

News & Features

Bandito Bros. Adds to the Family with The Garage

If you're an ad agency or client in the automotive world, you may well have dreamed of a one-stop shop that refines the process of producing broadcast content for a variety of uses all under one roof. Dream no more: The Garage has swung open its doors in scenic Culver City, California.

Designed as a cost effective, seamlessly-integrated approach to car content and positioning, it's affiliated with the L.A.-based production company **Bandito Brothers** and staffed by a pit crew of highly seasoned automotive film production specialists.

The Garage is being set up to help Bandito Brothers' automotive clients handle everything from production to post for any kind of content—web video, traditional TV commercials, even print and collateral shoots. As such, it's developed non-exclusive relationships with two top car photographers—**Boyd Jaynes** and **Vic Huber**—as well as with a premiere West Coast car prep service, Shelly Ward Enterprises. The set up is designed to work for both manufacturers and dealer networks. The move comes at a time when car companies and their agencies are under increasing pressure to make marketing dollars go farther. And even though the number of car spots that utilize computer-generated depictions of various automotive models seems to be on the increase, there's still a need for car companies to show the sheet metal in TV spots, whether it's for brand campaigns or the running footage often seen in local dealer ads.

"Clients are more conscious of the money they spend on advertising - you now have cross-brand shooting at once, and it's hard to define a means of executing it," says Sumer Friedrichs, The Garage's Detroit-based Executive Producer. "As tier one and tier two advertisers struggle to put together the spots they need, The Garage model offers a perfect solution."

A veteran agency producer formerly with GM shop Campbell-Ewald, Friedrichs is well positioned to give The Garage an agency perspective and client interface. "As a producer, I sought a combination of excellence and flexibility," she said. "All elements may not be running on a simultaneous calendar but need to connect. The Garage can mold the production as needed, with top-of-the-line talent handling everything from running footage and concept spots to car transport."

The Garage is comprised of just such a team. On the production front, Bandito Brothers offers its expertise mounting complex physical productions for brands such as Ford, Mountain Dew and the US Navy. Known for in-camera action and slick execution across tough terrain, Bandito Brothers also brings full in-house post-production capabilities to the party, encompassing digital asset management, along with its experience in long form branded content and product placement.

"Our M.O. is to get out in front of a challenging situation and solve problems," notes Bandito EP and veteran commercial producer **Jeff Rohrer**. "We've all been doing this long enough to know how to maximize the client's dollar by integrating the process and offering value on top of talent and organization. Instead of going out three times for many of the same assets, the client and agency can efficiently do the same work for significantly less money. Over the past year we've tested The Garage model and it works amazingly well. Happy clients, happy agency. "

Still photographer Jaynes comes to The Garage with an impressive career and unique eye for capturing many diverse aspects of the automotive culture that elevate his work into an art form. A southern California resident who was born in Detroit, Jaynes graduated from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. He's produced award-winning commercial work for Nissan, Infiniti, Kawasaki and BFGoodrich, and shot editorial assignments for such publications as *Automobile*, *AutoWeek*, *Road & Track* and others. Jaynes' first photography book, "Shelby Cars in Detail," was recently recognized as a finalist for the Motor Press Guild's annual Dean Bachelor award for outstanding photo journalism, as well as a gold metal winner the Independent Book Publishers IPPY award.



Bandito Brothers Executive Producer Jeff Rohrer and The Garage's Executive Producer Sumer Friedrichs.

"The Garage's progressive approach to automobile-centered productions is an exciting new opportunity for like-minded gearheads like myself to collaborate in the future," says Jaynes. "However, I think the real benefit will come in the work The Garage produces for our clients."

Likewise, Huber has made the automobile a major focus of his 28 year career. Beginning with editorial work for the major auto enthusiast pubs, Huber worked his way through the ranks to become a leader in the field of advertising photography. Among his many notable projects is a nearly 20-year relationship with Marlboro Team Penske/Leo Burnett, as well as the recent US launch of Toyota's Venza crossover SUV and the third generation Prius Hybrid via Saatchi & Saatchi Los Angeles.

"I am excited about working with The Garage, because these are people I've admired for a long time and who are the best at what they do," Huber comments. "These guys are focusing on the content rather than adhering to the production model that has existed for so long. I see what The Garage is doing as a return to realism in production and an example of what is possible when talented people get together."

Shelly Ward Enterprises and its Pursuit Systems Division are a unique part of the full-service Garage approach. SWE is one of the biggest prep companies in the world, providing a full range of services including transportation, vehicle prep, sourcing, fabrication, mechanical effects, custom paint and peelcoat from their three acre facility in North Hollywood, CA. Pursuit is well-known in the production community for its state of the art camera cars and gyro stabilized pursuit cranes, and have recently extended the brand with the launch of Pursuit Europe.

"We're very excited to be able to offer our clients a new way to leverage their production dollars," says Pursuit CEO Mike Johnson about Shelby Ward's association with The Garage. "By packaging all the tools and services that they need in a new way, The Garage concept provides quantifiable benefits."

To show off the capabilities of The Garage, Bandito Brothers partner and creative director Mike "Mouse" McCoy recently directed a spec film titled "**Living in the Lights**," which serves simultaneously as an homage to the BMW M3 (McCoy is a car enthusiast and weekend racer who owns one himself) that represents a car-lover's fantasy. It combines live action, visual effects and expressive lighting techniques, and was produced entirely in-camera. "It's a perfect example of the kind of work we can do," says McCoy, who recently collaborated with Chelsea director Neil Tardio on a **VW campaign** for Crispin Porter & Bogusky that was shot entirely on the Canon 5D digital SLR. "We did it with just a few people, a lot of passion and no barriers to our thinking. We think it's competitive with work that's typically produced on a much larger scale, and at a much higher cost."

Adds Bandito Brothers' COO **Max Leitman**, "This entity is born of a typical approach to new business - there's a problem out there that inspires a solution. From a cost-efficiency perspective, we remove layers of markup, consolidate services, and take a team approach. We'll put together the team to best execute the project, maintain the brand's integrity, and keep the money on the screen."

Leitman added that, given the broad spectrum of experience among its players, the Garage paradigm lends itself to expansion into other areas. "We are knowledgeable across the full media spectrum," Friedrichs concurred, "so we understand the big picture, and that is valuable in any segment of the industry."

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