

# Pitch 'the dream' to the monied lot

**Client:** *The Collection* (Coral Gables, FL)

**PR Team:** *Weber Shandwick Worldwide* (Miami)

**Campaign:** *2001 Luxury Model Launches*

**Time Frame:** *January-December 2000*

**Budget:** \$80,000

Four years ago, Weber Shandwick chairman Bruce Rubin strolled into the showroom of *The Collection* in Coral Gables and drove off with a brand new Jaguar – and a contract to help the southern Florida dealership reach the right audience for each new model.

## Strategy

The *Collection's* 2001 luxury models appeal to diverse consumer groups. So Weber Shandwick customized events and strategies to target different buyers.

"The challenge in creating a marketing campaign for high-end consumers is to sell them products they do not really need, like resort condominiums, luxury vacations or high-end automobiles," says Tadd Schwartz, client service director of Weber Shandwick in Miami.

"Therefore, we're not selling cars," says Schwartz. "Instead, we're pitching dreams, and our PR and marketing campaign needs to reflect that."

## Tactics

Each new model debut event was supported by a targeted publicity campaign, geared to drive qualified buyer traffic.

When the new Aston Martin was unveiled, AM Chairman

Robert Dover flew in to meet select clients, prospects and media at gatherings at *The Collections'* showroom.

The news releases explained how "wheels for the wealthy" were rolling fast due to a booming economy, with everyone from old economy investment bankers to new-money dot-com execs getting on waiting lists at luxury dealerships across the US.

For the Jaguar S-Type debut, Weber Shandwick pursued publicity in ad/marketing columns and hip local fashion magazines, such as *Ocean Drive* and *Channels* by tying *The Collection* to Sting, whose song *Desert Rose* was used in the S-Type's national ad campaign.

The Ferrari Modena, which sells for a staggering \$200K+, was coordinated around the "Ferrari Challenge" held annually at the Homestead Motor Speedway. During Media Day, press representatives were allowed to race the new model. Ferrari's chairman flew in to mingle with clients and media.

Weber Shandwick also arranged for *The Collection* to be part in Zo's Summer Groove, an annual charity basketball game put on by NBA star Alonzo Mourning. At halftime, a random fan was selected to attempt a half-court shot, which would win him a new Audi TT roadster.

The fan missed the shot, but

local print and TV outlets covered the event, complete with images of the attempted shot, the car and the dealership's banner shown in the background.

## Results

The events garnered local and national coverage, warranting hits on: *The Miami Herald*, *The Sun-Sentinel* in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, *South Florida Business Journal*, *El Nuevo Herald*, CNN en Espanol and FOX's *Deco Drive*.

Total media impressions neared 18.3 million – an advertising equivalent of some \$176,742, says Schwartz.

Though the booming economy was the primary driver, *The Collection* president Ken Gorin attributes sales growth, in part, to the campaign. Sales in 1998 rose to \$126 million, to \$154 million in 1999 and to \$175 million last year.

## Future

Pleased with Weber Shandwick's work, Gorin extended its contract. Upcoming events will be tailored to the Jaguar X-Type (at \$30,000, the most inexpensive Jaguar), the Porsche Cayenne (an SUV), and the new Ferrari 360 Spider (priced over \$200,000). There will also be a campaign coordinated around the upcoming launch of *Thecollection.com*.

**Craig McGuire**



**Hot wheels...** Weber Shandwick lured people into the showroom