

Capturing the Energy of Live Music

How I Streamlined My Workflow with ADAMO 4K Cameras

Jason Esparza | Hell N High Water Productions

How I Got Here

I've been filming live music for over 30 years and directing for more than 20, but it started long before that. Back in high school, I was filming local bands any chance I got, chasing that energy you only get at a live show.

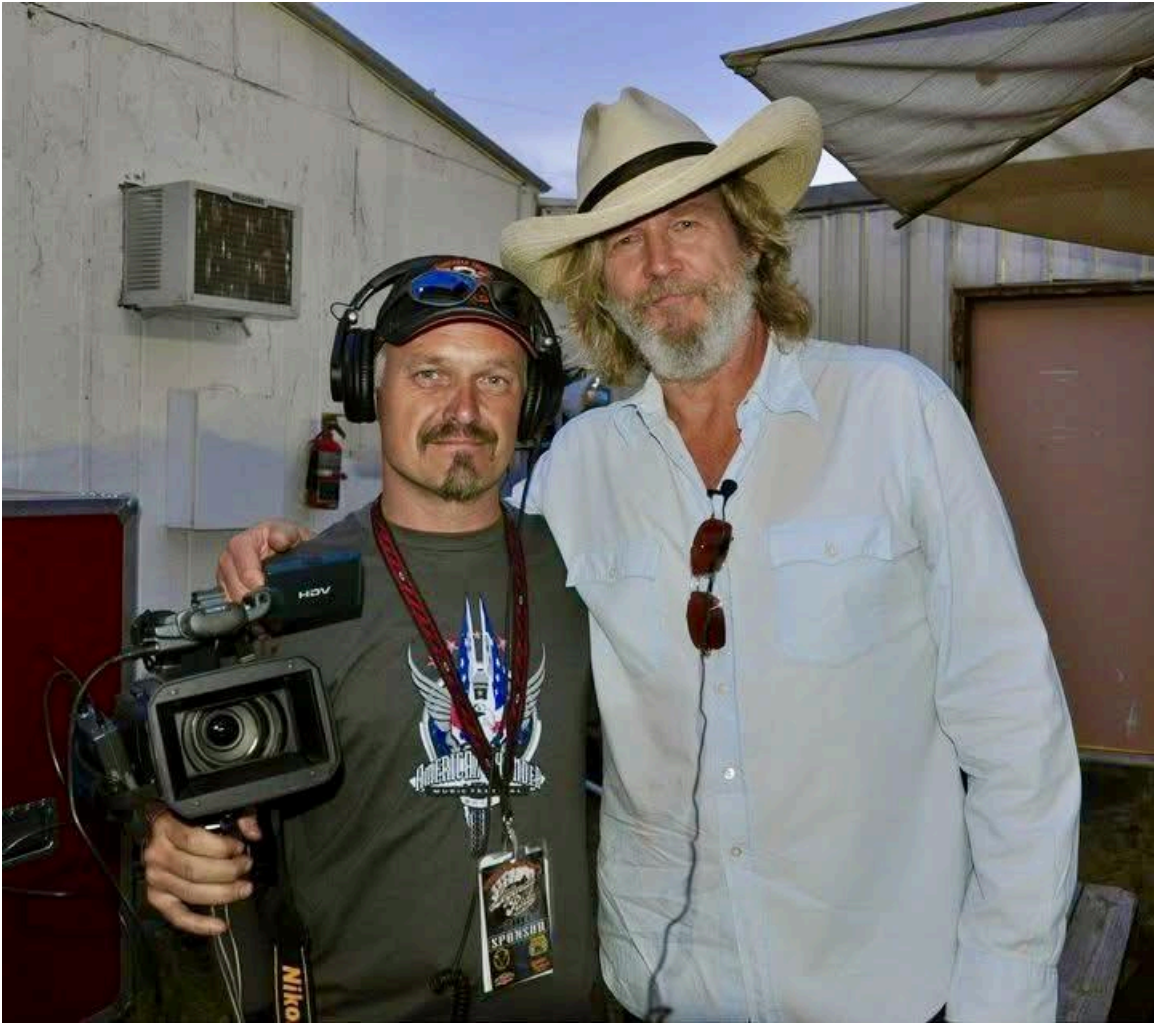
I'm not a musician, but directing lets me connect to the performance in my own way. My job is to translate that energy so the audience feels it through the screen.

I got my start at Fox Sports working master control for live broadcasts, which taught me precision, timing, and how to stay calm under pressure. From there, I moved into music—touring, adapting to unpredictable lighting, and learning how to capture performances in real time.

A major turning point in my career was producing and directing Texas Roadhouse Live, a multi-year, award-winning television series that aired across Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana. That show gave me the opportunity to work with an incredible range of artists—from Pearl Jam and Soundgarden to ZZ Top, Merle Haggard, and Billy Joe Shaver—blending broadcast-level production with raw live performance.

Over the years, I've worked everything from jam bands to the Houston Symphony, and today I direct multi-camera livestreams for platforms like nugs.net while also producing my own show, Vinyl Voices.

At the end of the day, the people matter—but the right tools make it possible to keep doing this at a high level.



The Personal Factor

Over the years, I've also had to deal with some ongoing health challenges that have made long production days more difficult—especially when it comes to fatigue and maintaining physical stamina on extended shoots.

Traditional multi-camera setups require a larger crew, more movement, and constant coordination. That can take a toll, especially during multi-day events where the pace never really slows down.

This is something I don't always talk about—but it's real, and it's part of why finding a more efficient workflow became so important to me.

I needed a way to keep producing at a high level without putting the same physical strain on myself every time I stepped into a show.



The Camera Operator Perspective

I've spent most of my life as a camera operator. It's something I've always taken a lot of pride in—not just capturing what's happening, but documenting it from my own perspective. In a way, it's like painting. Every operator sees things a little differently, and I've always looked at the camera as a tool to tell the story the way I see it.

Over the last couple of years, I've developed tremors on my left side, which has made it more difficult to operate a camera the way I used to. That's been one of the harder parts of this journey, because being behind the camera is something I truly enjoy.

I still love directing—especially live music—but I've missed that hands-on connection of actually operating a shot. There's a different level of connection when you're physically framing the moment, reacting in real time, and shaping the visual as it unfolds.

Losing that consistency and control has been frustrating. Not just from a technical standpoint, but from a creative one. It's changed the way I've had to approach production, and it forced me to start looking for a different way to stay connected to that part of the craft.



The Problem

Budgets for livestreaming have dropped, but expectations haven't.

To maintain the level of quality I expect, I was bringing in a full team of camera operators for every show. The results were strong, but the labor demands made it difficult to keep productions efficient and scalable—especially across multi-day events.

I needed a way to reduce crew size without sacrificing the multi-camera look I'm known for.

I had tried PTZ cameras before, but most didn't hold up—especially in low light. They didn't match my Canon XF605 workflow.



What Changed

That's when I started looking for a different solution—and that's when I found the ADAMO 4K.

On paper it checked all the boxes—4K image, 12G-SDI, internal recording. But what mattered was real-world performance.

These cameras handled low light far better than anything I had used. The biggest change was control—I could adjust exposure, color, and framing in real time while directing.

No guessing. No hoping someone caught it. I could fix it instantly.

Beyond the production benefits, this setup also made a personal impact.

By reducing the size of my crew and allowing me to control multiple cameras from a single position, I'm able to work smarter instead of harder. It's less physically demanding, more efficient, and allows me to stay focused on the creative side of directing rather than constantly managing logistics.

That shift has made a real difference in my ability to keep doing this long-term.



The Impact

I bought one camera and within a single three-day event, the labor savings paid for half of it. Then I bought another.

Now my setup is two experienced operators and three ADAMO 4K cameras. I still value great operators, but I'm no longer dependent on a full crew just to get coverage.

Now my setup allows me to achieve the same multi-camera coverage with a much leaner crew, giving me more control while significantly reducing the operational load on each production.

Even better, when I gave feedback to BZBGear, they listened. Firmware updates improved real-world performance. That level of responsiveness is rare.



Where I'm At Now

Now I can run full multi-camera productions from a single station if needed.

For projects like Vinyl Voices, where budgets are tight but expectations are high, this setup allows me to maintain quality without absorbing extra cost.

It's given me more control, more flexibility, and a way to stay profitable while continuing to do what I love.

But just as important, it's given me a sustainable way to keep working in an industry that demands a lot—physically and mentally.

I'm not just producing better shows—I'm able to keep showing up and doing it consistently.

Final Thought

After more than 30 years, I've learned that gear only matters if it helps tell the story better.

These cameras do that.

They've streamlined my workflow, strengthened my creative control, and allowed me to sustain my business in a changing industry.