



Brand/Rebrand: FYI Network

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Modern life is a series of small, creative decisions we make every day, ranging from what clothes to wear to what food to cook to how we decorate our living spaces.

A+E Networks' new FYI channel taps into this daily flow of personal expression with programming ranging from the buzzy hit "Married at First Sight" to the forward-thinking design show "Tiny House Nation." It's a lineup of intriguingly specific viewing experiences that, like life experiences, can't easily be corralled into a unified whole. Which meant that, leading up to FYI's July launch, the tough part in creating a brand that tied those disparate pieces together was "creating a visual identity that could speak to all the different areas of lifestyle that FYI will cover but also feel [cohesive]," said Guy Slattery, EVP of marketing for A+E Networks.

Aiming to create an identity that, continued Slattery, "is extremely versatile but all comes from the same place," A+E Networks went to entertainment branding agency loyalkaspar, which had previously created vivid, character-driven launch campaigns for Seasons 1 and 2 of A&E's "Bates Motel." With creative director Daniel D'Arnellmann at the helm, loyalkaspar was able to whittle a creative strategy for FYI's identity down to three guiding principles: Curation, Authenticity and Monochromatic, each of which spoke to different facets of the channel's

personality, programming and viewership.

Of the three principles, Monochromatic is perhaps most immediately apparent in the elements that ensued, particularly in a series of striking sets loyalkaspar produced that used bold, solid colors such as gold, red and green to evoke the essence of representative FYI shows such as "B.O.R.N. to Style," "Epic Meal Empire" and "The Feed." Appearing in on-air and off-air marketing materials, including a fab print campaign from & Company, the use of monochrome palettes in designing each show's motif "became a huge tool for us," said DÃ¶rnemann, "because it allowed for us to more clearly differentiate shows and environments and yet at the same time create a brand that is actually more cohesiveâ€¦ more ownable, more recognizable.

The sets also manifested another guiding principle of the new brand, Curation, in that they both curated 19 of FYI's top talent across the board and also exhibited exquisitely detailed, carefully assembled compositions of objects, clothing and furniture.

"We wanted to curate different objects together, different facets of a show or life or a genre and build their own stories out of them," said DÃ¶rnemann. It's an approach that not only reflects FYI's visual identity and programming scope, but the makeup of a typical viewer. "There are so many facets to people that make us who we are," he added. "Even more so today, when the digital environment allows [us] to be different things [and have] different experiences."

The idea that our own lives have become curated infused FYI from the earliest stages of its development, where a term Slattery called "proudly-hyphenated" became a source of inspiration.

"Viewers don't live their life in silos," he said, "they have a broad range of interests across the lifestyle category. FYI is a network that can appeal to a broad range of interests, not just the niches of food, travel or design."

Nowadays, few people are "just," say, a writer, but a writer-director, or "just" a chef but a chef-blogger-gardener. And these new, more layered personal identities require more creativity to live out. FYI, said Slattery, "is a brand that is very much about inspiring personal creativityâ€¦ which is why so many of the elements feel handmade and spontaneous."

In an era saturated in computer graphics, loyalkaspar's FYI elements display the endearing cracks and dings of the physical world at every level, from a series of on-air logos crafted from different real-world materials to not one, not two, but FOUR unique handwritten type styles created by actual, human calligraphers. Guiding principle No. 3, Authenticity, gets its due in these hand-crafted

elements and then some.

"We wanted things to feel real rather than computer-generated," said DÃ¶rnemann. "There's something beautiful about handwriting that gives you another layer of enabling discovery of a personality. In our world today we are all known by the same quality, which is Helvetica type in emailsâ€ In that sense the directive to the calligraphy person was to not use this very pristine calligraphy that you would want on your wedding invitationâ€ We wanted a variety of personalities reflected there. A little bit louder, a little bit bolder, a little but more feminine, a little more delicate."

In the end, working on a network brand so immersed in inspiration and creativity was a welcome breath of fresh air for loyalkaspar, who, in "getting creative ourselves, [got to] step away from the computer and play around," said DÃ¶rnemann. "I think that really positively impacted not only the team working on [FYI] but the people around us because [it was] so nice to see things being made in the corners."

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