



INTRO/APPROACH

As a car lover, a sports fan, and a director, I couldn't be more excited by the prospect of working with a group of Olympians and Paralympians. Athletes who have been supported by Toyota throughout their careers and embody the 'Start Your Impossible' message at the heart of this campaign.

Taking inspiration from the 5 Olympic Rings, we'll tell 5 inspirational stories from 5 different continents. Contrasting the global with the local as we explore a range of interesting and previously unseen cities, towns, communities, cultures, and sports that are specific to each athlete.

By capturing the authentic voices and experiences of our athletes over these 5 short documentary films, we'll be able to elevate their profile, engage a range of young audiences, and reflect the vision, values, and actions of the Olympics to create a better world.

And show Toyota as a creative, adventurous, mobility-friendly company that believes in the human body and spirit.

TONE

We won't focus too much on the drama and the barriers that these athletes have had to overcome. Instead, their struggles and setbacks will be discussed with a lightness and positivity that puts a smile on the face of our audience, inspiring future generations who are new to the Olympics.

VISUAL APPROACH

These documentaries will strike a balance between something that looks highly cinematic but feels verité, immersing our audience in the world and stories of our characters like a movie. Avoiding anything fictional or overly constructed, they'll look and feel spontaneous but with an elevated realism and crafted polish.

We'll take a mixed media approach that captures their present and visualises their past, combining footage we shoot with archive footage of our athletes training, performing, talking to the media, engaging with their fans, or even just playing as children.

Then we'll find interesting, innovative ways to display this archive footage, such as showing it on a mobile phone, through a social media interface, or projecting it onto the wall of a building while having our character watch it.

For the master interview, we'll shoot against a dynamic backdrop that is relevant to our athletes, such as a gym for a weightlifter or a bowl for a skater. This will give us the option of cutting to this interview at various points throughout the edit or taking snippets of the athlete's dialogue and using it as a voiceover for other moments, adding another audiovisual layer to the film.

CINEMATOGRAPHY

We'll elevate the concept of 'mobility' with an authentic, vérité style.

This will include long Steadicam shots that capture observational moments of our athletes as they go about their daily routines. Interacting with friends, family, their local community, fans, their trainer. We'll also see them in their natural environments, such as their home, their real training facility (or one that has been intentionally designed), and the Toyota vehicle itself.

Long takes have always been used in cinema and artistic documentaries to capture life and enhance realism, bringing us closer to the characters. In these films, the camera will smoothly track our protagonists, capturing their life in a way that feels authentic.

We'll go in tighter with a handheld camera for those emotional close-ups that capture our protagonists' highs and lows and moments of intensity during their sporting performance - making it easier for our audience to empathise with them.

Wide aerial drone shots will allow us to track the journeys of the characters and the vehicles on a grander, more epic scale, and showcase the variety of landscapes and terrain we pass through.

Meanwhile, shots from the backseat or custom rigs inside and outside the vehicle will offer up unique, unexpected angles, highlighting the accessibility of the vehicles.

We need to shoot a lot of footage in a short space of time, so I plan to always have two cameras in play - one Steadicam and one handheld. For the cameras and lenses, I'll use a cinematic setup of the highest standard, combining the Arri Alexa LF or Alexa 65 with

Panavision anamorphic lenses. These large format frames will make for an immersive, unforgettable movie-like experience with a variety of depth, texture, and colour.

DOP

This isn't your typical vehicle commercial that seeks to show its features from a range of angles. These films are intended to highlight the mobility of the Toyota vehicle and the 'Start your Impossible' concept in a subtle, cinematic way. For that reason, we need a talented cinematographer with experience in cinema and documentary, and a good knowledge of vehicles.

TOYOTA

Although the Toyota brand and its message will determine how we create and shape the narrative, the vehicles won't be a ubiquitous part of the films.

However, when they do appear, we'll capture their presence and beauty by integrating the vehicle into the background or foreground in a way that fit subtle but noticeable.

Instead of overly composed, quick-cutting close-ups that highlight the features of the vehicle, we want unforced shots that show the ease with which a disabled athlete can enter or exit the Toyota.

Rigs attached to the windscreen or bonnet that show our athletes looking outside. Wide and smooth aerial drones that capture the athlete and the vehicle moving from one scene to another. Maybe even using a side mirror to reflect the actions of our athletes as their story unfolds.

DRIVING WITH HUMANITY

One way to convey the humanity at the core of the Toyota brand is by showing the accessibility and comfort of the vehicle, elevating the concept of mobility.

Another is to show how the vehicle improves the lives of our athletes on a practical level, allowing them to travel across large distances, challenging terrains, in difficult weather conditions, or simply transport their equipment with a trailer or the rails on the roof of the vehicle.

And a third is to show just how exciting and pleasurable the vehicle is to drive, creating an emotional connection between our athlete, the vehicle, and the audience.

CHARACTERS

There are many factors to consider when choosing our final list of athletes, including sport, continent, gender, and ability. Included below are some suggestions for a mix of athletes that have overcome challenges, elevate the idea of 'mobility', and show that greatness can come from anywhere.

Asia

Toh Wei Soong - a 24-year-old Singaporean who has overcome transverse myelitis to become a paralympic swimmer and champion, an ambassador for the Singapore Disability Council, and editor-in-chief of an international multimedia journal while studying at the same time.

Ni Nengah Widiasih - a 30-year-old Indonesian Paralympic powerlifter who lost her legs to polio as a child but has since gone on to compete in wheelchair racing and shot put before focusing on powerlifting. Like Too Wei Soong, she is a vocal supporter of people with disabilities in Indonesia.

North + South America

Alexa Moreno - a 28-year-old Mexican gymnast who medalled at the World Championship and was bullied on social media for her unconventional body shape.

Philip Kim (or Phil Wizard as he is known on social media) - a charismatic 26-year-old Korean breakdancer who emigrated to Canada and ignored his parents' wishes that he pursue a more traditional career and is now a medal favourite for the Olympics.

Europe

Carlota Dudek - another audacious 21-year-old breakdancer from France with mixed Cuban and Polish heritage who, like Phillip, is sponsored by Red Bull.

Vincent Milou - this 26-year-old Frenchman is a skateboarder from Biarritz who left his hometown at a young age and moved to the urban sprawl of Paris in search of a skateboard scene that would allow him to pursue his dream of going pro.

Africa

Tyrone Pillay - now in his 40s, this South African Paralympic shot putter took up the sport at 29 - seven years after giving up due to the death of his father. Won bronze in Rio and has his sights set on another medal in Paris.

Blitzboks 7s Team - a South African rugby 7s team made up of youngsters who have a formidable record of four World Sevens series titles and a Commonwealth championship, making them favourites going into Paris.

Oceania

David Liti - a 27-year-old former rugby player now powerlifter. Originally from Tonga, he lives in New Zealand and is keen to bring more Polynesians into professional sports. He weighed in as the heaviest athlete at the most recent Commonwealth Games.

Riley Batt - a 34-year-old wheelchair rugby player from Australia. Two-time Gold Medallist at Olympics, captain of the Australian team, and one of the greatest players ever.

SERIES TITLE

I think 'Unstoppable Drive' and 'Driven by Motion' feel the most apt for this series. 'Driven' highlights the automotive aspect of the Toyota brand, as well as the passion and determination of our athletes, while 'Motion' acknowledges the importance of mobility in the campaign. I'm also happy to explore other options as we move into the second stage of the project.

SERIES LOGLINE

An uplifting series of observational yet cinematic, character-driven documentaries that celebrate the inspiring stories of five unique Olympic and Paralympic athletes from five different continents.

SERIES OVERVIEW

What separates this campaign of cinematic, verite documentary films from your typical previous Olympics Channel or Toyota-branded content is our unique mixed-media visual approach. Combining grounded realism - in the form of long, immersive takes - and artistic flair to create a look of crafted spontaneity.

Like the Olympics, the strength of these films will be their rich diversity. This will be evident in the athletes we choose, the sports they play, and the continents they come from, showing the impact of the global Toyota brand through the story of localised, relatable athletes.

We'll hook curious viewers in by getting them to empathise with our characters early on, showing them what our athletes want, what motivates them, and the setbacks they have encountered along the way.

Where other films might overdramatise these moments, we'll cut against the grain and place them in the context of our athlete's wider life and career. Including moments of levity to maintain a positive, empowering tone that engages the audience and communicates Toyota's belief in mobility, healthy living, and the power of the human spirit.

SERIES OUTRO

To create a sense of continuity between our five different films, I would suggest including a similar visual outro at the end of each. This could involve our Toyota vehicle approaching a busy intersection and crossing paths with another Toyota vehicle that we turn our attention to and whose journey we then follow.

We could also have a banner appear at the bottom of the screen that allows the audience to skip the outro and go straight into the next episode.

TOH WEI SOONG "MAKING WAVES" SCRIPT

Act One: "A Ripple of Passion"

We open on a wide aerial drone shot of Sentosa Island as the glistening turquoise sea meets the golden sands.

INTRO CARD: START YOUR IMPOSSIBLE - TOYOTA

The crash of waves and sounds of nature bring the frame to life.

In a long take, we descend downward towards a Toyota vehicle, tracking it as it drives along a beachside road.

We turn away from the vehicle toward the sea to find our hero, Toh Wei Soong, doing what he does best: swimming.

We cut between close-up shots of him propelling himself through the water with his big, strong arms. Then to a peaceful, dreamy, and serene underwater shot looking up at him as he stops, rolls onto his back, and spreads out his arms, floating peacefully on the surface of the water. He closes his eyes and we cut to...

Wei Soong (VO): It's been my dream to become a world champion ever since I can remember.

...Wei Soong's childhood home and explore the house in a long, single Steadicam movement, passing along the corridor and catching glimpses of the kitchen, living room, and dining room, before entering his bedroom.

We hear sounds and voices of his past intermingled together.

The camera circles the bedroom and we notice posters of famous swimmers lining the walls. A stack of comics sits on the desk as we settle our focus on a small television with DVDs on the top that shows home video footage of Wei Soong as a baby being bathed by his mother.

Wei Soong (VO): I was diagnosed with transverse myelitis at the age of two. It's an incurable condition that causes inflammation in the spinal cord, affecting my lower nervous system and restricting the use of my legs.

We cut from home video footage of a cute two-year-old Wei Soong taking his first dip in the swimming pool with his loving mum at his side to him gradually learning to swim unaided.

With an alternate edit, we intercut between this archive footage and a close-up shot of Wei Soong with his eyes closed as he floats on the surface of the sea.

Wei Soong (VO): I couldn't run and play like I used to and swimming was a form of physiotherapy, but it gradually became a hobby and then a passion. I enjoy the freedom of being underwater. Being able to move about without obstacles is why I love swimming.

Now we cut between footage and photographs of a skinny, teenage Wei Soong competing as a para-swimmer at a variety of swimming meets, such as the Special Event at the annual SSSC Championships.

Wei Soong (to camera): It wasn't until I joined the Aquatic Performance Swim Club (ACS) under the Singapore National Para-Swimming Team and met my current coach, Ang Peng Siong, a former Singaporean Olympic swimmer, that I thought this could be a career.

We show Wei Soong getting out of a Toyota with ease, highlighting its mobility benefits.

He enters the swim club, smiling and saying hello to the receptionist and the rest of the local swim community he knows so well as he makes his way to the locker room.

We cut inside the locker room to find him laughing and joking with his fellow swimmers - some able-bodied, others not.

But he is focused when he emerges from the locker room to find his coach, Ang Peng Siong, waiting by the swimming pool. Wei Soong confidently transfers himself from the wheelchair to the swimming pool. He jumps into the water and we intercut...

Act Two: In the Flow

... between Wei Soong swimming in the pool and archive footage of him competing in an alternate edit.

As he dips underwater, we cut to archive footage of Wei Soong winning his first international medal - a silver in the Men's 100-metre freestyle S8 event at the 2013 Asian Youth Para Games in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

This increases in speed, intensity, and excitement as we continue, showing Wei Soong...

Wei Soong (VO): Either real audio commentary from the event or Wei Soong explaining the achievement.

Winning three golds and one silver at the 2015 ASEAN Para Games in Singapore.

Breaking several Games records on his way to winning two gold medals and one silver at the 2017 ASEAN Para Games where he was also a torch bearer.

Wei Soong (VO): Either real audio commentary from the event or Wei Soong explaining the achievement.

Becoming the first Singaporean to win a para swimming medal in the Men's 50-metre freestyle S7 event at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Australia.

Wei Soong (VO): Either real audio commentary from the event or Wei Soong explaining the achievement.

Becoming the most decorated Singaporean athlete of the Asian Para Games after winning gold in the Men's 50-metre freestyle S7 event and 100-metre freestyle S7 event as well as a bronze medal in the Men's 100-metre backstroke S7 event in 2018.

Wei Soong (VO): Either real audio commentary from the event or Wei Soong explaining the achievement.

Coming 4th in the Men's 50m Butterfly S7 twice in a day at Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, but setting a new national record and shaving two seconds off the previous record.

Wei Soong (VO): Either real audio commentary from the event or Wei Soong explaining the achievement.

An interview with an upbeat Wei Soong after this epic performance.

Wei Soong: I went out, had fun, and did my best.

Wei Soong clinching the Silver medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, UK.

Wei Soong (VO): Either real audio commentary from the event or Wei Soong explaining the achievement.

One of Wei Soong's Instagram posts appears over the footage: "I would like to thank everyone who has watched and supported me in following this path to medalling at Paris in 2024. This Silver is a stepping stone to that higher goal, but it's good to be racing at a CG again."

We end this archive montage with the Singapore Disability Sports Awards in 2022, where Wei Soong is named Sportsman of the Year.

Wei Soong (VO): Either real audio commentary from the event or Wei Soong explaining the achievement.

We cut to Wei Soong, revealing that he is watching the archive footage projected onto a wall. He sits in his wheelchair in front of a large panoramic window overlooking an Olympic size swimming pool where other professional swimmers are training at night.

We go in close on Wei Soong, capturing his spontaneous reaction as the light from the projector flickers on his face and illuminates his smiling, nostalgic expression.

Wei Soong: No. I can go a lot faster.

We cut between rigs on the outside of the car, capturing Wei Soong looking reflectively out the windows.

Then to a shot from inside the car showing what he is looking at as they drive through the streets of Singapore.

We capture wide shots as his vehicle drives through green, modern areas of the city, past glass-walled buildings with interesting reflections.

Wei Soong (VO): I've had success but it hasn't always been easy.

We cut to a Steadicam weaving between a class of students at the National University of Singapore while a lecturer stands at the front. We land on the focused face of Wei Soong as he takes notes.

Wei Soong (VO): Juggling my swimming and academic commitments has been particularly tough, especially at the start of my international competitive career. I struggled for several months to balance the stress from school and the pool. But it got better. It always gets better. You have to plant your feet and weather the storm and the weight of what life throws at you because you will get past this struggle and be better for it.

Act 3: Tides of Change

We cut to a long, observational take of Wei Soong at home with his parents and family, sitting around a table as they eat dinner together and talk.

Wei Soong (V.O.): When I had an interest, they tried it; when I had an ambition, they fed it; and when I had a dream, they stayed with me all the way.

Wei Soong's parents: They acknowledge the difficulties and sacrifices along the way, but say that it was all worth it and talk about how proud they are of who he has become.

We cut back to a medium shot of Wei Soong in the swimming pool with his coach, Ang Peng Siong, walking alongside him.

Wei Soong (VO): My coach Ang Peng Sion is my hero and role model, but I'm also grateful to my teammates for motivating me to improve and for always having my back in this crazy sport.

Wei Soong reaches the end of the pool and stops. We get a close-up of him as he catches his breath and listens to instructions from Ang Peng Sion.

Wei Soong (VO): Medals are wonderful and representing your country is an honor, but real self-fulfilment comes from performing your best. From seeing the hours pay off and knowing that you have given your all.

We cut to Wei Soong reflected in the side or interior mirror as he pulls up outside a school.

Wei Soong (V.O.): I have a tenacious drive to achieve the impossible and to “overcome myself”, something that I hope can be an inspiration to other young people.

Wei Soong leads a physical education class with a group of mixed-ability children, laughing and joking with them as he shows them how to perfect the different swimming strokes.

Wei Soong (VO): The idea of ‘mobility for all’ resonates in particular with me, as I feel that it offers a promise of hope that everyone has a chance to improve. In partnership with Toyota, I will be championing “Equality of Opportunity”, working with the Singapore Disability Sports Council as a motivational speaker in their joint school outreach program to encourage youths, especially those with disabilities, to pursue their sporting dreams and to be unafraid to bravely challenge the impossible. I want to give them the hope that nothing is impossible and that their dreams can become reality.

We cut to Wei Soong waiting in the office corridor of the multimedia journal where he is editor-in-chief. He emerges into the large office space with panoramic floor-to-ceiling windows that overlook the city outside. An audience made up of media industry types rise to their feet and applaud him as he takes his place in front of them and begins to talk.

We cut to a shot of the now empty office as a reflective Wei Soong looks out of the panoramic window at the city outside and the many opportunities it presents.

We cut to an excited Wei Soong in a Toyota vehicle looking out of the windscreen at the open road up ahead.

Wei Soong (VO): I must always remind myself why I am here, that there are other things left to do, and that today there is still time to do them.

We end on a wide aerial shot of the Sentosa Island coastline and see the Toyota vehicle travelling down the road. It reaches an intersection, allowing us to leave Wei Soong’s story and pick up the next protagonist.

END CARD: START YOUR IMPOSSIBLE - TOYOTA

BEAT SHEET

1. We open on a wide aerial shot of Sentosa Island and with a long, single-take track a Toyota vehicle passing along a coastal road before turning to the sea and revealing our hero, Toh Wei Soong.
2. We explore his childhood home, ending on the television in his bedroom as we cut between...
3. ...archive footage of Wei Soong being bathed by his mother and learning to swim. He reveals his diagnosis of transverse myelitis and how swimming was initially intended as physiotherapy but soon became his passion.
4. Wei Soon emerges from the Toyota vehicle with ease and enters his local swimming pool. He acknowledges this friendly, familiar community of staff, fellow swimmers, and his coach. As he transfers into the pool, we intercut between...
5. ...Wei Soong swimming and archive footage of him competing and winning at Asian and global events, culminating in him being named Sports Personality of the Year.
6. Wei Soong at university as he talks about the difficulties of studying and training.
7. Wei Soong at home having dinner with his parents. He talks about their commitment while they share their pride.
8. Wei Soong swimming with his coach, Ang Peng Sion. He talks about Ang Peng Sion being his hero and role model.
9. Wei Soong arrives at a school for children with mixed abilities. He laughs and jokes with them while showing them how to perfect different swimming strokes and talking about his belief in 'mobility for all'.
10. Wei Soong gives a confident talk to a media industry audience at the office of the multimedia journal where he's editor-in-chief. Later on, he takes a moment on his own to take in the city the office overlooks and reflect on how far he has come.
11. Wei Soong looks out at the open road ahead as he drives the Toyota vehicle and reflects on what is to come. We end on an aerial shot of the Toyota vehicle approaching an intersection as we leave his story and join a different protagonist.

LOCATION: SINGAPORE

We'll look to shoot this film in Singapore. A modern, cosmopolitan, tropical city with a diverse mix of wildlife, wide, clean roads that are perfect for driving footage, beautiful seas, varied architecture, and glass-walled buildings with interesting reflections. It's a city that is popular with Toyota and very important for its brand, and one we feel would best represent the Asian region along with Japan.

There's also a talented, experienced filmmaking community and great facilities in Singapore. I have had the good fortune to collaborate with industry professionals from Singapore on multiple occasions and would feel very comfortable shooting there.

EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is a core Toyota value and should be central to the planning of these documentaries. This means prioritising production partners with a green label, providing vegan/vegetarian alternatives for catering, and travelling in a way that limits our carbon footprint. Along with sustainability, equality is something we feel strongly about. So we want to see people with a range of genders and ethnicities, both in front of the camera and behind it.

EDIT AND POST

Let's collaborate with editors who have experience in fictional storytelling as well as documentaries, so that they can elevate the emotion and poetry of our stories. We'd also like to explore the idea of crafting an outro that connects these stories such as the intersection scene at the end of this film that allows us to leave one vehicle and follow another.

When it comes to colour grading, we want to avoid a dark or dramatic look in favour of a vibrant, colourful, daytime aesthetic with lively colour separation and a motion-picture patina.

The archive footage that we source, whether that's from VHS or photographs, is likely to be of varying quality, so we need to find a way to organically mix and unify them with VFX so that they feel part of the same film.

By using in-house post-production, we'll be able to simultaneously edit the material we've shot whilst preparing to film the rest and make VFX and online adjustments with the help of our internal team.

SOUND AND MUSIC

Authentic sound design has the power to immerse us in the world of our characters and their story, so we'll combine real sounds recorded on set with foley to capture the natural texture of each location and achieve cinema vérité realism.

For the music, let's craft an uplifting, original score with a recognised film composer that sets the tone for the films and the rhythm for the cut.

Voiceover will also play a crucial narrative role in our films. It will contextualise what we're seeing, allow our athlete to tell their story, and infuse it with emotion. This will, most likely, be taken from the master interview but could also be captured when we are filming our protagonist travelling, training, or talking with somebody else. We'll also include the real voices of other contributors, allowing for dialogue and background chatter that adds another layer of realism.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Ideally, we would have the same talented creative team of cinematographers, musicians, editors etc. working across every film from pre-production to post-production, allowing us to maximise our resources and maintain a consistent vision across the entire campaign. However, I appreciate that in some cases it may make more sense to hire a creative that is local to the region we are shooting in, so remain flexible to this approach.

OUTRO

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts on this unique campaign. I couldn't be more excited to get started. Given my previous experience shooting a successful campaign for Toyota celebrating forty years of innovation, as well as several portrait documentaries, I feel confident that together we can create a series of films that are as inspiring and uplifting as the athletes at the heart of them.