



ONE PROJECT TO RULE THEM ALL: MANAGING *THE* *LORD OF THE* *RINGS*

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PROJECT OVERVIEW



Background

- Conquer a live-action film adaptation of the sprawling fantasy book series The Lord of the Rings
- Simultaneously produce three films with unified scope, experimental VFX, and centralized control

Objectives

- Narrative Continuity
- High Production Quality
- Commercial Success

Stakeholders

- Director: Peter Jackson
- Production Company: New Line Studios
- VFX Company: Weta Digital
- Audience: Book fans and movie-goers

SCOPE MANAGEMENT

Three Films				
1: Pre-Production		2: Production (Principle photography)	3.1 Fellowship of the Ring Post Production	Marketing and Distribution
1.1 Script Development		2.1 Unit 1 Filming	3.1.1 Editing	4.1 Trailer Production
1.2 Storyboarding and previsualization		2.2 Unit 2 Filming	3.1.2 VFX (Weta Digital)	4.2 Promotional Campaigns
1.3 Casting		2.3 Unit 3 Filming (parallel units)	3.1.3 Sound Design & Score	4.3 Press & Media Relations
1.4 Location scouting		2.4 On-set Direction & Cinematography	3.1.4 Color Grading	4.4 Global Distribution Logistics
1.5 Set and costume design		2.5 Practical Effects & Props	3.1.5 Final Cut	4.5 Theatrical Release Rollout
1.6 Budget finalization		2.6 Daily Review (dailies)		
1.7 Production planning			3.2 Two Towers Post Production	
			3.2.1 Editing	
			3.2.2 VFX (Weta Digital)	
			3.2.3 Sound Design & Score	
			3.2.4 Color Grading	
			3.2.5 Final Cut	
			3.3 Return of the King Post Production	
			3.3.1 Editing	
			3.3.2 VFX (Weta Digital)	
			3.3.3 Sound Design & Score	
			3.3.4 Color Grading	
			3.3.5 Final Cut	

Work Breakdown Structure

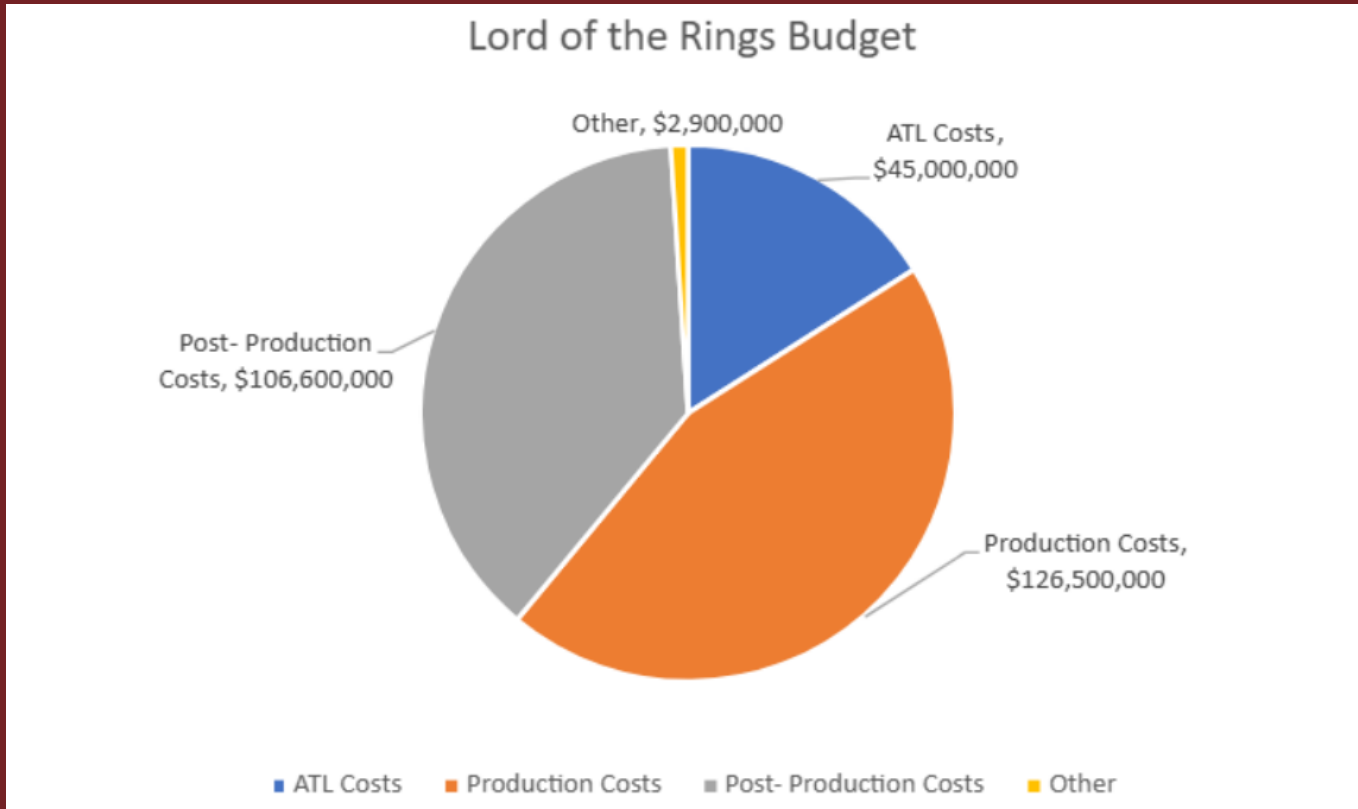
TIME MANAGEMENT

Lord of the Rings Production

ACTIVITY	PLAN START	PLAN DURATION	ACTUAL START	ACTUAL DURATION	PERCENT COMPLETE	PERIODS							
						1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	
Pre-Production	1997	2	1997	2	100%	█	█						
Principal Photography	1999	1	1999	1	100%			█					
Fellowship Post-Production	2000	1	2000	1	100%				█				
Fellowship Release	2001	1	2001	1	100%					█			
Two Towers Post-Production	2001	1	2001	1	100%						█		
Two Towers Release	2002	1	2002	1	100%							█	
Return of the King Post-Production	2002	1	2002	1	100%								█
Return of the King Release	2003	1	2003	1	100%								█
Marketing	2000	4	2000	5	100%				█	█	█	█	

Gantt Chart

COST MANAGEMENT



Cost Estimation Per Phase

- Total budget of \$281 million
- Each movie had a budget of \$93-94 million
- 4 Phases
 - Above the Line: Creative aspects
 - 16% = \$45 million
 - Production: Filming, logistics, crew, equipment, sets, travel
 - 45% = \$126.5 million
 - Post-Production: VFX, editing, sound
 - 39% = \$106.6 million
 - Other Costs
 - \$2.9 million
 - Marketing: Global campaigns
 - \$150 million

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Quality Standards

- Highest level of cinematic and visual realism
- Narrative continuity between films
- Exceptional technical work
- Industry expectations for blockbuster films

Quality Measurement

- Error rates on VFX shots
- Test screenings
- Visual and audio testing

Quality Assurance and Control

- Assurance focused a smooth process.
 - Stakeholder expectations and regulation requirements
- Control focused on creating the best product.
 - Edit reviews, reshoots, and ADR

Testing

- A variety of tests were used to ensure high quality.
 - Including functional, usability, and performance testing

RISK MANAGEMENT

	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Mitigation	Contingency
VFX Rendering Delays	High	High	Weta Digital & New Line Cinema	Parallel rendering pipelines	Prioritize critical scenes
Budget Overruns	High	High	Producers & New Line Cinema	Cost tracking	Use contingency reserve
Actor Availability & Injury	Medium	Medium-High	Actor & New Line Cinema	Schedule buffering & Insurance	Reshoot scheduling
Technology Limitations	Medium	High	Weta Digital & New Line Cinema	R&D Investment	Simplify effects / cut scenes
Schedule Failure	Low-Medium	High	Producers & New Line Cinema	Parallel workflows	Delay non-critical deliverables

Risk Register

STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

Identifying Key Stakeholders

- High Power & High Interest:
 - Director: Peter Jackson
 - Production Company: New Line Cinema
 - Department Heads
- Medium Power & High Interest:
 - Crew Members
 - Cast Members
- Low Power & High Interest:
 - Audience Members

Stakeholder Communication Plans

- Production Meetings:
 - Daily
 - In-Person Meetings
- Executive Reports:
 - Weekly
 - Written Reports
- Reviews:
 - Milestone-Based
 - Screenings

CONCLUSION



Key Points

- Integrated planning across scope, time, and cost
- Post-production critical path
- Strong stakeholder coordination

Challenges

- Different timetables
- Too much information for research made it overwhelming
- Communication

Lessons Learned

- Early scope clarity prevents later issues
- Parallel tasks reduce length but create challenges
- Continuous risk monitoring is essential
- Our success depended on:
 - Consistent task completion
 - *Scope management*



QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU!

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