



One day, next door could be your next best friend



A white picket fence subjected to the extremes of flood, bushfire and cyclone provides the central conversation element to the 2011 Neighbour Day television campaign.

Written by creative director Steve Minon, directed & shot by emerging 22 year old talent Gwyn Dixon, and produced by Sara Taghaode of Traffic Film Production, the 30 second entirely pro-bono commercial subtly reinforces the importance and value of strong relationships between neighbours all year round.

The crisp yet compelling narrative is voiced by Angela Catterns with music composed by Ryan Walsh of SST Workshop.

"It's easy to overlook the importance of positive relationships between neighbours, but just recently we have seen how critical it is to know the people next door, across the street or on the next farm," said Neighbour Day founder Andrew Heslop.

"Whether it has been the floods or the cyclone or bushfire neighbours have needed each other to protect livelihoods, defend homes and save lives. Disasters unite communities immediately in common purpose but post-disaster they also are the binding element which brings residents together to plan for their collective future.

"From a brief conversation with Steve Minon about trying to reflect the overwhelmingly positive community spirit that emerged from the disasters and touched all of Australia, he wrote a great script which Gwyn Dixon has beautifully brought to life. It is a terrific commercial which underpins the positive message of Neighbour Day as Australia's annual celebration of community," Andrew said.

The biggest challenge wasn't the lack of budget for the commercial but rather ensuring it didn't betray people who lived through the disasters, said Steve Minon.

"What I wanted to achieve was the message that wherever you live in Australia, at some time you are going to need the help of a neighbour. It could be to walk the kids to school, water the garden or collect the mail.

"But rather than making the viewer feel guilty about not knowing their neighbour or lecturing them about why they should participate in Neighbour Day I wanted to deliver an inspiring message. We are all part of a community – where the strength of the individual is enhanced by our relationship with others," he said.

Filmed entirely on location at Brookfield on the outskirts of Brisbane, and shot in one day, the commercial was made possible by the resources and post-production facilities provided by Traffic Film Production.

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"Creating a strong piece of advertising around such an emotional event is very difficult. However we have worked with Steve Minon in the past and were impressed by his sensitive script for Neighbour Day, which is why we were pleased to provide him with the resources and staff he needed," said Sara Taghaode, producer at Traffic Film Production.

"Gwyn Dixon has been with us for six months and his direction of this commercial is clear evidence he has a very bright future ahead of him in the industry."

The tvc will be distributed to networks via adstream on Friday 11th March 2011 for immediate broadcast.

To date the majority of free-to-air networks in metropolitan and regional markets have agreed to placements in prime time, bonus and CSA spots. In addition Foxtel, Sky News Australia and The Movie Channels Network have committed a strong in-kind schedule.

Nine Entertainment Co CEO David Gyngell has embraced the commercial with Nine promising a heavy schedule and ABC Managing Director Mark Scott has agreed to play it as a community service announcement on ABC News 24, ABC1, ABC2 and ABC3.

Qantas CEO Alan Joyce - who has followed his predecessor Geoff Dixon by generously supporting Neighbour Day in previous years by agreeing to broadcast tvcs on every domestic flight during March - has again been asked to help.

Two versions of the commercial have been produced. Following the United States not-for-profit model the 'sponsored' version runs to 26 seconds allowing a four second tail to acknowledge placement.

Westpac, Woolworths, Nestle Australia, Lend Lease and David Jones have been approached to substitute this version within their March advertising buys to assist in the promotion of Neighbour Day with their logo placed in the final end frame against the statement –

'The placement of this commercial was made possible by [INSERT NAME AND LOGO]. Proudly promoting Neighbour Day'

Despite strong organic growth over nine years and the endorsement by political and community leaders Neighbour Day does not receive any government, corporate, philanthropic or public funding.

Founded in Melbourne in 2003 and held on the last Sunday in March every year, it is the catalyst for great relationships all year round whether you live in the city or the bush, in a house, an apartment or on a farm.

There are five principal aims –

1. Strengthen communities and build better relationships with the people who live around us.
2. Create safer, healthier and more vibrant suburbs and towns.
3. Promote tolerance, respect and understanding.
4. Break down community barriers.
5. Protect the elderly, the vulnerable and the disadvantaged.

View the 2011 Neighbour Day television commercial <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19H1OQrRu5k>

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