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MEDIA RELEASE

Celebrity status for "star" of Australian Gas Networks popular television advertising campaign

It's official - the indisputable "star" of Australian Gas Networks' popular new television advertising campaign has reached celebrity status.

The fame of "Frisky" - the moody feline with the penetrating eye gaze who features in the TV ads currently being screened in South Australia, regional Victoria and regional NSW - has reached dizzy new heights.

The most recent proof of his new-found popularity was when he featured in a popular newspaper quiz (*Brainwaves* in *The Advertiser*) where readers were asked to "name the cat in the current Australian Gas Networks television commercial".

It's the latest in a growing list of publicity feats for Australia's most recognisable cat, who, like all celebrities, has his own website and all the "must have" social media accounts - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube - all dedicated to his career.

"There's no doubt Frisky has become the unofficial star of our new advertising campaign," Australian Gas Networks Marketing and Communications Manager, Mr Jin Singh, joked.

"His new-found fame in mainstream media has taken his popularity to a whole new level," he said.

"But who can deny Frisky his time in the sun - he is such a natural talent in front of the camera. You hear about the tantrums and dummy spits that other 'stars' are renowned for.

"Not Frisky - he takes everything in his stride.

"We just hope his new found fame in our popular television commercial is the start of something big for him - maybe Hollywood?"

Australian Gas Networks - the country's largest distribution company - unveiled a new progressive advertising campaign earlier this year under the slogan "the everyday experts recommend natural gas".

The concept was built around letting a range of everyday "experts" - including Frisky - recommend using natural gas for a range of common household needs.

The campaign - across both traditional and non-traditional markets - has definitely resonated with the community.

"Traditionally, when it comes to decisions like having gas connected to your home, or even buying a new appliance, we tend to prefer to default to the opinions of experts - the sales people, builders and plumbers who deal with gas for a living and 'know best'," Mr Singh said.

"We believe the real 'experts' are the everyday people who already use and love gas every day," he said.

"They are already converted, they know from a personal perspective that gas is best - so we built the campaign around that.....let's ask them why they use natural gas."

In the television commercial, Frisky is filmed sitting snugly in the warmth in an armchair. While he/she gazes intensely at the screen, a rolling series of subtitles appear on the screen....

Frisky, 8

Expert in natural gas

"There are only two things I like

"1) The perfect temperature in every room

"2) Being left alone"

In real life, Frisky's real name is Zanda. He hails from Canberra, and like in the TV ad, is aged 8.

A Scottish Fold Straight Ear breed, he first got into acting a few years ago via a couple of cameo films roles, but it is his "starring" role in the AGN commercial that has taken the famous feline's popularity to the next level.

"Householders overwhelmingly prefer the use of natural gas for cooking, heating and hot water. Renovators and home buyers look to upgrade to natural gas appliances as the inclination is to move to something that enhances their home lifestyle and has the potential to keep their household bills down," Mr Singh said.

"Further, most consumers also recognise that natural gas appliances deliver a better product, are greener than electricity and cost less to run," he said.

"That is why the new advert puts customer experiences – 'the home truths' - with natural gas at the core.

"Everyday experts recommend natural gas because the hot water that never runs out, heating is instant and isn't harsh on the skin and mains connected BBQs never run out of gas for that great Australian outdoor living experience.

"And the truth is - whether you like cats or not - everyone knows they love comfort and in winter they love a warm spot for long lazy naps where the heat is just right.

"The feedback we have received has been amazing - we have even had people send in photos of their own cats by the heater in response to the advert, and rebates for central heating and space heaters have been taken up faster this winter than previous winters."

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