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Transported: My Vulcan Career Meld

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The passing of the great Leonard Nimoy has us reflecting on his career, his famous character, and the words of wisdom we were lucky to hear from both. I'm remembering, too, how my lifelong love of Star Trek and my professional career intersected twice in ways I found, hmmm, fascinating.

Star Date: 03.17.1998. I arrived for my first day on the job at a promotions agency that had just been voted Promo Magazine's agency of the year – again. I immediately fell in love. Awaiting every colleague was a four-pack of Guinness to celebrate St. Patty's Day. Sweet! I was then introduced to my new writing partner who was starting HIS first day. Little did I realize the impact our collaboration would have on my career and creative development, let alone how we would become, and always shall be, friends.

Logically, our first project also awaited – quickly re-purposing an existing ad to feature Star Trek themed prepaid calling cards to serve as a conference bag stuffer our client was granted (last minute) given their sponsorship of a Star Trek convention. We were asked to keep the “No Bills. No Coins. No Hassles.” headline but replace the usual cards with Star Trek cards. However, we used our creative judgment and mediocre knowledge of all things Trek and suggested revising the headline to “No Bills. No Coins. No Tribbles.”

The fun had begun. We went on to create a portfolio of Star Trek pieces, including an ad for Star Trek cards to be used as promotional items “The Whole Federation's Up for a Promotion”; a campaign to “Win a Voyage to Vegas” to attend the premiere of the next film “Insurrection” at the Star Trek Experience; and an ad in Trekker magazine leveraging the plot of the new movie “Violate the Prime Directive? TOUGH CALL. Stay Connected with Your Crew? EASY CALL.” This set the tone for an entertaining body of work, a great client relationship, and professional and personal collaborations that endure.

The other time my career intersected with my lifelong love of Star Trek was less romantic, but the effect was MUCH more profound.

Star Date: 09.07.1989. Having spent months after graduation gaining a lot of experience in interviewing, but not yet creating, I walked into what would become my first job. Leaving the interview, I noticed a poster hanging in the Graphics Department depicting Spock, McCoy and Kirk at a time when the Next Generation was still airing in its original run. I made a passing comment that I too was a closet Trekker.

Several months into my new gig, I found out that the selection came down to just me and another candidate. Our “Manhattan Style” portfolios were on par. We both presented with a similar level of skill. But, he was MUCH better looking, and the hiring manager admitted that he would have been easier on the eyes day-in and day-out. Luckily, my random comment about the poster assured her that, all things considered, I was probably a better fit with the culture. Score one for us geeks!

How fortunate I've been to work with great talent on projects that sometimes transcend the purely professional and bridge into what inspires me personally. My career wish for myself is also my borrowed valediction for you – Live Long and Prosper.

Thank you Gene and James and DeForest and Leonard. And of course my old writing partner and good friend, Doug.



Rob has built brands and generated awareness for A&E, AT&T, BellSouth, Benjamin Moore, Broadbeam, Coldwell Banker, DuPont, FoodTown, Johnson & Johnson, Maxim Group, Mercedes-Benz, Multimedia Entertainment, Newsweek International, Roma Foods, Spirits Unlimited and more. He helped revitalize the global ETS brand and sub-brands for over 10 years, establishing new graphic standards and messaging hierarchy. Most recently, Rob has held a senior role on the leadership team charged with standing up Ortho Clinical Diagnostics as a fully independent brand after the carve-out from Johnson & Johnson.

Rob Adams is a dynamic, results-driven Creative Director and Brand Champion driving change through solid management experience, award-winning creative, and strategic leadership.

