

# *THE* *Hollywood* *REPORTER*

## **Paramount eyes postproduction upgrade**

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Paramount is grappling with ways of boosting its on-lot postproduction facilities while raising its post profile in Hollywood.

The studio appears to be closing in on an agreement with Technicolor to supervise a planned new sound postproduction facility on the Melrose Avenue lot. Paramount also is mulling an expansion of its film-restoration capabilities and is actively recruiting candidates to oversee those operations.

The latest developments follow earlier discussions about a plan to invest more than \$60 million in post upgrades on the lot. Proposed improvements ranged from new projectors for digital intermediate and digital-cinema suites to the refurbishment of editing bays to provide air conditioning in ones now lacking A/C.

The studio went so far as to interview candidates for a planned executive vp facilities hire to oversee the upgrades. But those plans might be on hold while Paramount focuses on a possible relationship with Technicolor.

Technicolor -- a unit of France's Thomson tech conglomerate, whose operations include facilities in Burbank, Glendale, Hollywood and North Hollywood -- is constructing a massive facility on the Sunset Gower Studios lot in Hollywood. The giant postproduction indie also maintains a Technicolor-branded unit on the Sony lot in Culver City, where it provides various digital post services.

Paramount has been considered something of a laggard in the postproduction community. That's in part because Sony, Fox and Warner Bros. have upgraded their on-lot facilities in recent years.

Now it appears Paramount is intent on rectifying the situation, on its own or in partnership with Technicolor.

"It's really being done simply to bring these things up to decent standards," a source familiar with the proposals said. "It was first brought up by DreamWorks people, who were pressing them to get these things done."

DreamWorks -- where execs recently announced plans to bolt Paramount for a distribution only relationship with Universal -- were unavailable for comment.