a.team

Entertainment

How A.Team and Showrunner Built an Award-Winning OS For Virtual Production

$9.8M	**$1M**	**1yr**
Raised	ARR in first year	Zero-to-one build

The Challenge

The film and TV industry is traditionally characterized by a waterfall workflow: one department completes its task before the next one starts. This waterfall workflow also leads to a waterfall of inefficiency and delays. Tools and technology are usually siloed within departments, which creates information redundancies.

Shane Snow — best-selling author and founder of Contently — couldn't get over the wild inefficiency of this system and how it was holding creators back. So alongside his three co-founders, Shane set out to build **Showrunner**, the world's first single operating system for film production.

Their vision: create an operating system for virtual production that would connect everything on set—all the cameras, lights, virtual backgrounds, Unreal Engine, media, servers, audio—into one interface that could be accessed from any device. "We wanted to bring a fundamental shift in film production, transitioning from the traditional waterfall methodology to an agile one, akin to what software has achieved in other industries," Snow explained.

But building a seamless operating system turned out to be way more technically challenging than anyone anticipated.

> "Tech leaders and founders should be considering A.Team because you not only want the best talent in the world, but you also want groups of people that add up to more than the sum of their parts. That's what A.Team is optimized to give you."

— Shane Snow, Founder @ Showrunner

The Build

Showrunner needed an MVP. So they assembled an A.Team of highly skilled specialists across multiple domains to ramp up production speed and realize their vision for an enterprise-level platform for smart studios.

The primary challenge was synchronizing the various devices on set, each with their distinct protocols. From the director wanting to adjust the lighting to the cinematographer rotating the virtual background by a couple degrees, the system needed to be intuitive and seamless.

"We got into a kind of a crunch where finding the perfect talent to make that team of our dreams was really really hard," Snow said. "So we spun up an A.Team of a few developers and a designer to help us really make progress on this and it was worth every penny."

A.Team assembled a specialized team with high cognitive diversity: there was Tim, a designer with a rich film background who ensured a pragmatic interface for industry users; Ted, a globally recognized Unreal Engine developer; and Lucas, a stellar front-end developer who transforms transforms conceptual designed into incredible functionality.

Film sets use a maddening hodge-podge of disparate technologies, but Showrunner's A.Team was able to triage and integrate the disparate protocols and tools. They focused on real-time collaboration, optimizing the filmmaking process, and minimizing redundancy.

For Showrunner, turning A.Team engineers into apart of the core team was part of the strategy.

> **"Our product team does a daily stand up and every A.Teamer is part of that."**
>
> — Shane Snow, Founder @ Showrunner

Outcomes

The quick spin-up of the MVP gave Showrunner the opportunity to evaluate their go-to-market strategy. They opted to spend more time perfecting the product before bringing it to market.

What began as an ambitious prototype, developed by the founders and a small crew, evolved into a larger project demanding more time and a broader skill set.

In just one year, Showrunner and A.Team created an operating system from 0 to 1 capable of communicating with an array of different technologies and accessed from any device – lights, cameras, virtual backgrounds, audio, and other set elements – each with unique protocols and control methods.

The product significantly reduces inefficiencies in film production, enabling crews to work proactively and get home in time for dinner. It allowed for improved control and coordination on set, reduced costs, and saved valuable time. This, in turn, boosted Showrunner's position in the market and helped them scale their business as one of the world's leading smart studios.

"The next couple of years, we're going to see virtual production become more and more accepted as part of the fabric of Hollywood," Snow said. "We're going to affect behavior change because these tools make filmmaking simpler."

The launch was a dramatic success. Showrunner's virtual production toolkit took home the prestigious "**Product of the Year**" award at the National Association of Broadcasters' annual convention. also scored a global partnership with the virtual production studio network Vū. And in just one year, Showrunner's reached $1M in ARR, establishing a whole new category for film technology.