



Planner Adam Smith Wins National Award

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"Not only is he a handsome young lad and the proud father of an 8-month-old boy, but according to this year's national US Account Planning Group competition for "outstanding planners with less than three years experience," Adam Smith is officially the "Pick of the Litter," an honor bestowed upon him at the AAAA's annual Account Planning Conference in Chicago this August for his strategic marketing insights and direction that helped make the grand opening of Seattle's Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame a cosmic success. In the summer of 2004, the first-ever museum dedicated to the science fiction genre opened its doors to an enthusiastic Seattle public, eager to explore the mysteries of the unknown within its walls. A few months prior, the Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame (SFM) approached Cole & Weber United to help launch the museum. Adam's extrasensory sci-fi intuition swung into full problem-solving mode, and soon the overarching challenge became clear: "How do you pique the interest of the rabid SF fan and the general public, when it is widely assumed that SF is strictly the domain of the dateless and the dweeb-ish?" explains Adam. "To drive ticket sales and membership, the advertising had to build awareness and interest for the SFM launch with the general population while remaining authentic and credible to the SF enthusiast." Finding the sweet spot for success became a late-night supernatural obsession for Adam. He reviewed transcripts and reports from focus groups previously conducted by the client. He started researching science fiction literature theory. He reviewed online lesson notes and lectures from college literature programs that teach science fiction as

part of an English major. In short order, according to Adam, he learned that "science fiction resonates with people because it creates a fictional world that is different from, yet consistent with, the world we live in. It blurs the lines between fact and fiction ... I knew that if we could make the general public feel what happens when imagination and reality collide, and ask themselves 'Is it real?', then we would be successful." Armed with those insights, the Cole & Weber United creative teams disappeared into space and, several days later, returned safely to Earth with an integrated campaign promoting futuristic products and services that were supposedly "coming soon." "From print ads and billboards," explains Adam, "to faux storefronts and live-action 'alien coverups,' our executions drove an unprecedented attendance, where ticket sales exceeded expectations by 18%. By connecting the SFM to those things people love the most about science fiction, we drove fans that didn't know they were fans to the museum." Congratulations, Adam. You are a keen young Jedi." 