



Jussi Kaakinen

What was the commission?

The illustration and layout for a one-spread advertorial for the energy company Gasum, published in HS Kuukausiliite magazine and some other Sanoma Magazines' publications. The advertorial is about the advantages of a biogas car, compared to a regular car. It tells a fictional story of two families travelling to their cabins for a vacation. There are six infographics embedded in the main illustration, which is divided into five scenes.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

The main challenge was to present a large amount of information in an aesthetically pleasing and interesting way, using many different modes of visual communication (infographics, typography, illustration).

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

Lots of deep thinking, and/or research, in this case about biogas cars. Mostly that means looking up things on the internet, sometimes also going to places and taking photos. I usually collect a small library of reference pictures.

Was it a good brief?

Yes. I had a good meeting with the writer and the art director, so we shared a common goal from the beginning.

Describe your sketch process.

I start with lots of quick and small pencil sketches. I try to find an idea and a structure to the illustration. After that I start to think about style and colour. The first sketches that I show to the client are usually drawn with pencil, then scanned and coloured digitally. In this case the commission was to create a magazine spread that combines text and images, and the text was written simultaneously with the illustration process. I sketched the illustration elements separately and then combined them with blocks of placeholder text into a layout sketch. This way the writer could see what amount of text we could fit in, and how much of the information could be communicated by images and infographics.

What was the feedback you were given ?

I worked closely with a copywriter and an art director at Sanoma Creatives, who in turn were in contact with the end client. They gave me useful feedback about the sketches and the final artwork as it progressed, mostly regarding the infographics and the use of corporate graphic identity. The process went smoothly, I didn't need to redraw any major elements.



What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

I'm fascinated with infographics and the storytelling aspect of illustration. This was a great chance to explore those interests. Because the advertorial contains a lot of technical information, I felt that the visual style needed to look simple and accessible. I wanted it to have a softness and a sense of fun, and the characters to be relatable. Some of my inspiration for this kind of style comes from European Ligne Claire comics and early 20th century lithograph posters.

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

Pretty much. I'm happy with it.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

Googling skills and general curiosity.