

# ADWEEK

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## It Took Three Child Actors to Get This Scene Right in the New Garanimals Ad

New work breaks for a classic brand

By David Gianatasio

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Working with toddlers in commercials can be tough. Sometimes, the wee thespians just can't take direction. In these cases, alas, the kid most definitely does not stay in the picture. David Bernstein, chief creative officer at The Gate Worldwide, and his team faced just such a challenge as they shot new spots for iconic children's clothing brand Garanimals.

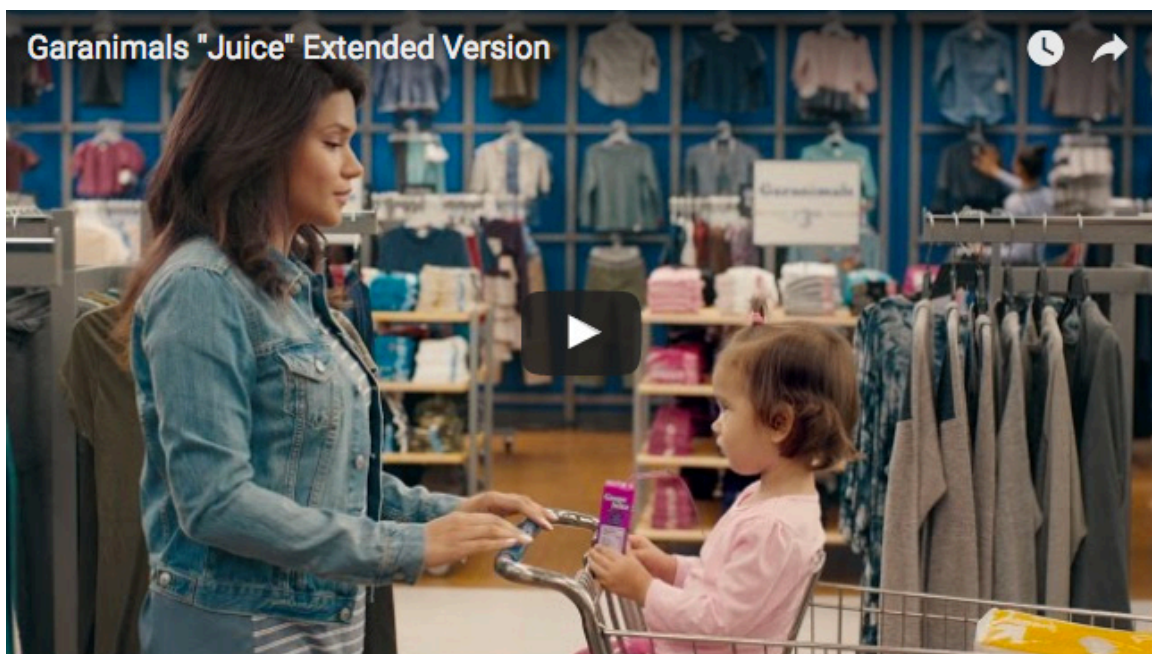
The apparel has been sold exclusively by Walmart since 2008, and the new ads introduce the line "Big on cute. Small on price," because Garanimals items start at less than \$4.

"Everybody remembers Garanimals" from the brand's 1970/'80s heyday, Bernstein says. In that era, the colorful tops and bottoms could be easily mixed and matched by youngsters based on which critters appeared on the items' hangtags. (Those tags were discontinued when the label began specializing in clothes for newborns and the 5T set.)

"Even first-time moms have probably been exposed and maybe even have worn the brand as a child," says Bernstein. "Part of our target audience live in multi-generational homes. The media strategy and selected programming allow one generation to remind the other about the brand and to speak of its virtues."

To facilitate production when working with kids, "You always cast several actors for the day of the shoot," he adds, "because they don't always want to act on the day of the shoot."

The crew encountered this scenario while making the messy spot below:

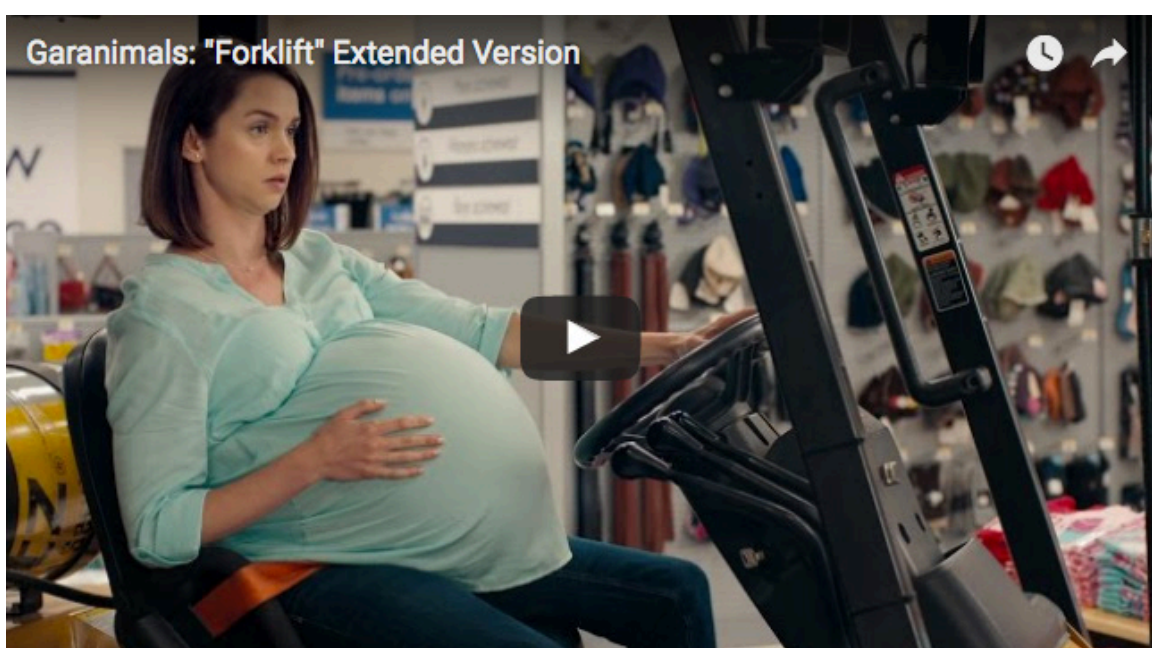


"The first child had a meltdown when the juice started to squirt on her chest," Bernstein recalls. "So we had to move on to child two. Then, actress No. 2 kept laughing whenever the juice would squirt on her chest—which made the spot, well, not funny."

Luckily, the third little actor—the last one available that day—nailed it. "If she couldn't do the job, I'm not sure what we would have done," Bernstein says. "But she was perfect. She kept a straight face during every take. Just like Stewie Griffin would have done."

Get that kid a sitcom!

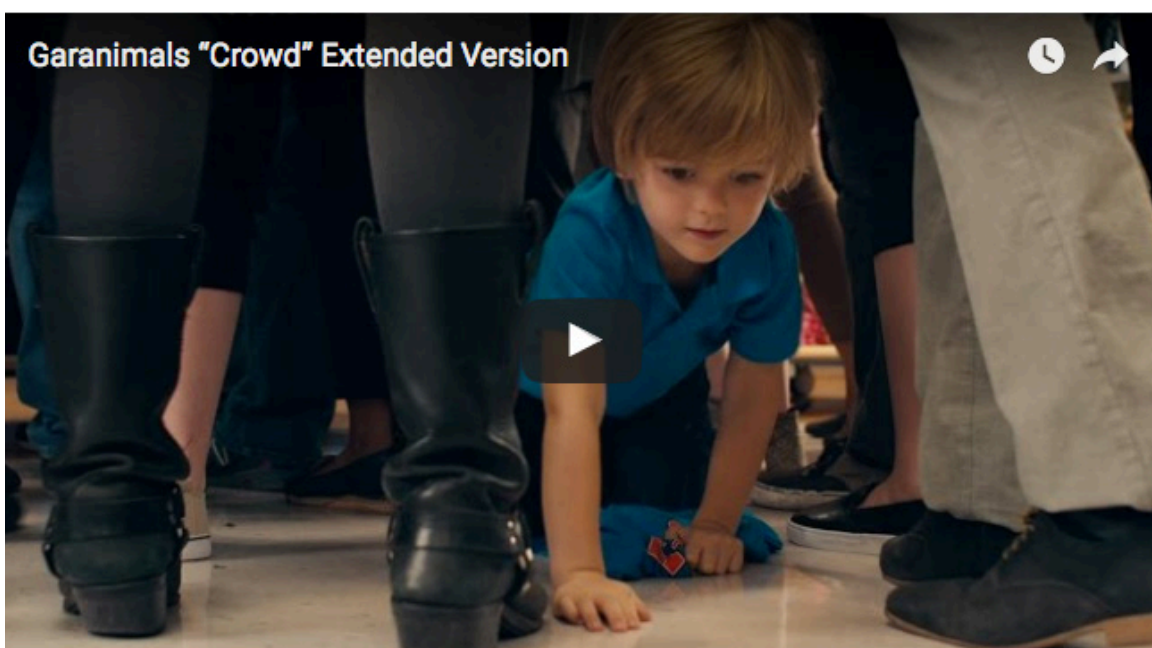
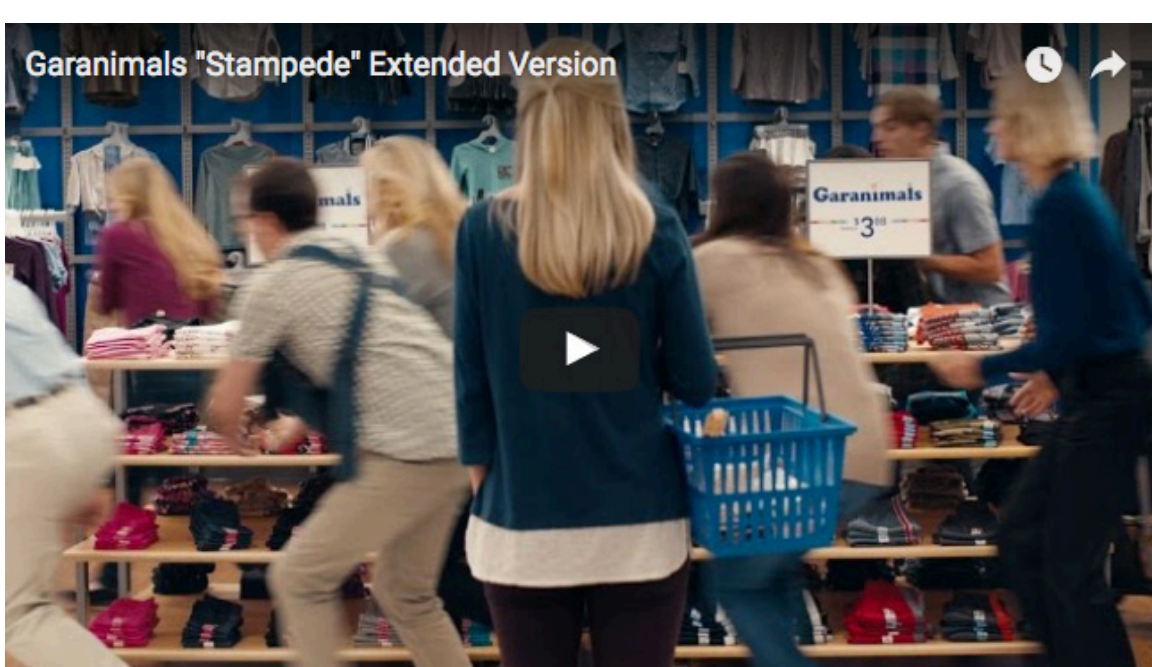
Oh, and striking the set reached a whole new level in the next ad, which shows a very pregnant mom commandeering a forklift so she can scoop up a whole table of Garanimals:



"We hired a stunt actress to lift up the table of clothing and literally plow through the rest of the set," Bernstein says. "You only get to see the beginnings of the damage due to the length of the spot. But trust me, that set was left in pieces. And that's why we shot it last."

Smart thinking, dude. That's why you get the big bucks.

Check out two more spots below. No tees or terry pants were harmed during the Garanimals stampede.



### CREDITS

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