

Robert Smith Advertising Federation of Greater Hampton Roads 2008 Silver Medal Award Honoree



The 45th Silver Medal Award presented by the Advertising Federation of Greater Hampton Roads went to Bob Smith in 2008.

Bob Smith has always had a passion for music, sound, and art. As a child he would bang pots and pans and when a boy would go around the house mimicking Jimi Hendrix on air guitar without even knowing who Hendrix was.

At age 13 he took up guitar and at 15 founded his first band, City Limits, which he began promoting around southwestern Virginia, playing parties, weddings, and local festivals. His first advertising "campaign" consisted of the band's business card and a poster.

In college at Virginia Tech he drifted until he began taking film, art, music, and communication courses, earning a Communications degree. While in Blacksburg, Smith and a friend founded The Janitors, a rockin' R&B band, and enjoyed great success around Virginia. After graduation, Smith joined a USO touring band and played for our troops all over Europe and the Middle East.

Upon returning from the tour, Smith, a beach lover, settled in Virginia Beach, began a career in advertising sales. He built a small recording studio in his garage where he began recording local bands. One day he produced a radio commercial for a friend and realized that he could combine his love of sound and music with a career, and so the idea of Earworks was born.

For months Smith worked his day job but at night he built his studio and finally moved out of the garage, opening Earworks in 1989. In 1992 Smith made the move to digital recording and was the first studio in Hampton Roads to go digital. In addition to commercial work, the company also began composing custom music for the Discovery Channel, the Learning Channel, and the History Channel, producing underscores for over one thousand hours of programming.

Since then Earworks, now Earworks Media, has grown into a national production company providing audio and video services to advertising agencies, corporations, and government agencies. His spare time is spent with his family, church, volunteer organizations, and his bluegrass band, More Perfect Jones. He still carries that first business card in his wallet.