

# Services & Qualifications



Blake White founded the Strategic Technology Institute (STI) in 1985 as an outlet to investigate the business and public policy issues raised by science and engineering.<sup>1</sup> STI has evolved into a virtual 'think tank' that investigates emerging IT developments and the business, organizational, and public policy issues raised by science and engineering. STI's network of independent consultants specializes in executive-level management advisory services focused on corporate strategies, often facilitated by technology innovation, at the intersection of the Media & Entertainment (M&E) and Information & Communications Technology (ICT) industries.

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## Solution Space

New value is being created where the multi-platform distribution of digital media assets by secure IT-based supply chain systems creates new business opportunities for media, telecommunications, computer, and consumer electronics companies in adjacent markets. Because of its extensive experience with audio-visual assets, the M&E industry is the bellwether sector for both commercial and public sector enterprise use of richer forms of media as a means to better inform decision-making, collaborate with supply-chain and distribution-chain partners, influence customers, and offer new entertainment-based services. So, just as the information technology sector provided information from numerical data, then textual data, then image data, enterprises are on a definite path to enrich their information assets with audio-visual data. STI believes that video is the next generic datatype for enterprise information. Consider the following:

- Major brands seek to better control, exploit, and reuse their media assets; rather than being controlled by their ad agencies.
- Technology and telecommunications companies see their futures tied increasingly to the inherent growth of high-bandwidth services that are in-turn driven by video distribution.
- Consumer electronics companies deliver video platforms, not just miniature computers (in the numerical and text sense).
- Even the information services companies increasing look like digital media equivalents of broadcasters.
- Digital media is becoming ubiquitous and its market opportunities extend far beyond the M&E industry. As broadband becomes ubiquitous, video will be used more than ever. The need for systems to facilitate collaborative production, manage and track distribution, and provide storage and retrieval will become essential as the volume of video increases.

Since the influence of video as a datatype on the commercial market and public sector is growing and causing companies and institutions to undergo tremendous change, the assessment and implementation of change creates a significant degree of technical and operational complexity to warrant external consulting assistance to internal CIO and CTO organizations. In addition, the issues surrounding digital media are different from those numerical and text-based

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<sup>1</sup> Over the past 24 years, STI was also formerly known as *Strategic Systems, Inc.* and *Strategic Technologies*, both of San Francisco. STI is licensed in the State of California by the City of Oakland as a Professional Services sole proprietorship under permit number 2249782.

issues so successfully managed by the IT industry over the past four decades. There are deep-rooted business strategy, business process, inter-company workflows, and change management issues that must be understood in order to take full advantage of the digital media value chain and emerging content delivery platforms. Digital media can be a transformative catalyst. However, business transformation has a profound effect on people, infrastructure, and operations. Companies in transition, often facilitated by rapid technological innovation, have found the need to address the strategic issues around organizational change, since human issues trump technology issues most of the time.

These new developments come at a time when many leaders of major enterprises have to do more with less. Increased workloads, reduced staff, and the time-critical nature of client operations and projects constrain clients' internal abilities to keep abreast of important industry developments. As is common among industry executives, needs arise to research various technologies quickly, but they often need to do so on short notice or in an ad hoc manner. They know that these innovations will likely have a significant impact on their business, either as opportunities or threats, but it is not uncommon that internal staff have very little extra time or resources to stay ahead of unexpected technology issues.

STI can help further ensure clear alignment between the digital media technology strategy and the overall company's business strategy. This approach allows STI's clients to focus, not just on efficiency and cost reduction, but also on the power of digital media as an enabling force for new businesses, new markets, new revenue streams, and organizational transformation. These opportunities and challenges are especially significant to companies when they are:

- Changing from traditional departmental to "content-centric" models of business,
- Considering (or have done) M&A activity in or on the periphery of the M&E space -- either purchasing entities to be integrated or rationalizing a group of companies that need to be integrated, or
- Evaluating adjacent markets and services enabled by digital media, but need additional technical depth and operational expertise in media processes, workflows, and technologies in order to assess opportunities and plan for success in a business environment that has increased risks.

## STI's Services

Aligning technology roadmaps to corporate strategy, STI offers the following services:

- **Decision Support** -- Scenario planning; Competitive analysis; and Strategy development
- **Technology Assessment** -- Functional and technical specification; Conceptual systems design; Vendor assessment and selection; and Engineering ethics.
- **Program Management** -- Business development; Alliances; and Project planning.

White has extensive experience performing or managing the delivery of these services globally, in countries that include Canada, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, UAE, UK, the US for the following clientele:

- ABC
- *American Journal of Archaeology*
- *Amy Wohl's Opinions*
- Ascent Media Group
- BBC Worldwide
- BYU Broadcasting
- CBS
- Cincinnati Bell
- Clorox
- CNN
- Corus Entertainment
- Dreamworks SKG
- Discovery Latin America
- Dubai Media
- Employee Benefits Institute of America
- Fox
- *Future Image Report*
- Golden Grain
- Hulu
- InterTrust Technologies
- Lucasfilm

- Macys
- McKesson
- MediaCorp Pte
- The Mill
- Mindshare
- Microsoft Studios
- MSNBC
- MTV Networks
- Network Appliance
- Nominum
- Panavision
- PMT Video LLC
- Procter & Gamble
- Savantech
- Simon & Schuster
- Sony Pictures Imageworks
- South African Broadcasting Corp
- UCLA
- Viacom
- VNU's *Trade Dimensions*
- Walt Disney Company
- Warner Bros
- Weather Channel
- World Wrestling Entertainment
- Yankelovich Partners
- Y-Motion Media

## How We Work

STI is different from the Big 5 consulting firms and the IT systems integrators. Traditional strategy exercises, though valuable, may be insufficient to offer the practical media industry-specific engineering and operations expertise needed to add credence to strategic advice. Likewise, traditional technical proposal efforts from IT integrators and vendors, though valuable, may be insufficient to offer the C-level strategies, scenarios, business assessments, and independence needed to cause proactive movement of media systems projects toward green-lighting. We recognize that too often, technology-based solutions are targeted at issues that actually have more to do with organizational, historical, and internal political situations that are further complicated by the lack of clear alignment of the technology strategy with the overall company's evolving business strategy.

- STI uses its extensive media industry expertise to perform operationally-grounded top-down organizational readiness assessments and collaborative strategy development exercises backed up by practical technology roadmaps and implementation plans.
- STI provides its clients with the best industry expertise, including those of STI's consulting network who bring broad media industry engineering and operational decision-support capabilities to the table. We leverage Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in digital media convergence issues, such as: Media Asset Management (MAM), Digital Rights Management (DRM), content security, media industry workflows, media systems, Service Oriented Architectures (SOA) for media systems integration, targeted content/ads, media exchange platforms, and other IT-Engineering-Operations convergence projects.
- STI is able to utilize business-driven improvement methodologies for structure, process, consistency, metrics, and security in support of decisions involving: digital media management, risk management, security, operational efficiency, workflow optimization, quality of service, and cost of ownership.

This allows clients to make critical decisions upfront where they are less costly. We bring more of the important stakeholders into the process, so buy-in and organizational support for executive decisions are further assured. We also enable our clients to proactively seek solutions to their unique issues on an ongoing basis, without unduly burdening in-house staff.

Although STI is different from the Big 5 consulting firms and IT systems integrators, we partner with them on behalf of our mutual clients to further enhance their capabilities in media technology problem space, raise the value of their advisory services to enterprise clients (especially those at the intersection media, computers, and communications industries) and address the historical gap between CFO/CIO business issues and the operational issues of the CTO and line managers.

Most importantly, STI understands that an effective defense, while essential, is insufficient; a carefully planned offensive strategy is also required. Cost reduction, efficient operation, and risk

management, though required, are not sufficient for long-term sustainability in a changing global business landscape. Companies that achieve both efficiency and the potential for growth will be best positioned to take advantage of the eventual upturn in the global economy.

## **Fee Structures**

STI prefers fixed fee/scope/time projects with well-defined, mutually agreed deliverables. STI's standard day-rates vary by skill level and are used to develop a blended team rate for the fixed priced bid. Standard rates are available under non-disclosure agreement. Allowances, if any, are negotiable.

We also suggest retainers for clients that may have ongoing needs. Retained STI services can provide clients with the following additional benefits:

- Consulting retainers enable STI to proactively seek solutions to client issues on an ongoing basis, without unduly burdening in-house staff.
- Retainers allow for a more flexible use of STI's industry experts on a broad range of projects or investigations on an ad-hoc basis.
- Retainers make sure a certain amount of STI's capacity is held in reserve for our clients.
- Retainers allow clients to receive STI's services in a manner that does not require a new proposal or purchase order on each occurrence.

By leveraging our network of independent consultants to form small highly-skilled teams of SMEs, STI is able to provide Adjunct Project Members to retained client engagements. This provides our clients with a mix of STI expertise for a specified period, at a specified effort level, appropriate for departmental, divisional, or corporate support.

- Skill mix includes: Principal Consultants, Senior Consultants, Consultants, Researchers, Technical Writers, and Administrative Staff.
- STI's standard day-rates are available under non-disclosure agreement. Pricing is subject to the mix of staff skills and the term of the retainer. Annual, Semi-Annual, Quarterly, and Monthly retainer rate structures can be chosen by clients. Additional allowances can be applied based on the term of the retainer; for example: Quarterly 10% allowance, Semi-Annual 20% allowance, Annual 30% allowance.

In some cases, STI works on the client's behalf as a Retained Agent or Business Development Executive that brings incremental projects to the client. This may occur when STI is working with service providers, technology companies, vendors, system integrators, or other consulting firms. In such instances, the fee structure may be based upon a mix of a retainer plus a mutually agreed Business Development "Finders Fee" (% to be negotiated), correlated with the gross project revenue invoiced by the client to its customer(s) quarterly. The finders fee is paid to STI quarterly, unless agreed otherwise.

Actual project-related expenses, such as pre-authorized travel or pre-approved purchased market research, if any, are billed monthly. There is typically a 10% handling fee applied to reimbursable expenses incurred by STI on the client's behalf.

## **Network of Associates**

*(Representative Sample in Alphabetical Order. Specific Individuals are Subject to Availability.)*

- Gordon Castle -- Meadowdale Group; Atlanta
- Richard Ducey, PhD -- BIA/Kelsey; Washington DC
- Gerald Harris -- Harris Planning & Strategy; San Francisco
- Peter Humphrey -- Media Strategy Partners LLC; San Francisco
- Chandra Kotaru -- Gaian Consulting; Los Angeles & Andhra Pradesh, India
- Graham Sharp -- Media Asset Capital Ltd.; Boston & London
- Blake White -- Strategic Technology Institute; Oakland
- Julian White -- PromoPerks; Cincinnati

## Experience Profiles

### Blake White -- Founder & Principal, STI

Blake White is an experienced Silicon Valley and Hollywood executive, responsible for P&L-based commercial operations and leading product development/marketing, IT and Media industry marketing, systems integration, strategic advisory services, and corporate development/M&A initiatives. He has held management positions in some of the world's most respected Fortune 100 companies, plus innovative start-ups and the consulting practice of a Big Four accounting firm.

In the Hollywood M&E community, White held the position of Vice President & General Manager of Ascent Media's Consulting Services organization. In this capacity, he led Ascent's offerings in strategic, business and technology consulting services to the global electronic media industry. Prior to Ascent, White was Vice President of Strategic Services at National TeleConsultants (NTC), where he led the development of the META™ SOA-based integration architecture, and he was the national practice leader of Digital Media Management for PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLC.

Over a 20 year period, he held various management positions in the Silicon Valley computer industry, including: Vice President of Major Accounts at online e-book service bureau PublishOne (a business unit of InterTrust Technologies), Vice President & General Manager of media transport company WAM!NET Entertainment, Director of Entertainment Industry Professional Services, Industry Marketing, and Business Development at Silicon Graphics (SGI). At SGI, White led the team that productized the first commercially available Digital Asset Management System – *StudioCentral* – and developed SGI's media applications integration architecture – the *Silicon Studio*. These technologies were used to support SGI's development and system integration efforts for: Dreamworks SKG, during the development of its animated *Prince of Egypt* feature film; Lucasfilm in the remake of *Star Wars*; and CNN during its development of the Lo Res Browse Server for newsroom editing. He was also an early participant in the interactive TV industry, serving as Executive Director for Content Development at US West Multimedia. White was a Director in the Corporate Development organization at Apple Computer, where he provided decision support and strategic alliance management services to the Office of the CEO. He also held several product management/marketing positions in multi-platform network integration technologies at Apple, Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC), and Hewlett-Packard (HP). He began his career in Procter & Gamble's Management Systems Division.

White is a frequent speaker at entertainment industry conferences that have included: NAB, IBC, SMPTE, Digital Hollywood, Cannes Film Festival, and Broadcast South Africa. He is the author of: *The Technology Assessment Process: A Strategic Framework for Managing Technical Innovation*, published by Greenwood Press, the PricewaterhouseCoopers 2003 publication -- *A New Era for Content: Protection, Potential, and Profit in the Digital World* -- and the SMPTE Motion Imaging Journal article (April 2004) by the same name, and he was co-author of *Digital Asset Management: Process Over Product*, published in Broadcast Engineering (July 2004).

White holds BSIE, MBA, and MLA degrees from North Carolina State University, Xavier University, and Stanford University, respectively. He is a member of the Society of Motion Picture & Television Engineers (SMPTE), the Hollywood Post Alliance (HPA), the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), and the Institute of Industrial Engineers (IIE).

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*(Representative Sample in Alphabetical Order. Specific Individuals are Subject to Availability.)*

### **Gordon Castle -- Meadowdale Group**

[www.meadowdalegroup.com](http://www.meadowdalegroup.com)

Gordon Castle, Managing Director of the Meadowdale Group, is a recognized industry leader who brings over 22 years of expertise in business management, technology planning, strategic planning, Internet technologies, workflow optimization, digital media planning and implementation to clients.

Castle is a visionary and technology strategist with proven success as an operational leader in media and entertainment. Prior to The Meadowdale Group, he served as the Senior Technology Fellow for Turner Broadcasting. As a corporate adviser, he led initiatives to advance high definition acquisition, broadband production, media asset management and new product development. Additional previous experience includes nine years as SVP of CNN Technology where he spearheaded and directed all aspects of technology planning, execution, training, and provided strategic direction for the CNN News Group as SVP. Castle has also provided technical and operational leadership for CNN Headline News, CNN Radio, The Airport Network, CNN Newsource, CNN Graphics, Graphic Production and Effects for Turner Entertainment Networks, and directed live news production for CNN Headline News.

Castle is the recipient of numerous awards and honors for industry accomplishments including: The Broadcast and Cable Technology Leadership Award (2005) and the Entertainment Asset Management Pioneer Award for Outstanding Individual Achievement (2003).

### **Richard Ducey, PhD -- BIA/Kelsey**

[www.bia.com](http://www.bia.com)

Rick Ducey is the Chief Strategy Officer for BIA Advisory Services. Rick assists clients with their business planning and sales models, strategic research and market assessment, designing and implementing IT strategies.

A known expert and frequent speaker on the transforming media ecosystem, Rick is the program director for BIA's conference, "Winning Media Strategies" and for the continuous advisory service called Transformative Media Strategies (TMS). Both programs address how new technologies, competition, shifting consumer demographics and media usage trends are driving changes in the media ecosystem and what traditional media companies must do to be successful in the new environment.

Prior to joining BIA/Kelsey in 2000, Rick was a top executive at the National Association of Broadcasters. He was Senior Vice President of NAB's Research and Information Group. In this position, he was in charge of the association's new technology assessment, audience and policy research, strategic planning, information systems, including all Internet operations and he also developed publications and seminars.

Before joining NAB in 1983, Rick was a faculty member in the Department of Telecommunication at Michigan State University where he taught and did research in the areas of emerging telecommunication technologies and strategic market research. He also served on the graduate management faculties of George Mason University and George Washington University in telecommunications management and the University of Maryland, where he taught strategic market management and research methodologies. He published a number of research articles and papers in these areas and serves on editorial boards of leading scholarly journals in the communications field. He worked at radio stations WSOQ-AM/WEZG-FM and Upstate Cablevision in North Syracuse, NY.

Rick received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University; M.S. from Syracuse University and B.A. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

**Gerald Harris -- Harris Planning & Strategy**

[www.artofquantumplanning.com](http://www.artofquantumplanning.com)

Gerald Harris is President of Harris Planning and Strategy, where he assists companies and non-profit organizations with high-quality business and strategic planning. He has led planning engagements internationally in Europe, Asia and Latin America. Harris was a long-time staff member of the Global Business Network (GBN) of Emeryville, CA; the founders of which were the early pioneers in the discipline of Scenario Planning at Royal Dutch Shell. Prior to GBN, he held the position of Director of Strategic Planning at Pacific Gas & Electric.

Harris is the author of *The Art of Quantum Planning*, published in 2009 by Berrett-Koehler Publishers. He is a graduate of Morehouse College and holds an MBA from the University of Chicago.

**Peter Humphrey -- Media Strategy Partners LLC**

<http://www.msp-llc.com/aboutus.html>

Peter Humphrey contributes more than 15 years of industry experience in developing state-of-the-art strategies and solutions for the migration of media content and practices to digital platforms; realizing efficiencies through better asset management, preservation and distribution. Combining media, technology and project management knowledge and skills, Humphrey has led teams architecting and implementing video asset management systems for high traffic video production and distribution environments, as well as for leveraging large-scale moving image archives. His strengths are in developing business and content strategies, project management, maintaining client and vendor relationships, and the application of relevant technologies to meet project objectives.

Since 2000, Humphrey has been providing strategic consulting services for sharing, viewing, accessing, and managing the NBC Olympics production video assets utilizing advanced digital creation, distribution, storage, and asset management applications. He helped develop the strategy, tactics and architecture of the internal digital distribution of video assets successfully used at the 2004 Athens and 2006 Torino Olympic Games. Most recently, Humphrey, as Solution Architect, helped NBC Olympics design the much expanded system deployed for the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics for fulfilling all New Platform video distribution, for which the project received the "2008 Broadcast Engineering Excellence Award" for the Post & Network Production Facilities category, as well as leading the MSP team helping Fox News Channel and Business Network migrate to a tape-less workflow at its primary New York location.

Other projects for which Humphrey led the MSP media asset management consulting effort include ones for: National Geographic Ventures, the CBS Hard News Center, World Wrestling Entertainment, and Satellite Television Asian Region (STAR) Hong Kong.

Previous to co-founding MSP, Humphrey was Senior Vice President Strategy and Alliances at Sekani, Inc. (now Corbis Motion, LLC), a leading international stock footage research, clearances and licensing company. During his seven years at Sekani, Humphrey had the responsibility for: founding the Sekani Media Management Consulting Division aimed at providing owners of major moving image archives with solutions for preserving and leveraging valuable media assets; managing the moving image libraries for a family of sports, news, archival, and general-purpose stock footage companies containing over 40,000 hours of historical and contemporary film and video material from exclusive representation contracts with suppliers such as ESPN, NHL, CNN, MGM, Paramount, Hearst Entertainment and over 400 other local TV stations, niche archives and production companies; and negotiating contracts with, and managing, an international network of fifteen foreign subagents licensing sports, news, and general stock footage in six continents.

Humphrey has an MA in Social Anthropology from Edinburgh, and completed the MA in Culture and Media program at New York University.

**Chandra Kotaru -- Gaian Consulting**[http://www.gaiansolutions.com/about\\_us.html](http://www.gaiansolutions.com/about_us.html)

Chandra Kotaru is the Founder, President & CEO of Gaian Consulting in Los Angeles and Gaian Solutions in India. Gaian is a technology and consulting company that develops products and solutions for the Media & Entertainment industry that cater to all aspects of the content distribution value chain, performing all standard tasks in Content Capture, Ingest, DRM, Asset Management, Content Distribution, Content Streaming, and STB solutions for delivery over Cable, Satellite and IPTV platforms. Gaian is comprised of over 70 experienced software architects, consultants, project managers, software, broadcast and media engineers located in India and the USA.

Prior to founding Gaian, Kotaru was Principal Consultant at National TeleConsultants, the boutique engineering and systems integration firm in Glendale, CA. At NTC, he developed the company's strategy and tools for bringing SOA-based integration architectures from the enterprise IT arena to the world of broadcast systems. Prior to NTC, Kotaru led DIRECTV Latin America's software development organization for ten years. He has also worked on many cutting edge projects for some of the top companies in the world, such as Microsoft, Oracle, Motorola, Star TV, Nagra Vision, and HP. The first DTH Set Top Box in Asia, Chief Architect for DIRECTV NOC systems, Content Security Solution Architect for Movie Beam, and Senior Program and Product Management roles with Microsoft's IPTV solution group are but a few examples of Kotaru's contribution to M&E industry.

Kotaru has several patents to his credit and is constantly innovating in the fields of next generation advertising technologies, SaaS or cloud computing platforms serving the media industry, semantic web, and digital video processing technologies.

**Graham Sharp -- Media Asset Capital Ltd.**[www.media-asset-capital.com](http://www.media-asset-capital.com)

Graham Sharp is Media Asset Capital's Managing Director for North America and a member of its Board. MAC works with clients that create and distribute media, supply technology and offer services to the media industry. MAC is a full-service media consultancy that offers services for: broadcasters, content owners, production and post-production businesses; broadcast and media technology companies; and financial institutions and investors in the media community. The company offers services in strategy, planning, governance, policy, regulation, technology strategy and implementation, workflow, operations and sales and marketing. MAC is also active in advising the investment community and helping them to understand the media market.

Sharp is responsible for business transformation and associated change management services that help MAC's clients to achieve business and process improvements. Sharp has a broad management skill set, with experience in sales, marketing, finance, services, product development, and general management, particularly managing to a P&L. Prior to joining MAC, Sharp was Vice President and General Manager of Avid's Video Division. He has had a distinguished career in a number of well-known industry companies, including Tektronix, Alpha Image, Dynatech, Post Impressions and Discreet Logic.

Sharp has a proven track record of building or changing cultures, acquiring and integrating businesses and building shareholder value, as well as an extensive knowledge of international business and cultures gained through living and working in Asia, Europe, Canada and the US. Equally at home in a start up or large business, the more recent positions have included significant change management, usually in a turn-around situation.

Sharp was educated at Hatfield Polytechnic in Electrical and Electronic Engineering. He is the US Liaison Officer for the IABM industry trade group.

### **Julian White -- PromoPerks**

Julian White is the Founder & President of PromoPerks, an innovative web-based advertising company that markets a unique style of advertising that is more effective than current television, radio, and web based advertising. As a marketer, he has designed Facebook and Myspace marketing campaigns targeting ages 18-24, performed market research for consumer products companies, provided business consulting for startups, and developed/managed websites. He is also experienced in project management, team-building, conflict resolution, and crisis management. White also brings his background in music production and audio engineering to the team. This includes analog/digital/midi recording, mastering, mixing, and sound design. He holds a B.M. in Music Production & Engineering from the Berklee College of Music and an MBA with a concentration in Marketing from Assumption College.