current and future scope of **Logo Program**
 - a. **Product Partner** Program
 - b. **Service Provider** Program
 - c. **Show Credit** Program
3. Decide criteria for full qualification vs. possibility for 'partial credit' for use of ACES modules, color spaces, and workflow in later stages of production
4. Recommend enhanced licensing conditions for ACES logo in publication to online and print media



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5. Determine ways to streamline the Product Partner qualification criteria while still maintaining value
6. Add benefits for Partners to encourage participation, particularly in submission, interoperability testing and program updating
7. Propose and enforce time limits for submissions from partners - in its current form, many PP have signed up but have yet to submit a complete product submission
8. Define entry points for ACES workflow phases to qualify as being “produced using ACES”
 - Crossover with each committee/working group for qualification criteria (i.e., IDT, ODT, RRT, LMT)
9. Create collateral for studio participation

Proposed deliverable(s)

- Call for Participation
- Schedule of meetings and collaboration efforts
- Minutes or similar documentation of decision processes
- Outline of qualification criteria for Logo usage
- List of actionable recommendations to the Implementation TAC from exploration criteria above or others the group determines are a priority
- *Collateral for participation at production company and studio level

*With the exception of the last point, the group will have met all the proposed deliverables with the submission of this document to the ACES Executive Committee. The last point changed to become a strong recommendation for the formation of an educational program, which would then serve to help participants meet qualification requirements.

Working Group composition, meeting format, and methodology

Following the Call for Participation, the industry participants that answered came from diverse backgrounds across the industry to lend a wide spectrum of perspectives. We had studio representatives, colorists, imaging scientists, Academy staff, representatives of Product Partner companies, and occasionally on-set crew.

Meetings were divided into two groups, representing US domestic, and (predominantly) EMEA. We would meet each Tuesday, alternating each week between a 9am PT and 5:30pm PT, so we could foster some participation outside the Hollywood environment.

Meeting topics were divided into the three main areas of exploration: Product Partner Program, Service Provider Program, and Show Credit Program. The allotted project schedule was then roughly divided in thirds to allow sufficient discussion and debate over the details in each category.

Special consideration for the use of the ACES logo

Of particular concern is the Academy’s ownership and sensitivity for the use of the ACES logo, which contains a silhouette of the Oscar statuette. The group discussed the value of the logo and whether it was incentive enough to warrant the rigor currently being asked of Product Partners. Many simplifications were considered, including the possibility of a community-policed form of self-certification. Early on, there was some debate whether the easier course was to change the logo to re-address that sensitivity, or find a compromise, so as to not “water down” what it means to use the logo, while avoiding any substantive change in the relationship.

Due to the sensitivities around the license of the logo and the contained Oscar statuette, it became clear that any incentive involving the granting of use of the logo *must* require more than a self-service application and evaluation. Some manual evaluation of a Logo applicant’s submission would still need to be done, even if simply cursory, and permission to use the logo must be explicitly granted by AMPAS.

The groups discussions concluded:

- People do still want the logo - it is a carrot that most are willing to do some work to obtain.



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- Changing the logo wouldn't do anything to clarify the ambiguities around who has and has not already qualified to use the Logo.
- Introducing a new Logo might lead to brand confusion and further complications.
- Even if cursory, some formal manual review by a qualified Academy reviewer seems a requirement to feel comfortable granting permission to use the logo
- Terms to use the logo should be clearly stated, enforced, and permission to use can be revoked, if necessary and warranted

The challenge of creating and maintaining a qualification program

In an ideal world, all those who use ACES would want to be recognized by becoming a Product Partners, Service Provider, or ACES-produced Show. However, the logistics for creating a qualification program for each and every user and utilization could easily become overwhelming.

Parallels can be drawn to the experiences by the Motion Picture Association (MPA) of their vendor security program. For many years, MPA struggled to create a universal framework, employ a bevy of security assessors, and maintain a list of approved vendors. Even then, MPA was only able to keep up with a small subset. This led to the perception, right or wrong, that the process was fiercely political and only served an already favored group. Eventually, the program foundered.

The Media & Entertainment Services Alliance (MESA) / Content Delivery & Security Association (CDSA) resurrected the program as the Trusted-Partner Network (TPN), and created an entire cottage industry for vendor security assessments. The MPA was never happy with this arrangement, because they had essentially lost control of their own creation, and it was not quite what they had envisioned. The MPA is currently trying hard to regain some control, and the process is fraught with issues.

The other large challenge is the location and diversity of those who might want to be recognized. While the Product Partners may not currently be a big challenge because of the limited number of available products, Service Provider and Content Creators are spread globally, speak different languages, and potentially number in the thousands. Evaluating and qualifying most of them for inclusion may be unattainable given the resources of ACES staff and leadership. Simply keeping track of all these providers and productions using ACES is already challenging. A more practical approach had to be considered.

The Compromise: Listings on the ACES website vs. use of the ACES logo

For each of the three categories (i.e. Program, Service, Show) there would be a tiered process. One tier would simply be an application to be listed on the ACES website. For the purposes of simply being listed on the website, the submitter, who at least should be a recognized representative of the applying entity, would apply and be listed for acknowledgment on the website. As such, the onus would be on the submitter to (accurately) live up to the claim.

Use of the logo would still require review by appropriate AMPAS staff, and would only be available only to those who have demonstrated eligibility. This could be accomplished through the use of a "smart application process", meaning there would be some automated screening/filtering of the criteria as it is being submitted. Control of the logo itself would remain with AMPAS.

Strong recommendation for creation of an ACES Educational Program

Once it became apparent that a full-blown certification process and management system was an unwieldy prospect, the obvious alternative was to provide guidance to ACES participants in the form of standardized training and education materials.



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The consensus opinion of the Task Force was that the best way to ensure compliance was to demonstrate ACES principles, tools, and practicality through example. A library of known good example video and reference material could be maintained, or referenced through the ACES community. Several key organizations, like the ASC, SMPTE, OCIO, and the Colorist Society, have already expressed desire to contribute.



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Recommendations Outline

This list is intended to be an outline of the critical points for the recommendations. More detailed descriptions for each of the main areas can be found in the individual strawman documents.

Product Partners

1. The qualification criteria from the ACES 2.0+ specifications would be separated into three sections:
 - a. *Mandatory Components* – Product features that must be present and working properly. These core elements would be applicable to the role and function for which the product is targeted (i.e., Cameras must include an approved Input Transform, Color grading tools must have Look Modification Transform capabilities, Finishing / mastering tools must output using an approved Output Transform) The list of mandatory elements will be determined by the ACES Implementation working group, and should be published on the ACES web site and/or part of the 2.0 specifications.
 - b. *Highly-recommended Elements* – These are product features that are generally expected to be present, but are not mandatory. These will be defined in the revised PP documentation.
2. ACES website listing criteria for “ACES Enabled Products”
 - a. Listing on the website as having completed the logo program application require an application to be submitted by a proper representative of the product partner company.
 - b. Qualification criteria to be met for listing on the website would require all Mandatory Elements and at least some of the *Highly-recommended Elements*.
 - c. Verification of these features and proper functionality by AMPAS would not be required at this level, but published or demonstrated as reasonable compliance with ACES standards and specs.
3. ACES website listing criteria for “ACES Verified”
 - a. Listing on the website in this preferred-tier category would also require an application to be submitted by a proper representative of the product partner company.
 - b. Qualification criteria to be met for listing in this category is TBD in revised logo program documentation.
 - c. Verification that the preferred qualifications have been met, is required to be performed by an AMPAS designated reviewer prior to listing on the website in this category.
4. Use of the ACES logo
 - a. Permission to use the Product Partner logo by the Product Partner must be explicitly requested through the submission process.
 - b. Product must meet the preferred-tier category qualifications to be eligible to apply for use of the logo.
 - c. Qualification criteria and verification of proper functionality must be demonstrated to a duly appointed member of the AMPAS, or designated AMPAS representative.
 - d. The Logo Program Task Force recommends that a tailored or customized logo be created for special use on verified / qualified products to include some unique marking or wording. This is to



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reduce the risk of misuse of the logo and misrepresentation, fraud, or abuse by limiting availability to the specialized image or graphic.

- e. Dissemination and proper use of the (tailored) logo would remain under the direct control of AMPAS.

Service Providers (and Facilities)

1. To be listed on the ACES website as simply an “ACES Service Provider”, one only need to apply for listing with the caveat that they understand the ACES process, workflows, required elements, and capabilities, and are willing to follow the published standards for ACES..
2. To be listed on the ACES website as a “ACES Recognized Service Provider” a practitioner must demonstrate some knowledge and ability of ACES processes.
 - a. Qualification can be in the form of evidence of AMPAS recognized training, education, experience and/or at least two projects produced using ACES tools and workflows.
 - b. Verification by an AMPAS designated reviewer would be required to approve the application for listing in this section.
3. To be listed on the ACES website as an “ACES Verified Facility” a facility must demonstrate to AMPAS:
 - a. At least two shows listed as ACES projects or “Produced using ACES” that were produced or prepared by that facility.
 - b. At least one “ACES Recognized Service Provider” on the staff of the facility that can act as a mentor, guide, or tutor for ACES projects produced through that facility.
 - c. Verification by an AMPAS designated reviewer would be required to approve the application for listing in this section.
4. Use of the “ACES Recognized Provider” or “ACES Recognized Facility” (tailored) logo would require:
 - a. Permission to use the logo by the Service Provider or Facility must be explicitly requested through the submission process.
 - b. Service Provider or Facility must meet the preferred-tier category qualifications to be eligible to apply for use of the logo.
 - c. Qualification criteria and verification of proper functionality must be demonstrated to a duly appointed member of AMPAS or their designated representative.
 - d. The Logo Program Task Force recommends that a tailored logo be created for special use with verified / qualified service providers to include some unique marking or wording. This is to ensure reasonable compliance, and to reduce potential misrepresentation, fraud, or abuse by limiting availability to the specialized logo.
 - e. Dissemination of the (tailored) logo would be under the direct control of AMPAS.

ACES Show Credits

Listing on the ACES Website:



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For a show to be listed on the ACES website as being “Produced Using ACES”, a studio or content provider must affirm that:

- a. ACES workflows and tools were used on the show from the first time images and sound sequences were brought together and processed (generally considered Post-Production.)

Use of ACES tools, processes, and preview on set include IDTs from cameras and image sources, LMTs for show LUTs / look-and-feel, and post-processing transforms employed.

- b. Verification by an AMPAS designated reviewer would be required to approve the application for listing in this section.
- c. Existing shows that were produced by ACES can be grandfathered in and listed on the ACES website.

Use of ACES Logo in Credits:

Use of the ACES logo would require:

- d. Permission to use the logo by the studio or content creator as an end-credit “bug” must be explicitly requested through the submission process.
- e. The show produced by the studio or content provider must meet the “Produced Using ACES” category qualifications to be eligible to apply for use of the logo.
- f. Qualification criteria and verification of proper functionality must be demonstrated to an AMPAS designated reviewer.
- g. Once permission is granted, only the standard ACES logo* as the end-credit “bug” must be used.
 - * A tailored logo for this purpose is not necessary due to the persistence of the delivered show. Any misuse or fraud would be indelibly associated with the studio or content creator.
- h. Existing shows that were produced by ACES can be grandfathered in and permission may be granted to use the ACES logo bug.
- i. Proper use and control of the logo would remain under the direct purview of AMPAS.

Working Group Leads

Marc Zorn, Marvel Studios

Daniel De La Rosa, Sony Pictures Entertainment