

Nu-Wool Order

By **Brian Hoekstra** : Media Services Director : Rivertown Media & Communications : Grand Rapids, Michigan

November 25, 2002

Terry Rilett – oh-so-optimistic owner of our company – tells me: “We need to do something fun for Nu-Wool’s National Sales Conference in January.”

Translation: I need to create a unique and interesting presentation that will hold the attention of 200+ contractors, builders, insulation installers and sales people. It must also state clearly Nu-Wool’s need for a national branding campaign.

Nu-Wool Insulation is headquartered in Jenison, Michigan, and is one of the nation’s fastest growing cellulose insulation companies. With our help, they’re looking to launch their first large-scale television ad campaign in February 2003. Since our company will be arranging and supervising the commercial shoots (two spots shot on film by C2 Media in Grandville) and setting up the cable advertising schedule, we will also be responsible for presenting the campaign in a fun and interesting manner at Nu-Wool’s National Sales Conference in Florida in January.



[buddy, er, brian hoekstra]

The specifics are simple: Introduce the new television commercials by creating a 5- to 7-minute presentation that’s low budget, light-hearted and fun, yet informative. But insulation? Light-hearted and fun?

December 2

A week has passed ... and nothing. When I think about the project, I focus on the specs – “low budget” and “light-hearted.” I also think about the branding campaign’s main focus, which is “clarity.”

Nu-Wool’s new slogan will be, “It’s not wool, it’s Nu-Wool,” distinguishing their product from one that might make sweaters, mittens and cozy winter hats, and clearing up the rumor that Nu-Wool is insulation made from wool. IT’S NOT.

After adding these factors to the cake bowl, I think about my mom. In a casual conversation about Nu-Wool some weeks before, my mom had asked: “Does Nu-Wool put wool in the walls?” No mom, they don’t. Exactly the kind of perception we are trying to eliminate.

Bringing together everything I learned in film school projects (low budget = humorous) and the fact that the average Joe/Jane on the street may react like my mom, I decide it might be a good idea to create a documentary. Sort of. I pitch this to the boss and, miraculously, Terry is interested. She then challenges me to write a script.

That night, at a local coffee shop, after numerous sketches and word

maps, a rough outline is created. It’s part script, part improv. Inspired partly by Microsoft’s boardroom commercials and partly by Conan O’Brien, it aims for fast, witty and raw.

The first scene will be in Nu-Wool’s boardroom and will include Mark Henderson, Nu-Wool Company, Inc.’s owner, in a meeting with his national sales team. A random Nu-Wool

“...I will forever be nicknamed, The Guy in the Blue Jumpsuit.”

employee overhears the meeting and is inspired to find out what the world knows about Nu-Wool Insulation.

December 3

Terry is pleased with the effort and is ready to present the idea to Mark Henderson in a polished script later this week.

December 9

E-mail from Terry: “Mark loved the script...he was laughing out loud!!!”

From here, I decide to play the role of the aforementioned “random Nu-Wool employee.” Or, as I will forever be nicknamed thanks to this project, The Guy in the Blue Jumpsuit. I will be the star



[making the mockumentary]



of the mockumentary, interviewing people on the streets of Grand Rapids. Why not? It's my vision. I'm young, shameless and wear Buddy Holly glasses! People respond to that, right?

December 18

I recruit my roommate, Keith Golinski, and his business partner, Chris Randall, to shoot the mockumentary through their company, Fulvew Productions. We shoot the footage on handheld DV-Cam. It's easy to manipulate and glorifies all things low budget. This is going to be just one level above a college film project.

Our team arrives at Nu-Wool to film the boardroom scenes. There it's discovered that Terry hasn't warned any of the Nu-Wool sales people that we'll be filming them for this project. They all think they're in for a typical meeting.. To their surprise, we stick cameras in their faces using fisheye lenses, and

give them lines to recite. What comes out of this shoot is pure amateur acting greatness. There's even a celebratory scene inspired by *Eight is Enough!*

I can tell everyone is confused but cooperative and intrigued. It's the most glamour that these insulation professionals have ever enjoyed on the job.

December 27

This is the best day I have had as an employee of Rivertown Media! We shoot the street interviews today. In my blue polyester Nu-Wool jumpsuit, wielding a giant Nu-Wool sign, I randomly select people on the streets of Grand Rapids to interview. One of our first interviews is scrapped right away because our interviewee had just had an argument with our owner's son at the local college earlier that morning. She wasn't exactly welcoming the idea of being filmed.

Despite the early setback, we were definitely successful in achieving vari-

ety among our subjects, interviewing everyone from parking attendants to bridge-maintenance men and even a lady at the Urban Mill Café who thought we were anti-war protesters!

Running around the city in a Nu-Wool jumpsuit with a microphone...it's amazing what one can be paid to do in the creative industry.

January 3, 2003

It's the final day of editing at Fulvew Productions. We add some "X" graphics and buzzer sounds inspired by Family Feud to one of our subjects who couldn't form a thought. Karen Rilett (Terry's daughter and our graphic designer) suggests we add the Nu-Wool logo and a tooth sparkle (à la Orbitz Gum commercials) to the camera-loving crane operator we interviewed. Credits and outtakes are added to the end, and there's nothing to do now but wait and see if we're successful in amusing a



couple hundred insulation contractors next week.

January 14

Terry calls from the conference in Florida to let me know that the presentation is a success – a great introduction to the branding info that followed. According to her, everyone laughed, so much that they might not have gotten all the details. It was a great way to loosen everyone up, and proved to be a prime example of what we were up against as far as spreading Nu-Wool awareness.

Post Conference

Since the conference, both Mark and Terry admit they weren't sure how the short film would be received, since it was a direction not taken before. Also since the conference, we've added the new television spots to the mockumentary and distributed the package to the interested parties.

This project proved to be quite an eye-opening and informative piece for the company, despite being a bit outlandish and goofy. Nu-Wool's branding campaign is off to a great start, and as of late, the foremen in Nu-Wool's insulation factory seem to wear their blue jumpsuits with that certain *je ne sais quoi*.

Brian Hoekstra is busy scheduling a national rap/comedy tour based on his blue jumpsuit character.

Credits

Client: Nu Wool Insulation Company, Inc. (Jenison, MI)
Agency: Rivertown Media & Communications (Grand Rapids, MI)
Executive Creative Director: Brian Hoekstra
Production Studio: Fulvew Productions (Grand Rapids, MI)
Editor: Chris Randall (Fulvew)
Director: Keith Golinski (Fulvew)

From getting the assignment to getting it done, Diary of a Concept takes a step-by-step look at the creative process. If you would like to share your Diary, email ccoona@bigideaweb.com.