

Quality animation has traditionally been traced to cel count. However, in limited animation, it generally boils down to the budget. The higher the budget, the higher the quality. Gunther-Wahl suggests that the "look and feel" of the animation is critical. A more tangible interpretation, is the number of moving characters per scene, the movement of those characters and how many scenes are produced in any given episode.

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Being an independent also forces a more conservative use of the budget. Therefore, every effort is made to control costs and maximize the available production funds. By limiting overhead,

producing efficiently, keeping rejected work to a minimum (ie., script writing), an independent like Gunther-Wahl can produce high quality programming at a significantly lower budget than the larger "majors". A properly managed independent "puts more money on the screen".

International business is a substantial portion of the animation business for Gunther-Wahl. The reason is that there are far more opportunities for independent producers overseas than there are in the United States.

If one was to review the current U.S. market, one would see that ABC is owned by Disney and therefore, offers little chance for an independent to sell a series to ABC. CBS is in a state of flux and there is no guarantee that they will be broadcasting animated programming in the future. NBC has no animated series currently being broadcast. Warner Bros. Inc. licenses few series from independents because the majority of its series are created in-house. NICKELODEON has a current policy to produce all of its series in-house as well. United Paramount Network (UPN) indicated that there will be no interest in independent animation in the foreseeable future. Finally, Barry Diller's acquisition of Universal's television assets and the USA Network may change the focus of the nature of programming in the U.S. Where animation fits into this, is open to speculation.

Lastly, there is first-run syndication in the U.S. market. This happens when an independent producer produces a series and attempts to clear it on a market-by-market basis. Syndicated ratings across the board have fallen precipitously over the last several years. This has adversely affected the revenue generated by the sale of advertising time which is the source of income for the independent