

ROHDE & SCHWARZ STREAMLINES MASTERING FOR zweiB



At a glance

zweiB specializes in finishing, mastering and delivering content for cinema and commercial events, which requires the company to prepare high-quality video and audio files in a range of resolutions, codecs and formats.

It has long relied on the R&S®CLIPSTER platform for all its mastering, trusting it to ensure quality, reliability and productivity. Affirming its successful long-term partnership with Rohde&Schwarz and to future-proof its investment against continuing developments in content delivery, zweiB upgraded its installation to the latest version of the platform, the R&S®CLIPSTER 6 Mk 2.

Summary

- ▶ **Customer:** zweiB, Munich, Germany
- ▶ **Task:** High-quality mastering for cinema and event display
- ▶ **Challenge:** Complex output requirements including DCP and IMF; tight timelines; stringent quality expectations
- ▶ **Solution:** R&S®CLIPSTER 6 Mk 2 mastering workstation
- ▶ **Key advantages of this solution:** Provides assured mastering of all formats, including metadata-rich deliverables like DCP digital cinema files; future-proof against continuing developments in formats and resolutions

Case Study | Version 01.00

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The customer

zweiB is a post production facility based in Munich, Germany. It has a unique specialization in preparing content and managing its delivery to cinemas, events and trade shows. It handles content for major film festivals like the Berlinale, as well as product launches for premiere clients in the automotive industry.

The company's reputation depends on its ability to deliver to the highest technical standards regardless of the final format while meeting fixed deadlines. To manage its delivery process, zweiB has long relied on the R&S®CLIPSTER mastering station, and has now upgraded to the latest version, the R&S®CLIPSTER 6 Mk 2.

The challenge

zweiB is a small post production house, employing around 15 full-time staff. It provides the usual range of post production facilities. However, one of its main specialties is preparing and delivering content for display on large screens, whether for cinemas, specially created facilities, trade shows or in other commercial environments.

This means that deliverable materials have to meet strict requirements. Content typically needs transcoding and requires color space conversion from standard to high dynamic range systems. All this must be provided for files of 4K resolution and higher at frame rates of up to 120 frames per second (fps).

For cinema, files must conform strictly to the DCI standards. Events often use multiple screens at different resolutions with display systems potentially requiring different formats and wrappers. The zweiB facility in Munich has its own small cinema that allows clients to check the quality of deliverables or host full-scale screenings when required.

To ensure its high quality standards are maintained, zweiB needs a reliable, productive solution to create deliverables it can trust. The solution has to be flexible enough to adapt to the varying formats its customers require; it must

ensure the correct metadata is packed with the content – vital in DCP and IMF – and it must consistently retain the highest possible image and audio quality.

The solution

In its early days mastering for cinema and events, zweiB quickly recognized the excellence of the R&S®CLIPSTER. The company has considered and used other mastering systems over the past decade, but the R&S®CLIPSTER remains its solution of choice due to its excellent quality, throughput and ease of use.

“We are not 100% a post production company; we are not 100% an event technology company – we are somewhere in between,” said Tammo Buhren, General Manager at zweiB. “Our business is in dealing with top-notch, high-quality content.”

“Whether a major film festival or a prestigious product launch, our clients need to know that the quality on the screen and in the accompanying audio is perfect,” Buhren explained. “That is our approach, our baseline: we must deliver perfection. That is the reason we use the R&S®CLIPSTER, because it is the recognized industry standard, and because it ensures we deliver perfection.”

The company's expertise means that it is regularly called upon to provide complete facilities as well as master content. A typical example is Film Woche, held in Munich every January. It is an opportunity for studios to showcase their latest content to cinema owners.

R&S®CLIPSTER

- ▶ Fast and reliable IMF and DCP mastering
- ▶ 4K uncompressed playback up to 120 fps
- ▶ HDR color-processing pipeline
- ▶ Input any file type and video signal
- ▶ Mix and match codecs alongside uncompressed frame sequences



R&S®CLIPSTER mastering station

As a showcase, quality is clearly the prime consideration. zweiB uses its R&S®CLIPSTER not only to prepare all the material but also to check and validate the content.

zweiB is involved with various film festivals throughout Germany. "For over 10 days, Berlinale has screenings across the city of Berlin in existing cinemas and in facilities we build for the festival," said Buhren. "For this event, we put together a team of maybe 40 people because we are responsible for the whole technical setup. R&S®CLIPSTER devices are a key part of that setup," he added.

As well as festivals, zweiB is also routinely involved in high-profile movie premieres and major television productions that offer public showings as part of the publicity process. Bringing large numbers of people together to drive interest in a production depends on a screening that has the maximum impact.

"A few years ago, we ran the German premiere of Men in Black 3," Buhren recalled. "It was a 3D screening for 9500 people in the Mercedes-Benz Arena in Berlin," he said. "The only way to feed the Sony projectors was with an R&S®CLIPSTER, and we were taking everything to the limit," he said. "On a night like that there is no Plan B, so we were absolutely depending on the quality and reliability of Rohde&Schwarz."

zweiB's continuing confidence in the R&S®CLIPSTER to deliver the quality, flexibility and reliability it demands has led it to upgrade its facilities to the latest version, the R&S®CLIPSTER 6 Mk 2. "The main focus is to be future-proof," Buhren adds.

"Standards in the industry are changing quickly, and the good thing about Rohde&Schwarz is that they are an active part in the process," he continued. "Often, they have people in the standards bodies, so they really know all the implications. It means when we get a software

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Tammo Buhren, General Manager at zweiB

update, we know that it is 100% correct and we can trust it right away."

Conclusion

While zweiB might be considered a relatively small company in the post production world, it has a market-leading reputation for quality in large-screen deliverables, for cinema and events. Central to maintaining this reputation for quality is the R&S®CLIPSTER, which has a place in all its mastering facilities as well as being used for on-site work.

Reliability and support is vital for this application. As delivery standards are refined and developed, users rely on rolling upgrades to ensure that the latest data is implemented. Working in the events business, where every job has a fixed and demanding timeline, access to responsive support is also critical. "There is never an option to not solve a problem," said zweiB's Tammo Buhren. "We receive 100% reliable support from Rohde&Schwarz."

The company has looked at lower-cost alternatives to the R&S®CLIPSTER but has rejected them because they are unable to match what the R&S®CLIPSTER offers: ease of use, the ultimate in adherence to standards, high throughput and uncompromising quality. zweiB has relied on the R&S®CLIPSTER for more than a decade, which shows that its investment has paid off handsomely in reliability, productivity and quality.



Tammo Buhren, General Manager at zweiB, uses the latest generation R&S®CLIPSTER in the zweiB post production facility in Munich for fast and reliable IMF and DCP mastering.

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