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Beyond Better Pixels: How HDR Perceptually and Emotionally Affects Storytelling 19

*Abstract*

**As the push for high-dynamic-range (HDR) content begins to swell, consumers may find themselves wondering what this new content offers at home, beyond gimmicks and more expensive televisions. Content creators may also find themselves won­dering what this new standard offers to the stories they tell beyond yet another set of delivery specs. With the bulk of HDR demo material showcasing standalone, wow-factor wide shots designed to showcase the physical limits of dynamic range, there is a need to take a step back and examine how HDR and wide color gamut (WCG) affects an entire proj­ect: putting our brighter and better pixels in the more meaningful context of an entire story. This paper presents observations on the effect of HDR/WCG as it varies through visual styles, using examples from a one- hour medical drama, a half-hour superhero comedy, and a one-hour spy thriller. The author will use data collected from her work as a colorist on over 35 episodes of HDR content to examine the psychophysical, per­ceptual, and emotional impact of the deeper dynamic range and greater gamut available in larger color volumes.**

*Keywords:* ***Content creators, contrast ratios, HDR10, high dynamic range (HDR), home viewing, perception, standard dynamic range (SDR)-to-HDR, SDR, storytelling, wide color gamut (WCG).***