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## MPC brings Christmas Magic and Sparkle with Frankie

by Rory

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MPC is one of the biggest names in the world for VFX. With over 1,000 employees and offices from Los Angeles to Bangalore – and plenty more in-between – there's hardly a big-name project that goes by without its involvement.

The studio has worked on blockbuster movie franchises like Godzilla, Harry Potter and X-Men, as well as being involved in advertising campaigns for giant brands like Three Mobile and Sony. From concept design to 3D/CG effects, animation to software development, MPC covers all bases..

This year's Christmas spot for retail chain Marks and Spencer – entitled 'Christmas is Better with Magic & Sparkle' – is yet another example of MPC's consistently excellent output. The commercial sees a couple of cheeky fairies – Magic and Sparkle, naturally – brightening up the Christmases of those they come across by changing gifts, wardrobes and even relationships into something a lot more special than they initially were.



The backbone of the project's workflow was Cospective's Frankie, the real-time video review and approval tool.

VIDEO LINK: [www.moving-picture.com/work/marks-spencer-christmas-is-better-with-magic-sparkle](http://www.moving-picture.com/work/marks-spencer-christmas-is-better-with-magic-sparkle)

Paul Branch, executive producer at MPC, said Frankie's involvement in the Marks and Spencer

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Paul Branch, executive producer at MPC, said Frankie's involvement in the Marks and Spencer project helped dissipate a real pain point for remote collaboration: "It was the distance between parties that was the major issue," he explained, "The director Philippe Andre was located in France, and he was regularly travelling for work and shooting on location. Frankie allowed us to communicate with Philippe and agency RKCR/Y&R, talking everything through with clarity."



Being browser-based made Frankie very easy to work with, especially for the director – "The big plus point was there was no software to install, other than a browser."

This ability for anyone to use Frankie – as long as they have access to a computer and the internet – meant that a complex and involved production could be carried out as smoothly as possible. "It's definitely helped on projects where the relevant parties are spread all over the globe and unable to come in and review in the same room.," Branch said.

Frankie allows for real-time, interactive reviews, where everyone involved is able to see the same footage in perfect synchronisation. "It removes the uncertainty from long range approval sessions," he continued, "As everyone can clearly see what's being commented on. It therefore makes the approval process quicker and more efficient, which means we get more time to polish the image rather than tweak a misunderstanding."



Communication and avoiding misunderstandings is key to any project, but being a project for Marks and Spencer – and it being a flagship Christmas commercial no less – the pressure was on to perform. "Marks and Spencer was a huge undertaking for the VFX teams," Branch explained, "There were over 100 VFX shots in the final film."

So after all of the intense effort and the 10 weeks of post-production work carried out using Frankie, is it something Branch would recommend? Yes, he said – and his biggest reason is unsurprising: "It makes the approvals process quicker and saves time – which is something we're all short on!"

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