

Andrea Frazer Paventi

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"If you want relaxation, take a nap. For everything else, there's Tonga." This isn't an exact quote, but anyone that's seen the new Sketchers commercial spot driving through the such airways as MTV and Fox, created by the production house Tonga, can't miss the message: hip, edgy, in your face footwear. The bottom line: if you haven't seen Sketchers new ad, you haven't been watching tv.

Sketchers can best be defined as urban footwear: funky boots, rugged loafers and eye-catching tennis shoes. Given the nature of Sketchers unique look, it was important to Sketcher's client, Jeff Greenberg, that these non-traditional shoes not be portrayed in a traditional light. He knew how he wanted the commercial to look, but he didn't know how to do it. Enter Tonga.

Tonga, an independent production company focusing in live action segments, is a spin off of FUEL, a design and graphic house. Greenberg was aware of Tonga's/FUEL's reputation for blending both style and substance, and he encouraged Tonga's director, Seth Epstein, to bring both elements to the project. Although Greenberg prompted Epstein to bring Tonga/FUEL's culture to the work, there was one creative restriction. "Sketchers wanted to make sure we showed the difference between their night and day shoes," says Epstein. True to his reputation for original concepts and art direction, Epstein devised a visual solution. He shot two different scenes for the commercial: one of a thrashing rave party taking place on a C-123 Air Transport plane, the other of slow motion trampoline jumping. He then intercut the fast, hard hitting shots of the rave mixer with slow, languid shots of youths tumbling in mid air. By blending two completely different scenes, Epstein succeeded in two fronts: He produced a stimulating commercial for viewers to watch, as well as a unique venue for Sketchers to display the differences between their night and day shoes.

It's Tonga's start to finish approach to production that sets them apart. It's also why Fuel felt the need to create Tonga. "We were doing so much live action at FUEL, opening Tonga seemed the natural thing to do," says Epstein. "Tonga exists as a traditional production company because it has to."

Clients, such as Greenberg, couldn't be happier. Under the Tonga name, Epstein and director Carl Olsen have recently completed projects for such agencies as Goldberg Moser O'Neill, Ogilvy and Mather, Chicago and LA, Messner, Vetere, Berger, McNamee and Schmetterer, and Valentine Radford.

Epstein believes clients today want more than a production company. They want a creative team packaged with new thinking, new technology and stronger, more innovated relationships. Working together or separate, Tonga and FUEL are ready to deliver.