

NISSAN X PEP GUARDIOLA

TREATMENT BY
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INTRO

Last time I found myself on a Nissan Leaf commercial I was about 2 metres away from a very damp Joe Wilkinson. So its with the smell of a sodden cheap suit lingering in my mind I write this treatment. (For the record Joe's subsequent health issues had nothing to do with being put through a carwash with windows open. It is very exciting that we've traded Joe in for a sleeker, smoother and less soggy model - Pep. (But if you reckon we should drench Pep too I'm up for it.)





TO NE & APPROACH

I know we only have Pep for a limited time, which is why we have to be clever in our approach. We want to get as much as possible out of the reactions of the presenter and extras. All we need from Pep is a casual shrug and a matter-of-fact delivery that will stand out amongst the uncool chaos of the failed surprise. We'll shoot on 2 or 3 cameras for the sake of time, and I'd like to put an eye deflect on the lens for the shorter films so that Pep can deliver the lines to me, keeping things as natural as possible.

Thanks to my experience with things like BA and Carpool Karaoke, I am used to drawing a great, subtle and natural performance out of people who aren't necessarily professional presenters or actors, harnessing their natural energy in order to make the best of each film. And often with VERY little time.



LOOK & FEEL

I think it's important to keep a documentary style for the filming, so that it feels both energetic and natural. We want the launch film to be handheld and on zoom lenses so that it has the energy of a genuine surprise. This energy is then completely deflated when everyone realises Pep already owns a Leaf. Often our cameras will be finding the action especially when things go wrong as it should feel un planned. This being said, although it will be documentary style we still want it to look stylish and in keeping with the Nissan brand.

For this shoot I'll be using Angenieux lenses which have a great zoom capacity, so that we have maximum flexibility for a rapid shoot time. Plus, these look great and filmic, so that the car (and Pep) will shine. We'll shoot everything on the day wide and high quality, and then crop in during the edit for the 1 x 1 and portrait. This approach may look a little clunky on the day, but for the purposes of getting as much material as possible it is definitely the right one, and after the edit everything will fall into place perfectly, and we'll end up with a great series of films for this new campaign.

The product films will follow in the same, documentary style too, ensuring a consistent look across the campaign.



TALENT & PERFORMANCE

I've been lucky to work with some amazing people over my career, and over the years I've perfected the art of drawing brilliant performances out of not only adept comics, but also people who aren't natural performers. If I can get a decent performance out of a the Tanna Tribe in Vanuatu on Idiot Abroad, Im confident we will get the best out of Pep too.



PEP GUARDIOLA

We really want to maximise our time with Pep. If we rely too heavily on him for the bulk of the humour, it puts us and him under too much pressure, but if we use the cast around him, then I think we can keep his performance naturally brilliant. One thing that really works in our favour is that Pep does genuinely love his Leaf. We won't have to force that – and it might be really nice to work some genuine 'loves' that Pep has into the campaign itself. The more believable, the better.

The more tech-heavy deliveries will be a little trickier to manage, but I think we can play with these too. It might be nice to let Pep put the technology into his own words, while we play on the fact that he doesn't really know what it's called or how it works, but he still really loves what it does.





P R E S E N T E R

I think the Presenter role needs to be played by an actor who has the capacity to switch from a consummate professional, to someone who is mortified and bewildered by the incompetence of those around him. We should almost feel sorry for him.

It might also be nice to consider using the presenter in the short films, either as an on or off-screen voice asking Pep what he loves so much about the Leaf (although I could also do this, as long as I'm allowed to remain safely behind the lens at all times, as I'm aesthetically challenged). Or we could use the presenter on screen explaining in 3rd person what it is that Pep loves about the Leaf as Pep kindly demonstrates. Ideally we want to place the majority of the performance on the Presenter's shoulders, allowing Pep to react as naturally as possible. It's as much about what he doesn't say as what he does.





A man in a blue button-down shirt and grey trousers is blowing a large, translucent white bubble. He is standing on a green artificial grass surface in a studio with a black background. To his left is a professional lighting setup featuring a large softbox on a stand, with a camera rig mounted on a dolly in front of it. The word "SCRIPTS" is overlaid in large white letters on the left side of the image.

SCRIPTS

I know that lots of these scripts are still works in progress, which lends us a nice flexibility on the day. We'll want to keep the lines delivered by Pep as natural as possible, and we can be a bit more creative with the reactions of the other cast members, giving us more opportunities in the final edit. We will also need to prioritise a few of the short films, so that if time is a factor we can focus on making 3 or 4 brilliant films, rather than 8 mediocre ones.

LAUNCH

We open on a Nissan representative outside the Man City training ground. He is eagerly and enthusiastically trying to organise a large crowd of performers who are ready to welcome Pep. There are ‘pyrotechnics’, lights and dancers - ref UCL half time show.

V/O: “To honour our partnership with Man City manager, Pep Guardiola, we’re here today to gift him a new Nissan Leaf – our most intelligent car yet...”

We see found moments of our presenter getting everybody ready, rehearsing the performers etc. The whole is crew eagerly awaiting Pep’s arrival.

Presenter: “He’ll be here any minute”

We see the presenter give a thumbs up to the team behind the camera.

Putting his hand to his ear we hear him say:

Presenter: “Right! He’s around the corner, everyone in positions”

We get a shot on zoom / finding focus on Pep’s car as it pulls around the corner into the stadium. We can’t quite make out what it is.

Cut back to presenter as his face drops as he sees what car it is.

Cut back to see – it’s another Nissan Leaf. It pulls up right next to the Nissan Leaf they’re about to gift to Pep.

The presenter and crew look a combination of both surprised and unsure what the hell to do.

Pep gets out of the car. He also looks confused as he sees the other Nissan Leaf and the crowd of people in front of him.

The crowd of performers and the presenter stand in shocked silence, staring at Pep’s Leaf. They look at each other confused and bewildered.

The pyrotechnics go off unexpectedly.

The presenter quickly tries to hush everyone away and signals to the camera crew to stop filming. We hear people muttering to each other “So wait...he’s already got one?”. Pep continues to look at the two Leafs side by side, confused. The presenter is mortified.

The Presenter awkwardly approaches Pep, trying to remain enthusiastic in the face of failure.

Presenter: “Pep, to celebrate our partnership we’d like to gift you our best-selling Nissan Leaf...”

Pep interrupts

Pep: “But...I’ve already got one?”. Pointing back to his parked Leaf.

Presenters: “Yeah, yeah you do”

SUPER: Win Pep’s other Nissan Leaf. He doesn’t need it. He’s already got one.

CTA: Swipe up to enter / Click here to enter.

SCRIPTS

We want to keep the series of short spots as natural and simple as possible to maximise our time with Pep. I think we should also consider changing to have our presenter present. This will make the campaign cohesive with the launch ad but will also mean we don't have to rely exclusively on Pep to deliver lots of dialogue and enable us to shoot just with the presenter once Pep has gone.

As for Pep's dialogue, we should give him a bit of flexibility when it comes to the script. Pep and his Leaf are the heroes of this campaign, so we want to use any real 'loves' that Pep has for the car, and get him to deliver them in a concise, believable way to camera.

The most important thing with these scripts is to keep them to one setup. If the number of films is important, then we must make best use of Pep's limited time. For example, having Pep always in the driver's seat and the presenter always in the passenger seat. This approach showcases that he owns the car and always keep it featured. Obviously this approach means we need to rethink the scenarios but I think this has to happen anyway given our time constraints.

LOCATIONS

In terms of location I think it would be ideal if we could shoot this somewhere real, and somewhere that immediately links to Pep. So where better than the City training ground? This would mean losing the green screen which would help from a cost POV in the post process.

MUSIC

I want to use a specially composed track for this piece, using a composer I've worked with for a number of years. The music will be very much in the background, but punctuating the action with quirky beats that accentuate the humour. This music will add atmosphere and awkwardness to the film without being obtrusive or distracting.



W A R D R O B E

I think Wardrobe should be in keeping with our two juxtapositions: natural and out of place. Pep and the footballing extras should be naturally dressed in training gear, with nothing remarkable to distinguish this from any other ordinary day of training. The presenter should also feel a bit more 'set-up' in his dress, wearing a suit for example. It might even have Nissan branding on it.



THANK YOU

Thanks for sending this idea my way, and for leafing through all that I had to say about it. Apologies for that one. Clearly I'm not as cool as Pep. But, I am really excited to see what we can achieve together. Let's revel in the awkwardness of this failed fanfare and celebrate incompetence, embarrassment, and all the things Pep loves about his Leaf.



MINDSEYE