Apple Plays With Action Movie Tropes in New iPhone 16 Ad

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Most every self-respecting Hollywood action flick contains the following scene: a few grizzled cops walk directly toward the camera—in dramatic slow motion—while the background lights up with explosions and fireballs.

It's a trope for a reason.

Apple pokes fun at that well-worn concept, reuniting a pair of law-enforcement characters who have appeared in previous commercials, in its new spot for iPhone 16. The sequel comes from the brand's in-house Apple Marcom agency and lauded director David Shane.

The 60-second ad plays with the classic "walk away from explosion" scenario, while the two macho stars engage in a bit of meta dialogue. One says what every movie fan has been thinking for years, "…when there's a giant explosion behind us, maybe it's not the best time to walk in slow motion."

And as an added cheeky kick, the commentary is also in slow motion, with cop #1 assuring his partner that the approach "maaaakes the sceeeene feeeel morrre cinemaaaatic."

Hollywood-caliber product demo

The brand takes a page from its own successful playbook with

the latest work, continuing to use its iPhone advertising as a product demonstration. In this case, it’s the iPhone 16 Pro’s 4K 120 frames-per-second feature that gets the spotlight, while the entire ad was shot on Apple’s latest smartphone upgrade as part of the iconic, long-running “Shot on iPhone” platform.

For consumers who want to make their own blockbusters, they can perfect their cinematic masterpieces with the Photos app that gives them control over timing, speed ramping, and stabilization, per the brand.

The two rough-and-ready cops in the new ad have become fan favorite characters. They first appeared in 2022’s “Detectives” to hype the iPhone 13 Pro’s Cinematic Mode. The spot eventually racked up three Cannes Lions and an Emmy nomination.

The new spot will appear on broadcast TV, YouTube, and online.

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