



Post-production in 2016 Survey Report

2017/10/12

Introduction

The survey was run for 4 months, from March to June 2017. Public respondents were requested via our mailing lists and social media. Responses were incentivised with two prizes:

- For editors, a year's membership with SAGE.
- For producers, R500 voucher for [Digital Depot](#).

The surveys saw 20 producer respondents and 80 editor respondents.

For all graphs, responses from editors are drawn in blue ■, producers in green ■.

We've also added SAGE membership data where relevant for comparison, in yellow ■. And new data from our [editors' job offer reporter](#) and [producers' job offer submission](#) forms are shown in purple ■.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey! Thank you also to our sponsor [Digital Depot](#) for their long-running support!

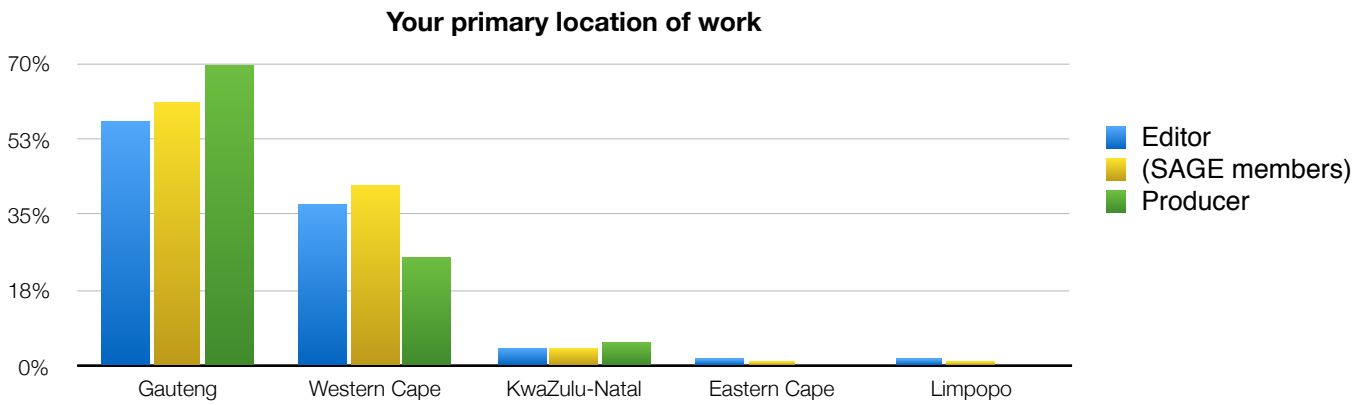


Previous surveys

This is the third of our annual post-production surveys, you can view previous results at the links below:

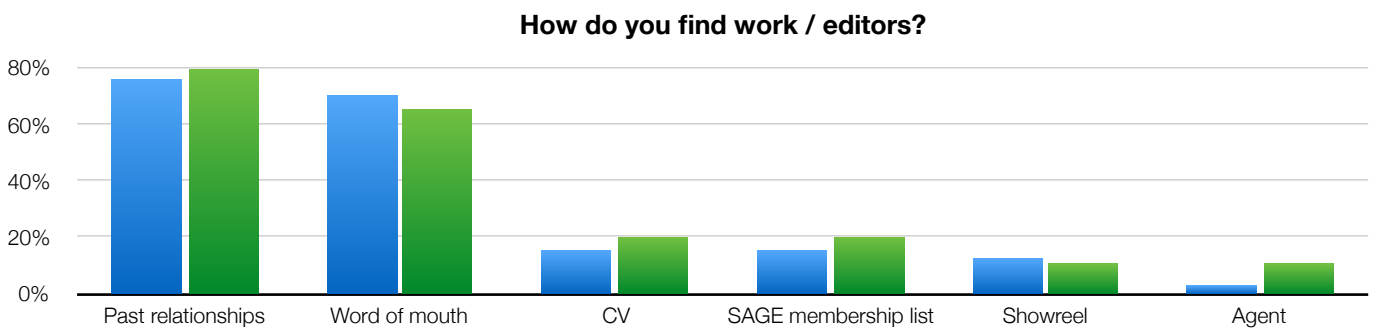
- [SAGE survey of 2013](#).
- [SAGE survey of 2014](#).

Region



Respondents were almost exclusively from Gauteng and the Western Cape. Editor respondents matched our own membership stats very closely.

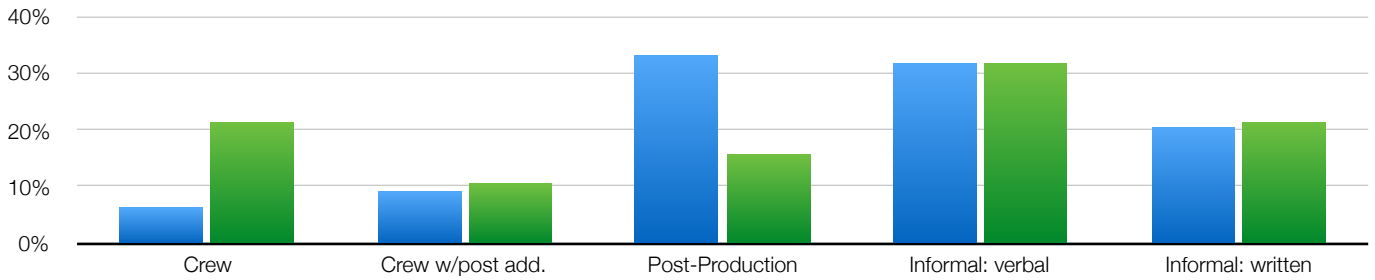
Finding work



Finding work continues to be dominated by past relationships and word of mouth among both editors and producers. A truism applies in post-production: no matter you job, you are also in sales.

Contracting and hiring

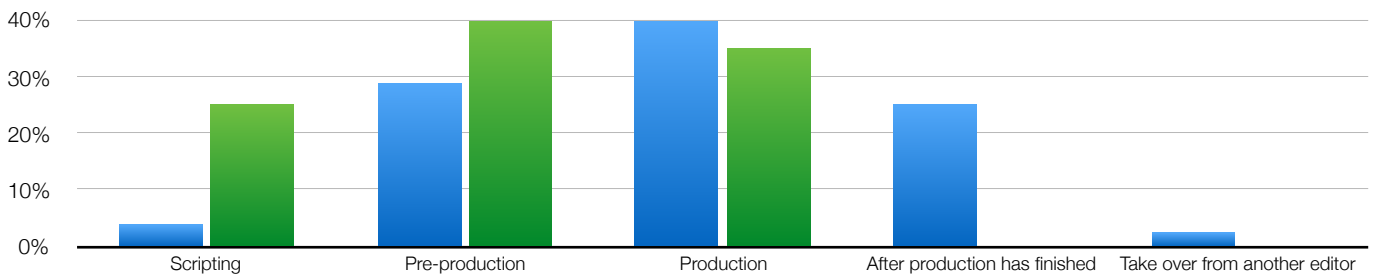
What kind of contract do you sign / offer?



These responses hold roughly steady with last year's. It remains concerning to see that nearly a third of editors work on informal verbal contracts. It is easy to turn a verbal contract into a written one: just summarise the agreement in an email and receive a response. There really isn't an excuse for a verbal contract!

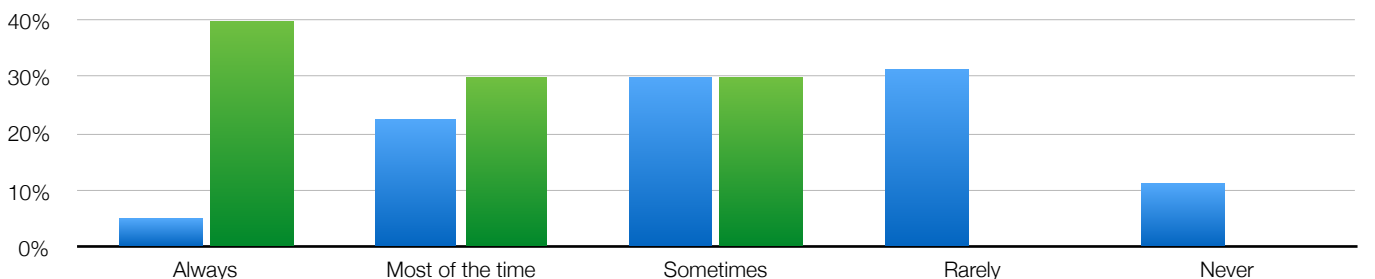
SAGE discourages the use of standard crew contracts for post-production, as these tend to misrepresent the conditions of work—normally featuring crewing hours and work weeks, for example. We recommend that editors modify any standard crew contract they are offered.

When in the production process are you hired? / do you hire?



Hiring the editor early in production is one of the easiest ways to improve the quality of the post-production process. It is encouraging to see that 40% of producers report hiring during pre-production (and an additional 25% in scripting), though concerning that editors don't really concur.

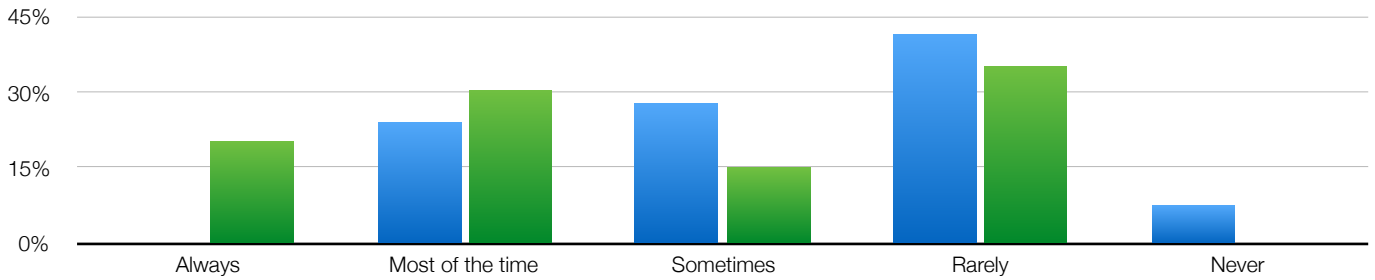
Is the editor included in discussions on style before editing begins?



Post-production will always have to see stylistic choices through to completion, and often have to pick up the pieces of a short-sighted stylistic choice that could have been easily avoided. Editors and producers disagree on their input on discussions on style: 40% of producers say they always include editors, yet 40% of editors say they are either rarely or never included in discussions on style.

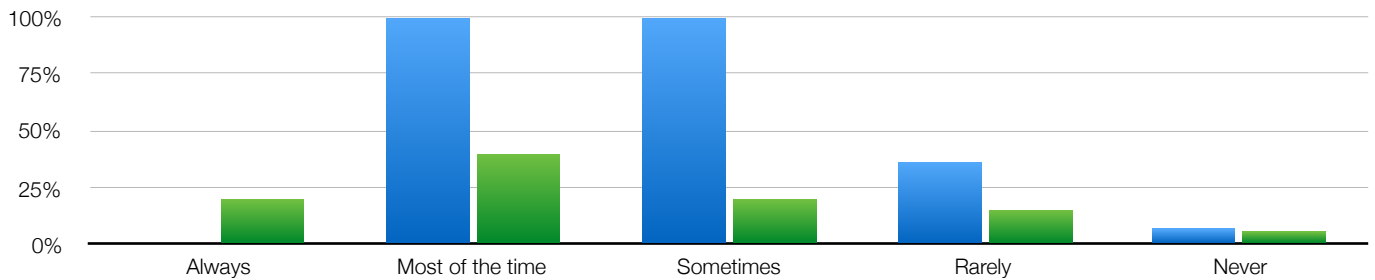
Scheduling

Do you feel there is enough time for the editing process?



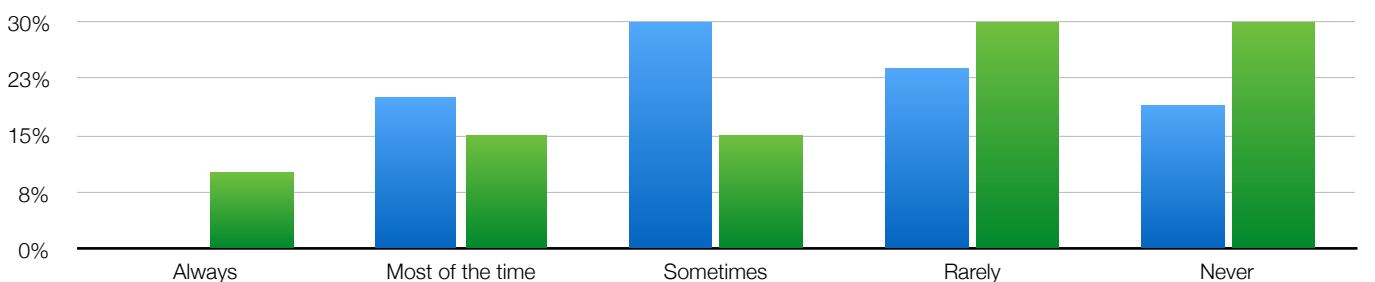
Unsurprisingly, editors skew towards there not being enough time, while producers skew towards the opposite. While a certain level of time pressure surely gets editors to work faster, producers should be wary of the harmful that too much pressure can cause to the final production value.

Is the editor involved in the post-production scheduling?



These two questions should be directly related, and this does appear to be so. Editors would do well to remember that nearly half of producers think that there isn't enough time for the editing process!

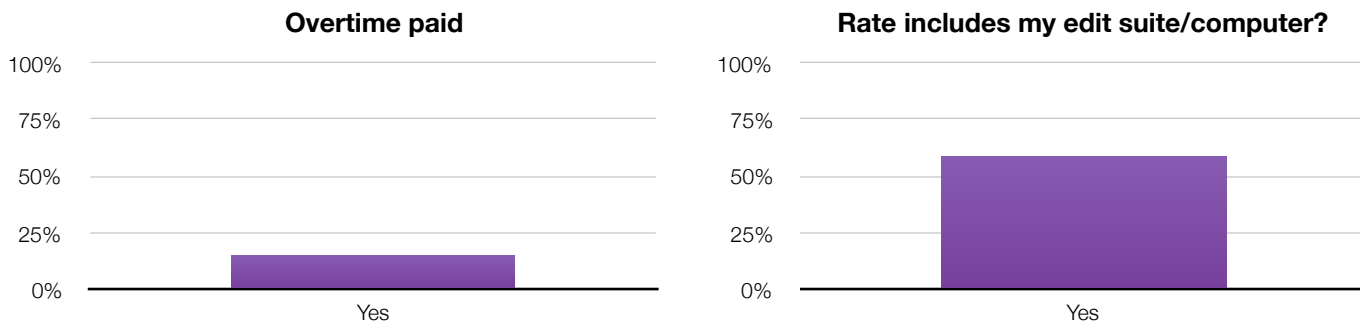
Is the editor required to take work home?



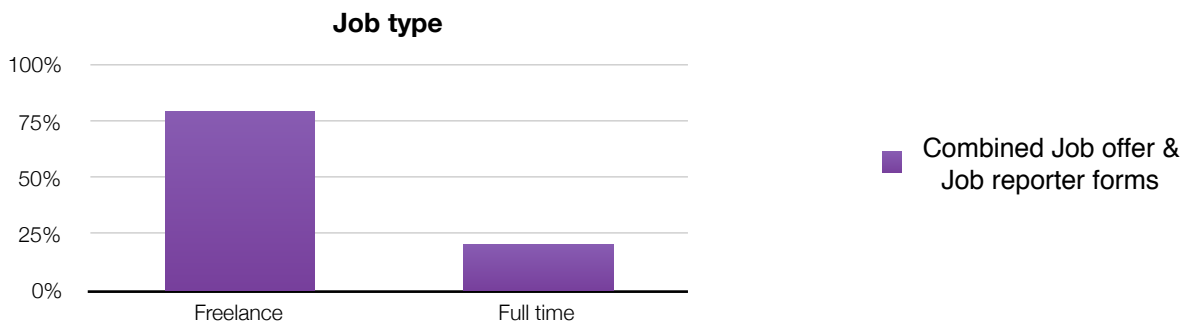
50% of editors said they are required to take work home 'most of the time' or 'some of the time', while 60% of producers said editors 'rarely' or 'never' take work home. An honest discussion is needed around this burgeoning trend — especially when it comes to overtime. While edit systems' lowering prices have made this possible, we encourage producers to think of the human resource of editors.

Work conditions – reported per job from both editors and producers

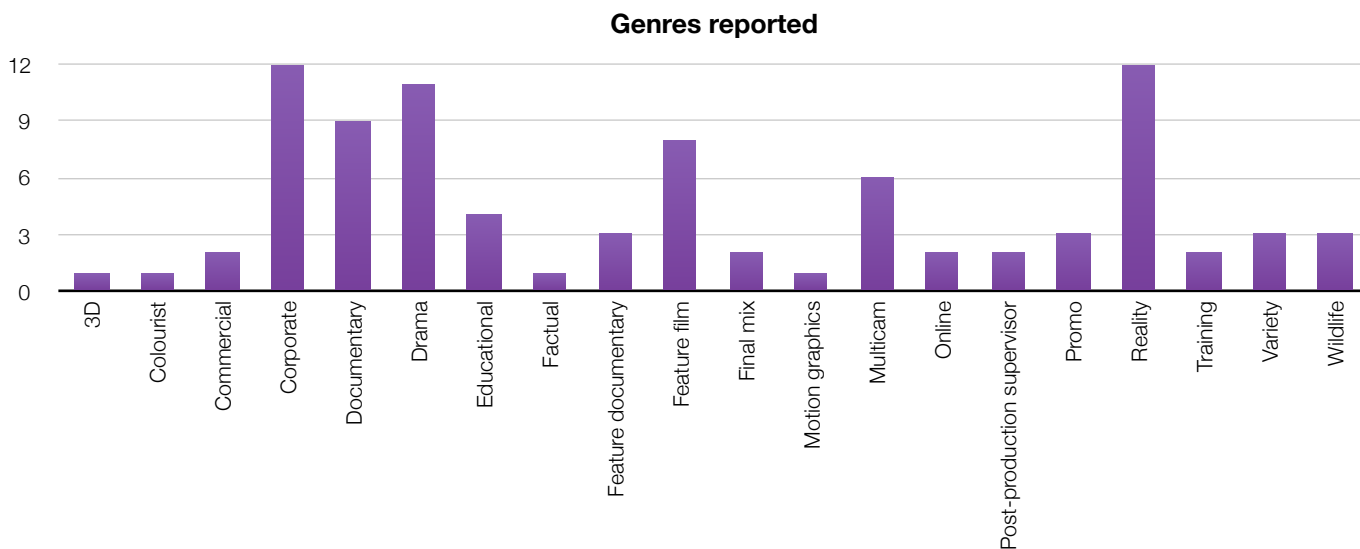
We are including some data from our [editors' job offer reporter](#) and [producers' job offer submission](#) forms. These data for 2016 are made up of around 90 individual job submissions from both editors and producers. For 2017 and beyond, we urge all editors (not just our members) to submit reports of job offers that they receive – whether they accept them or not.



Overtime and working on the editor's own computer may both be related to the above question regarding taking work home. We encourage editors who are running their own suite to charge accordingly, and to treat their edit suite as a separate office – even if it is just set up at home.

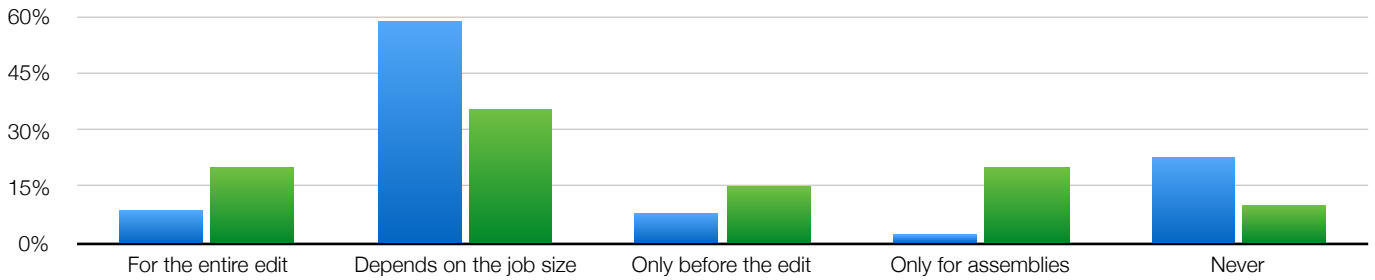


Over three quarters of job submissions covered freelance jobs.



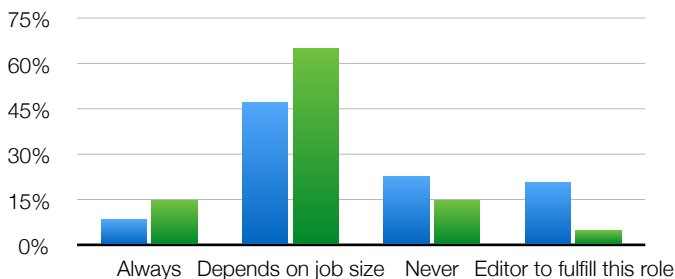
Post production colleagues

Do you have / hire an assistant editor?

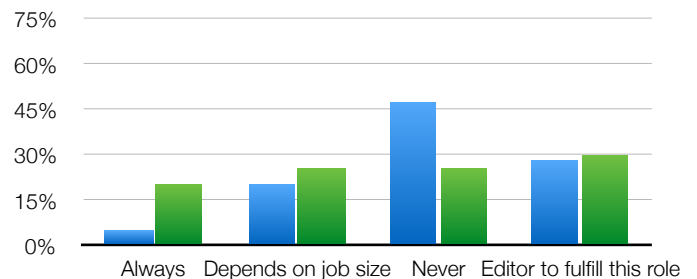


A good assistant editor allows the editor to do their best work, as well as greatly speeding up an edit. Assistant editors can often also be on-the-job learners, which is important for the long-term sustainability and transformation of the post-production industry. Admittedly, small edit jobs don't require (or can't afford) an assistant.

Do you have / hire a post-production supervisor?



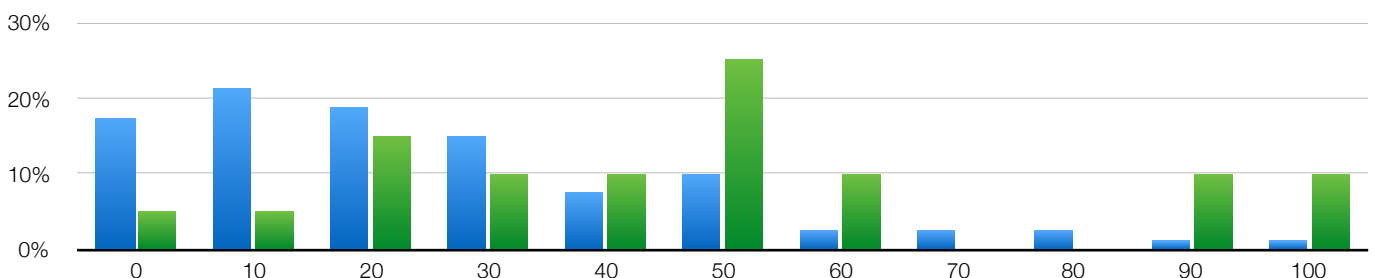
Do you have / hire a technical advisor?



Nearly 70% of producers report hiring a post-production supervisor when the job size demands one. This response is more encouraging than last year, where nearly 35% of editors report having to do this task themselves (this year only 20% responded so). Still, a discussion around the roles of editor and supervisor is needed — along with the appropriate job size for a supervisor.

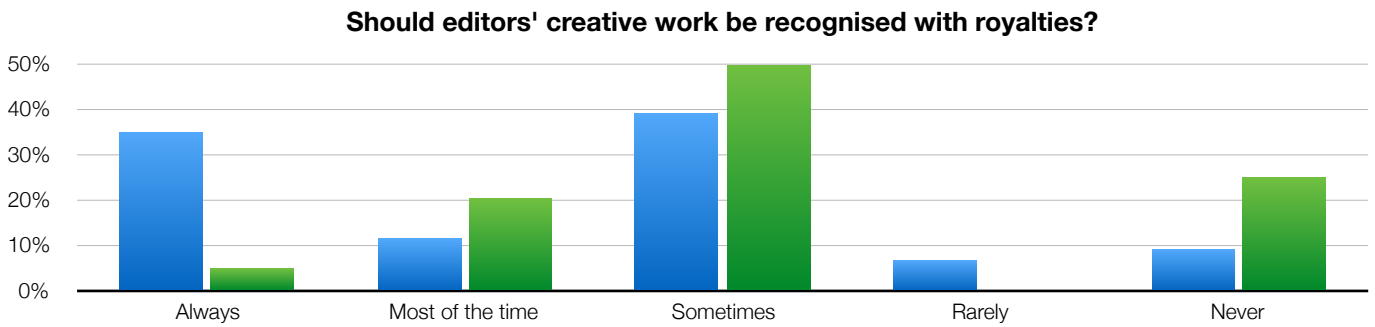
30% of editors reported being their own technical advisor. This reality in today's edit suite is unlikely to go away. Since the majority of technical support is done with searches online, this is all the more reason for editors to be given a connection to the internet while at work.

What proportion of the edit is done with the director present?



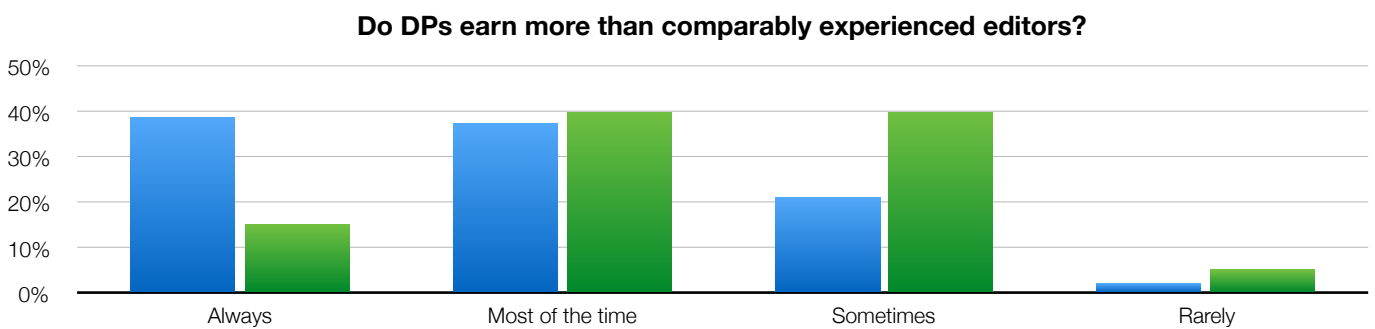
Editors and producers do not agree on the amount of time a director spends in the edit suite. If the producer is paying for the director's time on the edit, perhaps they should be paying more attention to how much time their money is actually buying.

Editors' royalties



Backed by international rules and trends, SAGE's position is that editors provide a significant creative contribution to certain kinds of work. Where royalty mechanisms exist (television and feature films, for example), editors should be considered eligible for a recurring reimbursement for the contribution to the finished product. It is a little disheartening to see that 25% of producers responded 'never' to the question. It must also be said, however, that 35% of editors responded with 'always', which is perhaps unrealistic for certain kinds of editing work.

Editors and Directors of Photography



These responses roughly keep track with those of 2013 and 2014.