

As Entrepreneurship Booms, Squarespace's Bold Ads Urge Aspiring Founders to Aim High

Does that pie-in-the-sky business idea you've been mulling for years now feel not so outlandish after all, given how 2020 has upturned pretty much every industry and disrupted millions of jobs?

The way Squarespace sees it, you may actually be sitting on a moonshot.

The brand is encouraging people to dust off their ideas, refine their passion projects and build out their side hustles in a cinematic new anthem called "Launch It."

The hero spot's space theme, while tapping into an ongoing trend in commercials this year, has special poignancy here as characters—farmers, artists, beekeepers and techies—watch their dreams literally take flight. The soundtrack, meanwhile, could've been plucked straight from NASA.

The overall campaign pairs "Launch It" with shorter spots dubbed "Launch Kits," which humorously focus on startup founders like chefs, skaters and yogis. The work, done in-house, aims to capture "something visceral" and show the brand as the ultimate facilitator, according to Gui Borchert, a 72andSunny alum who recently opened Squarespace's first Los Angeles outpost.

"If ideas become rockets," Borchert said, "Squarespace becomes mission control."

Squarespace's category is booming, unlike many industries during this economic downturn, and the campaign aims to address the surge in entrepreneurship. New business

applications rose by 85% in July compared to the same period in 2019, according to LendingTree.

The world has moved forward “by five years in just six short months,” David Lee, Squarespace’s chief creative officer and a 2020 honoree in Adweek’s Creative 100, said. He says the company’s customers are “making creative pivots, taking a chance on a new idea and transitioning their livelihood online.”

How work has been flipped on its head

The campaign, produced during lockdown, was filmed remotely in the U.K. and the Ukraine. Squarespace’s team in New York specifically watched over the London-shot “Launch Kit” work, while the new L.A. creatives ran point on “Launch It,” a three-minute mini-movie shot in Kiev that’s purposely nostalgic, with the grand scale of a Hollywood blockbuster and the gravitas of an Apollo liftoff.

“Every click, swipe, font change, drag and drop is meant to create parallels to the checklist preparation of a rocket launch,” said Borchert, the brand’s senior creative director. “And the radio chatter pushes the metaphor even further. What sounds like ‘NASA talk’ at a closer listen is actually entirely made from website design terms.”

The campaign will run across TV, digital and outdoor in the U.S., the U.K., Australia and Canada.

“2020 has flipped normality on its head, with new ways of living, working and creating,” said Borchert, who will lead brand design, film and branded content for Squarespace in L.A. “We wanted a campaign that not only nodded to this notion but inspired even more people to get their ideas out of their heads and into the world.”

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