

Editorial

For 4k's sake

Unless you've just got back from a trip to Mars and are still busy unpacking you can't help but have noticed that there is a new standard on the block in video - 4k. It's the latest in the video manufacturers relentless drive to gain direct access to your wallet via your credit card.

Now there's absolutely no doubt that the image produced by a correctly used and well set up 4k video camera will impress even the most jaded eye. There is detail in the detail which is drop dead gorgeous. Add that most 4k cameras can shoot smooth slo-mo and you have a magnetic package designed to lock onto the stripe on your credit card.

The final, clever barb on the baited hook is that footage shot on 4k but downsampled to 2k is better than existing 2k. That's the perfect angle to hook all those who, like myself, are more than happy with 2k. -the promise that your 2k footage can look better.

The big problem (and I hope you weren't thinking that I'd fallen for 4k marketing) is that it's not just about buying a new camera. You need to invest in a new system.

. In order to benefit from all that 4k video has to offer you will almost certainly have to buy a new (and not just an upgrade) computer editing system and data storage drives to cope with the eye watering file sizes. As an Apple user I costed this alone at about \$9000 without being too extravagant. The good news is that includes a 32" 4k monitor but if you want to impress your friends in your living room, you'll need a 4k TV...

Future proof 4k TVs...

The above rant leads perfectly to those naughty marketing guys and gals who attended the inaugural meeting entitled "How to make 4k reassuring" but first there needs to be a short history lesson.

In the beginning, in the home video world there was 8mm. Then you were encouraged to flash out more cash for "Hi"8. Not long afterwards came 'digital' video with smaller MiniDV tapes and higher image quality.

That was overtaken by HD when video data started to be recorded onto memory sticks rather than tape. However when they were selling you HD they knew, but obviously didn't tell you, that FULL HD was just around the corner.

Then they started to describe FULL HD as 2k because that was

the new standard for the future. The problem was that when 2k was replaced by 4k the men in shiny suits in TV sales-land had to come up with some new coat hangar and, I kid you not, the term they came up with was Future proof 4k televisions.

Now I fully accept that we are fair game when we step into a TV showroom but future proof?

Do me a favour.

Is the latest the best?

Anyone reading the New Products section in this Issue will quickly spot that the hot camera of the moment is the Sony RX100 111. It's the third incarnation of this 1" sensor fixed zoom lens which produces excellent stills and video in a size which is impressively small even when housed.

The above specification has made the RX100 111 eagerly anticipated and the housing manufacturers have virtually all tooled up to add it to their range.

For those choosing a camera for the first time or migrating down from an SLR the RX100 ticks a lot of boxes.

However for those who already own an RX100/11 and are considering upgrading, perhaps a word of caution might be wise. The RX100 111 has a much improved 24-70mm F1.8-2.8

Zeiss lens which is receiving rave reviews but, from an underwater point of view, especially if you use a wide angle attachment on your RX100/11 the extra wide angle coverage of the 24-70 will almost certainly cause edge cutoff with your existing wide angle lens. True you can zoom in a bit but you would then be losing a bit of coverage which sort of defeats the object.

The bottom line is that upgrading your camera may not mean just a housing, it could also include your accessory lenses as well.

Let the buyer beware.

28th Annual Discovery Shark Week

I've only been allowed to watch trailers whilst under medical supervision but some of it is so amazing that you'd swear they'd made it up.

Fortunately it's all been shot in 4k so it must be true.

Welcome to unreality TV.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com