**[Michael Acton Smith](http://www.parliamentspeakers.com/Speaker/Michael%2BActon%2BSmith)**

**Entrepreneur**

Michael Acton Smith is the dynamic young entrepreneur who founded the popular gadget company Firebox and more recently, Mind Candy. Mind Candy’s flagship product, ‘Moshi Monsters’, has grown rapidly since it launched in April 2008.  22 million children around the world have signed up and every second another new player joins.  Moshi Monsters was nominated for a BAFTA in 2008 and 2009, and in 2010 will begin a global licensing campaign to take the brand into physical products.

Michael was recently appointed to sit on the Cool Brands Council which votes on the top 500 Cool Brands in the UK every year (in association with the Observer Magazine).

The internet-based gadget shop Firebox.com (originally ‘Hot Box’) is an internationally recognised household name, offering funky, innovative and quirky gadgets from around the world.  The company now turns over in excess of £10 million.

Michael Acton Smith has been fascinated by games and puzzles ever since receiving a copy of Masquerade for his seventh birthday. Whilst at university, Michael and his friends hit upon the idea of launching their own web-based games company.  In 1998, with £1000 cash given to them by Michael’s mother and using the free attic of one of their parents, Hot Box was launched.

The biggest breakthrough in their success came from the “Shot Glass Chess Set”, an idea that was born during a drunken night at the Union Bar!  In 1998 the company moved to London and having made a startling discovery about another company called Hot Box, the pair rebranded and Firebox.com was born.

Michael confesses to his naivety about business in the beginning, but was determined that, with no other competitors in the market, their idea couldn’t fail.  They set about absorbing information from every publication and source they could get their hands on in order to gain the help they needed to drive the company forward.

In fact, their growth was so spectacular that, in late 2004 Firebox was listed by *The Sunday Times* ‘Fast Track 100’ as the 13th fastest growing, privately-owned business in the UK.

Today, following the immense success of Firebox and his latest equally quirky company Mind Candy, Michael is often asked to share his success stories with the corporate sector. As one can expect of a young gifted entrepreneur, Michael’s presentation style is fun, enthusiastic and has a powerful underlying message of overcoming obstacles, sailing through the turbulent times and never giving up on the dream.

Mind Candy has become one of the world's leading developers of social multi-player games, helping kids around the world play and connect. Mind Candy’s flagship product, Moshi Monsters, has grown rapidly since it launched in April 2008.

Michael has recently featured in full page articles in [*The Evening Standard*](http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/article-23415149-new-media.do) and [*The Sun*](http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/features/2906337/UK-Facebook-for-kids-thats-a-Monster-smash.html) and [*The Financial Times*](http://www.parliamentspeakers.com/uploads/files/dcead76e-6d31-4b4b-83f7-99388538253c.pdf), and has appeared on BBC News and Reuters TV.

“The feedback has been compiled and looks great!  They ranked the event as a whole as 3.8 out of 5 (with 5 being excellent), and words like ‘inspirational’, ‘motivational’, ‘interesting’ and ‘superb’ were frequent comments!  You ranked extremely well receiving 4.3 out of 5” -  Startups Live

 ‘Michael is a top drawer speaker...I would not hesitate to recommend Michael to anyone looking for an open, interesting and knowledgeable speaker around business startup, building a business, multi channel marketing, online retailing, and online development. Thanks for a great event.’ - Event Manager, The Forum

**[To book Michael Acton Smith for your event, please contact Parliament on](http://www.parliamentspeakers.com/)**

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