

Hugo Awards Marketing Committee

Report to Mark Protection Committee and WSFS, July 2009

Accomplishments in 2008-9

1. Logo Contest. After a couple of years of discussion mentioned in our previous reports, we launched the Hugo Award Logo Contest in April 2009 and accepted entries through the end of May. Response was gratifying and overwhelming. We received 390 entries from 24 countries. The panel of judges (Irene Gallo, Neil Gaiman, Chip Kidd, and Geri Sullivan) selected a winner, which will be unveiled during this year's Hugo Award ceremony. We have already started working with this year and next year's Hugo Administrators regarding the use of the logo.

We thank the judges and the contest sponsors:

- **SCIFI** donated \$500 for a cash prize.
- The **MPC** funded the production of the winner's trophy, which ended up costing approximately \$250 including shipping.
- **Neil Gaiman** donated several signed books.

2. Hugo Awards Web Site. We continue to maintain the official Hugo Awards Web Site, <http://www.TheHugoAwards.org/> (The old www.hugo.org site redirects there.) We got so much traffic at Nominations time that our service provider, Laughing Squid, moved us onto a faster server and asked us to make changes to the site to improve response times. The site is currently averaging over 500 visits a day. Traffic is up 348% over last year. (See attachment for more web-related statistics.) We continue to field questions regarding the Hugo Awards through the web site, and make correction when prompted to do so by the FOLLE Committee.

3. Hugo Award Publicity. Sam Jordison's tour through past Hugo winners in *The Guardian* continues to attract lots of attention, and has apparently done so well that they are launching a parallel tour of BFS/WFA winners. We got a huge amount of publicity thanks to the *Watchmen* film ("only graphic novel ever to have won..."), including a full-page photo of Dave Gibbons' trophy in his book, *Watching the Watchmen*.

4. Hugo Award Voter Package. The upgraded voter package has proved very popular. Total nominations are up 65% on last year, and it got us a very nice article in the Ottawa Citizen.

(<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/opinion/op-ed/reading+list+grows/1524132/story.html>)

5. Marketing the Hugo Award to the Mainstream Press. Anticipation's PR people have done good work on assembling a list of mainstream press contacts, which they have shared with us. This list of contacts should remain available for the shared use of future Worldcons for similar marketing purposes. Note that in the past year we fielded enquiries regarding the Hugo Award from the BBC and from Entertainment Weekly, both of which requested an official logo they could use.

Plans for 2009-10

The committee recommends that the MPC continue the HAMC for another year. Assuming the MPC does so, the HAMC plans to undertake the following projects:

- 1. Registration of logos.** Research and, as soon as practical (and subject to funding from the MPC), undertake registration of the logo selected in the Hugo Awards Logo Contest as service marks. We anticipate coming to the MPC and the Business Meeting in 2010 with a recommended change to the standard service mark notice.
- 2. Incorporation of logos in as many places as possible.** Work with the 2010 and 2011 Worldcons to publicize the Hugo Award logo to establish it as the official logo of the Award.
- 3. Hugo Voter Package.** Discuss with John Scalzi taking the load of organizing the Hugo Voter Package off of him and formalizing relationships with publishers so we can get this done every year, (preferably through the Hugo Award web site so that Worldcons don't have to reinvent the wheel each year). Work with future Worldcons to attempt to establish standard processes for this package so that they can use it to market membership sales, particularly supporting membership sales.
- 4. Hugo Awards Web Site.** Begin a redesign of the existing TheHugoAwards web site in cooperation with the winner of the Hugo Award Logo Contest, who has offered to assist. We assume that the Hugo Awards web site will remain at its current host (LaughingSquid) and content-management system (WordPress) for the next few years at the very least. Plans in the MPC to redesign Worldcon.org and WSFS.org will remain separate, and those site re-launches, if they do happen, will be separate from TheHugoAwards.org for the next few years at least.
- 5. Hugo Winner Stickers.** Investigate selling “Hugo Award Winner” stickers incorporating the Hugo Award Winner Logo to publishers for book covers, and/or licensing the use of the Hugo Award Winner Logo for winning books/works. Revenue from such projects would be used to pay for ongoing maintenance and registration of WSFS marks, reducing the need to call on Worldcon committees for additional funding.
- 6. Hugo Award Merchandise.** Investigate possible Hugo merchandise in addition to what has already been licensed through the MPC, with the proceeds to be used, as above, for ongoing mark registration and maintenance. Should we be able to raise sufficient revenue, the MPC might be able to return additional funds to future Worldcons.

Web Site Statistics

Top traffic sources

Excludes 'bots and the obvious (direct requests, Google, Yahoo, Wikipedia, etc.)

- Girl Genius (3,733 visits)
- Anticipation (3,457 visits)
- Neil's Journal (3,372 visits)
- BoingBoing (2,465 visits)
- GallifreyOne (2,033 visits)

Top visiting countries

The site logged visits from 189 different countries. Top sources (in order):

- USA
- UK
- Canada
- Australia
- Spain
- Germany
- Italy
- Poland
- France
- Turkey

(Japan was 15th)