



Creative Mammals Elevates Freeform's 'Family Guy Fridays'

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Even if you've never seen an episode of Family Guy, chances are you're familiar with the Griffin family: fat dad Peter, tolerant wife Lois, and their kids, meek Meg, underachieving Chris and evil baby Stewie. And of course there's Brian, their swinging and sophisticated family dog voiced, like so many of the characters, by series creator Seth MacFarlane.

The show has been airing-first on Fox, then on Adult Swim, then on both Fox and Adult Swim, and now on many platforms-since 1999. Like its predecessor The Simpsons, it's something of a national institution.

That's why when Freeform wanted to promote its Friday night block, Family Guy Fridays, it wanted a fresh approach that wasn't clips-based and that felt true to its young and bold brand. To accomplish that, the network turned to Atlanta-based animation and motions-graphics specialist, Creative Mammals.

"Family Guy is such a known entity now. [The show] is kind of at a place where if you just hear Peter's voice or Quagmire's 'Giggity,' you automatically recognize it," said Robert Burroughs, Creative Mammals' executive creative director. "So we wanted to push and pull the characters a little bit. We thought about what we could do to give these characters new life-something more than

just relying on an edit."

The timeline on the project was short from conception to completion, with the network deciding in late 2019 that it wanted to introduce the programming block in early 2020. The holidays are always a busy time for Freeform, with its annual "25 Days of Christmas" programming event, so the network needed help when it came to marketing the new block.

"Creative Mammals did a great job of thinking outside of the box with spots that were unique and unexpected," said Alison Braman, director of on-air branding and design at Freeform. "This IP can be found on a lot of other platforms and networks, so we wanted to develop something beyond just a clip-based promo. They came in with some great, visually intriguing ways of representing the show that we loved."

Creative Mammals had been tasked with creating one promo, but after the agency went through the concepting phase, it ended up with four fleshed-out ideas. The network loved all four and decided to take them all to promote the block throughout the year.

"They were very clever and bold and they had a sense of humor about them," said Braman. "It just gave them a bit more personality. And their unexpected nature is [a tone] we always strive for. We want to do something a little bit different to catch people's attention."

The four spots run back to back in the reel above, but each one comes with its own clever concept.

In "Rabbit Hole," all of the main characters fall through each other's eyes until they end up with a flat version of Stewie and then go back again:

"'Rabbit Hole' was the first one we did," said Burroughs. "We worked with some artists and they were thinking, 'what if we traveled from one character to another through their eyes.' We thought it would be cool to connect them because of the look of their eyes. Their eyes are all kind of the same and it anchors them."

In "Cells and DNA," the characters divide into cells and combine back into each other:

"Repetition" has fun with trippy character-based patterns:

And in "Exception," one of these things is not like the other:

"The way that they repeated and patterned out the icons that represent each character-Chris as his hat, Brian as a martini glass, Lois as a piano-that was really brilliant. I really thought that concept was genius," said Braman.

Creative Mammals also worked with another Atlanta-based agency, Soundbyte, on the audio. The team used tiny voice clips to accompany the video, but cut in very precise ways that helped the spots to feel separate and unique from the show.

Once all of the spots were complete, Creative Mammals bundled it all into a toolkit that it provided to Freeform if they wanted to tinker with any of the spots or make more. So far, Freeform hasn't needed to change a thing.

Said Braman: "The promos have done the heavy lifting for us."

CREDITS

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