

Andy

B A D E R



DIT
PRODUCTION CITY: WILMINGTON, NC
ICG MEMBER FOR 15 YEARS
PORTRAIT BY DANA HAWLEY

“Andy Bader is a wizard,” declares Director of Photography Shana Hagan, ASC. “His skills as a DIT are top-notch.” Hagan’s words well-describe Bader’s key contributions to the FOX TV sitcom *Welcome to Flatch*, shot documentary-style with a huge range of gear that includes the ARRI Mini LF, GoPros, iPhones, working prop Canon consumer video cameras, drones and live FaceTime calls on phones and laptops. “Andy is the only person on set I trust to help me set exposure and keep multiple cameras matching,” Hagan continues. “His dailies CDL’s are so helpful, and we do minimal corrections in our final color sessions.”

Hagan’s also a fan of what has become known on set as “The Bader Box.”

After Season 1, Production wanted to streamline the rigging for the show’s driving work, and Bader accepted the challenge. “Shana and the crew settled on a go-to camera setup: three GoPros, usually with one on the hood and one on each front window,” Bader recalls. “It worked, but it was a big, cluttered pile of technology that took a lot of time to set up and had a lot of failure points.”

To keep costs and failure points at a minimum, Bader used HDMI all the way to the transmitter, a consumer-grade 12-V HDMI splitter, and a multi-port 5-V USB power supply that could accept 12-V power input. He cut the cables to expose the bare copper wires and connected all the leads via a gold mount battery plate and two terminal blocks (one positive, one negative). A 12-V buck-boost converter in line with the positive lead of the battery ensured each device got a true 12 V, not 14 V or more. He added a four-pin XLR input with another voltage regulator and diodes to prevent power back-feeding from one battery to another.

To route all those cables and connections where the crew needed them, Bader bought HDMI and USB waterproof bulkhead connectors and made a patch bay on the side of the case. Connections and cable looms were color-coded to make connection easy. He also deployed Solid Camera’s Wedgie2 to mount the Teradek transmitter so it could switch from the C camera to the box and power off the gold mount battery plate. A simple Pelican-style hard case held it all.

“Key Grip Stacy Barnhill helped me out with some D-rings, cheese plates and baby pins to mount it on a vehicle in pretty much any configuration,” Bader notes. “It’s not an incredibly complex box. The value lies in being able to keep everything built, protect it, power it all from one battery, and streamline it for the whole department to use. It was a great project for me to help out the department while I learned on my own, as I’m not an electrical engineer – which any electrical engineer reading this can probably tell!”