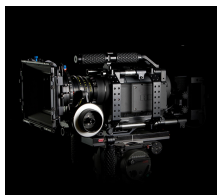


11 April 2008

By: Luca Oprea, Video news editor

Fully loaded RED One
RED

[Red One Inventor Gives First Details on Scarlet](#)

A pre-preview of a future release that has the filmmaking world churning out unprecedented amounts of jittery buzz

Jim Jannard is having a good time. On the discussion forums of his most daring project to date, his customers are having similar amounts of fun. There is an almost childish brand of fun - mostly grown men, quite a few already established in the film and broadcast business, many just starting out - all of them sharing love for a visual toy, love that almost goes beyond the geeky. Right now, in what is the beginning of a golden age for visual self expression, the liberation of moving pictures from the cost of film and the control of marketing executives, this forum is ground zero. Jim is RED's founder slash 'inventor' (it's not exactly an invention, it is a technological construct) slash biggest fan. RED is a single S35mm-sized CMOS digital cinematography camera. It records beautiful 4K video (4096X2304) with over 11 stops of dynamic range. The only things closer to film than the RED is film itself - and perhaps some extremely high-end digital cinema cameras costing in excess of \$100,000. If that makes no sense, it's because there are many types of film stock, with wildly varying characteristics, and many ways to shoot and process them. The look of film is subjective, and RED's images are highly malleable pieces of visual art with a hyper-real feel to them. Blown up on a 60-foot screen, there is no mistaking it for HD, and while it can be made to look like film, RED is its own aesthetic. That it carries a price tag of \$17,500 is nothing short of a miracle, and only a couple of years ago felt, looked, and was received by many as a bad joke. Now, those who bought into RED's promises back then are playing guessing games and hunting for clues related to a follow-up wonder-toy, the Scarlet. The RED Scarlet was announced months ago as a 'professional pocket camera', which would be significantly cheaper than the RED, and would not compete with it. "Scarlet will be a surprise, no matter what you thought. It will not be a shirt pocket camera. It will look different than you imagined. It will be all metal, no plastic. We will not take reservations for it - it will not be for sale at the show. It will weigh more than any pocket consumer camera. It will record REDCODE RAW (duh)." These, the first real details about the camera, were posted today by Jim Jannard. The ability to record RAW files is one of the features that set the RED apart from other cameras at any price point. That a much cheaper camera which is meant to compete with prosumer camcorders would record RAW, and that Jim would see that as so obvious that it's not even worth debating, makes the 'duh' at the end of the message the most surprising and at the same time most reassuring information about the new camera. Scarlet is going to be all metal, probably modular and upgradeable in the hardware sense, certainly capable of firmware updates, with 2k resolution, or perhaps 3k and a PL mount and 2/3 inch sensor, wait, make that full frame - RED's fans are allowed to speculate and dream, aren't they? And it will do REDCORE RAW, that much we know for now. Much more details will surface at NAB 2008 in just a few days. Just how innovative and how surprising depends mostly on Jim's ambition and desire to shake (and anger) the foundations of the film and video production business. As the founder of the Oakley clothing company, Jim's pockets are large, but not particularly large when viewed in the economic terms of the digital camera industry. And it's not spectacular spending habits that have turned the RED project into reality (although one has to assume that quite a bit of money went into its development). Instead, his attitude of confident enthusiasm and his bold and savvy in-the-trenches marketing garnered him the support of thousands who pre-ordered the Red and logged daily onto discussion forums to contribute opinions and hints regarding the future camera, but mostly to keep the movement going with their presence and excitement. "Remember that two years ago we were a scam. We didn't go from scam to

super-heroes overnight. We still need time to pull all this stuff off." Says Jim, suggesting that it took more than hype to gain people's confidence. There were series of tests and prototypes and software versions. There were critics - people who didn't trust their vision or their product, and people with vested interests in not seeing the Red succeed. There even was the September 2006 theft of a Red camera housing and computers with production details. And the NAB 2007 show came with a splendid statement: a 12 minute short directed by none other than Peter Jackson. RED was up and running. Since then over a thousand units have been shipped. There are features and commercials being shot on the RED, and it has been adopted by some big names in Hollywood. Michael Douglas is starring in a movie shot with RED. So are Matt Damon, Benicio del Toro and Gerard Butler. This is a camera that is ready for the prime-time, so naturally it requires some serious hardware and software solutions on the post-production side of a shoot. And that is where Scarlet steps in. For those who can't afford RED-the-large-digital-cinema-camera (and there are many), and for those who want the freedom of shooting hand-held, a camera like Scarlet can't come along soon enough. The same can be said of news about innovatory features. But there will be a wait. A release date might be announced at NAB 2008. Scarlet isn't ready yet. A forum user mentions "RED's willingness to listen to the end user throughout the development process". Jim answers, "This camera represents a new category. Of course we will listen, but I'd be very surprised if there is much to talk about."