

A DELTA SIG'S EXPERIENCE WITH

“THE BEST JOB IN THE WORLD”

► BY JUWEON JONATHAN KIM, TEXAS '02

“The Best Job in the World” was a campaign launched by Tourism Queensland (TQ), the state tourism board in Queensland, Australia. With their incredibly creative marketing strategy of using social networking sites and designing a campaign that would induce word-of-mouth frenzy across all media platforms, TQ officials were able to turn a \$1.5 million advertising budget to generate over \$100 million worth of publicity ACROSS the GLOBE, not to mention several international advertising awards, including the Cannes Lions Award which is equivalent to the Oscars of the industry. If you didn't hear about this campaign, or at least know someone who talked, heard, applied or knew someone else who applied, then you were obviously living in a cave somewhere near the Pakistan-Afghan border. Wait, I take that back because even Osama Bin Laden applied for the job (you can find the video on Youtube under “Bin Laden Best Job” – I wouldn't have minded losing to the creator of that video).

The campaign created such a buzz that over 34,600 60-second video applications came in from 200 countries causing numerous server crashes on the TQ web site.

After stumbling across the story in January while looking for stories to

cover for my current events radio news program that I host in Seoul, South Korea, I bookmarked the web page and set a reminder alarm on my cell phone for the application deadline. I actually started my application video just two days before the deadline. The friends that saw my application video during its hasty production laughed and said it didn't stand a chance. However, I thought as long as there is a chance, that's all I needed and I didn't want to regret later on for not even attempting to take that opportunity no matter what the probabilities were. The fact of the matter is; the chance of you winning the lottery goes up an infinite amount the moment you buy a ticket, and I spent 38 of the remaining 48 hours trying to pick the perfect combination of numbers on that sole lotto ticket.

In a matter of weeks, BOOM! I found myself in the preliminary top 50. After another hectic and whirlwind three weeks of all-nighters involving Internet blogging, video production, sorting through media interview requests from across the globe and running PR campaigns both in Korea and in Texas, all while keeping my day job as host of two radio programs in Seoul, I was selected into the final 16! SIXTEEN out of 34,600!



Juweon Kim overlooking the Pacific Ocean during his trip to Queensland, Australia for his interview.

The high that I felt when I got that phone call confirming my place in the final 16 was just absolutely... incredible, mind-blowing and numb... are some of the words that come to mind. I felt chills running throughout my body and I guess that's how it feels when someone hits the \$100 million jackpot at the Bellagio slots. On top of that, there were various “alignment of the stars” moments throughout my campaign that just worked out no matter the situation, starting with my application video dodging the server crashes on the TQ site. It was kind of like playing Texas Hold'em and every draw you went on, didn't matter if it was an open-ender, a gut shot straight draw or a two-outer, if you saw the

river, BAM you hit it and that's how I felt up to this point. The greatest omen in this entire process was the fact that I arrived in Australia for the interview on the morning of May 1st – the morning of my 26th birthday. It was like how the San Antonio Spurs felt when Robert Horry hit that game winning 3-pointer in Detroit in game 5 of the 2005 Finals. After that, you knew the Spurs were winning it. At least I did.

But I guess I was celebrating too soon. If you don't know already, I'm writing this column in my office in Seoul, which means I'm not on Hamilton Island with the Best Job in the World. If I had to do the entire interview process again, there might be a couple of things I would do differently, but not in the category of effort. I poured everything I had out there, I just wish I had poured some of that effort in different places, but to get into the details of that would produce a novel, not a column. But even despite the "loss", I still believe 100% that I came away from this experience with so much more than what I had before. Please allow me to explain...

I had a once-in-a-lifetime experience, having the opportunity to meet and make friends with some great people from all around the world while doing activities that I couldn't even dream about doing.

Australia was one of the places that I had never been, but in just ten days, the country and its people succeeded in making me fall head-over-heels in love with it. The country is just so vast (and I realize that I only explored a fraction of the continent) but the little part of Oz that I did see, was plenty enough to leave a lasting impression and make me want to go back.

I snorkeled in the world's largest coral reef system, the Great Barrier Reef. I flew in a seaplane while riding in the copilot's seat. I ate food pre-



Kim holding a koala during his 10-day interview for The Best Job in the World.

pared by some of the world's best chefs, stayed in 5-star hotels, sailed on a luxury yacht, held koalas and fed kangaroos, and sand boarded on the world's 3rd largest sand island. Basically, I got treated like a superstar. But the best part of this entire journey was the people I befriended and the life motivation that I garnered.

The 15 other candidates I met were absolutely amazing people, each of them bringing to the table something different and unique. In the end, a charismatic and energetic lad from England took the job that more than 34,000 people in the world were going after. Ben Southall is a class guy with an amazing life story to tell, and I'm sure his job as the "island caretaker" will be another chapter to his fascinating life. As for me, I think there is a different book to write.

Many people think I would have been depressed or disappointed at the result, but that wasn't the case at all. I didn't feel like I "lost" a competition. In fact, in some weird way, I felt like I still won. I felt like I was the successful applicant – I just didn't have the "island caretaker" position. Coming out of this incredible journey, I have a newfound confidence and optimism about this world and what an individual can accomplish if we just put in the effort and belief that we can make

a difference. I will be the first one to admit that I was complacent for several years. I was satisfied with where I was career-wise, education-wise and lifestyle-wise, but my involvement in this process motivated me to always be aiming higher in life, because life is so much more fulfilling when you do.

So go out there and reach for something big and impossible, because you will be so much more satisfied even in "failure." You want to know how my "failure" ended up? Well, for one, TQ offered me a 1-year contract to be their Tourism Ambassador in Korea, giving me a nice sum of cash to maintain a blog, help in running a couple of marketing campaigns and take two all-expenses-paid "business trips" back to Australia to promote Queensland. The massive media exposure I got through the whole experience upgraded my profile in the Korean media/broadcasting industry, opening up a lot of new doors for me. I will now be making a similar sum of cash as the Island Caretaker, although he will be making his cash in 6 months traveling around paradise, while I make mine in a year commuting in Seoul traffic. But the thing that tips the scale in my favor? I'll still be employed come 2010 while he'll officially be out of a job in this economic environment come December 31st, 2009. (I have a feeling though that Ben will land somewhere on his feet as I did.)

YITBOS,

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P.S. Come check out my web site for more in-depth coverage of my "Best Job" experience. Log on to www.juweonnago.com.