

# DR&A (Nashville) brings the SCRATCH-RED 4K Workflow to Country Music

For DR&A, Nashville offers a plethora of opportunity for creating high-quality music videos, commercials, independent films, as well as supporting TV productions. Using the RED ONE™ Digital 4K Camera and ASSIMILATE's SCRATCH® Digital Process Solution, DR&A has honed their craft of production and post production with a digital workflow that works well in the studio and on the road.

The history of DR&A (Nashville, TN) lies in providing the lighting and heavy technical equipment set-ups for commercials and music videos. When walking through NAB 07, DR&A owner Doug Rice and General Manager Bret Weeks saw the RED 4K camera and realized this was the means to diversify and expand their business. Weeks quickly understood the need for a seamless digital post production workflow that could handle the native REDCODE RAW files (R3D). The optimum solution for price and performance was the SCRATCH suite of post tools, which offers resolution-independent real-time conform, construct, color grading, dailies, and finishing.

Since then, DR&A has completed over 45 RED-SCRATCH-based documentary and music video projects for artists such as Martina McBride, Keith Urban, Lady Antebellum, Doc Walker, as well as Nashville Ballet and Dale Earnhart NASCAR commercials, to name a few.

"As someone who's been around the block with film, tape, and non-tape based productions for years, I experienced a massive level of personal excitement when I contemplated the possibilities of how we could use the RED camera to create new solutions for our clients," says Weeks. "It was a light bulb moment for us. We quickly recognized the differences and benefits between the RED-SCRATCH workflow and traditional wet or tape-based methodologies. The ease of use, time and cost savings, and high-quality results of the RED-SCRATCH 4K Workflow, as compared to the older, costly, time-laden post processes, were the decisive factors for us."

Weeks adds, "We were the first in our market to purchase RED cameras and have been going strong ever since. We now offer complete production services for projects of any scale or location – a concert tour, live performance, client's home, studios, etc. After we shoot the footage with the RED camera, we load the R3D files into SCRATCH on-set so that we and our clients can preview the material. We can then determine if we need to shoot more footage before striking the set. This production workflow



Image courtesy of DR&A (Nashville): SCRATCH used as 4K post workflow for Taillight TV/Martina McBride "Ride" music video.

gives us an easy and fast set-up, considerable time savings, and enables us to capture as much footage as necessary to give our clients a top-notch end product."



## Credits

**Client:** Taillight TV/ Martina McBride "Ride" music video **Director:** Kristin Barlowe **Production and Post production facility:** DR&A, [www.griptruck.com](http://www.griptruck.com) **DP:** Dermot Downs **SCRATCH Artists:** Bret Weeks and Kyle Spicer **Camera:** RED ONE™ Digital 4K Camera  
**Post Workflow:** ASSIMILATE's SCRATCH® Digital Process Solution

## RED-SCRATCH 4K Workflow

Rice and Weeks of course approached the development of their new business model based on market needs.

Rice notes, "When researching ways to expand our business, we realized a 35mm workflow was very costly and knew margins would be tight, but with RED and SCRATCH we're able to achieve comparable results and squeeze the budget to an acceptable cost. Also, some of our projects require timely turnarounds and working in 35mm doesn't allow for that, whereas working with

They also have a crew of technicians on staff, and hire freelancers for projects as needed.

Weeks explains, "For any given RED project, we'll bring the R3D files into SCRATCH and do a quick conform. We then move into the construct and editing to lay out the story line and begin color grading. We're able to do the beauty work on the imagery in SCRATCH Scaffolds – masking, clean-up, touch-ups – as well as copy the scaffolds throughout the workflow, reapplying that work

19' x 40' screen at our studio. On set, we loaded the R3D files into SCRATCH for a quick check of material. We then ran it through the SCRATCH post production workflow; showed the director and DP a preview grade; and then did some beauty enhancements using SCRATCH Scaffolds. We were able to make any changes/ edits in real time, which the client loved because it's a big time-savings for them, as well as for us. This is an amazingly quick turnaround for a high-quality video."

"We're getting ready to shoot the concert background elements for the 2009 Keith Urban tour, and taking footage for an ongoing concert documentary," says Weeks. "It's all in RED 4K data so we'll be able to quickly respond, moving the R3D files to SCRATCH for the DI when the time comes," says Weeks. Prior to RED and SCRATCH, DR&A worked with 35mm, HDCam and Varicam, as well as other HD & SD formats. "We would push for film to up the quality of the master and deliverables, but we've discovered not using film is a much better solution for time, cost, and quality results.

We output everything to 4K DPX files and from that – because SCRATCH is resolution independent – we use SCRATCH to create any deliverables we need," says Weeks. "The flexibility and advantages of this workflow make it a lifetime investment for us, and one we can expand upon as RED and SCRATCH bring new upgrades/updates to market."

"We've achieved our goal of expanding our business to now include a small, well equipped editorial house. We can also work in Final Cut Pro and Avid for editorial and VFX, then integrate the files into SCRATCH for the color grading and finishing," says Weeks.

## Adding 3D and Other Formats

"With SCRATCH, we're able to work with other formats and data that come in from other resources for a project, but we're mostly working in RED footage now," says Spicer. "The cherry on the sundae would be to use SCRATCH and the RED camera for a high-quality stereoscopic 3D workflow, so we're exploring that opportunity as well."

Weeks adds, "Our goal is to work in very high resolution as much as possible, keeping the data at a feature-level, and then down convert for the deliverables like SD and digibeta. Squeezing down from 4K makes even SD look good."

## Final Say

"It's been exciting for us to be one of the torchbearers of the 4K data workflow in our industry. It's changing the future of how movies, videos, documentaries, and commercials are made, truly expanding the reach, creativity, and productivity of all the artists involved in a project. And specifically for us of course, it means more business opportunities, but also a high level of excitement in taking on new project challenges and doing great work for our clients," says Weeks.

Weeks, Spicer and Rice all conclude that the ASSIMILATE team has been very generous with their time and support for the company. Weeks notes, "For any question, we'll have a solid response within two hours – even at night. All the guys – Jeff Edson, Lucas Wilson, Tony Cacciarelli – are all very personable and right there when we need them. That's a huge boost for us when on deadline."



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super high-res 4K files and a 4K data workflow get the job done in about 30 to 40 percent of the time. Our clients love the results – quick turnaround and sharp image quality." Both Bret Weeks and Kyle Spicer work as DPs and SCRATCH artists, including color grading and finishing, at DR&A.

to other sections of the material. This is extremely useful in the review phase."

Weeks adds, "As an example, one of our biggest clients, Taillight TV used RED to shoot a recent Martina McBride performance in front of a concert-type background on a