Walt Disney World News

Disney Memories Caught on Home Video Drive First

In Colorado, a dad and his kids accompanied grandma and grandpa to the airport to see them off on a trip. Or so the children thought. In fact, it was the kids who were leaving – for a surprise vacation to Disneyland Resort. And the excitement that followed was captured in a home video.

Moments like these of real emotion – memories in the making – are becoming the platform for communications as Disney Parks invites guests to “Let the Memories Begin.”

The new ‘Memories’ theme focuses on parents’ desire to have lasting experiences with their children. “Making memories is the masterpiece of parenthood,” said Leslie Ferraro, executive vice president of Global Marketing for Disney Destinations.

To create the first round of TV commercials and other forms of marketing, the Disney Parks creative team scoured the Internet for publicly posted videos and photos.

They were enraptured by what they saw: People riding Disney attractions and hugging characters … a family around a dinner table, with the children opening a pizza box to discover a message that they were “going to Disney World” … the airport surprise … and more.

“And the kids, naturally, enthusiastically were going wild,” said Marty Muller, senior vice president, Global Creative, Disney Destinations. “We discovered parents finding unique and creative ways to tell their kids. We found all this video content filled with love, passion, reality, authenticity, genuine emotion around going to the parks.”

The consensus was unanimous. Disney’s tradition of beautiful film in its TV ads would give way to beautiful, authentic moments.

“We decided we were going to make our commercials a forum for these people to tell their stories,” explained Ferraro. “We were looking for authentic emotion around our brand and we found it here. The emotions of these people are nothing we could have shot.”

The initial series of four spots includes snippets from about 30 user-generated videos … from literally thousands of videos that were reviewed by the Disney creative team. Common to the user-generated content is a lack of fancy equipment – no gaffers or sound techs or mega-expensive recording equipment here.

“These real voices have impact and credibility,” Ferraro said. “They are making real-time moments that burn in your memory.”

As Disney envisions subsequent communications relating to “Let the Memories Begin,” it is creating a “memories website” (www.DisneyParks.com/Memories) where consumers can upload their Disney memories and share them with others. Disney Parks is planning on making user-generated content part of future TV commercial spots, print advertisements, newsletter articles and vacation planning video segments.

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