

TalkTalk

Intro

We've all been there. Halfway through a meeting, or worse a pitch, on Zoom, Google Meet, or Teams when the lag suddenly hits, voices begin to echo, and someone freezes mid-way through a sentence in the most unflattering pose possible.

Is it me? Is it them? Is it both of us?

Having worked in the UK a lot over the years and experienced your notoriously spotty internet first-hand, I know that these are questions a lot of Brits ask themselves. Except for Talk Talk customers because their broadband is ridiculously good.

As are these scripts.

Like Joe Wilkinson, they don't try to be funny. They just are. And I've got no doubt that they're going to be the kind of spots that make you laugh no matter how many times you watch them. That's a dream scenario for me to be stepping into, so I just want to start by saying thanks!

Tone and Approach

I'm instinctively drawn to slice-of-life comedy that hones in on the funny idiosyncrasies of characters and the unexpected ways they interact with the world around them, rather than a series of telegraphed jokes, setups, and punchlines the audience can see from a mile away.

Joe is really good in those quiet, still moments. So instead of rushing him through the lines or getting him to try and do too much, let's embrace his off-beat, eccentric humor and the material by sitting in those awkward beats and looks with a 'less is more' approach.

We'll drop the audience into what feels like a typically untypical day in the life of Joe. Then we'll just sit back and watch him have fun with the tech as the film gets funnier and funnier in increasingly unexpected and ridiculous ways.

Instead of getting up to make a cup of tea or skipping the spot just a few seconds in so they can get to the YouTube video they originally searched for, people will stick around just to see what happens next. By the end of the film, people will want to watch it again as it's

not just a one-off joke that once you've seen and got that's it, but because Joe's performance and the set design will keep on revealing new layers of comedy with every watch.

Cinematography

This tonal approach will inform our cinematography, so we're not getting a joke from the first frame, but as these scenes gradually unfold and reveal themselves like they would in a film rather than a commercial.

We'll do this with an intimate, observational style that works with Joe's performance rather than a dynamic, energetic camera that undermines those still, awkward moments. Letting shots run and run, so we can sit in that awkwardness and give Joe the freedom to experiment.

But we'll also capture each scene from a range of different angles, giving us plenty of footage so we can pick the best performances, hone the timing of a line or delivery of a reaction, and build the funniest spot in the edit.

We also want cinematic images that resemble a high-end movie, so let's avoid anything overly stylized and predictable that has been saturated with a ton of color contrast and has an unnatural, flatly-lit 'comedy look'.

Joe

I've worked with my fair share of celebrities and understand the need to earn Joe's trust and make him comfortable, so we can get the best out of him and make sure he doesn't come off as merely a spokesman or comic prop who turned up on the day.

When you're working with someone of Joe's caliber, both the production process and the end product need to be worthy of his time and effort. This way he'll recognize the hard work we've put into meeting him halfway with plenty of ALTs and ideas and feel obliged to give it his all as well.

I'm always available to meet, exchange emails, and just generally work with the talent in the lead-up to the shoot, but a lot of this will come down to the vibe on set. Whether Joe feels as though he is in good hands and being listened to. So while the visuals, the production, and everything else are important, I would say Joe's comfort level with the comedy and the entire production are top of the list.

For the finished film to be its best, we want everything to feel authentic and in the moment - even though what's happening is completely insane and will surprise the hell out of

everyone. He's so talented that once he sees he can trust the process and we're making something really cool, we'll get something incredible from him. I'm sure of it.

'Four Ridiculous Scenarios' TVC Script :30

Joe Wilkinson is lounging on the sofa. As he speaks to camera, a drone effortlessly flies into shot and delivers a Scotch egg into his hand.

JOE: My TalkTalk Full Fibre can do all sorts. Like get a drone to deliver me a Scotch egg.

Cut to the kitchen, where Joe stands looking at his phone. He opens the camera app and we see the contents of his dishwasher. Amidst the commemorative royal coronation plates (although I wonder if he'd be more of a mix-and-match rather than matching kind of guy) are a series of unexpected items.

ALTS. A rubber duck, a pair of mismatched socks, a pair of shoes, a garden gnome, a pair of glasses/sunglasses, a small umbrella, and a framed photo.

JOE: ...livestream the inside of my dishwasher.

Joe admires himself in the mirror – 'If I should get a mullet' appears on the smart mirror as he says it.

JOE: ...and ask my smart mirror if I should get a mullet.

The smart mirror then gives him a mullet and a handlebar mustache.

JOE: Should I get a mullet?

'No' appears on the smart mirror. He laughs to himself.

Cut to Joe lounging on the sofa with a VR headset on his forehead as he uses a tablet.

JOE: Obviously, I use it for firing off some emails.

Cut to a close-up of the tablet screen to land the 'UK's most reliable broadband technology' message.

JOE: But with the UK's most reliable broadband technology,

Then to a shot of him pulling down the VR headset over his eyes as we cut to...

The POV from inside the VR. It reveals a virtual Henry VIII sitting on the armchair opposite tucking into a bargain bucket chicken leg.

ALTS. A pizza. A burger that he struggles to get his mouth around. A hot dog that he holds like a jousting stick. A turkey leg resembling a royal scepter.

JOE: ...why not share a virtual takeaway with Henry VIII?

We end with Henry VIII being swapped out for the logo lockup still within the VR framing.

Switch to TalkTalk Full Fibre. Ridiculously reliable broadband.

‘VR Headset’ TVC Script :20

Joe Wilkinson is wearing a VR headset as he sits on the sofa speaking to camera. We cut to...

JOE: With the UK’s most reliable broadband technology...

His POV from inside the VR. It reveals a virtual Henry VIII sitting on the armchair opposite tucking into a bargain bucket chicken leg.

ALTS. A pizza. A burger that he struggles to get his mouth around. A hot dog that he holds like a jousting stick. A turkey leg resembling a royal sceptre. Cut to...

JOE: ...why not share a virtual takeaway with Henry VIII?

...Joe lounging on the sofa once more, with the VR headset resting on his forehead as he takes a selfie on his phone.

JOE: Or send a few emails.

The logo lockup and TalkTalk logo overlay the end frame.

JOE: TalkTalk Full Fibre. Ridiculously reliable broadband.

‘Mobile’ TVC Script :20

Joe Wilkinson is holding his mobile phone as he sits on the sofa speaking to camera.

JOE: With the UK’s most reliable broadband technology...

Cut to the screen of his phone - in the camera app. We see the contents of his dishwasher. Amidst the commemorative royal coronation plates (although I wonder if he'd be more of a mix-and-match rather than matching kind of guy) are a series of unexpected items.

ALTS. A rubber duck. A pair of mismatched socks. A pair of shoes. A garden gnome. A pair of glasses/sunglasses. A small umbrella. A framed photo.

JOE: ...you could live stream the inside of your dishwasher.

Cut to Joe lounging on the sofa watching a tablet.

JOE: Or the footie.

The logo lockup and TalkTalk logo overlay the end frame.

JOE: TalkTalk Full Fibre. Ridiculously reliable broadband.

‘Drone’ TVC Script :20

Joe Wilkinson sits on his sofa, speaking to camera.

JOE: With the UK’s most reliable broadband technology...

As Joe speaks to camera, a drone effortlessly flies into shot and delivers a Scotch egg into his hand. Cut to...

JOE: ...your butler drone will work no problem.

...Joe lounging on the sofa using a laptop.

JOE: Or your video call.

Logo lockup and TalkTalk logo to overlay as endframe.

JOE: TalkTalk Full Fibre. Ridiculously reliable broadband.

Styling, Location, and Art Direction

This is the world of Joe - or at least what we envision his world is when we see him on TV.

So let's channel Joe's relatable yet ridiculous aura and have fun with his styling, the locations, and their art direction, with a vintage style that nods to Wes Anderson and is present in all of our scenes.

Joe has branched out beyond the iconic brown suit we all know and love him for, but I think it's fun to let that inform his styling. Perhaps we see him on the couch in a brown dressing gown eating a Scott egg because...well, who doesn't want to see that?

And while I love the smart mirror scene, I wonder if we should dial back the overly stylised moustache and trust that the mullet (or maybe even a man bun) will be enough to get the laugh.

Let's also find a really unique kitchen with a funky, dated interior - given that we won't be able to change too much - and perhaps line the counter with esoteric cookbooks.

Then treat the living room as more of a conventional set that we can dress as we please. This should have an eccentric, vintage look, with brown wallpaper and perhaps a framed photo of his pet goldfish, a rug with a random design, or an analog landline phone. Things that don't necessarily draw your attention but accentuate Joe's personality and contrast with the broadband-connected devices.

Thanks

Well, I've had a lot of fun learning what a Scotch egg is (can't say I'm convinced), picturing the contents of Joe's dishwasher, and standing in front of my non-smart mirror imagining different hairstyles while my fiancée's voice says no in my head.

As you can probably tell, I'm ridiculously excited to get started and look forward to working with you to bring these brilliant scripts to life.

In the meantime, please consider these thoughts as the beginning of a creative conversation. From our call, I got the sense that you're like me – no ego, best idea wins. So all we need to do is trust in the material and Joe to craft a campaign that keeps our audience laughing and ensures TalkTalk lingers in their heads long after it has ended.