

# Super-charged

## Chevy spot out with flying colors

by Steve Hockensmith and Martha Ortman

**O**riginally, the Hillside-based ad agency Creative Concepts by Clemento wasn't sure if its first tv commercial, "The Adventures of Chevy Man," would fly. So they premiered it on cable where the modestly-budgeted spot proved a success of heroic proportions.

The animated 30-second spot about a superhero who fights for truth, justice and the Jack Phelan Chevrolet/Geo dealership, has been airing since June 10 on GNN, ESPN, TNT, USA Network and the Sports Channel. Just two weeks after the spot premiered, "Chevy Man Day" at the Berwyn dealership drew more than 150 people eager to meet the costumed hero and doubled the average sales for a Saturday.

"We had no idea it would get a response like it did because it had only been running two weeks prior to Chevy Man Day," says freelancer Shirley Feldmann, who produced the spot. "For Creative Concepts' first tv campaign, it really came out with a bang."

The spot seems to pack quite a wallop despite its deceptively mild-mannered budget of \$10,000, most of which went to Milwaukee-area animators Animagination.

"I was a little skeptical about going out of the city for the animation, but we got three times what we paid for," says Feldmann. "We ended up with \$35,000 worth of animation for \$6,500."

The traditional cel-animated spot will continue running until the Fall and should be showing up on broadcast stations by the end of the month. "It will be a six or seven station buy," says Creative Concepts retail marketing director Susan Karr. "We'll try late-night first and if that becomes successful we'll worry about prime time."

That same "test the waters" approach explains the spot's cable tv premiere. "Since it was fairly inexpensive, they wanted to run it on cable to prove to the client tv can work," says Feldmann.

**C**hevy Man's faster-than-a-speeding-bullet popularity has convinced Phelan to go ahead with more spots revolving around the colorful crimefighter. He owns the registered trademark to the character and plans to use him in future promotions and spots.

"This campaign was to create awareness of Chevy Man," says Feldmann. "It's safe to say parts of the animation will be seen in upcoming spots, incorporated with other footage."

Agency founder/president Jan Clemento directed the spot, which she co-wrote with Karr and freelance writer Sam DeSio. The seven-year-old Creative Concepts has specialized in print-oriented image campaigns and brought that expertise into play for Phelan.

The campaign is also utilizing print, direct-mail and point-of-purchase advertising, along with giveaways like Chevy Man t-shirts and rings. Actors dressed as the caped car salesman will be making appearances at fairs and promotional events throughout the summer. And Berwyn mayor Joseph Lanzillotti declared June "Chevy Man month."

"Television's the direction we'll want to go in in the future," says Clemento. "From here on out, I'll try to incorporate tv into my clients' campaigns. It's just so effective." □