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104 DISNEY'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

An exclusive look at how Jimmy Pitaro is driving new growth in multiple ways for Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media.



136 WBCP: A LEAGUE OF OPPORTUNITY

Warner Bros. Consumer Products' president Pam Lifford continues to craft a definitive global strategy and dedicated organization that is ready to drive growth for the new DC films and characters, as well as its long-standing franchises and location-based entertainment.



143 ENDLESS POWER

Saban Brands is gearing up with a wide range of initiatives from new products to live events that will celebrate 25 years of "Power Rangers" in 2018.



174 NICK JR.: FIRING ON ALL CYLINDERS

Nickelodeon and Viacom's Nick Jr. preschool business is on fire with some of the hottest kids' properties currently on the market and a strong pipeline of content that will keep the excitement growing.

- 46 LICENSING EXPO 2017 OVERVIEW
- 80 RAINBOW: A SAVVY STYLE
- 88 ENDEMOL SHINE: SHINING ON
- 92 GENIUS BRANDS INTERNATIONAL: RIDING HIGH
- 96 BEANSTALK: LOOKING BACK TO LOOK AHEAD
- 100 MGA ENTERTAINMENT: KIDS' CLUB
- 110 FLICK PICS 2017
- 124 SPECIAL REPORT: ORIGINAL NEW CONTENT
- 150 SPECIAL REPORT: SUBSCRIPTION BOX SERVICES
- 154 HASBRO: CREATING THE RIGHT MOOD FOR A NEW FRANCHISE
- 160 SCOTT LIVING: BUILDING A BROTHERLY BRAND
- 166 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC: EXPLORING NEW DEALS
- 172 FREMANTLEMEDIA NORTH AMERICA: CLASH OF THE 'GODS'
- 178 'MASHA AND THE BEAR': 'MASHA'S' GLOBAL OUTLOOK
- 182 ENTERTAINMENT ONE: GROWING UP AND OUT
- 184 SPECIAL REPORT: VIRTUAL REALITY
- 186 SPECIAL REPORT: SOCIAL INFLUENCERS



128 ABG: GROWTH IS A SLAM DUNK

With nine acquisitions over the past two years, ABG is expanding rapidly internationally, and now has 27 brands in its portfolio across celebrity and entertainment, fashion and sports.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENTS

- 14 **EDITOR'S NOTE**
The Future is Now
- 18 **BIZ BRIEFS**
Retail news, licensing deals and more.
- 190 **LAST WORD**
BuzzFeed: Catching the Buzz

ON THE COVER



Jimmy Pitaro, chairman, Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media

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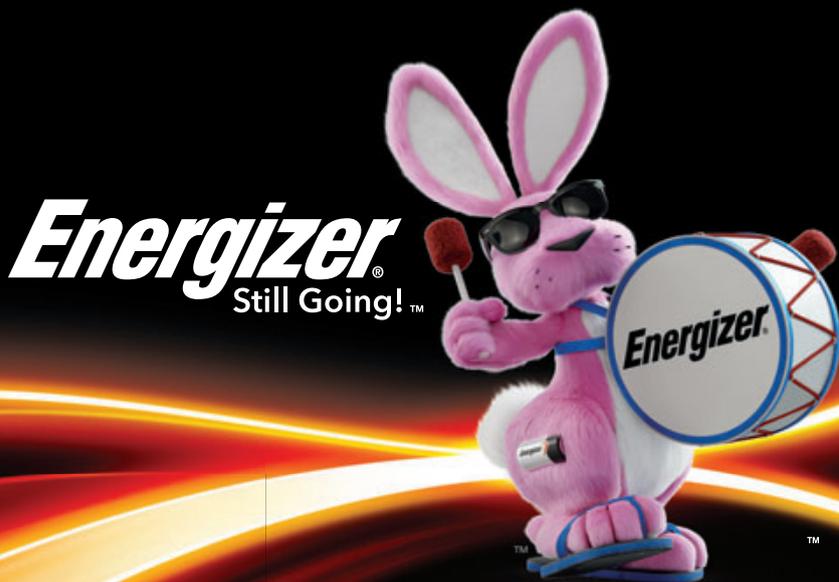


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THE FUTURE IS NOW

When you look back over the past decade, it's clear that the licensing business has grown significantly and experienced numerous changes, but nothing quite like what the next decade will bring.



by **TONY LISANTI**
global editorial director

As licensing executives from around the world converge on Las Vegas this month for the sector's largest and one of its most important events of the year, it's the perfect time to not only think about the next big deal or hot property, but also to look ahead and to understand the changing dynamics of the licensing business.

It's easy to get caught up in the moment, but it's critical for every executive to take the time to look ahead and reflect on the trends that will impact the future of the licensing business. And it's always amazing just how fast time goes by.

For example, after celebrating my 10th anniversary with *License Global* and experiencing first-hand many of the changes in licensing, it is clear that the industry has evolved into a highly sophisticated global business.

Do you remember when Licensing Expo moved to Las Vegas in 2009? Now the trade show has expanded to include multiple events and into what is now called "Licensing Week."

Over the past 10 years, the licensing sector has grown by \$135 billion in retail sales and the annual Top Global Licensors report has expanded from 75 to 150. *License Global's* digital news products have grown from weekly to daily and include a weekly European edition and various other special editions throughout the year.

In this last decade, there has been phenomenal global growth of the business into territories not thought possible a decade ago, and Licensing Expo now has events in Japan and China to address those markets. Over the past two years, the NYC Brand Licensing Summit, which has received huge support from leading industry executives, has also demonstrated the significance and value of the business. And on a personal note, I have had the distinct pleasure to meet and interview some of the most talented executives in consumer products, brand development, marketing, et al.

But that's all in the past. What's important today are the key factors that will shape licensing in the next decade. This special May issue, which has numerous articles and interviews with leading executives from the world's largest licensors, as well as those on the rise, has some of the answers. Consider these factors:

- **Content**—The importance of new content across multiple platforms from the big screen to short-form digital will become increasingly important for all licensors and their respective IP. From the "Hanazuki" digital series, Hasbro's new franchise in the making (page

154), to the "Mighty Morphin Meower Rangers" shorts from Saban Brands (page 143), each exemplify the need to connect with consumers in different ways.

- **Social media**—Whether it's Twitter, Instagram or some new platform yet to be developed, these resources will become more critical and commonplace for licensors to communicate with consumers. And whether it's Authentic Brands Group tweeting about Shaq, Elvis or one of its many other brands (page 128), the need to be proactive is paramount.

- **e-Commerce**—While brick-and-mortar retailers continue to face challenges and close stores, and while Walmart and Amazon may continue to dominate click-and-buy, the sector is growing and offering new opportunities for brand owners to sell merchandise.

- **Subscription boxes**—This concept is offering licensors the opportunity to sell merchandise and connect with fans on a regular basis. The special report in this issue (page 150) highlights various services and details about this alternative way to sell products.

- **Events**—From exhibits to showcases and anniversary events, licensors are investing in ways to bring a brand to consumers like National Geographic, which is developing several exhibitions such as "Explore," debuting this fall in New York (page 166).

- **Direct-to-consumer**—Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media has identified D2C as a key strategy and is developing various initiatives (page 104).

- **China**—Warner Bros. Consumer Products has identified China as a growth market and is gearing up for new initiatives in the next few years (page 136). Other Hollywood studios have plans for China as well.

In turn, for *License Global*, future headlines will be about retail sales reaching \$300 billion, the Top 150 becoming the Top 200 Global Licensors, more events around the globe and news on-demand 24/7 in multiple formats through social media platforms.

There's no doubt that it's a very different type of list from just a few short years ago, but these are just a few of the trends that will have a decided impact on the licensing business.

So, enjoy the moment and this issue, sign the next deal, celebrate Licensing Week, remember all the wonderful people you have met and then take a deep breath and think about the future, because as the saying goes, "the future is now." ©

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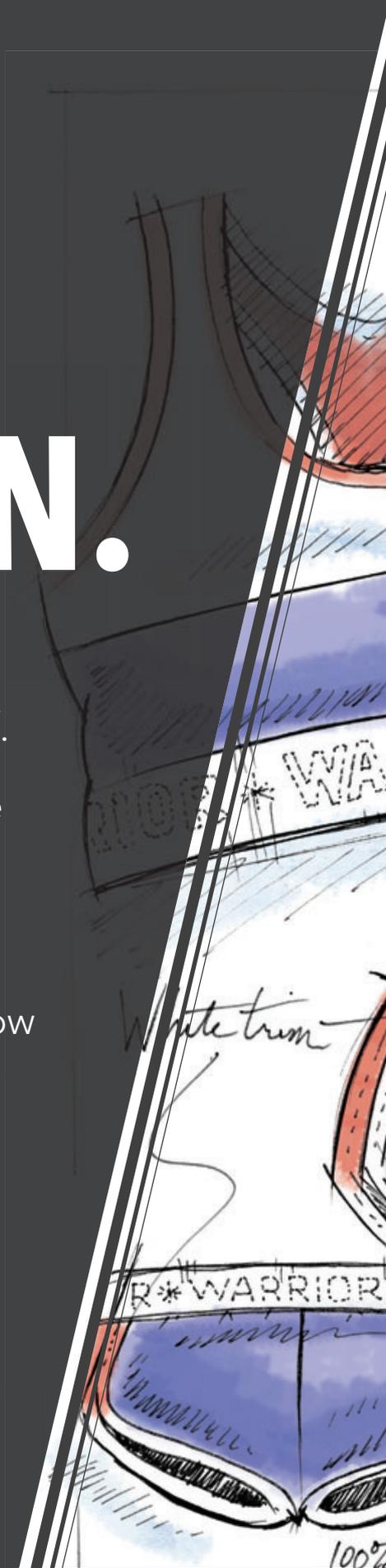
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Emoji Around the World

The Emoji Company is having a banner year with strategic moves that will only further bolster the brand.

Earlier this year, the company secured the rights to the website domain, Emoji.com, which will give all users access to Emoji's B2B website, gather all relevant information and enable them to browse its catalog of icons available for cross-category licensing. The site also links to Emoji's official online store, which is operated in conjunction with Universal Music.

In a separate deal, The Emoji Company has acquired the official Emojiville trademark, along with all related assets and domain rights, from Saban Brands.

"The acquisition of the Emojiville trademarks was a logical step for us to strengthen and extend our global brand strategy," says Marco Hüsages, chief executive officer and founder, The Emoji Company. "Based on our various trademarks and IPs, we are proactively developing new brand concepts to address different target audiences and to support our global partners with fresh and powerful marketing concepts."

The company has further extended its partnership with Bravado U.K. to manage retail, licensing, online distribution, partnerships and collaborations for its brands in the U.K., Ireland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland.

But that's not all for all things Emoji, says Hüsages.

"Since we started in 2015 and signed

our first licensing in Q2 of the same year, we have had amazing development," he says. "Since 2015, we have signed 320 agreements, are now being represented by 17 agents and official Emoji products can be found in more than 65 countries. We have filed for more than 650 trademarks globally, and we have created more than 5,200 hi-resolution icons for cross-category merchandising and licensing."

According to Hüsages, officially licensed Emoji product has "easily surpassed" \$200 million in retail sales, thanks in part to partnerships with evergreen brands such as PepsiCo, Nestle, Nikon, Fuji and Swiss Post, as well as retail partnerships with Zara, C&A, Ardene, Renner, Wego and Riply.

The food and beverage category is also strong for The Emoji Company across Europe, as are loyalty programs. "Our food and beverage segment is exploding," says Hüsages. "We also launched an amazing collectible toys program with Switzerland in its leading grocery retailer, COOP, and have successfully launched wide product ranges at both Aldi North and Aldi South throughout Germany via our partner. We will also launch several loyalty program campaigns across European countries in 2017/2018."

But it's not only in Europe that the brand is on the upswing—the company has recently signed a direct-to-retail agreement with Walmart Mexico.

Also in the works for the company is its first sticker app and even a music label.

Learning English with Aardman

Aardman Animations, the production studio behind the "Shaun the Sheep" franchise and "Timmy Time," has teamed with the British Council, the U.K.'s international organization for cultural relations and educational opportunities, for an educational endeavor that aims to teach the English language to young learners around the world.

The program launched first in Chile and Singapore and is continually growing to include further learning centers around the world. The early English program uses a learning approach based on Aardman's characters as they incorporate themed classrooms and teachings based on the two TV series.

The characters are a part of a range of learning products such as stories, activity books and digital resources targeted to early learners, ages 2 to 6, as well as a series of apps. To-date, the relationship has rolled out 46 episodes for the program.

"The relationship with the British Council started in 2014 when we were approached to collaborate on themed centers," says Sean Clarke, head of rights and brand development, Aardman

Animations. "We embraced a partnership with the British Council in that we felt it was a great opportunity. What Aardman can bring is our characters, entertainment and engagement with children, ages 2 to 6, which the British Council can marry with the premium, world-renowned expertise in the teaching of English."

"We've got many years of experience around the world—in more than 100 countries for 75-plus years," says Kate Joyce, head of early years, British Council. "Parents around the world have been seeing the benefit of introducing their children to English at an earlier age in recent years, and we wanted to give those children the opportunity to learn in a fun way that inspires them, and which enables them to play an explore. That is one of the main reasons we wanted to pair up with Aardman—it brings those learnings to life."





Tinderbox to Rep 'Call of Duty'

Activision has appointed Tinderbox, the digital division of Beanstalk, to represent its video game franchise "Call of Duty" for licensing in Europe.

Tinderbox will now actively pursue licensing opportunities for the brand across apparel, fashion accessories, gifts and novelty, consumer electronics and home décor. The agency will also aim to create new touchpoints with fans beyond the game.

"We are thrilled to partner with Tinderbox to build our 'Call of Duty' consumer products footprint in Europe," says Ashley Maily, vice president, global consumer products, Activision Publishing. "Tinderbox truly understands the 'Call of Duty' franchise's place in entertainment and pop culture. This, combined with their expertise in building major brand extension programs, provides us with an opportunity to reach our fans outside of the core game through a variety of highly relevant, global product extensions."

"Call of Duty" was the No. 1 top-selling console video game franchise worldwide in 2016—the seventh time in the last eight years—and continues to inspire a raft of consumer products due its high level of player engagement from a global community of fans.

"Call of Duty" is one of the most iconic video game franchises in history," says Dan Amos, head, Tinderbox. "Its reach extends into the fabric of pop culture with references in all forms of media, globally. Tinderbox is proud to join the team at Activision in developing consumer product extensions for this massive franchise throughout Europe. 'Call of Duty' has potential across a broad range of categories and distribution channels; we are excited to begin work and look forward to great program extensions to come."

McFarlane Pairs for Henson Cult Classics

The Jim Henson Company has partnered with licensee McFarlane Toys to create figures of classic characters from two of Henson's most well-known features, *Labyrinth* and *The Dark Crystal*.

McFarlane Toys has produced highly detailed figures and construction sets for various entertainment properties, and this collaboration with The Jim Henson Company will give fans of these iconic films new and unique action figures that are "true to life" replicas of their on-screen personas.

The upcoming toys will include a 7-inch figure of *Labyrinth's* Jareth The Goblin King; and for *The Dark Crystal*, fans will find figures of Jen and Kira. Each figure will be highly detailed and come fully articulated to recreate infamous movie scenes.

These figures will also debut in new window box collector packaging and will come with *Labyrinth*- and *The Dark Crystal*-branded detailed bases.

"Fans of both *Labyrinth* and *The Dark Crystal* have continued to increase over time, with both brands enjoying the passionate and loyal support of these committed followers," says Federico San Martin, vice president, global consumer products, The Jim Henson Company. "We know that McFarlane Toys will do an excellent job realizing the characters that defined these classic adventures and bring them to our legions of fans around the world."

McFarlane Toys' *Labyrinth* Jareth The Goblin King figure will be available at major retailers this November; while *The Dark Crystal* figures will hit shelves in spring in 2018.

"Jim Henson was one of the most visually creative minds, and these incredible movies are just the tip of the iceberg," says Todd McFarlane, owner and chief executive officer, McFarlane Toys.

"We pride ourselves on our creativity and attention to detail, and to be able to make figures of these iconic characters is something pretty special."





BBC
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Redibra Celebrates Big Wins in 2016/2017

Brazilian licensing and brand extension agency Redibra is celebrating the success of several of its high-profile partnerships including Coca-Cola, Nintendo, Fox and the animated preschool property, “Lottie Dottie.”

“2016 was a good year for Redibra, despite the economy in Brazil,” says David Diesendruck, president and partner, Redibra.

In keeping with his company’s mission to “invest in Brazil,” Diesendruck points to regional breakout preschool animation “Galinha Pintadinha,” which is among the first Brazilian brands to find major success in more than 20 countries. “Galinha Pintadinha” can be found on 14 online platforms, has four DVDs and more than 40 million downloads for its app.

For 2017, the brand will get a new extension with “Mini Lottie Dottie,” featuring the star of “Galinha Pintadinha.”

“Lottie Dottie’s’ Brazilian YouTube channel was the first to reach 5 billion views, and it was awarded for this important milestone,” says Diesendruck. “This year, we will launch ‘Mini Lottie Dottie,’ a new property with a different content and visual identity, which will continue with new stories.”

Redibra has also found success for the Coca-Cola brand in the country.

During the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games, Coca-Cola products could be found at two retail locations within Olympic Park, each of which had almost total sell-through, says Redibra.

A high point for the brand in the country was at São Paulo Fashion Week, which found celebrity Xuxa’s daughter Sasha style a collection of Coca-Cola looks.

Redibra also gained exposure for Nintendo’s evergreen property “Super Mario Bros.” and its main characters, Mario and Luigi, at Carnival, “Brazil’s most important



event of the year.” The brand activation supported the launch of a fast fashion direct-to-retail partnership with retailer Riachuelo at 300 stores nationwide, says Diesendruck.

“We expect 2018 to be an even better year for Redibra as the economic scenario improves,” says Diesendruck. “We believe it is time to invest in Brazil.”

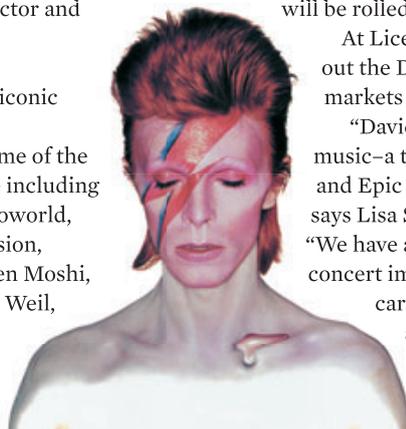
Epic Says ‘Lets Dance’ with David Bowie

Epic Rights and Perryscope have recently partnered to represent the legacy of legendary award-winning singer, songwriter, actor and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer, David Bowie.

The companies are collaborating to develop a comprehensive range of quality products using Bowie’s iconic imagery.

Epic Rights and Perryscope have already secured some of the leading licensees in the industry for Bowie merchandise including ABG Accessories, Aquarius, Angotti Designs, Bentex, Bioworld, Brown Trout, C&D Visionary, CMD Figpin, Cotton Division, Creative Apparel Concepts, FIPO, Freeze, Impact, Lauren Moshi, Liquid Blue, Midnight Rider, Perri’s Leathers, Raymond Weil, Ropa Viva, Trecco and Z Supply.

The David Bowie program will offer a library of assets that feature new photos, logos, concert passes and album cover art that span Bowie’s entire career,



many of which have never before been used for merchandising. Products will be rolled out over the coming months.

At Licensing Expo, Epic Rights and Perryscope are looking to build out the David Bowie licensing program into new categories and new markets globally.

“David Bowie was one of the most iconic figures in popular music—a true visionary with an unparalleled talent and theatrical flair, and Epic Rights and Perryscope are honored to represent his estate,” says Lisa Streff, executive vice president, global licensing, Epic Rights.

“We have a library of assets that features never-before-seen photos, concert images, logos and album covers spanning his 40-plus year career, some of which we will unveil at Licensing Expo. We also have a roster of best-in-class partners already on board to begin rolling out merchandise this year, and we look forward to honoring his legacy as we continue to build the Bowie program.”



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BBC

DOCTOR WHO

Hungry Caterpillar Set to Blow Out 50 Candles

It has been 50 years since Eric Carle published his now beloved childhood staple, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, and to celebrate the momentous milestone, The Joester Loria Group, The World of Eric Carle's licensing agent, has a host of promotions and partnerships planned for the timeless brand.

"The 50th anniversary will tap into the book's global popularity," says Debra Joester, president, The Joester Loria Group. "Collaborations, pop-up shops, QSRs, in-school programs and retail partnerships driven by dynamic social media are in the works in Japan, the U.K., Germany, Australia, and of course, the U.S."

The property's "good for you" positioning has made it an ideal partner for quality brands that connect to new moms, says Joester. For example, in Germany, Mulipa, a world leader in infant nutrition, partnered with the World of Eric Carle for their First 1,000 Days campaign, which promotes healthy food choices for babies. The campaign was supported with dynamic marketing that reached 20 million consumers. The campaign kicked off in September 2016 on Weltkindertag (World Children's Day) and will again be celebrated this year.

As part of the 50th anniversary campaign, The World of Eric Carle has partnered with Dr. Brown's Baby for a co-branded collection, a first for the brand. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* will be featured on infant pacifiers/teethers, training cups and solid feeding products and hit retail in the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Australia and the Netherlands.

"Dr. Brown's Baby is excited to align with the World of Eric Carle, as we are both committed to the healthy development of children and their families," says Christy Pogorelac, director, research, Handi-Craft Company, owners of the Dr. Brown's brand.

The *Very Hungry Caterpillar* will also return to the stage with the "Very Hungry Caterpillar and Friends" live show. The event kicks off in New York City in October and will make its way to London in time for the holiday season.

The show first debuted in Australia in 2015 and has since toured 270 cities and opened the curtain on 1,180 shows.

Other stops on the new leg of the tour include San Francisco, Calif.; Dallas, Texas; and Portland, Ore.

Apparel is a key global category for the brand, says Joester, and several exclusive collections and direct-to-retail programs are planned for retailers such as Toys 'R' Us, Japan, Big W Australia, M & Co in the U.K. and Netto in Germany. Licensee Happy Threads is also on board for toddler and infant apparel, which will launch its first collection this fall in the U.S. Other licensees include Intimo for sleepwear and Jaxxwear for onesies and related baby apparel, which is already on shelf at Nordstrom and other retailers.

Other plans for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* brand include curriculum and in-school campaigns that will engage teachers and bring activities to classrooms across the U.S., as well dynamic social media campaigns targets to moms and families. Fiftieth birthday products are in the works this year, as are new apps and special edition collectibles for holiday 2018.

Maui and Sons Surfs into Zara

California lifestyle and surfwear brand Maui and Sons has teamed up with the retailer Zara to create a co-branded collection of apparel.

The new eight-piece capsule will highlight Maui and Sons' brand heritage by utilizing classic artwork and the company's "cookie" logo on a variety of articles such as crop tops, woven shirts, daisy dukes, denim pants, denim shirts, army coats and more.

"We worked very closely with Zara to develop this collection, and we are very excited to see the reaction in the coming weeks," says Blake Harrington, licensing director, Maui and Sons. "The Zara teams' attention to detail and their precision in executing this collection was top notch. We want to say a special thank you to the Zara Basics designers for working tirelessly to make this collection look absolutely stunning."

The Zara x Maui and Sons collaboration is now available in Zara locations globally as well as online at Zara.com.



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Rovio Aims for ‘Strategic, Sustainable’ Growth

Company rounds out global roster of licensing agents with appointment of Evolution in the U.S.

Rovio has had its share of ups and downs since 2009 when “Angry Birds” first exploded onto the scene, but in the past few years, the company has set a trajectory of growth with a steady, focused approach to both its content and licensing.

“There were a couple more challenging years. We tried a lot of different things, and some of them didn’t work out,” says Simo Hämäläinen, who was recently promoted to senior vice president of brand licensing at Rovio. “We decided we needed a more strategic, focused approach, and we have executed that very successfully over the past few years. Our goal now is to do fewer things, bigger and better, in games as well as in licensing.”

The approach is paying off, with last year’s *The Angry Birds Movie* propelling the brand back to growth after several years of declines. In 2016, Rovio posted a 34 percent increase in gross revenue and a record year for its games division. And that momentum is continuing into 2017, with the company reporting 94.4 percent year-on-year growth in Q1 and revenue of €66.3 million (€9.7 million of which came from brand licensing).

A key component of the company’s new strategy is a shift from in-house management of its licensing programs to an agency model, allowing Rovio to focus on its core competencies of game and content development.

“When ‘Angry Birds’ was launched, there was a huge hype around the brand, and the licensing program grew so rapidly that we couldn’t, in a way, control it,” says Hämäläinen. “Now we are in a much better place, much more strategic, working toward the long term and building a solid licensing program that is more sustainable.”

Over the past few years, Rovio has hired regional licensing agents in all major global markets, with one notable exception—the U.S. Enter Evolution, which has just been appointed to manage

Rovio’s consumer products program and retail expansion in the world’s largest licensing market.

“Our plan is to focus on the core piece of business, which is obviously the games and the content, and help the consumer products program to be further integrated into those big media drivers,” says Travis Rutherford, partner and chief revenue officer, Evolution. “The first time around, ‘Angry Birds’ did in some respects get over-licensed, I think everybody recognizes that. But Rovio is committed to future content and has a lot of great stuff coming—multiple new game releases, short-form animation and a second feature film in development—and that will be the catalyst to rebuild the franchise.”

Among those pieces of new content is a spin-off program for the Hatchlings, the show-stealing baby Angry Birds that first appeared in the *The Angry Birds Movie*. Rovio will soon

wrap production on the first 30 episodes of a new short-form animation series featuring the Hatchlings called “Angry Birds Blues.” The first batch of episodes are available to view now on the company’s own ToonsTV platform, with these and all new episodes rolling out later this year on YouTube and other TV channels. A Hatchlings-focused game is also planned for release later this year, and Evolution is currently developing licensing initiatives that will launch in 2018 for the U.S.

“We think there’s a real opportunity with Hatchlings for a spin-off franchise,” says Rutherford. “They are core Angry Birds obviously, they’re part of the ecosystem, but they also appeal to a slightly different demographic: they can go more girl. We’re looking at [2018] first and second quarter initiatives; we think the Hatchlings are a perfect fit to essentially own the Easter timeframe.”

In the longer term, Rovio is currently eyeing a tentative release date of September 2019 for the forthcoming film sequel, which will also be a key driver for the brand’s merchandising efforts.

“The first movie exceeded expectations, so I think the marketplace is excited about the opportunities for the coming years, with a new film coming down the pipeline,” says Rutherford. “We intend to build a pretty sizeable licensing program around it.”

Rovio has lofty ambitions for the future, but with the help of Evolution and its other partners around the globe, the company is determined not to repeat the past.

“We’ve got a franchise that has had some phenomenal success. We know it’s gone through a down cycle, but we’re going to bring our resources, knowledge and relationships to bear,” says Rutherford. “We’re going to help Rovio align their content with the proper avenues, so it can have as much influence over product opportunities as possible, and we’re not going to over-license it. It’s about being smart about how much, when and where it goes and rebuilding some brand affinity.”





CBeebies Builds STEAM

The U.K.'s CBeebies network has given the greenlight to FremantleMedia Kids & Family for "Bitz & Bob," a comedy adventure series that combines funny and whimsical stories with key principles of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math).

The preschool-targeted series will center on 8-year-old Bitz and her younger brother Bob as they get creative and make creations in Bitz's "Maker-space" treehouse, which they then weave into magical stories that bring her inventions to life.

"Bitz & Bob" incorporates the guidance of two experts from the STEAM sector in the U.K. and U.S., Helen Heggie, director, STEMFirst, and Dr. Lisa Regalla, deputy director, Maker Ed.

"The compelling stories we are creating in 'Bitz & Bob' seamlessly integrate key aspects of STEAM into the series narrative to create artful solutions to engineering challenges," says Rick Glankler, president and general manager, FremantleKids & Family. "Whether they know it or not, kids are applying engineering principles on a daily basis, from creating paper planes to learning to ride a bike. This new show truly re-defines what engineering means, and our funny and 'girlstrous' lead character Bitz provides multiple fun and persuasive reasons to break down barriers and encourage young girls to get more involved."

To complement the series, a short-form, live-action companion show, "Bitz & Bob: Let's Make It," will provide children with step-by-step instructions to create the things they see in the main series, as well as bite-sized pieces of information on the specific engineering principles at work in each episode.

"We always aim to inspire on CBeebies, and I hope that 'Bitz & Bob' will encourage a new generation of engineers," says Kay Benbow, controller, CBeebies. "Bitz is a wonderful female role model, she is full of creative ideas and energy that will take our viewers on adventures that we know will fire their imaginations."

CoolSchool Makes the Grade

CoolSchool, a children's YouTube channel aimed at kids ages 4 to 9, will showcase its suite of brands now available for licensing at this year's Licensing Expo.

Launched in 2012 by Weitz and Rob Kurtz, CoolSchool is created by Driver Digital Studios and is making its mark with original content that now has more than 630,000 subscribers, 730 million video views and boasts 2.5 billion minutes of content consumed.

The concept for CoolSchool is rather elementary.

"It's time to make kids laugh," says Weitz, a father of five. "There needs to be a place for kids that is really wholesome, safe and makes you laugh."

Key CoolSchool characters include Ms. Booksy, who immerses herself in the story by bringing books to life via animation and live-action; Crafty Carol, who makes simple craft projects for kids; and Drew Pendous, CoolSchool's first animated superhero, who uses his artistic talents to draw gadgets that get him out of trouble.

Driver Digital Studios also has a separate production service, generating YouTube content for Mattel's "Thomas The Tank Engine" and American Girl brands, to name a few.

Represented by Danny Simon of The Licensing Group, CoolSchool founder and chief executive officer Scott Weitz will be meeting with potential licensors at the trade show, taking place in Las Vegas, Nev., May 23-25.

Future goals for CoolSchool includes to continue, as Weitz puts it "entertaining children in a great way," building out longer versions of its programming on other content platforms, and growing CoolSchool's licensing portfolio.

"We believe in kids, and CoolSchool speaks to that," says Weitz. "This is wide open, and it's great content that parents would love to know their kids are watching. It's really positive."

COOL
SCHOOL

Line Friends Takes on the World

Line Friends is continuing to broaden its global presence as well as its product offerings through an expanding network of licensing partners, agents, retail activations and more.

Originally launched as a series of sticker characters for the mobile messenger application “Line” in 2011, Line Friends quickly expanded into a worldwide character brand and began licensing in Japan in 2012. Since then, the company has made a host of deals in countries such as China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. In 2015, “Line” established the Line Friends Corporation in order to improve its value as a character brand.

Today, Line Friends boasts 73 stores worldwide that carry a variety of products ranging from apparel to stationery to cosmetics and more. Line Friends’ permanent brick-and-mortar locations can be found throughout Korea, Japan, China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. The company is set to open its first official store in the U.S. this July in New York City’s Times Square.

The character brand has also hosted a number of pop-up retail locations across the globe, including in the U.S., Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, China, Colombia, Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Korea.

In addition to its permanent and pop-up locations, Line Friends merchandise can also be found in specialty stores, convenient

stores, drug stores and hypermarkets.

Recent collaborations for the brand include a partnership with Samsung Electronics, which saw the launch of Line Friends-branded accessories for Galaxy devices in 15 countries across Asia. Another partnership with McDonald’s China saw a series of promotions for the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Other companies that have launched products—ranging from fashion to beauty and homewares to foods—featuring Line Friends include: Brompton, Lamy, L’Occitane en Provence, Thermos, Vans, Mr Maria, Moleskine, AIAIAI, Muurla, Swarovski, Uniqlo, Gustavsberg, Bearbrick, BookBinders Design, Arabia and Rivers Drinkware, among many others. The company is also seeking new opportunities across categories such as artificial

intelligence and information technology.

Additionally, Line Friends has partnered with design label PushButton to launch its own fashion brand, called PLF (pushButton x Line Friends). The new clothing collection is expected to roll out to the global market this year, including at the company’s upcoming New York flagship.

The company has also brought on a raft of licensing agents to expand its worldwide reach. Agents that have signed on to represent Line Friends include Haven in Australia and New Zealand; Exim Colombia in Central America; and Animation International in South East Asia, including Taiwan and Hong Kong. Line Friends is also currently in contact with other agencies to expand its business into Europe and North America.

“With Line Friends’ ceaseless dedication to quality and experience, we work with other brands that will both shape and accentuate our characters’ unique personalities and also attain an aura of uniqueness and distinctiveness that other character brands do not have,” says Sowon Jon, head of licensing, Line Friends. “With our own philosophy for collaboration and licensing, we proudly present the outstanding portfolios of our licensing business and are working on seeking new partners who we can work with in synergy.”



Studio 100 Makes Big Claim in m4e



Studio 100 has acquired a 68 percent stake in German media company m4e, making the international production and distribution company is now one of the largest European companies for children’s and family entertainment.

Hans Ulrich Stoeff, chief executive officer, m4e, will lead the activities of the Studio 100 Group in the home markets of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, as well as in the

international market.

The library of award-winning children’s and family programming at m4e includes more than 2,300 episodes broadcast in more than 150 territories worldwide, including “Mia and me,” “Tip the Mouse”, and “Wissper,” “The Beatrix Girls” and “Me, Mum & Mystery,” among others.

The m4e Group includes Tex-ass Textilvertriebs, Telescreen, m4e Television, the joint venture companies Hahn & m4e Productions and YEP! TV Betriebs, as well as m4e Licensing & Merchandising, a full-service agency/division representing international entertainment brands such as “Beyblade,” “Yo-kai Watch” and “Super Wings”

Studio 100 key properties include children’s television shows “Maya the Bee,” “Arthur and the Minimoys,” “The Wild Adventures of Blinky Bill,” “Vic the Viking” and “Nils Holgersson.”

“We are very pleased with this next step in our internationalization,” says Hans Bourlon, chief executive officer, Studio 100. “The synergies created by this acquisition will pay off in the coming years.”

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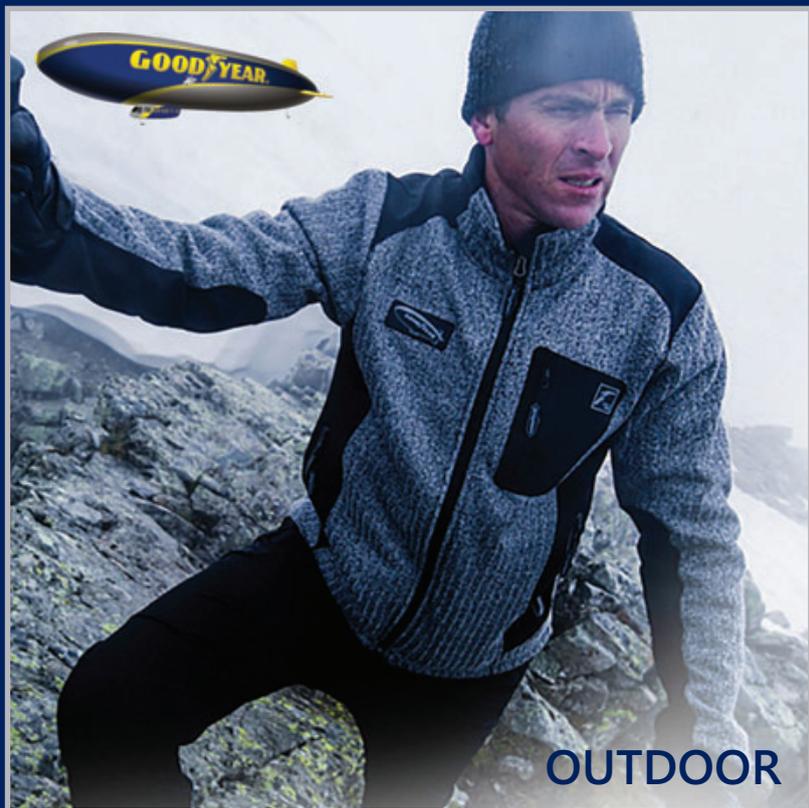


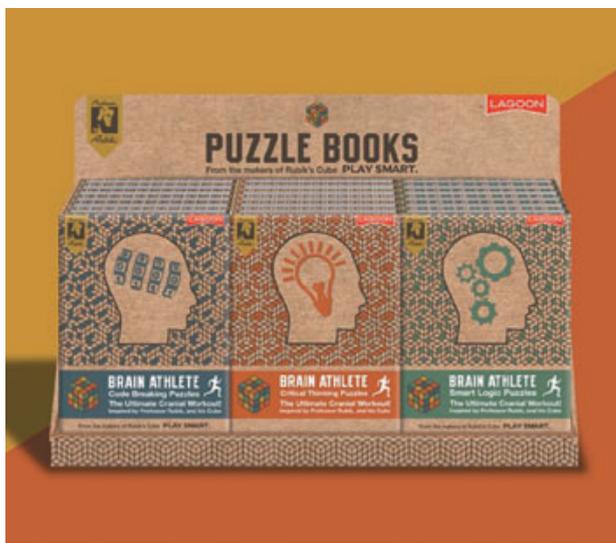
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Lifestyle Collections





Smiley to Launch New Rubik's Brand

The Smiley Company and Rubik's Brand (for which Smiley serves as master licensee) will collaborate with The Lagoon Group to create the first line of products under the new Professor Rubik's brand.

Professor Rubik's, created by Nicolas Loufrani, chief executive officer, The Smiley Company, together with the team at Rubik's Brand and inspired by the early life of inventor Erno Rubik, pays tribute to his creation of the first Rubik's Cube in 1974.

Developed by The Lagoon Group, the range will fuse innovative design with compelling content as Professor Rubik's joins a roster of licensed brands that include Ladybird, the Natural History Museum, Beano and the Imperial War Museum.

The range of products will include gift books, tabletop puzzles in tins, card sets with IQ tests and more.

"Professor Rubik's is a new brand extension that we have created at Smiley Studio based on the current trends for retro games and publishing," says Loufrani. "I'm really happy to see that it has appealed to such a great company as The Lagoon Group."

10 Years of Striker

Licensing agency Striker Entertainment is celebrating 10 years, marking a decade of representing some of the most diverse and interesting up-and-coming and established brands.

"Striker's 10th anniversary is less about celebrating our individual accomplishments as a company, but rather, celebrating the collective accomplishments and collaborations between our clients, our licensee and retail partners, and the organization that we have built to help facilitate multi-faceted consumer products programs that service the people who really matter in the overall equation... the fans," says Russell Binder, partner, Striker Entertainment.

Striker recently signed on to build a consumer product programs for Laika, a producer of CG, stop-motion and cel animated films. Striker has been tapped to represent Laika's library of films including *Kubo and the Two Strings*, *Coraline*, *Paranorman* and *The Boxtrolls*, as well as an as-yet titled upcoming animated feature film.

Striker's television roster includes "The Tick," an upcoming live-action television series from Sony Television based on the classic comic book character; "Ultimate Beastmaster," the new Netflix competition show; "Preacher," based on the DC/Vertigo comic book series, which

begins its second season on AMC in June; AMC's "The Walking Dead," the critically acclaimed, highly rated television series that has been nominated for three LIMA International Licensing awards, including Best Live-Action Entertainment Property of the Year; "Fear the Walking Dead," the companion show; "Into the Badlands," the martial arts series; "Mr. Pickles," the irreverent Adult Swim animated comedy; and several other upcoming shows to be announced at this month's Licensing Expo.

Also on Striker's radar is "Five Nights at Freddy's," a horror video game franchise that the agency continues to expand a footprint for around the world. Other gaming franchises represented by Striker—digital, console and traditional—include "We Happy Few" from Compulsion Games, card game "Exploding Kittens," mobile app "Kitty Cones," art brand It's Happy Bunny and more.

"If someone would have said to us early on that I could make a living off of vampires, robots, zombies, Kaijus, superheroes, teddy bears and Angry Birds, Striker would be 25-years-old," says Binder. "The truth is that we have not been coming to 'work' for the last 10 years, and if we have our way, we will be saying the same thing at our 20th anniversary."

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Carole Postal Debuts New Agency

Licensing veteran Carole Postal has launched a new boutique licensing agency, called Spotlight Licensing and Brand Management, that will specialize in the representation of entertainment, art and design and digital properties, as well as corporate and character brands.

Postal will serve as the agency's president and brings extensive industry experience. Prior to founding Spotlight Licensing, Postal led the licensing agencies CopCorp Licensing and Knockout Licensing. During her tenure, CopCorp developed a host of successful licensing programs for a variety of properties including Jim Benton's It's Happy Bunny, international fashion brand Pink Cookie, "Thomas the Tank Engine" and Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, among others. At Knockout, she led the management of entertainment properties such as "Downton Abbey" and "Outlander."

Jodi Gottlieb will serve as the agency's senior vice president of licensing, and Ken Wong has taken on the role of director of marketing.

"Starting a new company is always exciting, but launching Spotlight Licensing is also a little bittersweet because it represents a new chapter in my professional life after the passing of my husband Bob Postal," says Postal. "Bob was co-founder and such a big part of CopCorp Licensing, and then a driving force behind Knockout Licensing, so starting a new business venture without him is a big step for me both professionally and personally. Clients and the licensing industry at large have been immensely supportive of this new venture, and we look forward to proving what we can do as Spotlight Licensing."

Spotlight has already signed several clients, including the fashion brand Vera, Great Britain's Imperial War Museums, the Victoria brand, Boo the World's Cutest Dog and "Downton Abbey"

For Vera, the agency is planning to bring a "fresh eye, renewed focus and new energy" to work with current licensees as well as to secure new opportunities in a variety of categories—ranging from iPad cases to



high-performance fabrics. Spotlight is also looking to work with other agents around the world to help expand the brand.

Meanwhile, Spotlight Licensing will help bring Imperial War Museums' vast archive, which includes items and photographs spanning the history of modern war, to licensees throughout the U.S. and Canada for the first time.

Finally, the new agency will aim to build a broad licensing program for Victoria. The curated program will aim to encompass both fan-based and lifestyle product categories.

Spotlight Licensing will make its formal debut alongside its current roster of clients at this year's Licensing Expo, May 23-25, in Las Vegas, Nev.

Bioworld Crafts Unique *Star Wars* Collection

In honor of *Star Wars* Day, which is celebrated annually on May 4, Bioworld developed a new merchandise collection inspired by Han Solo's adventures on the ice planet Hoth.

The new line features a variety of backpacks, handbags, headwear, wallets and small accessories, which embody unique aspects from the franchise's characters.

The collection also highlights details from the film *The Empire Strikes Back*, such as the color schemes of the AT-AT walkers, the imperial pilots and the rebels.

"It was the perfect opportunity for Bioworld to translate a great brand story onto the products core fans can get behind," says Jason Mayes, marketing operations manager, Bioworld. "It continues to showcase our ability to marry fandom and product innovation."

Bioworld's Hoth collection will launch this July at San Diego's International Comic-Con, followed by a full merchandise roll out this fall.





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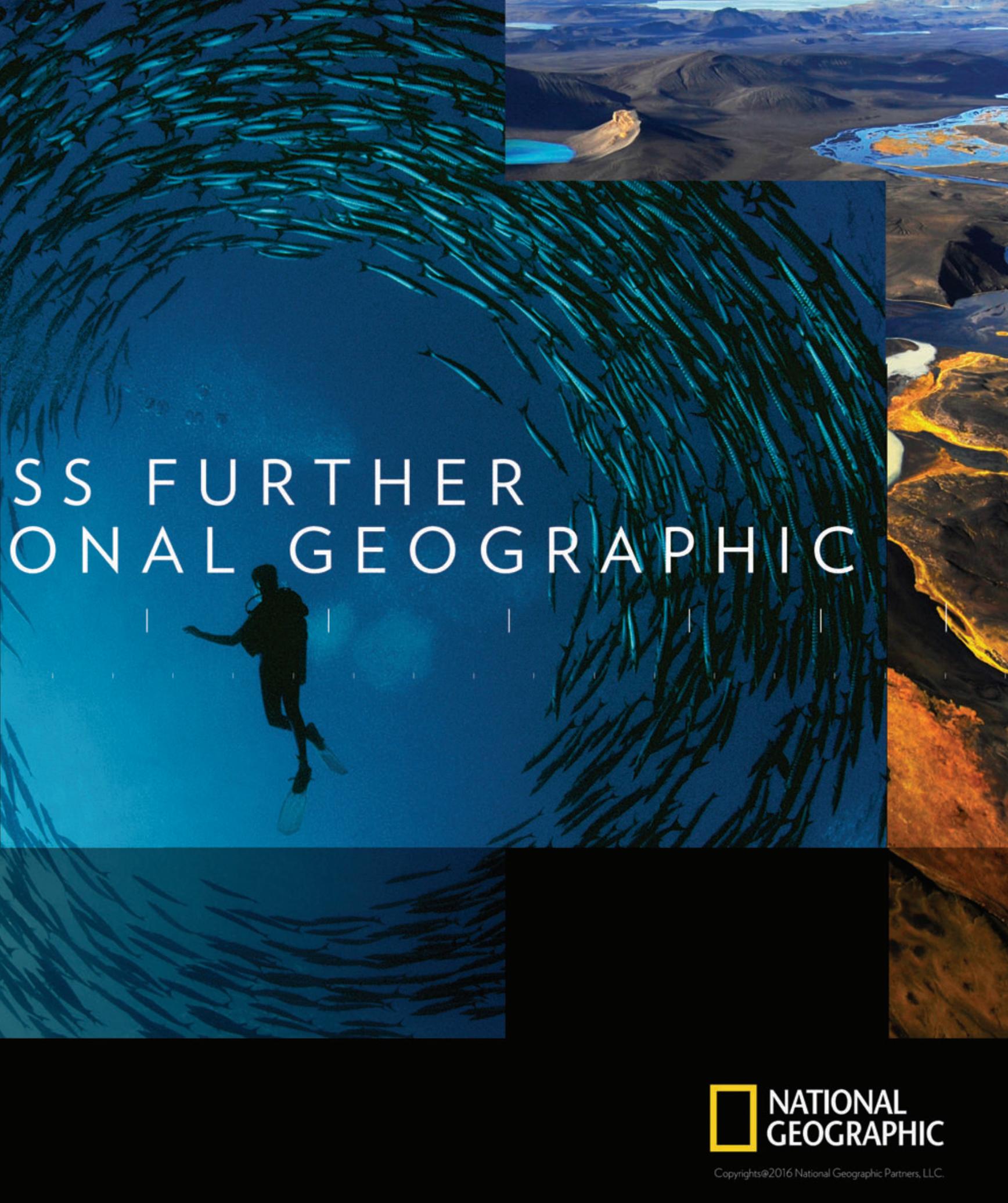
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Fox Teams for 'Buffy' 20th Anniversary

Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products has joined forces with online entertainment retailer Zavvi, part of The Hut Group, to fete the 20th anniversary of the cult television series "Buffy the Vampire Slayer."

Under the terms of the one-year agreement,

Zavvi will release an extensive collection of "Buffy"-themed merchandise, including hoodies, sweats, tees,

loungewear, exclusive prints and linen tote bags.

The online retailer will also launch a limited edition ZBox specifically for the series' fans.



"The Hut Group is excited to be entering a partnership with Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products to celebrate the 20th anniversary of 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer,'" says Claire West, brand licensing manager, The Hut Group. "'Buffy' is a cult television show that is as popular now as it was in the '90s, and we are thrilled to be working on developing a range that is relevant to both a long-serving 'Buffy' fan and a new viewer."

The new "Buffy" products will also be supported with a dedicated online and social media campaign as well as a home page takeover.

The new "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" merchandise will be available throughout the U.K. this year.

Mondo TV Teams for Science-Based Series

Henan York Animation and Mondo TV have teamed to create a new 3D-animated comedy-action series for kids, called "Invention Story," which will introduce its young audience to science concepts.

The series, targeted to 5- to 9-year-olds, will follow the adventures of an intelligent, thoughtful and creative fox who, in each episode, comes up with a new invention that amazes the rabbit population in Carrot Town, his adopted home. Everyone, that is, except the mayor, Silas Hopner, who briefly had a reputation as an inventor long ago and is jealous of Kit. His main aim now is to foil Kit or steal his ideas. By following the little fox in his efforts to build each new invention, kids will find out more about science and how it works.

The first season of "Invention Story" (104 x11) is slated to debut in 2018, and the partners feel so confident in the concept that they have already committed to the creation of five seasons of the show.

"'Invention Show' offers all the excitement and fun of the best children's

animation, combined with the thrill of discovery at seeing science in action," says Matteo Corradi, chief executive officer, Mondo TV. "We're delighted to be working with Henan York Animation on a show with such amazing potential in both the broadcast and licensing arenas."

Talks are already under way with major broadcasters, and Mondo TV has tapped Surge Licensing to bring the brand to North American shelves. At Licensing Expo this month, Mondo will be presenting the brand alongside Surge for licensing in a range of categories including toys and publishing.

"Working with Mondo TV on this delightful and highly original concept has already been a great experience," says Song Siyuan, vice president, Henan York Animation. "With the strong concept underpinning the show and a commitment to five [seasons] from the production partners, we feel this is a series that will be strongly supported by both viewers and licensees."

Artist Legacy Group Rocks with Iggy Pop

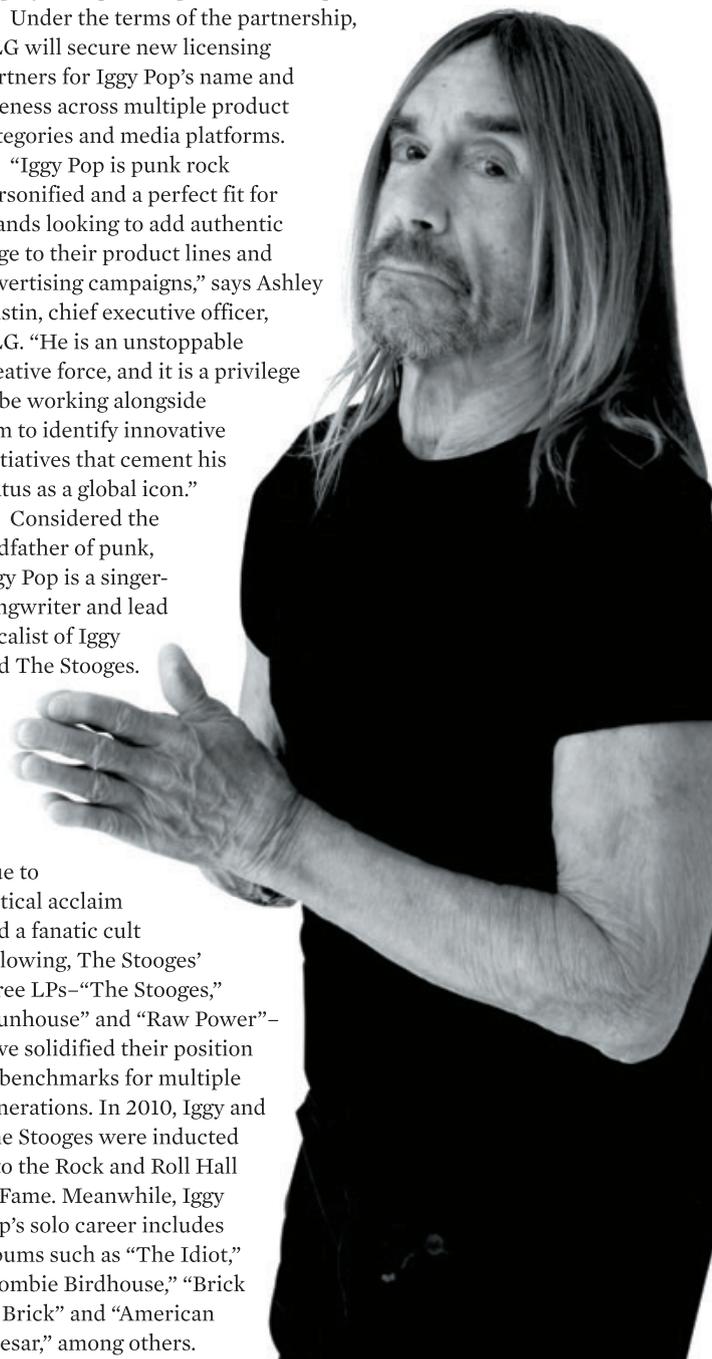
Punk rock pioneer Iggy Pop has named Artist Legacy Group as his global brand representative.

Under the terms of the partnership, ALG will secure new licensing partners for Iggy Pop's name and likeness across multiple product categories and media platforms.

"Iggy Pop is punk rock personified and a perfect fit for brands looking to add authentic edge to their product lines and advertising campaigns," says Ashley Austin, chief executive officer, ALG. "He is an unstoppable creative force, and it is a privilege to be working alongside him to identify innovative initiatives that cement his status as a global icon."

Considered the godfather of punk, Iggy Pop is a singer-songwriter and lead vocalist of Iggy and The Stooges.

Due to critical acclaim and a fanatic cult following, The Stooges' three LPs—"The Stooges," "Funhouse" and "Raw Power"—have solidified their position as benchmarks for multiple generations. In 2010, Iggy and The Stooges were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Meanwhile, Iggy Pop's solo career includes albums such as "The Idiot," "Zombie Birdhouse," "Brick by Brick" and "American Caesar," among others.



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Zara Showcases Peanuts

Zara has revealed a new range of Peanuts-themed fashion and accessories for children and women, which are now available at its locations worldwide.

CPLG's Spanish office brokered the deal on behalf of Peanuts Worldwide.

The first collection, which is targeted at girls ages 4 to 14, features Snoopy and Woodstock and includes denim dungarees, t-shirts, a dress, a sweatshirt, plimsols, a backpack and a khaki parka.

"Peanuts has a long-standing relationships with many of the Inditex brands, and we are happy to continue our partnership through this Zara collection," says Tara Botwick, senior director, international licensing, Peanuts Worldwide. "Zara's role as a key player in the fast fashion industry keeps Peanuts front of mind with the key Millennial demographic."

Meanwhile, Zara has also released a Peanuts-themed khaki jumpsuit and oversized shirt for women.

"We are thrilled to secure the launch of these multi-target collections in Zara, which confirms Inditex's continued commitment to Peanuts as we extend the alliance between these two companies," says Pau Pascual, managing director, CPLG Iberia. "Peanuts is an evergreen brand that resonates with different generations of fans, making it an attractive brand for global retailers like Zara and the rest of the Inditex brands."



Shopkins Heads to the Stage

Moose Toys and Koba Entertainment have joined forces to debut the first live theatrical production based on the collectible toy brand Shopkins.

The new show, titled "Shopkins Live," will feature the Shoppies and Shopkins characters in an all-new storyline. It will also include original pop music and video highlights as Jessicake, Bubbleisha, Peppermint and their friends prepare for Shopville's annual Funtastic Food and Fashion Fair.

"Shopkins is literally on every child's wish list," says Gilles Paquin, president and chief executive officer, Koba Entertainment. "Koba Entertainment's partnership with an innovative and leading toy manufacturer like Moose Toys allows us to bring one of the most successful toy brands in history to



life on stage."

The 90-minute show will premiere in Buffalo, New York, and will visit more than 75 U.S. cities including Boston, Mass.; Pittsburgh, Penn.; Atlanta, Ga.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Chicago, Ill.; and Grand Rapids, Mich., among many others.

"We are thrilled to have Koba Entertainment presenting our first-ever live theatrical show for Shopkins," says Nicole Hardiman, senior licensing manager, Moose Toys. "This will be a fantastic event featuring the Shopkins and Shoppies in an amazing adventure that our North American fans can experience."

"Shopkins Live" will kick off Sept. 14, with tickets going on sale next Friday, April 28.

TIME FOR ACTION & ATTITUDE!



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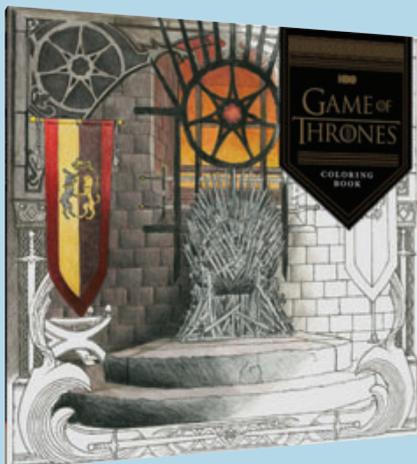
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Wine Glasses
Rabbit Tanaka



For more information on licensing opportunities, please contact Jeff Peters:
Jeff.Peters@hbo.com / 212-512-5250

For retail inquiries, please contact Michele Caruso: Michele.Caruso@hbo.com / 212-512-7391

EXPERIENCE LICENSING WEEK

Heading into its 37th year, Licensing Expo will return to Las Vegas as part of Licensing Week, which will bring educational and networking events, business-building opportunities and more to the Strip.

by ERICA GARBER

UBM's Global Licensing Group will kick off the inaugural Licensing Week May 22 with four days of continuous deal-making, networking, seminars, IP discoveries and more. With so many new opportunities available for attendees and exhibitors, *License Global* has rounded up the top highlights of licensing's must-attend event.

An On-Demand Keynote

To mark the start of Licensing Expo, which takes place May 23-25, Cole Gahagan, chief commercial officer of Fanatics, will deliver the keynote address "Licensing in the On-Demand Economy." The Tuesday, May 23, presentation takes place at 8

a.m. and will look at how Millennials and the generations that follow have shaped the company's strategies as well, as how it views the road ahead.

The keynote presentation is free to all Licensing Expo attendees and exhibitors and is part of the extensive lineup of Licensing University educational programs.

Licensing Expo

Licensing Expo, sponsored by LIMA, will serve as the pinnacle of Licensing Week and will boast more than 5,000 brands from all categories and dozens of countries around the world.

New exhibitors for the annual trade show include BuzzFeed, San Diego Zoo, Caterpillar, Scott Living/The



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Scott Brothers, Amazon Studios, John Wayne Enterprises, Ben Cooper Halloween and Coca-Cola Licensing, among many others. These new companies will join a host of Expo veterans, including Nickelodeon, Mattel, J!nx, BBC Worldwide, Kathy Ireland Worldwide, Warner Bros. Consumer Products and many more.

Licensing University

Like in past years, the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association has assembled the best of the industry for four days of seminars designed to help licensing professionals take their business to the next level.

This year's Licensing University will tackle trending issues ranging from social media strategies to sports licensing, digital entertainment and more. Each session will feature licensing executives from leading companies including NFL Players Inc., The Joester Loria Group, Beanstalk, Endemol Shine Group, King Features, CBS Consumer Products, LMCA and CAA Global Brands Group, among many others.

Opening Night Party

Sponsored by LIMA and co-hosted by Sony Music, the Opening Night Party will take place at The Havana Room and Sky Beach Club at the Tropicana Las Vegas. The evening networking event will include entertainment by Epic recording artist Jessie James Decker.

Find out more about the Opening Night Party on page 52.

Entertainment Showcases

Licensing Week will also

see a series of invitation-only Entertainment Showcases take place beginning Monday, May 22, with Hasbro Consumer Products. During the showcase, each company will debut its upcoming projects and properties.

Other companies that will be hosting private Entertainment Showcases during Licensing Week include Cartoon Network Enterprises, Disney Consumer Products, Mattel, NBCUniversal Brand Development, Nickelodeon, Sony Pictures Consumer Products, Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products and Warner Bros. Consumer Products.

International Buyers' Program Select

Also new for 2017 is the International Buyers' Program Select, which enlists the U.S. Department of Commerce's global network to recruit pre-selected international manufacturers and retailers from China, Mexico, Canada, South Korea and Japan to attend the show and meet with exhibitors.

While on site, IBP Select specialists will assist with pairing U.S. brands, international licensees, manufacturers and retailers as part of the Licensing Expo Matchmaking Service. The IBP will also help enable all U.S.-based exhibitors and international attendees to meet prospective partners based on their objectives and provide guidance.

Matchmaking Service

The Licensing Expo Matchmaking Service, which debuted last year, will return this year. The exclusive networking service will allow pre-registered attendees and exhibitors to search, connect and schedule



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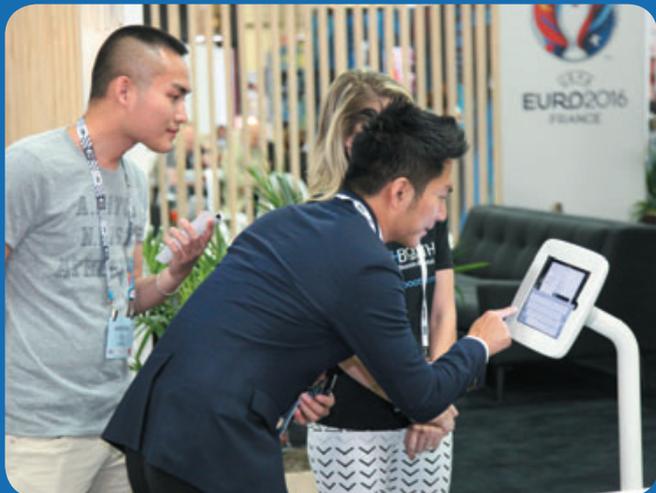
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meetings with each other before the trade show starts. The service will be free to all exhibitors and licensees, manufacturers, wholesalers/distributors, retailers and sales promotion representatives registered to attend. Brand owners and agents attending the Expo will be able to access the Matchmaking Service by purchasing the networking package.

Networking Opportunities Abound

In addition to the Opening Night Party, Licensing Week will feature a variety of networking opportunities for exhibitors and attendees, including an Orientation Session, which will see Jessica Blue, senior vice president of licensing at UBM, introduce the Expo team, provide an overview of the show and give tips for making the most of the week. The event will also include an open Q&A session.

Other networking opportunities include the Women in Toys breakfast on Wednesday, May 24; an Art & Design Mixer at the Border Grill after the show concludes on Wednesday; the International Cocktail Hour, which will invite delegates from the IBP Select, U.S. Department of Commerce representatives, international attendees and U.S. brand owners and agents, to the International Buyers Lounge for complimentary drinks; and the Agents' Business Forum, which will take place at 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 25, for brand owners and agents exhibiting at the show, as well as attending brand owners.

LIMA's annual International Licensing Awards will also include a networking break before the ceremony.

Targeted Pavilions Expand

Licensing Expo will play host to a number of niche pavilions this year including the Geek Culture Pavilion, China Brands Pavilion, Malaysia Pavilion and Korea Pavilion. Each pavilion will serve as a dedicated floor space for exhibiting companies in their respective categories.

Companies participating in the Geek Culture Pavilion include Anaglyph Sculpture, Lugosi Enterprises and Synthesis Entertainment, among others. Within the Malaysia Pavilion, attendees can find companies such as Viz International, Lil Critter Workshop and more.

The Korea Pavilion will also play host to a raft of exhibitors, including Daewon Media Co., Sweet Monster and Young Toys, among others. Finally, the China Brands Pavilion will see exhibitors including Fujian International Exhibition & Commerce Co., Fantawild Animation, Beijing Dream Castle Culture and more.

Spotlight on Retail

Last year, Licensing Expo welcomed a raft of retailer buyers and executives from leading companies such as Walgreens, Sainsbury's, Argos, Walmart and Toys 'R' Us, among many others.

This year, there will continue to be a strong retail presence with even more retail executives in attendance. Additionally, the show will continue to host the Retailer Lounge, which is open to all retailers and will allow visitors to enjoy complimentary refreshments while engaging in additional networking opportunities. ©



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DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY

JESSIE JAMES DECKER

This year's annual Opening Night Party will return to the Tropicana in Las Vegas, Tuesday, May 23, and feature Jessie James Decker as entertainment.

by ERICA GARBER

Licensing Expo, taking place May 23-25 at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas, Nev., has teamed with Sony Music to co-host its annual Opening Night Party and will present country music singer and songwriter Jessie James Decker as the special guest performer.

Sponsored by LIMA, and co-hosted by Sony Music, this year's evening networking event will kick off at 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 23, at the Tropicana Las Vegas.

"We are so excited to have Jessie James Decker as the special guest performer and Sony Music as the co-host of Licensing Expo's Opening Night Party," says Jessica Blue, senior vice president, licensing, UBM. "Licensing and brand collaborations are the natural next step as musicians look to develop key partnerships that connect them with their fans. This is the world's largest licensing party and a must-attend event for the licensing industry."

Decker is a country music singer/songwriter and style entrepreneur who began singing at the age of 9. In 2009, she debuted her self-titled album, which features the gold-certified single "Wanted." Decker released her EP "Comin' Home" in 2014, which reached No. 1 on iTunes. Her new EP "Gold" hit No. 1 on the iTunes country chart twice, No. 4 on the iTunes top albums chart and No. 5 on *Billboard's* current country albums chart. She also embarked on a sold-out tour last year that visited cities such as New York City and Los Angeles.

"I'm so excited to perform at the Licensing Expo and share music from my new EP, 'Gold!'" says Decker.

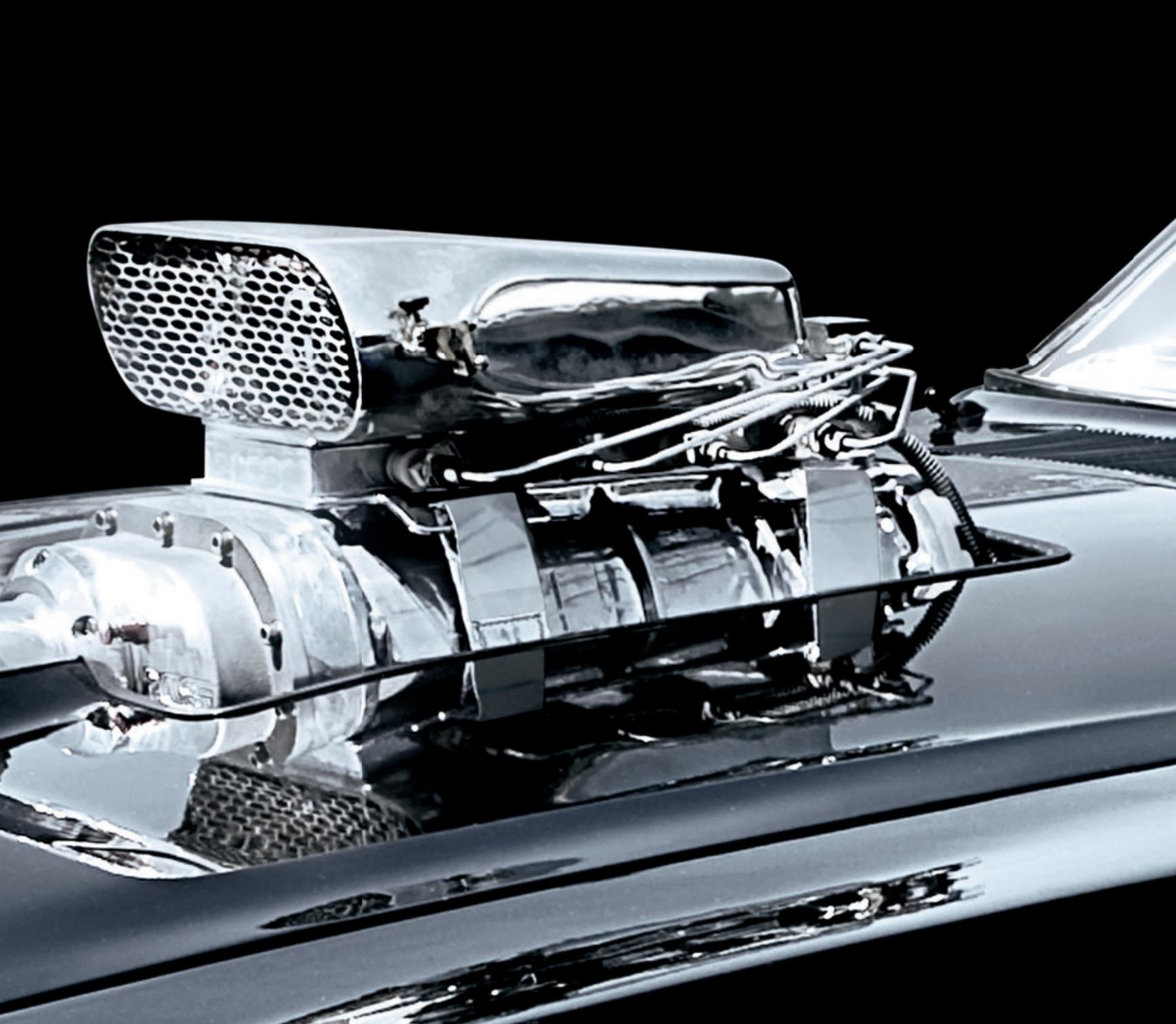
Past Opening Night Party entertainment has included

Winter Dance Party, Fifth Harmony, Flo Rida and Kellie Pickler. Last year's event attracted more than 1,000 brand owners, retailers and licensees for a night of networking, conversation and entertainment.

Sony Music will also make its Licensing Expo debut this year with the goal to connect with new clients to help them "harness the power of music to achieve growth and success." While at the show, Sony Music (booth U234) will bring representatives from SyncShop, which licenses Sony's roster of music within films, television, games, commercials and shows; The Treat Shop, which connects brands and licensees to channel Sony Music's merchandising IPs for apparel, accessories, housewares and more; Arcade Creative Group, which is Sony's creative agency that connects brands with music through advertising, design, original content, strategy and experiential programs; and Artist Legacy Group, which licenses name and likeness IPs to brands seeking to be associated with iconic music artists and properties.

"Sony Music signed on to co-host the Opening Night Party to contribute to the excitement of Licensing Expo by showcasing one of our rising artists Jessie James Decker," says Howard Lau, vice president, finance, analysis and strategic planning, Sony Music. "We believe in the power of music as a force in everyone's lives. Aligning licensees with the right artist and music strengthens brands, connecting with its targeted demographic through emotions and spirit."

Additionally, Cirque du Soleil will make a guest appearance with a special performance as well as meet-and-greet opportunities with its performers. ©



FAST & FURIOUS

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LICENSING UNIVERSITY

Organized by the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association, Licensing University takes place May 22-25 at Licensing Expo.

MONDAY, MAY 22

Basics of Licensing

9-11:15 a.m.

Moderator: Ira Mayer, president/co-director, Mayer on Marketing Consulting/Institute of Branding & Licensing

Speakers: Gary Caplan, principal, Gary Caplan Inc.; James Slifer, senior vice president, business development, The Joester Loria Group; and Joanne Olds, president and founder, The Buffalo Works

Basics of International Licensing

11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.

Moderator: Teri Niadna, managing director, Brandgenuity Europe

Speakers: Bettina Koeckler, founder, The Deal Factory; Christine Cool, license area manager, Perfetti Van Melle; and Dalia Benbassat, vice president, corporate relations, Tycoon Enterprises

Basics of Licensing Law

2-3:45 p.m.

Moderator: Jed Ferdinand, senior managing partner, Ferdinand IP/24IP Law Group

Speakers: Greg Battersby, managing member,

Battersby Law Group; Allison Hobbs, director, legal and business affairs, Big Tent Entertainment; and Sam Khare, vice president, business affairs, MGA Entertainment

TUESDAY, MAY 23

Keynote: Licensing in the On-Demand Economy

8-9 a.m.

Speaker: Cole Gahagan, chief commercial officer, Fanatics

Creating a Brand Identity for Licensing

9:30-10:45 a.m.

Moderator: Rachel Terrace, senior vice president, brand management, Beanstalk
Speakers: Gabrielle Bozza, vice president, global brand management, CAA Global Brands Group; and Mark Otero, creative director, Brand Central

The Basics of Sports Licensing

9:30-10:45 a.m.

Moderator: Steve Scebelo, vice president, licensing and business development, NFL Players Inc.

Speakers: Carl Banks, president, G-III Sports; Matt Chavlovich, vice president, consumer products licensing, Major League Soccer; and Matt Dyste, director, strategic initiatives, Learfield Licensing Partners

Working with Agents and Consultants

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Moderator: Marty Brochstein, senior vice president, LIMA

Speakers: Michael Connolly, founder and chief executive officer, Retail Monster; Tamra Knepper, senior vice president, Greenlight; and Woody Browne, managing partner, Building Q

Growth Markets—India, China and Brazil

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Moderator: Jiggy George, founder and chief executive officer, Dream Theatre

Speakers: Clara yang, vice president, content investment and distribution, UYoung Culture & Media Co.; David Diesendruck, president, Redibra; and Rohit Sobti, chief executive officer and co-founder, Brand Monk Licensing



DREAMWORKS

Trolls

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Managing an Overnight Sensation

1–2:15 p.m.

Moderator: Mallory Van Laeken, director, brand management, The Licensing Shop

Brand and Consumer Research—How to Do It, What’s Out There and Doing It on a Budget

1–2:15 p.m.

Moderator: Leigh Ann Schwarzkopf, founding partner, Project Partners Network
Speaker: Patrick Griffis, business librarian, University of Nevada Las Vegas

The Basics of Art Licensing

2:45–4 p.m.

Moderator: J’net Smith, owner and founder, All Art Licensing

Capsules, Collaborations and Limited Editions: Opportunities and Pitfalls

2:45–4 p.m.

Moderator: Karen Raugust, president, Raugust Communications
Speakers: Carla Silva, vice president and general manager, global head of licensing, King Features; Christine Cool, license area manager, Perfetti Van Melle; and Pamela Deese, partner, Arent Fox

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24 Roundtables 1

8–9:45 a.m.

Leaders: Careen Yapp, senior vice president, global business, Mixed Dimensions; Jeffrey Levin, manager, royalty audit and contract compliance, EisnerAmper; Pete Canalichio, principal, Licensing Brands; Tamra Knepper, senior vice president, Greenlight; and Woody Browne, managing partner, Building Q

Roundtables 2

10:15 a.m.–12 p.m.

Leaders: Alison Grand, founder and president, Grand Communications; Friderico Gatti, chief executive officer, MegaLicense; Jim Sachs, licensing advisor; Harris Sachs; Mary Yedlin, vice president, business development, Ripe Concepts; Stephanie Pottick, licensing and IP attorney, Pottick Law; and Tamaya Petteway, senior vice president, brand and licensing partnerships, Endemol Shine North America

Style Guides 101

12:30–1:45 p.m.

Moderator: Stan Madaloni, president, Studio2pt0
Speakers: Christopher Lucero, vice president, global licensing, Sony Pictures Television Franchise Licensing; and John Van Citters, vice president, product development, CBS Consumer Products

Eight Key Steps in Extending a Brand

12:30–1:45 p.m.

Moderator: Allan Feldman, chief executive officer, LMCA
Speakers: Ted Curtain, chief marketing officer, LMCA, and executive vice president, marketing and innovation, ProdigyWorks; and Vera Tsekeris, director, brand licensing, HP

Building an Entertainment Licensing Program from Scratch

2:15–3:30 p.m.

Moderator: Russell Brown, president, consumer products and promotions, Valiant Entertainment
Speaker: Steven Heller, founder, The Brand Liaison

The Changing Landscape of Digital Entertainment

2:15–3:30 p.m.

Moderator: Mark Caplan, principal, BD Labs
Speakers: Arthur Madrid, founder and chief executive officer, Pixowl; Clint Waasted, senior business development manager, Zynga; Javon Frazier, executive vice president, strategy and business development, Studio71; John Sutyak, executive vice president, new business development, DDM; and Travis Rutherford, founder and president, licensing and retail, Evolution USA

Navigating the Rapidly Changing Retail Waters

4–5:15 p.m.

Moderator: Marty Brochstein, senior vice president, LIMA
Speakers: Cindy Levitt, senior vice president, merchandise and marketing, Hot Topic; Jamie Uitdenhoven, general manager, Toys ‘R’ Us; and Michael Trembley, vice president,

partner services, Walmart U.S. e-commerce

Case Studies in Food and Beverage Branding

4–5:15 p.m.

Moderator: Ricky Yoselevitz, vice president, brand licensing, Seltzer Licensing Group
Speakers: David Lee, director, licensing, e-commerce and experiential marketing, MillerCoors; Ernie Savo, director, global licensing and international partner retail, The Hershey Company; and Sondra Newkirk, senior director, brand licensing, Meredith Corp.

THURSDAY, MAY 25

Minimizing Risk in the Global Marketplace

9–10:15 a.m.

Moderator: Andy Koski, partner, Miller, Kaplan & Arase & Co.
Speakers: Danny Simon, president, The Licensing Group; Gary Krakower, vice president, worldwide licensing, WWE/IMG; Pamela Deese, partner, Arent Fox; and Paul Sammons, director, global licensing operations, Electrolux

Everything You Need to Know About Royalty Rates

9–10:15 a.m.

Moderator: Maura Regan, executive vice president, LIMA
Speakers: Eric Morse, divisional vice president, licensing, marketing and product development, Spirit Halloween/Spencer’s; Marilu Corpus, chief executive officer, Click! Licensing Asia; Tara Hefter, vice president, global licensing, Jakks Pacific; and Veronica Hart, senior vice president, CBS Consumer Products

Planning and Executing Your Social Media Strategy

10:45 a.m.–12 p.m.

Moderator: Natalie DiBlasi Cupps, co-founder and executive director, digital marketing, media and strategy, LACED Agency

Building Successful Brands & Licenses for Millennials and their Kids

10:45 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Moderator: Kristen McLean, executive director, new business development, NPD Book

FRESH FACES AT LICENSING EXPO

From apparel to universities and everything in between, Licensing Expo will host an impressive roster of new exhibitors. With so many new faces on the show floor, here are 10 you won't want to miss. **by ERICA GARBER**

Atlantya Entertainment – Booth #G103

Based in Italy, Atlantya Entertainment is a trans-media entertainment company that maintains production and distribution of multiple television series via its new division Atlantya Live. The company's licensing division manages the international licensing programs for the Geronimo Stilton portfolio, "Bat Pat" and "Thea Sisters," among others.

Recently, the company debuted an exclusive line of Geronimo Stilton children's apparel at the European retailer Carrefour. It has also secured a host of licensees for the brand in categories ranging from stationery to comics to 3D flash drives and more.



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www.pjmask.com



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**BuzzFeed –
Booth #B154**

BuzzFeed is a leading digital news and entertainment company with a raft of brands like Tasty, TopKnot, Try Guys and more. The company’s news and entertainment divisions also boast a highly engaged audience that consumes content across multiple platforms.

As a first-time exhibitor, BuzzFeed will be highlighting its Tasty brand, which originated as a series of simple, instructional recipe videos.



**Coca-Cola Licensing –
Booth #C114**

Although the company has exhibited at Licensing Expo before, Coca-Cola took a brief hiatus before returning this year. The international beverage company reaches more than 1.9 billion consumers in more than 200 countries via its host of sparkling and still brands, including Coca-Cola, Powerade, Fanta and Sprite, among others.

As one of the world’s most recognizable brands, the Coca-Cola licensing program aims to connect with global consumers through a raft of categories.



**Earthbound Brands –
#J140**

Earthbound combines product design and development with a full-service licensing agency.

Since its inception in 2000, Earthbound has generated \$20 billion in retail sales for clients such as Acura, American Honda, *Cooking Light*, DuPont Kevlar, *InStyle*, Meredith Corp. and many others.

Earthbound will treat Expo as “a bit of a coming out party,” as well as to generate business for current partners while also attracting new ones.



**FAO Schwarz –
Booth #J170**

Last year, Toys ‘R’ Us sold FAO Schwarz, one of the oldest toy retailers in the world, to the ThreeSixty Group (formerly known as MerchSource).

As a first-time exhibitor, FAO Schwarz will announce to the world that its back and will seek potential partners to assist in the historic brand’s re-launch.

“In October 2016, MerchSource announced its acquisition of FAO Schwarz, seeing tremendous opportunity to build upon the heritage, experience and nostalgia of the brand,” says Christina Schick, head of marketing, ThreeSixty Brands. “We are excited to build upon its iconic history by bringing to life the magic of the FAO Schwarz brand in the right categories. We are exhibiting to start conversations with partners who can bring that vision to life.”

**Hang Ten –
Booth #F128**

Founded in 1960, Hang Ten is a surf and California lifestyle brand that is globally recognized for its “Feet” mark.

The brand has a strong emphasis on active lifestyle and is currently available across categories such as apparel, swimwear, sunglasses, footwear and outdoor recreational products.

Last year, the brand appointed Jewel Branding & Licensing to serve as its North American licensing agent in all home categories, including fashion bedding, home décor accessories, furniture, rugs, housewares and tabletop.





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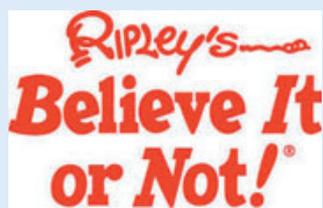
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**Level-5 abby –
Booth #B142**

Multimedia company Level-5 abby creates, produces and distributes content for children, adults and game/anime fans worldwide. With a solid footprint in North America and Europe, the company will bring brands such as “Yo-Kai Watch,” “Professor Layton,” “Snack World” and “Inazuma Eleven” to Licensing Expo in order to build its long-term business and business partnerships as well as its international reputation as a multi-portfolio content creator and IP owner.



**Ripley's Believe It or Not! –
Booth #B93**

As the “world authority” on all things unbelievable and strange, the Ripley's Believe It or Not brand boasts more than 95 attractions in 12 countries, as well as global distribution of its popular *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* books. This year, the 99-year-old brand will head to Licensing Expo to prepare for its 100th anniversary in 2018 as well as further extend its presence globally with merchandising and marketing partnerships.

With a variety of archival material, fun facts, unique characters and more than 30,000 exhibits, Ripley's is able to provide a host of specialized content for licensing. The Ripley's Believe It or Not! trademark is also available for licensing.

**San Diego Zoo Global –
Booth #F94**

San Diego Zoo Global includes the San Diego Zoo, SDZ Global Wildlife Conservancy,



SDZ Institute for Conservation Research, SDZ Kids and SDZ Safari Park and will head to Licensing Expo for the first time in its history. In addition to displaying a number of consumer products, SDZ Global will also sample its accredited digital archive, which offers a myriad of wildlife and natural habitat photographic images and video footage for advertising, corporate, editorial, non-profit and other professional creative use.

While at the show, SDZ Global will look to grow its roster within the baby category as well as secure licensees for publishing (including educational books, flash cards, posters and more), toys, pet products and more.

“We have been attending Licensing Expo for many years,” says Monica Michel, licensing and partnership marketing manager, San Diego Zoo Global. “Having a presence at this year's Licensing Expo as an exhibitor will give us the opportunity to share with potential licensees that a licensing agreement with San Diego Zoo will not only benefit conservation, but also contribute to the positive image of companies that license with our internationally recognized brand.”

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CHINA LICENSING EXPO READIES

The inaugural Licensing Expo China will co-locate with the events CBME China and Cool Kids Fashion Shanghai, July 18-20, at the National Exhibition and Convention Center in Shanghai.

by ERICA GARBER

Continuing its plans to create an international platform for local and international companies, UBM's Global Licensing Group, organizers of Licensing Expo, in partnership with the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association, will launch a new licensing and brand extension networking event, Licensing Expo China, in Shanghai this July.

The new trade show will connect the most influential art, fashion, entertainment, character and corporate brand owners and agents with consumer goods manufacturers, licensees and retailers from all product categories across China.

This year, the show will feature more than 250 brands and properties from China and overseas including Click! Licensing Asia, Fantawild Animation, Beijing Dream Castle Culture Co., Animation International (Shanghai), Hasbro Trading Co. (China), Medialink Co. (Shanghai), Mattel, Soap Studio Company and Familyyout, among many others.

Licensing Expo China will take place July 18-20, at the National Exhibition and Convention Center in Shanghai and will be co-located with CBME China, the world's largest trade fair for baby products and services, and Cool Kids Fashion Shanghai, China's premier trade fair for kids' fashion.

"China was identified by our customers as the No. 1 market that they are looking to for growth," says Jessica Blue, senior vice president, licensing,

UBM. "This launch underlines our strategy to provide products for our customers in the markets that they want to penetrate. We are excited to be working with our experienced trade show team in China to deliver this event for the licensing industry."

In addition to the show, Licensing Expo China will also host a series of lectures and workshops that will address issues related to the licensing industry such as a how-to of the licensing business, opportunities, challenges and more. A host of business matching and networking sessions will also be set up to connect licensors with potential business partners.

The new trade show is also planning to host a character parade and will allow visitors to take photos with the characters to share on the social media application "WeChat" in order to help promote the show.

The inaugural event will also host the first China Licensing Awards. Held in conjunction with LIMA, the awards will aim to recognize the outstanding achievements of companies with licensing properties in China. The winners will be announced at the China Licensing Awards Ceremony, July 18, during the show.

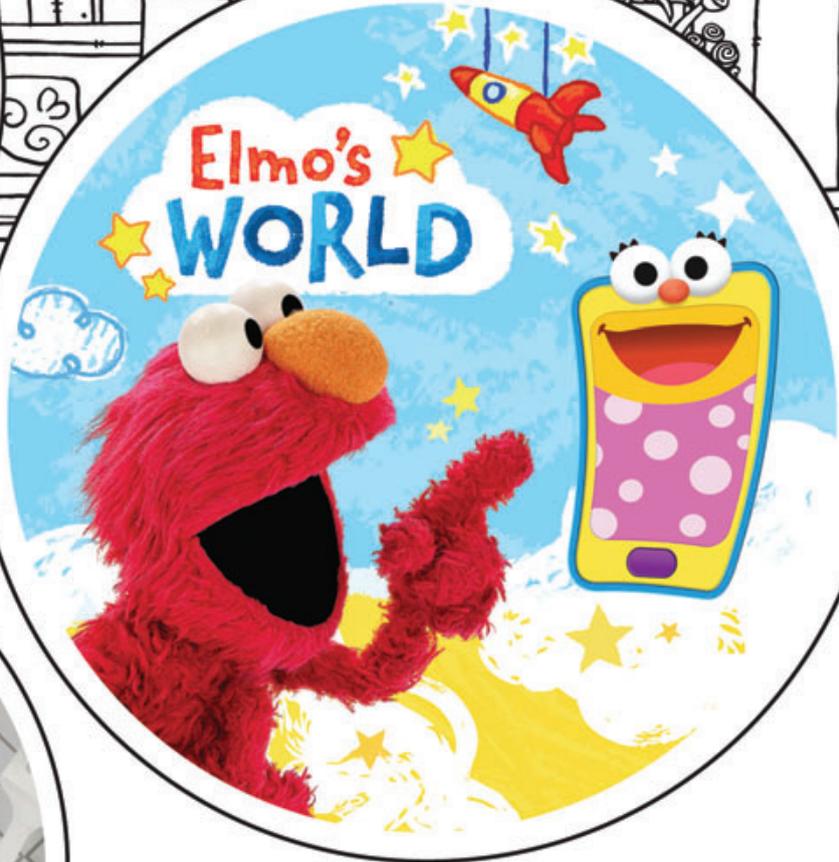
Further details regarding Licensing Expo China will be released closer to the show. Be sure to stay up-to-date with *License Global*, which will have the latest news on all of the shows included in UBM's Global Licensing Group portfolio—Licensing Expo, Brand Licensing Europe, NYC Summit, Licensing Expo Japan and Licensing Expo China. ©

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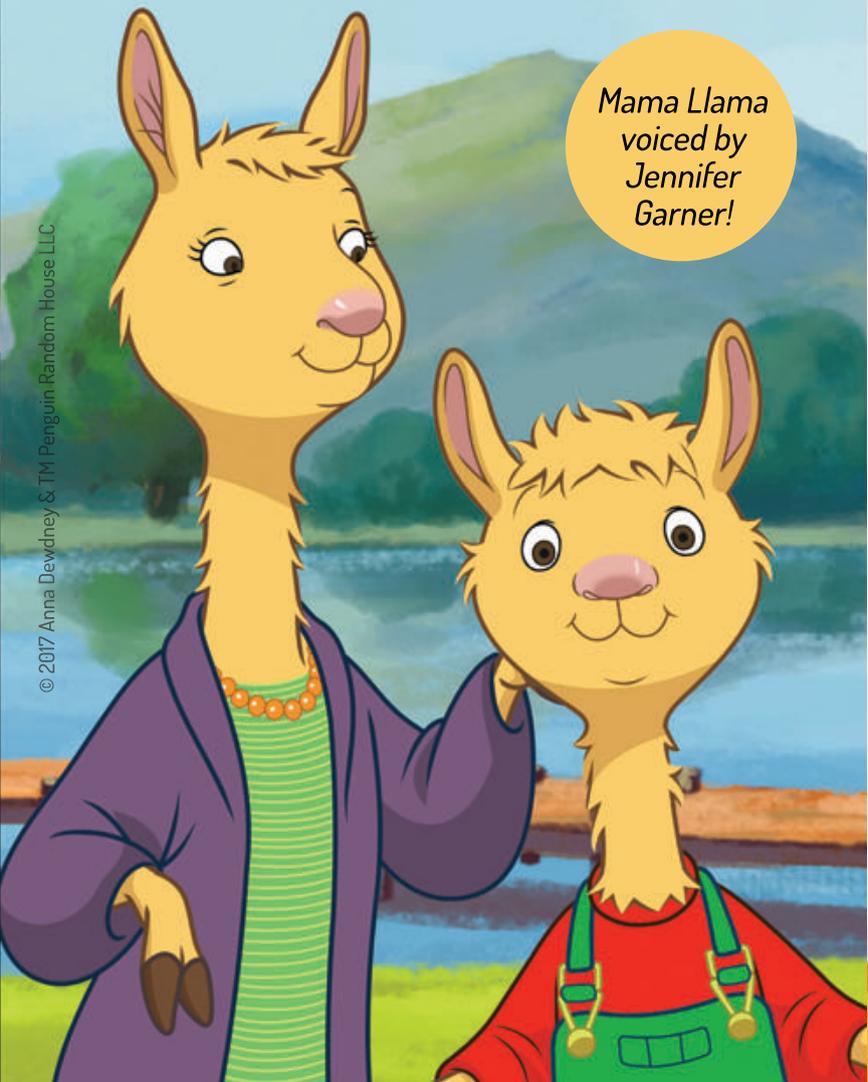


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{ Licensing Expo 2017 }

BLE MOVES FORWARD

Now in its 19th year, Brand Licensing Europe will expand its footprint with even more educational sessions, on-site activations, new exhibitors and more.

by ERICA GARBER

This year's Brand Licensing Europe, set for Oct. 10-12 at London's Olympia, currently boasts a raft of fresh exhibitors, new activations, an extensive Retail Mentoring Programme and more.

The 19th annual trade show will once again be divided into three sections—Art & Design, Brands & Lifestyle and Character & Entertainment—that will be filled with new and established brands. Thus far, a host of new exhibitors have signed on to participate in the 2017 event, including Emoji Company, Endemol Shine U.K., Ty, Historic Royal Palaces Enterprises, Juventus Football Club, Kitkase, May the Thoughts Be with You (last year's License This! winner), Crazy Bell Agency, Last Lemon, Rugby World Cup, Ypsilon Licensing and more.

To date, more than 180 companies have signed on to exhibit at BLE including popular brands such as Nickelodeon, Toei Animation, Mattel, "Masha and the Bear," Moomins and Smiley, among many others.

In addition to a host of new and returning exhibitors, the annual licensing trade show is also planning several new activations this year.

First, BLE will expand the Brands & Lifestyle Theatre program to include more sessions throughout the day on each day of the show. The program will also include a live activation each day to showcase the potential of lifestyle brands across multiple categories. Possible activations include catwalks, music and more.

BLE will also debut a new Gaming Activation

Area, which will be divided into two parts. The first part will serve as an interactive space for demos and competitions, while the second will highlight the potential of gaming at retail, from concept to store.

"We are so excited to roll out these new initiatives at Brand Licensing Europe this October," says Anna Knight, brand manager, BLE. "Last year's Brand & Lifestyle Theatre program was so packed—we're hoping to further meet the needs of this growing licensing category."

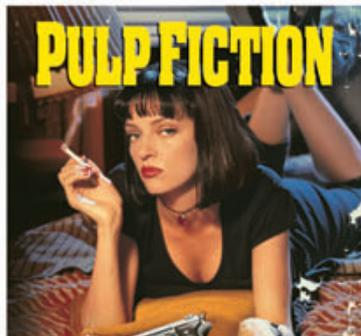
Continues Knight: "I'm also particularly excited about our brand-new gaming activation, a really important theme for this year that I'm hoping will not only showcase our fantastic gaming exhibitors, but that will also shine a spotlight on this critical growth market and dispel some of the myths of gaming licensing."

BLE has also unveiled a number of retailers that have joined this year's Retail Mentoring Programme, which is designed to give buying and merchandising professionals a deeper understanding of the licensing industry. The mentees participating in this year's course, which is now CPD accredited, represent multiple retail categories and departments including buyers, marketers and designers from the apparel, gift, toys and leisure sectors.

Standout additions to this year's Mentoring Programme include online retailer Character.com, specialty toy buying group Toymaster, apparel retailer M&Co, supermarket chain Morrisons and the U.K. theater chains Odeon and UCI Cinemas Group. ©



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LICENSING EXPO JAPAN LAUNCHES STRONG

The first-ever Licensing Expo Japan kicked off with huge success, April 26-28, in Tokyo.

UBM's Global Licensing Group, organizers of Licensing Expo and Brand Licensing Europe, kicked off the inaugural Licensing Expo Japan April 26-28 at Tokyo Big Sight Exhibition Center in Tokyo, Japan. The event co-located with the first IFF MAGIC Japan fashion event, which took place simultaneously.

The first-ever Licensing Expo Japan brought together 400 international and Japanese brands together for three days of networking and deal-making. Exhibiting companies included IMG, Caterpillar, CAA-GBG, Copyrights Asia, Nissan, Kangol, Neca, Maui & Sons and Gaia; while brands such as Astro Boy, B.Duck, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Capsbeans, Corvette, Dwell Studios, Popeye, Paddington Bear, Hoppechan, Maisy, Panda no Tapu Tapu, Pokopan, Poppy Cat, Cynthia Rowley, "Sesame Street," Sumikko Gurashi and *The Dark Tower* could be found on the show floor. The show also saw nearly 14,000 attendees across its three days.

"We were thrilled to bring the Licensing Expo brand to Japan, working with our UBM Japan colleagues," says Jessica Blue, senior vice president, licensing, UBM. "Our goal was to deliver a high-quality licensing event, showcasing a diversity of brands, attracting the right mix of licensees and retailers across all product categories. The feedback from exhibitors demonstrates that we did just that, and we are already working on the next edition to make it even bigger and better. The adjacency with MAGIC worked extremely well with

a healthy cross-over of attendees between the shows, which is no surprise given that apparel is the largest licensed product category in Japan and globally."

Licensing Expo Japan was sponsored by the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association and it organized 15 seminars, as well as two keynote addresses, the first delivered by Hong Ying, general manager, Alifish, and the second by Don Anderson, head of family and learning partnerships, YouTube APac.

Other seminars included "Making the Best Use of Characters Based on LINE Stickers: An Introduction to LINE Creators Management Platform for Character Licensing" with panelists from Line Corporation and Character Databank; "Design Vision & Key Looks for the Spring/Summer 2018 Season" with participants from WGSN; "The Cutting Edge of Character Retail: An Insider's Guide to Best-Selling Trendy Character Goods at Popular Retail Chains" with representatives from Kiddy Land, Freak's, Patty's Co. and Tezuka Productions Co. and "Market Trends & Prospects for Brand Licensing" with FSR and Yano Research Institute.

Licensing Expo Japan through a party, which took place the second evening of the event, and was well attended by industry professionals that nurtured new and established relationships.

The next Licensing Expo Japan will take place April 25-27, 2018, again at Tokyo Big Sight Exhibition Center. For more information on the event, visit LicensingExpoJapan.com. ©

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A SAVVY STYLE

Rainbow continues to focus on new content with several initiatives as well as publishing, digital and live entertainment. Joanne Lee, chief operating officer, discusses the company's biggest properties in 2017 and its plans for the future.

Rainbow has grown significantly throughout its history and is now one of the largest licensors in the world. What are the key business strategies that you attribute to this strong performance?

We are an integrated company that is able to create, produce, distribute and license its own franchises. So, we have a great control of all the different phases of the process, and this guarantees the capability of monitoring all the key aspects that allow us to deliver great results once the products are on the shelves. And our partners know that, as most of them have been working with us for many years in long-lasting and extremely fruitful partnerships.

While "Winx Club" is well-established around the world, what new initiatives are you planning that will help continue to grow and expand this popular girls' franchise?

First of all, content has always been a driver for "Winx Club," and that's why we are already in production with a new season—number eight!—which is quite an impressive number. While the new season is in production, we will also expand to TV with the "Winx Club" spin-off, "World of Winx," which is exclusive to the Netflix platform. We are also planning a new live musical show, touring some of our main markets in Europe.

What are among the newest licensing initiatives for "Winx Club?"

We just closed a strategic worldwide deal with Original Marines, a very important European fashion retailer with about 530 stores across multiple territories. We also recently confirmed a new promotion with Ferrero, covering both Christmas 2017 and Easter 2018 in France, Germany, Eastern Europe, Russia and CIS.

JOANNE LEE
chief operating officer, Rainbow



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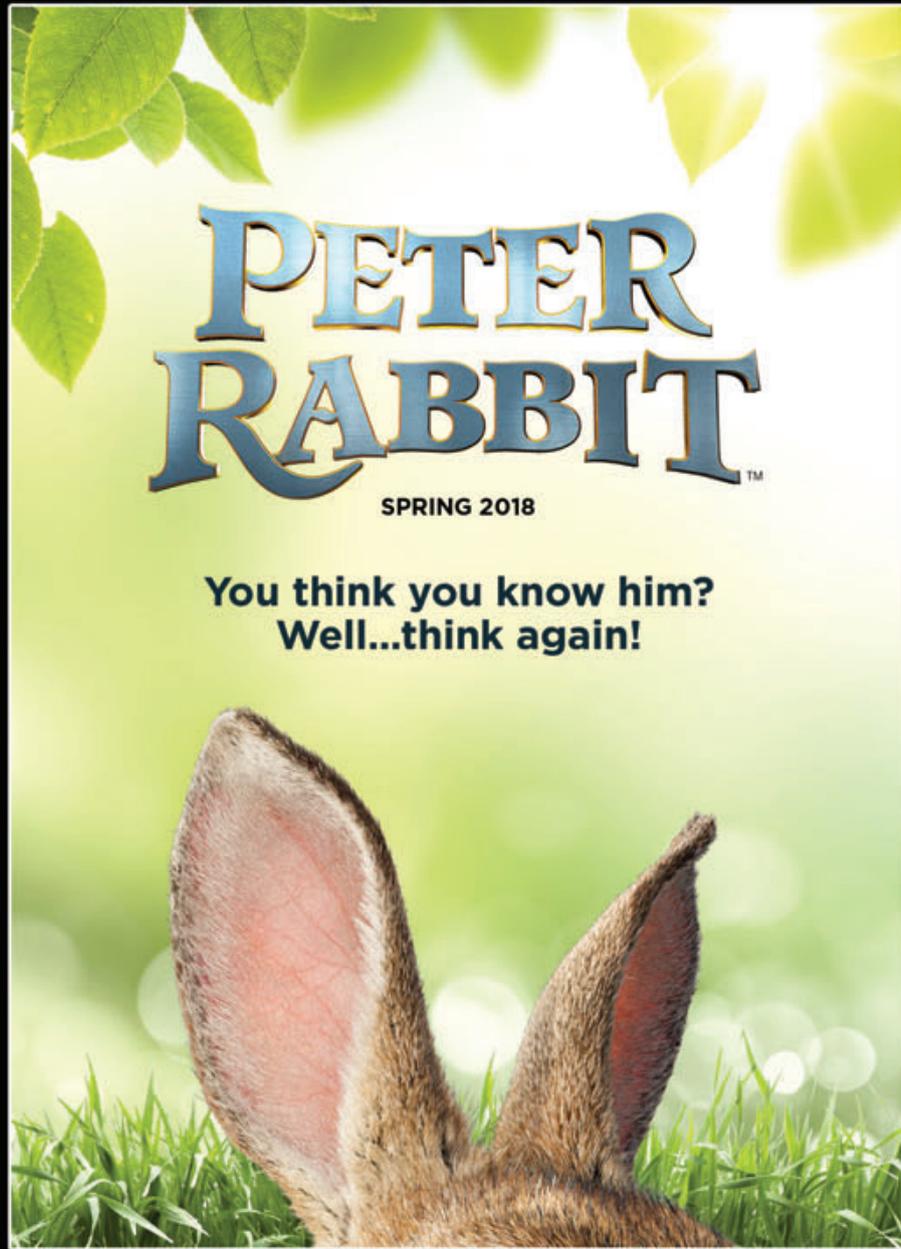
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“Winx Club” is an evergreen brand after more than 13 years, and it keeps attracting new and existing players because it always delivers results for our partners.

In addition to “Winx Club,” what other new properties is Rainbow developing?

We have plenty. From a licensing perspective, we are now rolling out “Regal Academy” on a worldwide basis, after its TV release in 2016-17, and “Maggie and Bianca Fashion Friends,” our first live-action show that targets tweens. We are also developing a great preschool

comedy, called “44 Cats,” a gender neutral series in CGI-animation. We have high expectations for this show.

What is the strategy for “Maggie & Bianca” and what are among the most important recent licensing deals?

“Maggie and Bianca” has proven to be a ratings success in Italy and Brazil, and now it is steadily growing its audience in France and about to premiere in Germany, Poland and Benelux. Netflix is about to release the first season on its platform on a worldwide level. So, we are signing many new licensees in various territories, starting from Simba Dickie as pan-European master toy partner, to Sony as the international partner for music. Top publishers such as Pocket Jeunesse/Grund in France, Mondadori in Italy and Panini to local partners in the back-to-school category, home entertainment, apparel, fashion accessories, food categories and much more. There is strong confidence in this series, and that is why we have just greenlit the Italian live show tour starting this fall.

Publishing is a key category for Rainbow, please explain your strategy for the popular franchises.

We care about content, which is a key driver for all our franchises. That is why we have built a catalog of more than 500 titles across all of our franchises, and publishers can choose among this huge availability, or they are free to create their own formats if the market needs. We leave them free to express their potential and to approach their readership in the most effective way. This is also the reason why we tend to work with local players rather than with large multi-territorial agreements, so as to be more global and local at the same time.

What is Rainbow doing to build its digital strategy for its key properties?

An in-house team of certified YouTube professionals is an asset that we have been building for years, and now—YouTube included—we have a large audience across all social media platforms including Instagram, Facebook, VK and all the Chinese video on-demand platforms. Each franchise has a different and unique digital strategy, depending on its target age, its popularity across the territories and the brand values.

Looking ahead to 2018 and beyond, explain the key factors that position Rainbow for future growth?

We will be launching our new preschool franchise, but we are also working on a new live-action series for boys and new concepts in both the girls and the preschool arena. Lots of new projects to fall in love with! ©



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TAMAYA PETTEWAY

senior vice president, brand and licensing partnerships, Endemol Shine North America

SHINING ON

Endemol Shine is armed with a new licensing head who is bringing its legacy and new IP to market in creative ways.

License Global spoke with Tamaya Petteway, Endemol Shine North America's recently named senior vice president of its new brand and licensing partnership division, about where the new division is headed.

How has the licensing strategy evolved since you joined Endemol Shine?

I originally joined Endemol Shine as senior vice president of brand partnership and took over the licensing group a year later. Our brand and licensing group is responsible for developing Endemol Shine North America's TV properties and brands against sponsorships and advertiser partnerships, digital and interactive initiatives and consumer products, live events and experiences.

We've evolved to create more comprehensive campaigns. We have a unique ability to exhaust program potential by cross-pollination of commercial activity between brands and licensing. The team has been focused on leveraging ESNA's IP to build maximum consumer impact and lifetime engagement across key areas of licensing, including our legacy IP.

Our core franchises are "Master Chef"; "Master Chef Junior"; "The Biggest Loser"; "Hunted"; "Fear Factor," which is coming to MTV; "Super Human," our new show coming to Fox this summer; "The Steve Harvey Show"; and "Simon's Cat." We're focused on building licensing programs and initiatives around these shows.

There's something unique and exciting about our wide variety of shows and what they stand for, from health and fitness on "The Biggest Loser" to "The Fear Factor," which is about the ultimate challenge and game play. That broad range creates a lot of diversity in the types of programs we can build.

These properties are so solid and they present themselves for unique opportunities, so we are looking at exploring all key categories for consumer products, publishing, live events and experiences, gaming and gambling and digital.

What has impressed you most about Endemol Shine and its franchises?

The thing that impressed me the most is that we have the

ability to make our IP travel. Our format traveled 50 percent more than our competitors, and the breadth and depth of our slate of programming and its assortment is extensive. From “Mr. Bean” to “Fear Factor” and “Master Chef,” being able to represent such a wide range of programming truly serves as a remarkable calling card for our team.

The ability to engage with my counterparts around the world and share information is also a huge asset. On “Hunted,” I connected with my counterparts in the U.K. to learn what brand and commercial activity they had developed so that when the show was coming to the U.S., we could get out ahead of release and start building very creative programs.

What keeps “Master Chef” and “Master Chef Junior” so popular with consumers?

Both shows continue to be strong ratings performers both internationally and here in the U.S., and brands and licensees want to be associated with them. We remain Fox’s No. 1 co-viewed series, and it’s the first unscripted show to feature kids in an environment that’s entertaining and educational for the entire family.

The show is a passion point for our viewers, and that lends itself well to developing initiatives from live events to kids’ cooking sets. We’re introducing a program with Blue Apron that has both an in-show and in-home activation for fans across the country. Consumers can watch a Blue Apron Mystery Box Challenge on “Master Chef Junior” then go on to Blue Apron’s website and order the winning dish for one week after the episode airs. The ability for the No. 1 cooking show to partner with Blue Apron, which is No. 1 in its category, is a unique, one-of-a-kind opportunity.

We’re also focused on our third “Master Chef” cruise that will set sail in November to the Caribbean, our “Master Chef” cookware and bakeware that’s available at Ross stores and our Eat With program that we launched in summer 2016—we’ll have some new events for that this summer. We’re also really excited about a digital extension we’ll announce soon.

What are some new initiatives for the company?

One of the big up-and-coming properties for our team is “Simon’s Cat,” a hugely successful animated brand in the U.K. for a digital platform that is coming to the U.S. We’re building out a robust licensing program in the States, and we’ll have some announcements this summer. We’re open to all categories.

Our legacy brand “Fear Factor” is coming back to MTV. “Wipeout” and “Deal or No Deal” are other initiatives we’ll be looking to build programs around. The game space is obviously something we’re looking at, but we’re open to a variety of categories.

What is your strategy for location-based entertainment and live events?

Live events and experiential platforms are very important to us. The “Master Chef” cruise gives fans a chance to experience the property in a live setting, to meet their favorite master chefs, previous contestants and winners and interact with the property in a unique and exciting way. We’ll have another announcement this year that speaks to “Master Chef” live. We’re looking at developing live events for “Hunted” and “Super Human,” as well.

“Super Human” is a great property because there’s nothing like it on television. It’s part extreme talent show, part inspirational variety show and it’s completely unique. It’s all about celebrating ordinary people with extraordinary abilities, so it gives us opportunities in the gaming space. “Hunted” is also perfect for the gaming space.

How are you building a digital strategy for your brands?

We’ve had a successful partnership with “Master Chef” with T-Mobile on their T-Mobile Tuesdays promotion. Consumers could download the T-Mobile app and enter a “Master Chef” contest with a “Master Chef” cruise grand prize and other prizes that included a visit to the “Master Chef” set, bakeware and a cookbook. We’re interested in partnering with brands that have an extensive and robust digital program of their own, and we’ll have an announcement about our own digital program for “Master Chef.”

We’re now developing consumer products for “Simon’s Cat” to further build the brand. We’re also focusing on “Mr. Bean” during Licensing Expo. “Mr. Bean” has surpassed “The Simpsons” as the No. 1 TV entertainment brand on Facebook, and it has a massive following and solid digital presence. We’ll be partnering with our counterparts on a digital strategy for the brand in the U.S.

What’s next for Endemol Shine?

We have an incredible library of IP with thousands of titles globally, so being able to re-imagine archived shows such as “Fear Factor” and “Wipeout” present a marvelous opportunity for 2018 and beyond. Our fans want to experience shows on- and off-air 365-days-a-year, and we are perfectly positioned to deliver shows that do just that and exploit our IP for its lifetime. ©



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STONE NEWMAN

president, global consumer products, worldwide content sales and marketing, Genius Brands International

RIDING HIGH

Genius Brands is fresh off a hit with 2016's "SpacePop" launch and is gearing up to debut two major brands to audiences and retailers around the world.

by **AMANDA CIOLETTI**

Genius Brands International's Stone Newman, president, global consumer products, worldwide content sales and marketing, is not shy about his optimism for the company's portfolio.

From the 100 percent digital launch of girls' brand "SpacePop" last year to the new program derived from publishing favorite *Llama Llama* and the exciting series "Rainbow Rangers," it is clear that GBI is ready to charge into 2017 and Licensing Expo armed with opportunity.

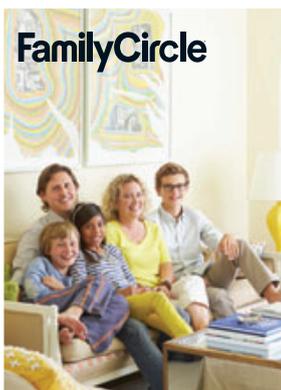
"SpacePop," a big focus for Genius Brands International in 2016, launched in an innovative way last year. Can you detail that launch and how it performed?

"SpacePop" was not only a big focus for the company last year but was its biggest focus. In fact, it has proven to be the biggest and most successful launch in the company's history. We took the position that we were about to start something big, and we delivered. Since the brand's debut at Licensing Expo 2016 less than a year ago, we have had unprecedented traction. We have generated 15 million-plus channel views on our YouTube channel (YouTube.com/SpacePopGirls), have more than 50,000-plus subscribers, and approximately 286,000 hours of watch time. We have proven that you can launch a brand and content with a purely digital strategy. We focused our efforts on YouTube, the home of "SpacePop," utilizing a robust grouping of influencers that we knew would resonate with our target audience, girls, ages 8 to 12. We also had an extremely broad social media footprint with a presence on Musical.ly, PopJam, Facebook and Instagram. We took "SpacePop" to where we knew our audience would be. This included summer-long national promotions with Six Flags and Camplified, an exciting integration with Dippin' Dots and a traditional print and digital media ad campaign across a variety of publications catering to tween girls. This led to achieving a massive audience that ultimately led to strong product sales. Our



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more than 20 licensees and promotional partners got behind “SpacePop” in 2016, and all were rewarded.

As “SpacePop” continues to establish itself in the U.S., what categories and retailers will we see the brand move into?

We are expanding our retail presence at Claire’s with the launch of SpacePop Galactic Goo, a series of putties, slimes, beads, sands and everything ooey, goopy, gross and fun for the hands. We have new retailers coming on board daily including Calendar Club’s Go! Retail, Spirit Halloween (our exclusive Halloween costume licensee) and several well-known mass retailers. We launched the brand with 20 licensees across all the major categories we set out to cover, so we are seeing a majority of licensees expand their offerings and product ranges.

How will “SpacePop” continue to evolve as the brand “grows up?”

The big news is that 2017 will see “SpacePop” go from the small screen to the big screen. Through a national partnership, *SpacePop The Movie* will make its theatrical debut this fall on 300 to 500 screens. We are also in development on season two of “SpacePop,” which will be in a longer format of 11-minute episodes, as well as an expanded digital presence. We have employed a scrappy, grassroots approach to marketing “SpacePop,” and I applaud our team at being innovative in the tactics they are employing to reach our target audience. For example, this year “SpacePop” will directly interact with more than 300,000 girls, ages 5 to 12, around the U.S. as the official music sponsor and provider to Pop Warner Cheer & Dance. These girls will cheer, dance and be immersed in the “SpacePop” brand. It will be a total takeover and a great way to market our brand directly to our core audience.

“Llama Llama” is a new animated preschool property for GBI that will premiere on Netflix globally this year. What is the rollout plan for the series by territory?

One of the benefits of a partnership with Netflix is that you achieve a true global launch. We will deliver the series in 19 languages, and it will launch in all markets where Netflix is available simultaneously. That is a very exciting rollout, and we are thrilled for the partnership with Netflix.

What will the CP program look like for “Llama Llama?” What is that timeline?

In specific markets like the U.S. where there is tremendous equity for the *Llama Llama* brand, from its track record as a *New York Times* best-selling childrens’ book series for the past decade to how the program will be launching now. Currently, we have plush available in the specialty market from licensee Kids Preferred. We also have select licensees on board including Hybrid and Franco Manufacturing, that are focusing on the classic brand, as well as a direct-to-retail program in the works with Calendar Club’s Go! Retail. We are planning a more comprehensive program into 2019 around the style of the animated series following the debut on Netflix. We anticipate similar timing in markets outside the U.S. to allow “Llama Llama” to get established from the Netflix exposure.

GBI’s new series, “Rainbow Rangers,” brings together talent with a storied pedigree. How did that project come together?

One of the strengths at Genius Brands is our ability to work with best-in-class creators. With “SpacePop,” we worked music industry legend Ron Fair who created the original music, Han Lee for character designs and Emmy-nominated writer Steve Banks as the creative trust on that brand. For “Rainbow Rangers,” we knew that we wanted to work with top-tier creators and were fortunate that we could assemble a dream team: Rob Minkoff (*Lion King*), who we were already working with on “Llama Llama”; Tim Mansfield who is writing partners with Shane Morris (*Frozen*) and who grew up with my wife; and Elise Allen (“The Lion Guard”), who was also working on “Llama Llama.” As we all have small children and girls who, in their words, “are watching a lot of TV,” everyone involved wanted to come into the world of television. When we presented the idea of the first “mission-based action adventure” series for preschool (or “pre-cool”) girls, they loved it and immediately signed on board.

What is the big picture plan for “Rainbow Rangers?”

With Mattel’s Fisher-Price as the global master toy partner for “Rainbow Rangers,” a major U.S. broadcaster on board and other key licensees soon to be announced, is it too bold to say we are creating the next great preschool evergreen that will entertain children for generations? No, I do not think so. It is rare that you have the creative talents of Rob Minkoff, Shane Morris and Elise Allen, paired with the best and brightest out of Mattel and our own shop. The show, the concept and the execution are all going to be amazing—“Ride Rangers, ride!” ©



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ALLISON AMES
president and chief executive officer, Beanstalk

LOOKING BACK TO LOOK AHEAD

Beanstalk's Allison Ames discusses how the challenges of 2016 will shape the victories of 2017.

In the year between Licensing Expo 2016 and 2017, what trends have you seen emerge and what trends do you see continuing in the future?

There are so many fascinating trends impacting and changing our world today that it's hard to narrow them down to a choice few. Be it the business of fashion, food, electronics, home, pet—you name it—we are in the midst of a retail evolution aptly described by three words: correct, change and experience. For any licensing program to be successful, licensors will have to properly address these shifts in consumer preferences and shopping behavior.

What do you see that needs to be corrected at retail?

We are witnessing a structural correction at retail that will, hopefully, right size soon. Over the past two decades, too many stores across specialty, mid-tier, mass and department store retail were overbuilt to service shoppers. The U.S. has six times the retail space per capita of either Europe or Japan. Layer on top of that the change in consumer shopping to off-price and online, and it has created a perfect storm of unusual magnitude and impact on our retail landscape. This is, undoubtedly, a moment of Darwinism as we experience the pain and consequences of brick and mortar correction and who will ultimately, survive. Those retailers that will be able to rise up and emerge from this turmoil will be healthier and smarter and provide a far better in-store experience to regain consumer trust and engagement.

Can you outline what needs to "change?"

Throughout different industries and across numerous

product platforms, we are seeing more and more brands changing their relationships with consumers to maintain and build loyalty. Much of this is driven by consumer's needs for transparency and convenience.

Taken clean and simple food labeling as just one example. The clean label movement, simplifying ingredient lists to make them more understandable, is a trend that's here to stay. Consumers

want to be empowered with information and it's forcing brands, large and small, to get on board. Consumers not only want transparency but they want to make sure the food they eat contains healthier ingredients. Niche good-for-you brands like Bob's Red Mill are disrupting this area and forcing the likes of General Mills and Pillsbury to acquire and/or launch natural food products with fewer artificial ingredients.

In addition to transparency, convenience is key. Face it, we live in an age of immediate gratification. Shopping, payment and delivery are all done at the stroke of a key. Restaurants are setting up their own separate delivery services to keep pace with the growing demand of hungry consumers. And the explosive growth of meal delivery and subscription services that are coming on the scene around the world offering all types of products, from Blue Apron, Hello Fresh, Chef'D in food, Birchbox and GlossyBox in beauty, Trunk Club and Blacksocks in fashion, Dollar Shave Club in grooming, clearly demonstrates that this is a new

BE IT THE BUSINESS OF FASHION, FOOD, ELECTRONICS, HOME, PET—YOU NAME IT—WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF A RETAIL EVOLUTION APTLY DESCRIBED BY THREE WORDS: CORRECT, CHANGE AND EXPERIENCE.



and exciting segment of retail that is speaking to consumers in innovative and immediate ways. (For more on this, see the story “Thinking Inside the Box” on page 150.) All in an effort to make our overtaxed lives more convenient.

How do you foresee the shopping experience evolving?

Around the world, brands are amplifying their marketing with visual and emotional experiences.

Ten years ago we weren't talking about marketing vehicles such as pop-up shops or influencers. And now, not a week goes by without a pop-up popping up on street corners, malls, airports and other venues. From Kellogg's Pop-Tarts Café to Hello Kitty, Eileen Fisher and *Vogue*, pop-up shops are more than just a trend. They are an exclusive and entrepreneurial way for brands and retailers to offer a “FOMO” moment and drive consumers to a unique and temporary shopping experience.

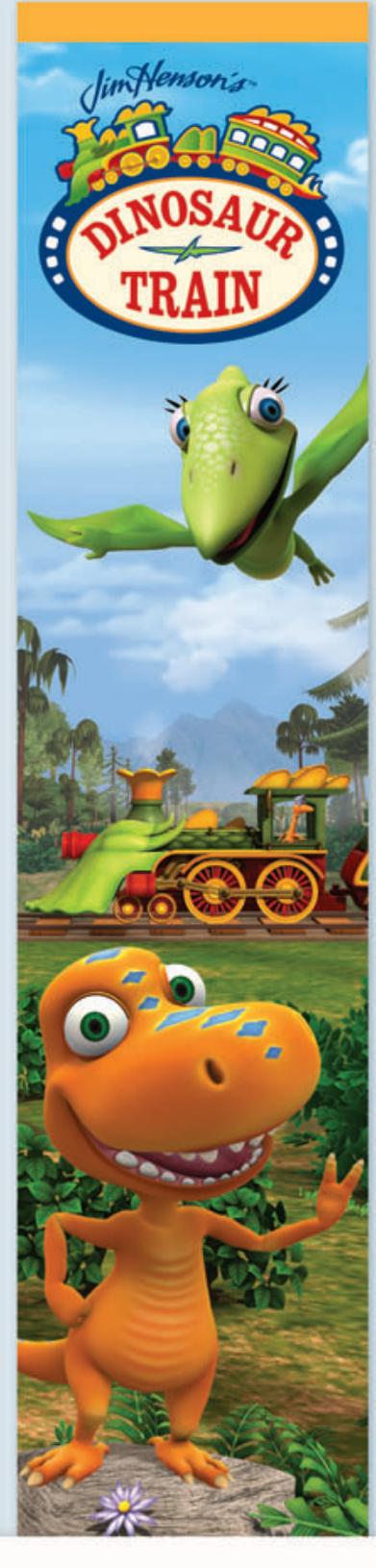
Influencers are another interesting way for consumers to experience brands. They are now the new celebrity endorser plugged in by the power of content. According to the marketing platform, MuseFind, 92 percent of consumers trust an influencer more than an advertisement or celebrity endorsement. Influencers are expert voices who can be relevant to a brand and therefore, emotionally encourage consumers to buy products in a genuine and organic way. It's not necessarily about their number of followers, but rather their ability to properly project their experience to likeminded people.

Consumers are radically changing their shopping behaviors, worldwide, and that will continue for some time. Smart retailers are adapting and evolving to stay alive and satisfy consumers' shifting needs. Similarly, successful licensors must develop products and experiences that address these changes or they will surely be left behind. ©



"Wonder, Laughter, and Infinite Possibilities." – Jim Henson

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JULI BOYLAN
head of global licensing, MGA Entertainment

KIDS' CLUB

MGA is heading into Licensing Expo with its newer brands as well as an old favorite.

by **AMANDA CIOLETTI**

MGA Entertainment's Juli Boylan, head of global licensing, is looking to stalwart brands like Little Tikes, as well as the year-old Num Noms, and its new L.O.L. Surprise! collectibles to drive the company's licensing portfolio in 2017 and beyond.

What will be MGA's major focus for Licensing Expo and 2017?

MGA will have a dual focus for Licensing Expo—first, delivering on the licensing program in support of the company's tremendously successful Num Noms toy line launch through all retail channels in the U.S. with solid retail placement of products across virtually every major category with an emphasis on expansion into international markets; and, secondly, launching the licensing program for MGA's phenomenally successful L.O.L. Surprise! brand, with unique products that illuminate the adorable yet fierce, fashion-forward little dolls with big personalities who come packaged in multi-layered balls that, when unwrapped, reveal various accessories for the doll found at its core.

What are the expansion plans for Num Noms in year two? How will the property continue to expand at retail in the U.S. and around the world?

In the U.S. and Canada, MGA has introduced three series of Num Noms, with more than 400 Num Noms characters available across mass retail including Toys 'R' Us, Walmart, Target and Amazon, as well as at mid-tier and specialty retailers. MGA is in development on series four, which will launch in June.

Internationally, series one of Num Noms sold out in the U.K., France, Benelux, the Middle East and Australia across all SKUs. Series two, which launched in summer 2016, expanded Num Noms into New Zealand, Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Argentina and Central America.

Key European retailers for Num Noms include Tesco, Smyths, The Entertainer, Toys 'R' Us, Auchan, La Grande Recre, King Jouet and Bart Smith, just to name a few.

This past holiday season, MGA launched series

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three and Num Noms lights in the U.K., France and Benelux, as well as initial brand launches in Iberia (with TRU), Italy (Toy Centre and at kiosks), Germany (TRU), Russia (Detski Mir) and South Africa (TRU), all selling through far ahead of expectations.

At Licensing Expo specifically, MGA will be meeting with a number of potential partners in ancillary categories, as well as with international partners throughout the Asia Pacific and Latin American regions.

How many countries is Num Noms in and who are its major domestic and international licensees?

Num Noms are currently available in 51 countries in major territories worldwide. The incredible success of the brand is validated by MGA's global licensing program for Num Noms, which includes more than 80 A-list licensees around the world across all major categories of softlines, hardlines and publishing.

MGA had a breakout hit with the L.O.L. Surprise! brand at holiday 2016. What are the plans for the brand's future and where will we find product on shelf?

The L.O.L. Surprise! toy range was a phenomenal success right out of the gate, which spurred an incredible demand for the licensed line. Over the past few months, MGA has been able to broaden retail distribution across all channels with availability at Target, Walmart, Toys 'R' Us, Amazon, Michael's, Kohl's, Kmart and other mid-tier and specialty stores around the globe. MGA has developed an outrageous licensing program that includes unique products that spotlight the dolls with an added element of surprise, targeting girls, ages 6 to 9. The style guide will be a ball full of surprises, packed with personality, utilizing the Clubs as themes and incorporating fun phrases and emojis. MGA will begin releasing with limited products including games and puzzles starting in Q4, followed by phase one (fashion apparel, sleepwear and accessories) in spring 2018, and then phase two (health and beauty, gift and novelty, stationery and party goods and crafts and activities); phase three (publishing, back-to-

school and electronics and home decor); and phase four (food and beverage, seasonal and sporting goods), until we reach full product distribution in fall 2018.

MGA is continuing to grow its evergreen Little Tikes brand. What is the secret to keeping the 45-year-old brand fresh?

It's not a secret that the way to keep a brand fresh is to continue to engage the consumer, and with Little Tikes, MGA has continued to innovate and grow the brand, encompassing indoor and outdoor activities with products that encourage active, imaginative play. By listening to parents, especially moms, the brand has earned 45 years of trust and brand loyalty, which is also why Little Tikes is the No. 1 brand and market leader in outdoor and ride-on toys and is consistently ranked among the top three brands by NPD in the U.S. and U.K. The more than 35 licensees for Little Tikes around the world share MGA's commitment to keeping the brand relevant, and we continue to inspire each other with great new ideas for reaching out to moms with innovative, safe and fun products for newborns, infants, toddlers and kids. We're also utilizing new tools for communicating that commitment to consumers including a recent partnership with BuzzFeed that ensures Little Tikes brand awareness continues through a variety of social media platforms that reach our target Millennial mom audience, as well as through traditional print, online and commercial advertising.

Can you discuss Little Tikes' growth trajectory for 2017 and into 2018?

The Little Tikes licensing program has closely aligned with complementary products supporting the active, imaginative play nature of the brand. We are now looking to expand beyond sporting goods, arts and crafts and toys and, at Licensing Expo, MGA will introduce its new Little Tikes Kids brand to accomplish this expansion. Little Tikes Kids is a lifestyle brand that incorporates the key attributes of comfort, durability and imaginative play synonymous with the Little Tikes toy brand into non-toy categories. MGA will be looking to partner on the development of branded fashion apparel and accessories that feature special fabrications such as tactile heat transfer, rubberized extras and reinforced stitching and aim to have those lifestyle products available at retail in fall 2018. ©



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Disney's Vision for the Future

An exclusive look at how Jimmy Pitaro is driving new growth in multiple ways for Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media.

by **TONY LISANTI**

The evolution of Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media, driven by new content, innovative products, experiential events and digital integration over the past several years, has produced record results for the world's largest licensor at retail, and it has also expanded its diverse and multi-generational fan base worldwide.

DCPI's new initiatives and ongoing efforts are focused on a cross-section of key business disciplines that are designed to improve and enhance product innovation, audience development, partnerships, retail, digital and social media and international expansion.

It's no longer just about another basic deal, which is still important, but it's more about taking the IP to new and innovative product categories. It's not just about another version of a video game, but rather about maximizing a digital presence for all the company's franchises in ways that didn't exist a few years ago. It's not simply about stacking products on an end-cap and hoping for sell-through, but it's now about creating more of a consumer experience at retail and online. And it's no longer just about a particular tentpole film event, regardless of the box office success, but it's also about creating content and touchpoints with fans every day.

"The focus is on developing, cultivating and advancing the franchises across our core brands," says Jimmy Pitaro, chairman, Disney Consumer

A portrait of Jimmy Pitaro, a middle-aged man with short dark hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and a dark suit jacket. He is smiling slightly and looking directly at the camera.

JIMMY PITARO
chairman, Disney Consumer Products
and Interactive Media

Products and Interactive Media, who took over the group about 15 months ago when he was promoted from his position as president of Disney Interactive. “Our strategy is to bring the magic of Disney into the daily lives of families and fans around the world.

“Daily touchpoints are so important to the team, and it’s how DCPI differentiates itself,” adds Pitaro. “We extend the stories that are developed by our divisions and keep them relevant every day.”

Since Bob Iger, chairman and chief executive officer, The Walt Disney Company, combined the Disney Consumer Products division and the Disney Interactive division in 2015 to form DCPI, it has been clearly evident that the company’s latest strategies are producing significant results.

Over the past two years, DCPI has added \$11.3 billion in retail sales of licensed merchandise worldwide. The world’s No. 1 global licensor, according to *License Global’s* annual Top 150 Global Licensors study, reported an increase of \$4.1 billion in 2016, pushing it to a record \$56.6 billion in retail sales. This follows an increase of \$7.2 billion in retail sales in 2015, and, in fact, over the last five years, Disney has added a remarkable \$19.1 billion in retail sales of licensed merchandise worldwide, far exceeding the current combined total of its closest

rivals in entertainment licensing. Over the last five years, DCPI has tripled its operating income, and it now has 11 franchises that generate more than \$1 billion in retail sales worldwide under the leadership of Josh Silverman, executive vice president, global licensing, Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media.

Another measure of growth and the company’s popularity that helps to drive DCPI’s licensing efforts come from the several key box office statistics that include:

- In 2016, The Walt Disney Company’s films grossed a record \$7.605 billion at the global box office, marking the first time any studio crossed the \$7 billion mark in a single year.
- In 2016, five Walt Disney Company films grossed more than \$700 million each—*Captain America: Civil War*, *Finding Dory*, *Zootopia*, *The Jungle Book* and *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*.
- Most recently, *Beauty and the Beast* grossed more than \$1.1 billion globally and is the biggest live-action musical of all time.

The company’s film slate in 2017 and over the next two years is poised for strong repeat performances and certainly will set the foundation for the continued expansion of DCPI’s licensing and retail initiatives. This year’s upcoming



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films include *Guardians of the Galaxy 2*, *Pirates*

of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales, *Cars 3*, *Thor: Ragnarok*, *Coco* and *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*. In 2018, the list includes *Black Panther*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *Magic Camp*, *Avengers: Infinity War*, an untitled Han Solo *Star Wars* anthology film, *The Incredibles 2*, *Ant-Man & The Wasp*, an untitled Disney Fairy Tale live-action film, *Mulan*, *Ralph Breaks the Internet: Wreck-It Ralph 2* and *Mary Poppins Returns*. And in 2019, the list includes *Captain Marvel*, *Star Wars: Episode IX*, *Toy Story 4*, *The Lion King* and *Frozen 2*, among many others.

Pitaro says there are three primary driving factors for DCPI-audience development, innovation and direct-to-consumer-and each one is being addressed across all franchises.

“We believe that there are demographic groups for each of our franchises that we have yet to fully reach with a product offering that speaks directly to them,” explains Pitaro. “Depending on the franchise, that could be age, gender, income level or geography. For example, with Marvel and *Star Wars*, we see an opportunity to create products that speak to women and girls, and we can do much more.

“We are focused on category expansion, more deeply entering the apparel, accessories, home, consumables and stationery spaces, and we’ve also looked at traditional play and toys, which have always been a critical part of *Star Wars* fandom,” he adds.

One new example is “*Star Wars Forces of Destiny*,” a new series of 16 animated shorts created by Lucasfilm Animation, that will feature pivotal moments in the adventures of heroines from the *Star Wars* universe including Rey, Jyn Erso, Sabine Wren, Princess Leia and Ahsoka Tano. The stories will be supported by books, apparel and toys, including a new product line of “adventure” figures created by Hasbro that will launch in August.

“The innovative 11-inch figures bridge the gap between

traditional action figures and dolls. They will have a different look and feel from

previous action figures and will allow kids to bring these heroes to life through play like never before,” says Pitaro.

DCPI is also working to age-up historically younger-skewing franchises, says Pitaro, with products appealing to adults and young adults, particularly in the fashion space. One of the most recent examples is Minnie Mouse and DCPI’s collaborations with top designers including Lanvin, Giles Deacon, Olympia Le Tan and alice + olivia by Stacey Bendet.

“We want to turn Minnie into an aspirational fashion icon,” says Pitaro. “Minnie’s charm and fun-loving personality resonate across age ranges, as do her signature polka dots and bows. Disney was just voted the most intimate brand by Millennials, and we’re seeing this play out in our fast-growing adult fashion business around the world.”

DCPI is also developing new initiatives with Her Universe and its founder Ashley Eckstein, who Pitaro says has played a key role in expanding audiences for *Star Wars* and Marvel with product lines specifically catering to women and girls. In addition, Pitaro says Eckstein will

be designing for other Disney properties including Disney Princess, and also creating a new co-branded kids’ athleisure line for both boys and girls.

The recent success of *Beauty and the Beast* is yet another example of how DCPI has taken the appeal of the movie and created new opportunities to partner with brands and retailers, from high-end fashion labels Christopher Kane and Judith Leiber to accessible brands such as MinkPink and Gap.

While innovation may sound like an obvious strategy, Pitaro believes that it truly is “at the heart of everything we do at DCPI. We are partnering with some of the world’s most cutting edge companies to introduce more technology to our products in ways that are authentic to our stories.”

The BB-8 by Sphero, a robotic





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Star Wars toy, is one of the best examples that highlights how a new company attended Disney's Accelerator Program and ended up developing one of DCPI's most innovative and sought after new products.

DCPI is now partnering with Sphero for the upcoming *Cars 3*, creating a high-performance, app-enabled Lightning McQueen that will connect with a broad audience.

Regarding Pitaro's third key strategy, direct-to-consumer, DCPI is investing in both brick-and-mortar retail and e-commerce.

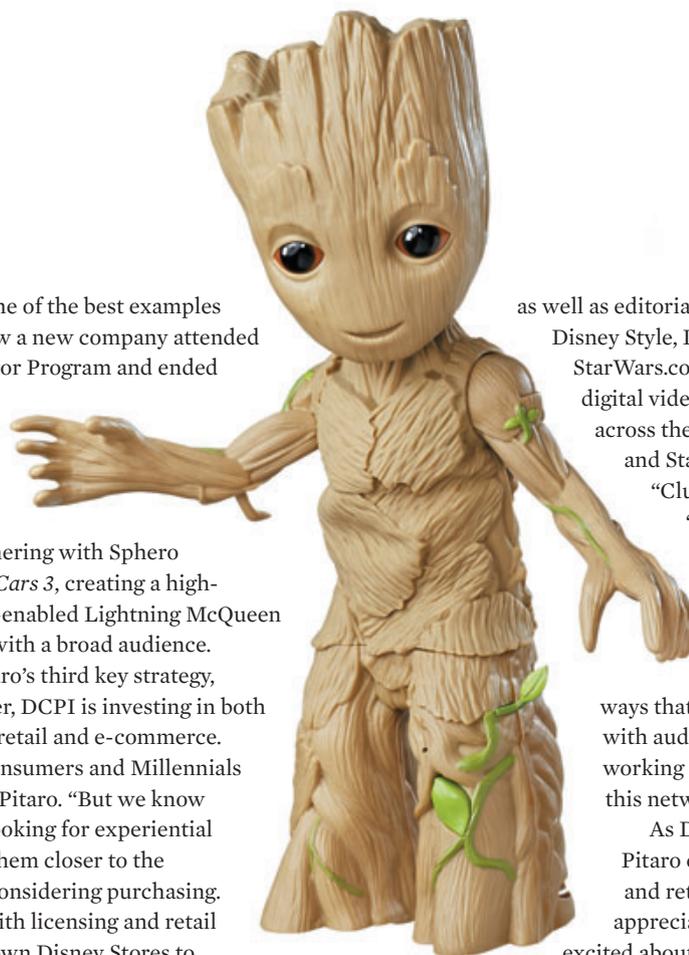
"Yes, Gen-Z consumers and Millennials shop online," says Pitaro. "But we know that they're also looking for experiential retail that brings them closer to the products they're considering purchasing. We are working with licensing and retail partners and our own Disney Stores to bring our products directly to consumers in new ways."

Pitaro says DCPI is also leveraging the full power of its digital business to help drive sales of licensed products.

This month, the company unveiled the Disney Digital Network, which delivers stories through digital platforms and influencers to Millennial and Gen Z audiences.

"With an audience of more than 1 billion highly engaged followers, the Disney Digital Network is one of the most impactful publishers in digital media," says Pitaro. "This network extends our stories to the platforms that Gen Z and Millennial audiences are on every day, with diverse editorial voices that integrate top creators and influencers."

The new network will combine more than 300 social media channels, social media influencers and include Disney's in-house branded content service, Disney Co/Op,



as well as editorial brands such as Oh My Disney, Disney Style, Disney Family, Babble, Polaris, StarWars.com and the "Star Wars" app. New digital video programs that will be available across the new network include "Science and Star Wars," "Oh My Disney Show," "Club Mickey Mouse," "Disney IRL," "COIN," "Disney Design Challenge" and "Disney Magical Starts."

"We are using this network to extend our company's stories and showcase our products and partners in ways that are authentic and that resonate with audiences," says Pitaro. "We are working with licensing partners to put this network to work for them."

As DCPI heads to Licensing Expo, Pitaro explains: "I want our licensees and retailers to know how much we appreciate their partnership, and to be excited about what's next. We're going to show what's ahead for our iconic brands, and we will be giving a sneak peek at new shows coming to Disney Channel as well as a look at the film slate in 2018 and beyond."

"We have one of the strongest content pipelines in our company's history, and our partners are going to get a look at everything from Disney•Pixar Animation's *Incredibles 2* to Lucasfilm's *Han Solo*, and of course *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*. They'll also see the latest from Marvel including *Thor: Ragnarok*, *Black Panther* and *Avengers: Infinity War*, as well as from our live-action studio, which will introduce a number of movies including *Mary Poppins Returns*."

As Pitaro looks ahead to the future through 2020, and ruminates on when he first became chairman of DCPI, he says: "I challenged the team to think about our legacy. The first goal we set was to have more people in more places inspired by our products and stories. That means bringing new consumers into our franchises and expanding our audience across age, gender, geography, and more. We also want to rethink our retail presence. The industry is going through a tremendous transformation, and we are working with our licensing and retail partners, as well as our vertical Disney Store team, to be at the forefront of an experiential approach to retail that excites Gen Z and Millennial shoppers. Finally, we want to develop content that brings the best of Disney storytelling to the digital space and helps fans discover more ways to connect with our franchises through product."

It appears that the world of Disney is well-positioned for continued growth worldwide and is in good hands in Jimmy's world. ©



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License Global presents its annual "Flick Pics" feature, a roundup of upcoming films that have strong licensed consumer product potential. by AMANDA CIOLETTI

Title & Release Date	Synopsis	Licensees & Promotional Partners
Lionsgate		
<p>Saw Legacy Oct. 27, 2017</p>	<p>One of the highest grossing horror franchises of all time is back, taking the Jigsaw killer's signature brand of twisted scenarios to the next level.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees and promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p>Wonder Nov. 17, 2017</p>	<p>Based on the <i>New York Times</i> best-seller, <i>Wonder</i> tells the inspiring and heartwarming story of August Pullman. Born with facial differences that, up until now, have prevented him from going to a mainstream school, Auggie becomes the most unlikely of heroes when he enters the local fifth grade. As his family, his new classmates and the larger community all struggle to discover their compassion and acceptance, Auggie's extraordinary journey will unite them all and prove you can't blend in when you were born to stand out.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees and promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p>Robin Hood: Origins March 23, 2018</p>	<p>A war-hardened crusader and a Moorish commander mount an audacious revolt against the corrupt English crown in a thrilling action-adventure from director Otto Bathurst. Packed with gritty battlefield exploits, mind-blowing fight choreography and a timeless romance, <i>Robin Hood: Origins</i> is the never-before-seen story of how Robin Hood became the icon and legend we know today.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees and promotional partners across select categories.</p>



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Lionsgate continued

<p>La La Land Ongoing</p>	<p>Written and directed by Academy Award winner Damien Chazelle, <i>La La Land</i> tells the story of Mia, an aspiring actress, and Sebastian, a dedicated jazz musician, who are struggling to make ends meet in a city known for crushing hopes and breaking hearts. Set in modern day Los Angeles, this original musical about everyday life explores the joy and pain of pursuing your dreams.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p>John Wick Franchise Ongoing</p>	<p>The <i>John Wick</i> series follows the exploits of the legendary hit man as he unleashes mayhem and fury on the mobsters who have wronged him and the army of international assassins who want him dead. Exploding with highly choreographed gun-fu and combat, the action-packed neo-noir thriller films tell classic stories of vengeance and redemption.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p>The Kingkiller Chronicle No release date available</p>	<p>Based on the best-selling fantasy book series by Patrick Rothfuss, <i>The Kingkiller Chronicle</i> tells the story of Kvothe, a streetwise young adventurer and musician who hopes to one day avenge the death of his family at the hands of a mysterious evil force through the mastery of sorcery and wizardry. Emmy, Grammy and Tony Award-winning Lin-Manuel Miranda to serve as creative producer and musical mastermind.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees across select categories.</p>
<p>Madea Franchise Ongoing</p>	<p>The <i>Madea</i> franchise chronicles the escapades of Mabel Madea Simmons, the unstoppable pistol-packin' Southern matriarch, created and portrayed by media mogul Tyler Perry. Since her on-screen debut in 2005, <i>Madea</i> has been a box office powerhouse, dishing out unorthodox wisdom in the wildly popular series of ground-breaking movies.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees across select categories.</p>
<p>Dirty Dancing: 30th Anniversary Ongoing</p>	<p>For over three decades, <i>Dirty Dancing</i> has been a mainstay of popular culture. With its captivating romantic storyline, chart-topping songs and unforgettable quotes, the original <i>Dirty Dancing</i> film became a movie phenomenon, inspiring an acclaimed stage show, a new TV special and generations of fans the world over.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees across select categories.</p>
<p>Reservoir Dogs: 25th Anniversary Ongoing</p>	<p>The American cult classic that turned Hollywood on its ear is boogieing back for its 25th anniversary. Written and directed by Academy Award winner, Quentin Tarantino, <i>Reservoir Dogs</i> is critically acclaimed for its raw power and breath-taking ferocity, and is firmly established as a brilliant American gangster movie class.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees across select categories.</p>

NBCUniversal

<p>The Mummy June 9, 2017</p>	<p>Tom Cruise headlines a spectacular, all-new cinematic version of the legend that has fascinated cultures all over the world since the dawn of civilization: <i>The Mummy</i>. Thought safely entombed in a crypt deep beneath the unforgiving desert, an ancient princess (Sofia Boutella) whose destiny was unjustly taken from her, is awakened in the current day, bringing with her malevolence grown over millennia and terrors that defy human comprehension. From the sweeping sands of the Middle East through hidden labyrinths under modern-day London, <i>The Mummy</i> brings a surprising intensity and balance of wonder and thrills in an imaginative new take that ushers in a new world of gods and monsters.</p>	<p>Contact Universal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>
<p>Despicable Me 3 June 30, 2017</p>	<p>Illumination continues the adventures of Gru, Lucy, their adorable daughters—Margo, Edith and Agnes—and the Minions in <i>Despicable Me 3</i>. Joining Steve Carell and Kristen Wiig in <i>Despicable Me 3</i> is Emmy, Tony and Grammy Award winner Trey Parker, co-creator of Comedy Central's global phenomenon "South Park" and the Broadway smash "The Book of Mormon." Parker voices the role of villain Balthazar Bratt, a former child star who's grown up to become obsessed with the character he played in the '80s, and proves to be Gru's most formidable nemesis to-date.</p>	<p>Contact Universal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>



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NBCUniversal continued

<p>Pitch Perfect 3 Dec. 23, 2017</p>	<p>Anna Kendrick and Rebel Wilson headline the returning cast of <i>Pitch Perfect 3</i>, the follow-up to summer 2015's blockbuster hit.</p>	<p>Contact Universal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>
<p>Pacific Rim: Uprising Feb. 23, 2018</p>	<p>John Boyega leads the cast of <i>Pacific Rim: Uprising</i> in a cinematic battle for global domination. This is a follow up to 2013's <i>Pacific Rim</i>, which took audiences to Further Earth's land, skies and seas and introduced an entirely new kind of warfare. Steven S. DeKnight directs the next chapter of the film that generated more than \$400 million worldwide, including a strong performance in China.</p>	<p>Contact Universal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>
<p>Jurassic World Sequel June 22, 2018</p>	<p>The next installment of the <i>Jurassic World</i> franchise is currently in production in London. Executive producers Steven Spielberg and Colin Trevorrow and stars Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard return for Universal Pictures' and Amblin Entertainment's <i>Jurassic World Sequel</i>, a follow-up to one of the biggest blockbusters in the history of cinema. Producers Frank Marshall and Pat Crowley once again join Spielberg and Trevorrow in leading the team of filmmakers for the next chapter in the franchise.</p>	<p>Contact Universal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>
<p>How the Grinch Stole Christmas Nov. 9, 2018</p>	<p>Benedict Cumberbatch voices the title role of The Grinch in the newly imagined version of the enduring holiday classic. Directed by Pete Candeland and Yarrow Cheney, and adapted from Dr. Seuss' book by Michael LeSieur, the animated film will be produced by Illumination's Chris Meledandri, Janet Healy and Scott Mosier, and executive produced by Audrey Geisel and Chris Renaud.</p>	<p>Contact Universal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>

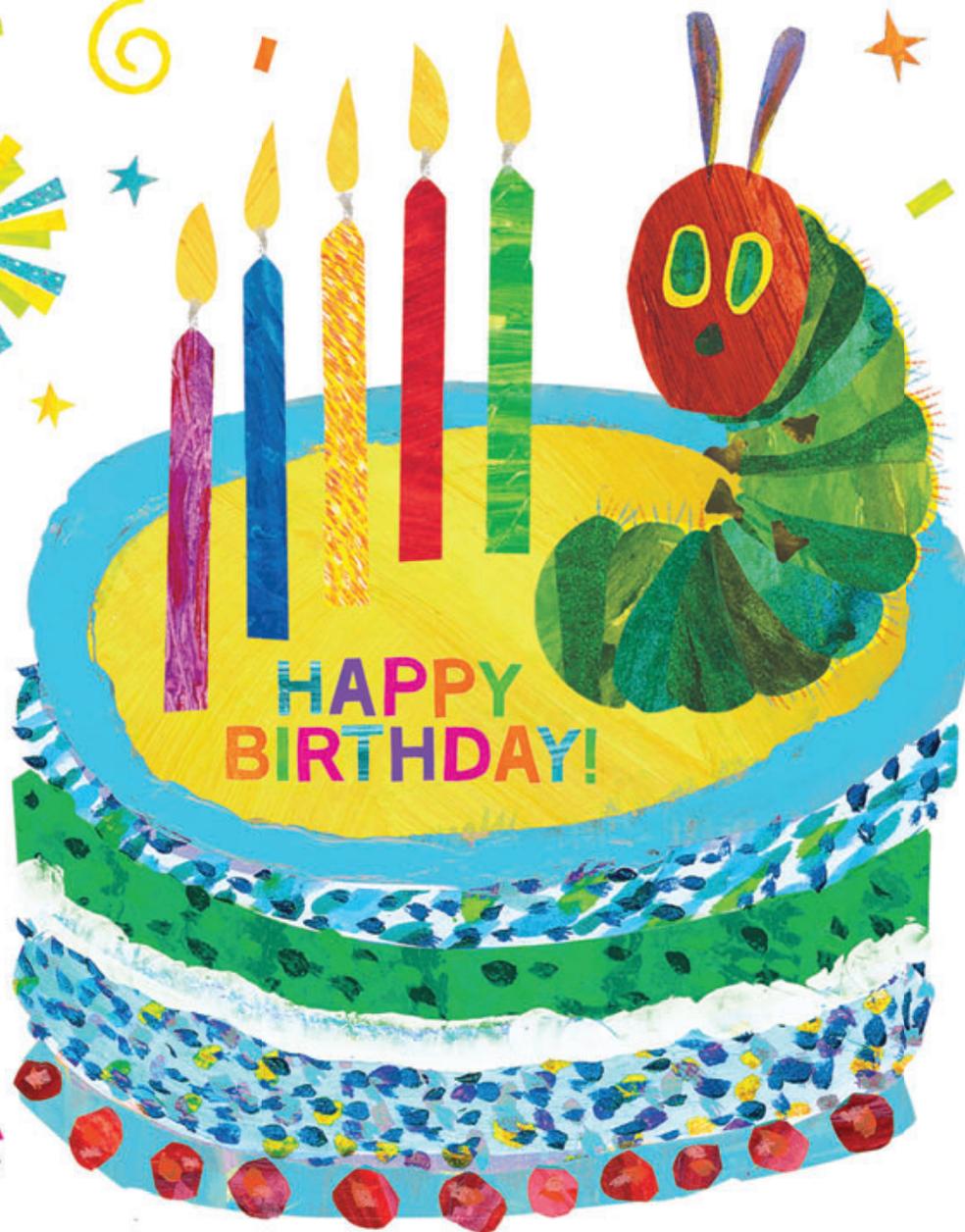
Paramount Pictures

<p>Transformers: The Last Knight June 23, 2017</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>For licensing inquiries, contact Hasbro.</p>
<p>Sherlock Gnomes Jan. 12, 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Bumblebee June 8, 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>For licensing inquiries, contact Hasbro.</p>
<p>Mission: Impossible 6 July 27, 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Amusement Park Aug. 10, 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>

Sony Pictures

<p>Spider-Man: Homecoming July 7, 2017</p>	<div data-bbox="404 1638 616 1750" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>A young Peter Parker/Spider-Man (Tom Holland), who made his debut in <i>Captain America: Civil War</i>, begins to navigate his newfound identity as the web-slinging superhero in <i>Spider-Man: Homecoming</i>. Thrilled by his experience with the Avengers, Peter returns home, where he lives with his Aunt May (Marisa Tomei), under the watchful eye of his new mentor Tony Stark (Robert Downey, Jr.). Peter tries to fall back into his normal daily routine—distracted by thoughts of proving himself to be more than just your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man—but when the Vulture (Michael Keaton) emerges as a new villain, everything that Peter holds most important will be threatened.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
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Sony Pictures continued

<p>EmojiMovie: Express Yourself July 28, 2017</p>	<p><i>EmojiMovie: Express Yourself</i> unlocks the never-before-seen secret world inside your smartphone. Hidden within the messaging app is Textopolis, a bustling city where all your favorite emojis live, hoping to be selected by the phone's user. In this world, each emoji has only one facial expression—except for Gene (T.J. Miller), an exuberant emoji who was born without a filter and is bursting with multiple expressions. Determined to become “normal” like the other emojis, Gene enlists the help of his handy best friend Hi-5 (James Corden) and the notorious code breaker emoji Jailbreak (Ilana Glazer). Together, they embark on an epic “app-venture” through the apps on the phone, each its own wild and fun world, to find the code that will fix Gene. But when a greater danger threatens the phone, the fate of all emojis depends on these three unlikely friends, who must save their world before it's deleted forever.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>The Dark Tower Aug. 4, 2017</p>	<p>T H E D A R K T O W E R There are other worlds than these. Stephen King's <i>The Dark Tower</i>, the ambitious and expansive story from one of the world's most celebrated authors, makes its debut on the big screen. The last Gunslinger, Roland Deschain (Idris Elba), has been locked in an eternal battle with Walter O'Dim, also known as the Man in Black (Matthew McConaughey), determined to prevent him from toppling the Dark Tower, which holds the universe together. With the fate of the worlds at stake, good and evil will collide in the ultimate battle, as only Roland can defend the Tower from the Man in Black.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>The Star Nov. 10, 2017</p>	<p>In Sony Pictures Animation's <i>The Star</i>, a small but brave donkey named Bo yearns for a life beyond his daily grind at the village mill. One day he finds the courage to break free, and finally goes on the adventure of his dreams. On his journey, he teams up with Ruth, a lovable sheep who has lost her flock and Dave, a dove with lofty aspirations. Along with three wisecracking camels and some eccentric stable animals, Bo and his new friends follow the Star and become accidental heroes in the greatest story ever told—the first Christmas.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle Dec. 20, 2017</p>	<div data-bbox="404 1176 614 1317" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>In the brand new adventure <i>Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle</i>, the tables are turned as four teenagers are sucked into the world of Jumanji. When four high school kids discover an old video game console with a game they've never heard of—"Jumanji"—they are immediately drawn into the game's jungle setting, literally becoming the avatars they chose: gamer Spencer becomes a brawny adventurer (Dwayne Johnson); football jock Fridge loses (in his words) “the top two feet of his body” and becomes an Einstein (Kevin Hart); popular girl Bethany becomes a middle-aged male professor (Jack Black); and wallflower Martha becomes a warrior (Karen Gillan). What they discover is that you don't just play “Jumanji”—you must survive it. To beat the game and return to the real world, they'll have to go on the most dangerous adventure of their lives, discover what Alan Parrish left 20 years ago and change the way they think about themselves or they'll be stuck in the game forever.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Peter Rabbit March 23, 2018</p>	<p><i>Peter Rabbit</i>, the new live-action/CG motion picture, is based on the internationally beloved series of books written and illustrated by Beatrix Potter. Directed by Will Gluck with an all-star cast including James Corden as Peter, Rose Byrne, Daisy Ridley, Elizabeth Debicki, Margot Robbie and Domhnall Gleeson.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Slenderman May 18, 2018</p>	<p>The supernatural Internet legend comes to life in an all-new film.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Barbie June 29, 2018</p>	<p>An all-new live-action film based on the venerable Mattel character.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>

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Sony Pictures continued

<p>Hotel Transylvania 3 July 13, 2018</p>	 <p>In Sony Pictures Animation's <i>Hotel Transylvania 3</i>, Mavis surprises Dracula with a family voyage on a luxury monster cruise ship so he can take a vacation from providing everyone else's vacation at the hotel. The rest of Drac's pack cannot resist going along, and once they leave port, romance zings Drac when he meets the mysterious ship captain Ericka. Now it's Mavis' turn to play the overprotective parent, keeping her dad and Ericka apart. Little do they know that his "too good to be true" love interest is actually a descendent of Van Helsing, arch nemesis to Dracula and all monsters.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Goosebumps 2 Sept. 21, 2018</p>	<p>The second film based on <i>Goosebumps</i>, the worldwide best-selling literary franchise by R.L. Stine, is back with returning fan-favorite and new characters.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Animated Spider-Man Dec. 21, 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>

Twentieth Century Fox

<p>Murder on the Orient Express Nov. 10, 2017</p>	<p>What starts out as a lavish train ride through Europe quickly unfolds into one of the most stylish, suspenseful and thrilling mysteries ever told. From the novel by best-selling author Agatha Christie, <i>Murder on the Orient Express</i> tells the tale of 13 strangers stranded on a train, where everyone's a suspect. One man must race against time to solve the puzzle before the murderer strikes again. Kenneth Branagh directs and leads an all-star cast including Penelope Cruz, Willem Dafoe, Judi Dench, Johnny Depp, Michelle Pfeiffer, Daisy Ridley and Josh Gad.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Ferdinand Dec. 15, 2017</p>	<p><i>Ferdinand</i> tells the story of a giant bull with a big heart. After being mistaken for a dangerous beast, he is captured and torn from his home. Determined to return to his family, he rallies a misfit team on the ultimate adventure. Set in Spain, Ferdinand proves you can't judge a bull by its cover. Inspired by the book <i>The Story of Ferdinand</i> by Munro Leaf and Robert Lawson, Ferdinand is a heartwarming animated comedy adventure with an all-star cast that includes John Cena, Kate McKinnon, Gina Rodriguez, Anthony Anderson and many more.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>The Greatest Showman Dec. 25, 2017</p>	<p><i>The Greatest Showman</i> is a bold and original musical that celebrates the birth of show business and the sense of wonder we feel when dreams come to life. Inspired by the ambition and imagination of P.T. Barnum, <i>The Greatest Showman</i> tells the story of a visionary who rose from nothing to create a mesmerizing spectacle that became a worldwide sensation.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Alita: Battle Angel July 20, 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>The Predator Aug. 3, 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Avatar Sequel Dec. 18, 2020</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Avatar Sequel 2 Dec. 17, 2021</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p>Avatar Sequel 3 Dec. 20, 2024</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>

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Twentieth Century Fox continued

<p>Avatar Sequel 4 Dec. 19, 2025</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
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The Walt Disney Company–Lucasfilm

<p>Star Wars: The Last Jedi Dec. 15, 2017</p>	<p>Rey took her first steps into a larger world in <i>Star Wars: The Force Awakens</i> and will continue her epic journey with Finn, Poe and Luke Skywalker in the next chapter of the continuing Star Wars saga. <i>Star Wars: Episode VIII</i>, which is written and directed by Rian Johnson, welcomes back cast members Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, Adam Driver, Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, Oscar Isaac, Lupita Nyong'o, Domhnall Gleeson, Anthony Daniels, Gwendoline Christie and Andy Serkis. New cast members will include Academy Award winner Benicio Del Toro, Academy Award nominee Laura Dern and newcomer Kelly Marie Tran.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Star Wars: Episode IX May 24, 2019</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>No information available.</p>

The Walt Disney Company–Marvel

<p>Thor: Ragnarok Nov. 3, 2017</p>	 <p>Thor's world is about to explode in Marvel's <i>Thor: Ragnarok</i>. His devious brother, Loki, has taken over Asgard, the powerful Hela has emerged to steal the throne for herself and Thor is imprisoned on the other side of the universe. To escape captivity and save his home from imminent destruction, Thor must first win a deadly alien contest by defeating his former ally and fellow Avenger... The Incredible Hulk!</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Black Panther Feb. 16, 2018</p>	 <p>After the events of Marvel's <i>Captain America: Civil War</i>, King T'Challa returns home to the reclusive, technologically advanced African nation of Wakanda to serve as his country's new leader. However, T'Challa soon finds that he is challenged for the throne from factions within his own country. When two foes conspire to destroy Wakanda, the hero known as Black Panther must team up with C.I.A. agent Everett K. Ross and members of the Dora Milaje, Wakandan special forces, to prevent Wakanda from being dragged into a world war.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Avengers: Infinity War May 4, 2018</p>	 <p>As the Avengers and their allies have continued to protect the world from threats too large for any one hero to handle, a new danger has emerged from the cosmic shadows: Thanos. A despot of intergalactic infamy, his goal is to collect all six Infinity Stones, artifacts of unimaginable power, and use them to inflict his twisted will on all of reality. Everything the Avengers have fought for has led up to this moment—the fate of Earth and existence itself has never been more uncertain.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Ant-Man & The Wasp July 6, 2018</p>	 <p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Captain Marvel March 8, 2019</p>	 <p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>

The Walt Disney Company–Pixar Animation Studios

<p>Cars 3 June 16, 2017</p>	 <p>Blindsided by a new generation of blazing-fast racers, the legendary Lightning McQueen pushes himself beyond his limits and suffers a huge crash. To get back in the game, he will need the help of an eager young race technician, Cruz Ramirez. Proving that 95 isn't through yet, he will test the heart of a champion on Piston Cup Racing's biggest stage against his new rival, Jackson Storm.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Coco Nov. 22, 2017</p>	 <p>Coco is the story of a young boy named Miguel, a spirited 12-year-old who one day dreams of becoming a famous musician. One the eve of Día de los Muertos, Miguel sets off a chain of events that transports him to a magical, new world unlike anything he's ever seen before. In doing so, he'll discover a generations-old mystery, leading to a most extraordinary and surprising family reunion.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Incredibles 2 June 15, 2018</p>	<p><i>Incredibles 2</i> brings back everyone's favorite family of superheroes, in an exciting, hilarious and heartfelt super-sequel. Written and directed by Brad Bird, this new chapter sees Mr. and Mrs. Incredible, Violet, Dash and Jack Jack encounter a brand-new nemesis that puts their powers—and their family—to the ultimate test.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Toy Story 4 June 21, 2019</p>	<p>Disney-Pixar's <i>Toy Story 4</i> opens a new chapter in the lives of Woody, Buzz Lightyear and the <i>Toy Story</i> gang.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Ralph Breaks the Internet: Wreck-It Ralph 2 Nov. 21, 2018</p>	<p>From the filmmakers behind <i>Wreck-It Ralph</i> and the Oscar-winning <i>Zootopia</i> comes this sequel, <i>Ralph Breaks the Internet: Wreck-It Ralph 2</i>. Tired of wrecking his own arcade game, bad guy Ralph sets out on a new adventure with his best friend, "Sugar Rush" racer Vanellope von Schweetz, and before they know it, the duo breaks the Internet!</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Disney Gigantic Nov. 25, 2020</p>	<p>Directors Nathan Greno and Meg LeFauve and Oscar-winning <i>Frozen</i> songwriters Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, join forces to create Walt Disney Animation Studios' sweeping new twist on the iconic tale of Jack and the Beanstalk.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>

The Walt Disney Company–Walt Disney Studios

<p>Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales May 26, 2017</p>	 <p>The rip-roaring adventure finds down-on-his-luck Captain Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) feeling the winds of ill-fortune blowing strongly his way when deadly ghost sailors, led by the terrifying Captain Salazar (Javier Bardem), escape from the Devil's Triangle bent on killing every pirate at sea—notably Jack. Jack's only hope of survival lies in the legendary Trident of Poseidon, but to find it he must forge an uneasy alliance with Carina Smyth (Kaya Scodelario), a brilliant and beautiful astronomer, and Henry (Brenton Thwaites), a headstrong young sailor in the Royal Navy.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>A Wrinkle in Time March 9, 2018</p>	<p>A re-imagining of Madeleine L'Engle's classic novel that takes Meg Murry, her brilliant brother Charles Wallace and their friend Calvin on an unexpected journey into alternate dimensions on a mission to bring home their father.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>
<p>Mulan Nov. 2, 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>No information available.</p>
<p>Mary Poppins Returns Dec. 25, 2018</p>	<p><i>Mary Poppins Returns</i>, the all-new sequel to Disney's 1964 film <i>Mary Poppins</i>, is drawn from the wealth of material in PL Travers' additional seven books. Set in 1930s depression-era London, Michael Banks and Jane Banks are now grown up, with Michael, his three children and their housekeeper, Ellen, living on Cherry Tree Lane. After Michael suffers a personal loss, the enigmatic nanny Mary Poppins re-enters the lives of the Banks family, and, along with the optimistic street lamplighter Jack, uses her unique magical skills to help the family rediscover the joy and wonder missing in their lives.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program.</p>

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The Walt Disney Company—Walt Disney Studios continued

The Lion King July 19, 2019	No synopsis available.	No information available.
Frozen 2 Nov. 27, 2019	No synopsis available.	No information available.

Warner Bros. Pictures

Wonder Woman June 2, 2017	 <p><i>Wonder Woman</i> hits movie theaters around the world when Gal Gadot returns as the title character in the epic action-adventure. Before she was Wonder Woman, she was Diana, princess of the Amazons, trained to be an unconquerable warrior. Raised on a sheltered island paradise, when an American pilot crashes on their shores and tells of a massive conflict raging in the outside world, Diana leaves her home, convinced she can stop the threat. Fighting alongside man in a war to end all wars, Diana will discover her full powers... and her true destiny.</p>	Mattel, The LEGO Group, Rubie's Costume Co., Funko, Bioworld, New Era, Hallmark, Nanette Lepore, A Classic Time, Alex & Ani, Converse and Her Universe.
It Sept. 8, 2017	New Line Cinema's horror thriller <i>It</i> , directed by Andy Muschietti, is based on the Stephen King novel of the same name, which has been terrifying readers for decades. When children begin to disappear in the town of Derry, Maine, a group of young kids are faced with their biggest fears as they square off against an evil clown named Pennywise, whose history of murder and violence dates back for centuries.	Niche licensing program. Partners as yet unannounced.
LEGO: Ninjago Sept. 22, 2017	 <p>In this big-screen <i>Ninjago</i> adventure, the battle for Ninjago City calls to action young Master Builder Lloyd, a.k.a. the Green Ninja, along with his friends, who are all secret ninja warriors. Led by Master Wu, as wise-cracking as he is wise, they must defeat evil warlord Garmadon, The Worst Guy Ever, who also happens to be Lloyd's dad. Pitting mech against mech and father against son, the epic showdown will test this fierce but undisciplined team of modern-day ninjas who must learn to check their egos and pull together to unleash their inner power of Spinjitzu.</p>	Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.
Justice League Nov. 17, 2017	 <p>Fueled by his restored faith in humanity and inspired by Superman's selfless act, Bruce Wayne enlists the help of his newfound ally, Diana Prince, to face an even greater enemy. Together, Batman and Wonder Woman work quickly to find and recruit a team of metahumans to stand against this newly awakened threat. But despite the formation of this unprecedented league of heroes—Batman, Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Cyborg and The Flash—it may already be too late to save the planet from an assault of catastrophic proportions.</p>	Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.
Rampage 2018	No synopsis available.	Targeted licensing program. Partners as yet unannounced.
Smallfoot 2018	No synopsis available.	Targeted licensing program. Partners as yet unannounced.
Aquaman 2018	No synopsis available.	Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.
Ready Player One 2018	From Warner Bros. Pictures and Amblin Partners, in association with Village Roadshow Pictures, comes the much-anticipated sci-fi action adventure <i>Ready Player One</i> . The film is directed by three-time Academy Award winner Steven Spielberg based on Ernest Cline's best-seller of the same name.	Targeted licensing program. Partners not yet announced.
Fantastic Beasts 2 2018	The sequel to <i>Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them</i> takes audiences back to the Wizarding World for an all-new adventure.	Broad licensing program. Partners as yet unannounced.



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by ERICA GARBER

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Binge on these top series that have the potential to add extensive merchandising programs:

“A Series of Unfortunate Events”

“A Series of Unfortunate Events” is a black comedy and drama series from Netflix that is based on the children’s novel series of the same name. The first season, which premiered in January, adapts the first four books of the series and received acclaim from critics and fans. The series has already been renewed for a second and third season, which are expected to adapt the remaining books in the series.

Given the Netflix series’ success, as well as the previous popularity the novel series experienced among Millennials, “A Series of Unfortunate Events” is in a prime position to expand into numerous merchandising categories, ranging from apparel to toys to stationery and more.



“BoJack Horseman”

Set in an alternate world where humans and humanoid-esque animals live together, this Netflix original series

follows BoJack Horseman, a washed-up ‘90s star, who has big plans to return to celebrity relevance with an autobiography that he dictates to his ghostwriter. He also has to deal with the demands of his agent and on-again-off-again girlfriend, his freeloading roommate and his frenemy, Mr. Peanutbutter.

The series, which is scheduled to debut its fourth season this summer, has developed a cult following and has already expanded into collectibles, apparel and more with partners such as Funko and Hot Topic. However, as the series continues to gain popularity, it has the chance to easily expand into additional categories such as stationery, mobile games, comics and more.



“Creative Galaxy”

“Creative Galaxy” is a “make-along create-along” art adventure series for preschool children that features Art, an alien artist, and Epiphany, his inspiration sidekick. In each episode, they adventure through the Creative Galaxy to solve art problems. At the end of each episode, the program features a live-action piece that takes families through the craft project Arty showcased in the galaxy.

Amazon has already secured several deals for the brand, including a partnership with Kahootz for the development of



an activity set, called Arty's Tool Belt. The activity set features a variety of art products and is available via Amazon.com. The company will also be showcasing "Creative Galaxy" at Licensing Expo, May 23-25.

"F is for Family"

Based on the comedy of Bill Burr, this animated Netflix original series follows the Murphy family in the 1970's, "a time when you could smack your kid, smoke inside and bring a gun to the airport."



The brand tapped Brand Central to serve as its licensing agent prior to its six-episode debut in 2015. Since then, the series has expanded into categories such as apparel and is available at retailers like Hot Topic. With a second season set to premiere this month, the show is poised to amass even more fans as well as an expanded consumer products program.

Netflix will debut the new season of "F is for Family" on May 30.

"The Handmaid's Tale"

Based on the 1985 novel of the same name by Margaret Atwood, this Hulu original series is set in a dystopian near-future where the totalitarian and Protestant



fundamentalist government rules the former U.S. amidst a civil war and subjugation of women.

The main character, Offred, is the Handmaid (women designated to the homes of the elite to become pregnant and bear children) assigned to an elite commander and his wife and is subject to the strictest rules and constant scrutiny. Although Offred can remember the "time before," all she can do now is follow the rules in the hope that she can someday live free.

Although the series only premiered on Hulu last month, it has quickly become viral among viewers and is likely to inspire a host of apparel, stationery, collectibles and other consumer products.

"Just Add Magic"

Based on Cindy Callaghan's book of the same name, "Just Add Magic" is a live-action series that follows Kelly and her two best friends Darbie and Hannah as they



work together to unravel the mystery surrounding the re-appearance of an old enemy threatening to steal the girls' magical cookbook. The first season of "Just Add Magic" was the most streamed Amazon Original Series for kids.

Amazon debuted the second season of the live-action series in January and will also be showcasing the property at Licensing Expo.

"Kazoops!"

Produced by Cheeky Little Media, in partnership with the Australia Broadcasting Corporation, this Netflix original



series follows Monty, a 6-year-old boy who takes on life's questions (both big and small) with the help of his imagination and his best friend, Jimmy Jones, the family pet pig. In each episode, the pair enters make-believe worlds to challenge everyday preconceptions such as "do you have to wear matching socks" or "do all games need rules?"

The series made its U.S. debut on Netflix last September. As a co-production, the series is also available on CBeebies in the U.K. and ABC Kids in Australia, and has already appointed a U.K. licensing agent—Art + Science International.

The show has also secured Tomy as its master toy partner and will launch a series of plush, play sets and more this July in the U.K. and Australia. With a strong international presence, the series is sure to expand quickly within the U.S. as well.

"Stranger Things"

Set in Hawkins, Indiana, in the 1980's, "Stranger Things" chronicles the search for a young boy who vanishes into thin air under highly suspicious circumstances. His mother opens an investigation into the boy's disappearance that unravels a series of mysteries involving government experiments, supernatural forces and "one very strange little girl."



The first season of "Stranger Things" was released last July and quickly garnered a cult following. In December, Netflix teamed with retailers Hot Topic and BoxLunch for the first-ever line of licensed merchandise for the brand, which included apparel, novelty-inspired pins, patches, accessories and other collectibles.

The second season of "Stranger Things" is gearing up to debut this October, and it's very likely that a larger consumer products program will follow, especially since Netflix is currently in the process of hiring a director of licensing, merchandising and promotion. ©

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With nine acquisitions over the past two years, ABG is expanding rapidly internationally, and now has 27 brands in its portfolio across celebrity and entertainment, fashion and sports.

by **TONY LISANTI**

NICK WOODHOUSE
president and chief marketing officer

JAMIE SALTER
chairman and chief executive officer, and

KEVIN CLARKE
chief financial officer, Authentic Brands Group

From the long corridor that features a wall of its brands at Authentic Brands Group's new headquarters in the heart of New York's fashion district to the individual showrooms that showcase each of its brands, it's evident that ABG has come a long way since it was formed just seven years ago with a \$250 million funding commitment.

The privately held brand management company, founded by entrepreneur Jamie Salter in conjunction with private equity firm Leonard Green & Partners, has

more than doubled its retail sales of licensed products worldwide to \$5 billion over the past several years. And ABG could double in size again over the next few years, according to chairman and chief executive officer Salter, who still remains sharply focused on acquisitions and growing the company's existing portfolio around the globe. This commitment to growth means that ABG could hit \$10 billion in retail sales of licensed merchandise and jump from No. 13 on the Top 150 Global Licensors report, published annually by *License*

Global, to No. 5, behind only Disney Consumer Products Interactive, Meredith, PVH and Iconix, respectively.

The strategy behind ABG's growth record and success has remained simple and consistent in its relatively short but impressive history, with a clear effort to solidify its organizational structure, personnel and business models, enhance content creation and social media efforts and improve its retail partnerships. The company continues to effectively transition from start-up mode to a well-organized brand management machine that could possibly pursue an IPO in the future, if media reports from December prove true.

ABG has strengthened its operational structure to include three specific business pillars—celebrity/entertainment, fashion and sports—with key management personnel in place that are focused on each individual business and brand.

"The board came to us and said: 'We love what you are doing and the way you have disrupted the business, but you are doing too much,'" explains Nick Woodhouse, president and chief marketing officer, ABG, who joined Salter in 2012 and spearheaded the company's expansion. "The board advised us to strengthen the management team."

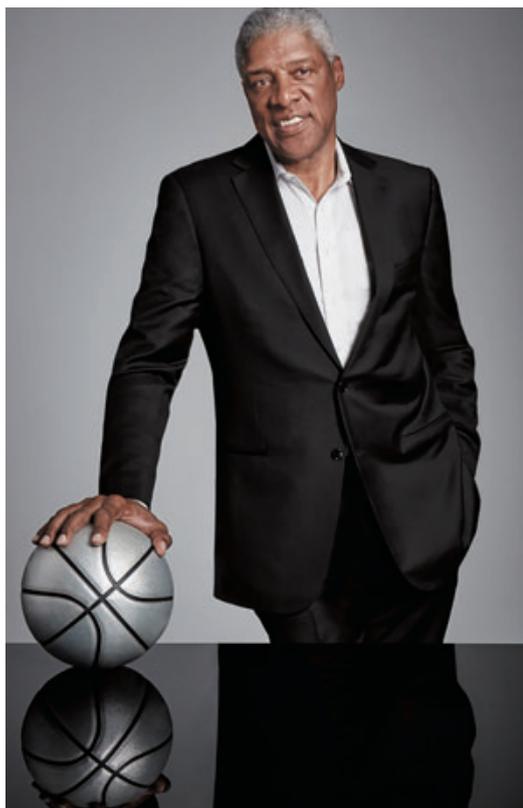
As a result, ABG established a new level of management below Salter, Woodhouse and Kevin Clarke,

chief financial officer, and the company continues to strengthen its levels of executives and middle managers as well. With more than 130 employees, ABG remains in hiring mode, particularly as new brands and initiatives continue to be introduced. The company is placing boots on the ground in key international markets in China, Mexico, Latin America and Europe, and is also adding more experienced managers and field representatives to nurture its retail and licensee partnerships.

"We work more directly with our partners and retailers to drive growth of the business," says Woodhouse. "We have hired people with retail experience and direct-to-consumer business experience, so when we talk to Macy's, for example, we can better understand what all the reports mean and improve the sell-through."

ABG has grown from its first brand, Tapout, to a robust portfolio of 27 brands that give the licensor a major position in celebrity and entertainment such as living legends described as "game changers" including Shaquille O'Neal, Julius "Dr. J" Erving, Thalia and Greg Norman. The company has also solidified a major position at retail following its acquisition of Aéropostale in October 2016, which continues to be available in more than 800 doors worldwide.

Salter takes pride in the fact that ABG does things





JOHN ERLANDSON

chief revenue officer

CHRIS FARRELL

chief strategy officer

JAY DUBINER

general counsel

JARROD WEBER,

*group executive vice president,
fashion*

NATASHA FISHMAN

*executive vice president,
marketing*

KEN OHASHI

senior vice president, global

ADAM GEISLER

*group executive vice president,
sports, and*

COREY SALTER

*executive vice president, celebrity
and entertainment, Authentic
Brands Group*

a little differently than other brand management companies and licensors, but at the same time he strives to take a similar approach to Disney.

“Disney is always enhancing their brands through content, and they continue to reinvest in their brands over time,” says Salter. “If you don’t do all of the above, you will be left with brands that sail off to sea and don’t necessarily come back to the mainland. Growth for us is not just about growing in profitability, but about having a good, long-term business plan and creating brand value.”

Each brand in the ABG portfolio is not only at a different stage of development, but also leverages various aspects of its IP in different ways, ranging from more traditional product licensing deals to various types of endorsements and promotions, brand ambassadorships and popular collaborations.

Consider the following examples:

- **Shaquille O’Neal**—NBA Hall of Famer Shaquille O’Neal, who was the first active celebrity to join ABG in 2015, is also a partner and ABG stakeholder. Key partnerships for O’Neal in 2017 include collaborations with Reebok, Roots of Fight, Mitchell & Ness, New Era, Chalkline and Pintrill, as well as endorsements for The General Insurance, Oreo, American Express and Krispy Kreme, a multi-faceted partnership that includes ownership of the company’s franchise location in Atlanta, GA.
- **Julius “Dr. J” Erving**—ABG is focused on the development of new product categories and programs, as well as global expansion targeted to reach new generations and ignite the legacy of the world

renowned NBA player. In February, ABG initiated the launch of Dr. J’s official Instagram account, coinciding with the beginning of NBA All-Star Weekend. In less than one day, he gathered more than 30,000 followers, demonstrating that Dr. J has an untapped fan base. Dr. J launched an apparel collaboration with Roots of Fight and a partnership with BIG3, the professional 3-on-3 basketball league founded by producer, actor and music industry legend, Ice Cube. Erving has signed on as a coach of BIG3, rounding out the league’s eight team coaches. He joins Allen Iverson, Charles Oakley, Gary Payton, George Gervin, Clyde Drexler, Rick Barry and Rick Mahorn. The BIG3 debuts at Barclays Center in Brooklyn in June.

- **Aéropostale**—In 2016, ABG made its biggest acquisition, which consists of a unique structure with a consortium that includes ABG and two of the largest mall owners in the world, Simon Property Group and General Growth Properties. Aéropostale has more than 800 stores around the world.
- **Judith Leiber**—Dee Ocleppo Hilfiger signed on as co-owner, collaborator, global brand ambassador and creative director of Judith Leiber. ABG will collaborate with Ocleppo Hilfiger on the continued development of the core brand while extending to new categories, distribution channels and territories. The first Judith Leiber x Dee Ocleppo capsule collection is planned to launch at retail and online this holiday season.

ABG TAKES A BET ON BRANDS

The ABG portfolio includes the following, ordered chronologically by acquisition:

- 2010—Tapout
- 2011—Marilyn Monroe
- 2012—Prince and HMX Group (includes the brands Hickey Freeman, Hart Schaffner Marx and Misook)
- 2013—Judith Leiber, Adrienne Vittadini, Taryn Rose, Spyder, Juicy Couture, Muhammad Ali and Elvis Presley
- 2014—Airwalk, Vision Street Wear, Hind and Mini Marilyn, an ABG-created extension of the Marilyn Monroe brand
- 2015—Jones New York, Frederick’s of Hollywood, Tretorn, Shaquille O’Neal and Michael Jackson (managed brand)
- 2016—Dr. J, Thalia and Aéropostale
- 2017—Greg Norman and Frye



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- **Frederick's of Hollywood**—Megan Fox, who signed on as a co-owner, brand stakeholder and global ambassador last year, will be collaborating on the development of product, marketing and retail partnerships. In March, Frederick's of Hollywood debuted its spring global campaign, which was the first to feature Fox as its face. Fox is currently designing her first Frederick's of Hollywood x Megan Fox lingerie capsule, which will launch this holiday season.
- **Tretorn**—ABG partnered with Grammy Award-winning artist Andre 3000 Benjamin for Tretorn. Through this partnership, Benjamin signs on as a global brand ambassador and creative collaborator. Benjamin will also appear in the brand's fall campaign; serve as premier artist in the Nylite 50 Artist Series, which celebrates the 50th year of the iconic Nylite sneaker; and design a footwear capsule collection that will launch in 2018.
- **Airwalk**—In celebration of Airwalk's 30th anniversary, ABG tapped Jeff Staple, the well-known sneakerhead, tastemaker and longtime brand collaborator, as strategic creative advisor for the Airwalk Classics initiative. Staple is a highly respected streetwear designer with an unparalleled understanding of the sneaker world that will be essential to guiding the introduction of Airwalk Classics into the U.S. Market, says ABG. Airwalk Classics launched at retailer Colette earlier this year, selling out its "Random" style on the first day.

- **Elvis Presley**—The Elvis Presley brand licensing partnership program has been strategically streamlined to elevate the brand, increase global presence and create new revenue streams. Key partnerships span product, collaborations, endorsements and content. They include Hamilton—The Ventura, which became known as "the Elvis watch" and has been re-mastered with major technical and material challenges as it celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2017; Elvis is the face and hair of American Crew, and provided the inspiration for its package design, in-salon and marketing campaigns; a global Elvis-inspired Coach collection designed by Stuart Vevers debuted at New York Fashion Week, and included store takeovers in New York City and Omotesando, Japan; Scientific Games, a long-time partner in the gaming space, recently released "Elvis Lives," a new video slot game featuring a journey through Presley's hit songs and concert footage; Bradford Exchange signed on for a long-term partnership for collectible items including accessories, home décor and figurines. On the content side, HBO is developing a three-hour, two-part documentary directed by Emmy and Grammy winner Thom Zimney; Baz Lurhmann has signed on to direct an Elvis Presley biopic through Warner Bros.; and Weinstein Company is developing the first-ever scripted Elvis Presley TV biopic based on the 1982 book *Elvis by Dave Marsh*.



Content on the whole is another key initiative for ABG, and to support its efforts, the company recently formed a new department under the direction of Natasha Fishman, executive vice president, marketing, that focuses on all aspects of content creation.

“We are becoming a full content machine with music, movies, television shows—the sky’s the limit,” says Woodhouse. “We believe content is the biggest driver in brand development.”

With more than 220 million followers across all of its brands, ABG is committed to connecting with its consumers and positioning its brands appropriately.

“ABG uses social media to promote its news and initiatives and as a platform to share key content,” says Woodhouse. “Everything you do today is content—from the movies that we are developing about Elvis to behind the scenes at a campaign shoot, a visit to ABG headquarters from one of our celebrity partners or brand ambassadors. Each of these moments captured adds to the brand narrative.”

For example, ABG manages and operates the social media platforms for the Elvis Presley brand. Since its launch in 2011, the brand has grown to more than 14 million followers worldwide across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

When it comes to acquisitions, the brand attributes that Salter looks for include emotion, a No. 1 or 2 position in their respective category and having a lifestyle, legacy

and equity that is already part of the brand’s DNA.

“If we don’t see significant growth in a brand, we will not buy it. It’s all about growth, and if you can’t double that growth in a short period of time, you shouldn’t buy it,” emphasizes Salter. “It takes 18 months to put the proper procedures and accountability in place to build the brand—there’s no need to rush. For example, we just bought Frye, which has only one licensee. We are looking at how to strategically expand the brand via new and relatable categories as well as growth in key territories where Frye resonates.”

ABG’s global licensee network has grown to 604 licensing partners, up from 470 in 2015.

ABG is also fully committed to growing its international business, which now accounts for almost 50 percent of its total retail sales of licensed merchandise.

Salter believes that future deals will be bigger and that there is a lot of growth potential on the celebrity and entertainment side, while in fashion and sports, ABG will continue to be very selective.

While Salter has always been a big thinker and an ambitious executive, he has been able to deliver impressive results since the formation of ABG. With a low-leveraged debt position, a strong cash position, a well diversified portfolio, along with a strong organizational structure and retail presence worldwide, Salter remains bullish about the future, projecting that ABG can double its business in three to five years to \$10 billion in retail sales. ©

A LEAGUE OPPORTU



PAM LIFFORD
president, Warner Bros. Consumer Products

WBCP's Pam Lifford continues to craft a definitive global strategy and dedicated organization that is ready to drive global growth for the new DC films and characters, as well as its long-standing franchises and themed entertainment experiences.

by **TONY LISANTI**

With the release of several new films from the DC universe, along with the much-anticipated *Justice League* movie, Warner Bros. Consumer Products is feeling the power and is poised for a new period of growth in licensing and related entertainment brand initiatives.

With a major commitment from the studio to expand its DC Entertainment slate, with *Wonder Woman* debuting next month and *Justice League* arriving to save the planet in November, it's a whole new world of opportunity for WBCP beyond the iconic *Batman* and *Superman* franchises, which also have key roles in the upcoming films.

Warner Bros.' DC films in the pipeline through 2020 and beyond include *Aquaman*, *The Flash*, *Cyborg*, *Green Lantern Corps* and *Justice League 2*, which are all in various stages of discussion and development.

WBCP's new merchandising and licensing efforts are taking shape, as various *Wonder Woman* products hit retail shelves last month and will continue to roll out in the lead up to the film premiere, as well as a wide assortment of *Justice League* products

OF UNITY



Lifford. “We have an ambitious plan in place to accelerate our growth and help the division really see itself as a high performing organization. We are focused on four key pillars—people, franchise, retail and products—and everything we do is filtered through that lens. We continue to enhance our relationships with our best-in-class licensees, retailers and promotional partners to help drive change through the organization.”

WBCP reported an increase in retail sales of licensed merchandise worldwide in 2016 to \$6.5 billion, up from \$6 billion in 2015, according to the Top 150 Global Licensors report published annually by *License Global*. WBCP remains the second largest entertainment licensor, behind Disney and just ahead of Hasbro and Universal Brand Group.

that will hit retail worldwide in August.

In addition to the popular superhero genre, WBCP has numerous other initiatives in the works under its president of consumer products Pam Lifford, who joined the studio a little more than a year ago and has quickly settled in to her position establishing a comprehensive strategic plan to guide the division.

The WBCP portfolio also includes J.K. Rowling’s Wizarding World, which encompasses the *Harry Potter* and *Fantastic Beasts* franchises; “DC Super Hero Girls”; primetime TV programming, including the live-action hits “The Flash,” “Arrow,” “Supergirl” and “Gotham”; as well as top-rated animated series “Teen Titans Go!,” “Justice League Action,” the “Looney Tunes” franchise and Hanna-Barbera properties; plus classics such as the Stanley Kubrick collection and much more. In addition, WBCP and The LEGO Group continue to build on their longstanding partnership for *The LEGO Ninjago Movie* and *The LEGO Movie 2*, from Warner Bros. Pictures, Warner Animation Group and LEGO System A/S.

“This has been an amazing first year, and the transition WBCP has made has been extremely rewarding,” says

“In addition to our unique content offering, we have reinvented our approach to the business and become more flexible and nimble to better serve our partners and consumers. The division’s ability to leverage its experience in themed entertainment as an extension of consumer products at retail and our commitment to providing fully immersive engagement across all our brands and franchises with our ‘never go dark strategy,’ has set us up for strong growth opportunities,” says Lifford.

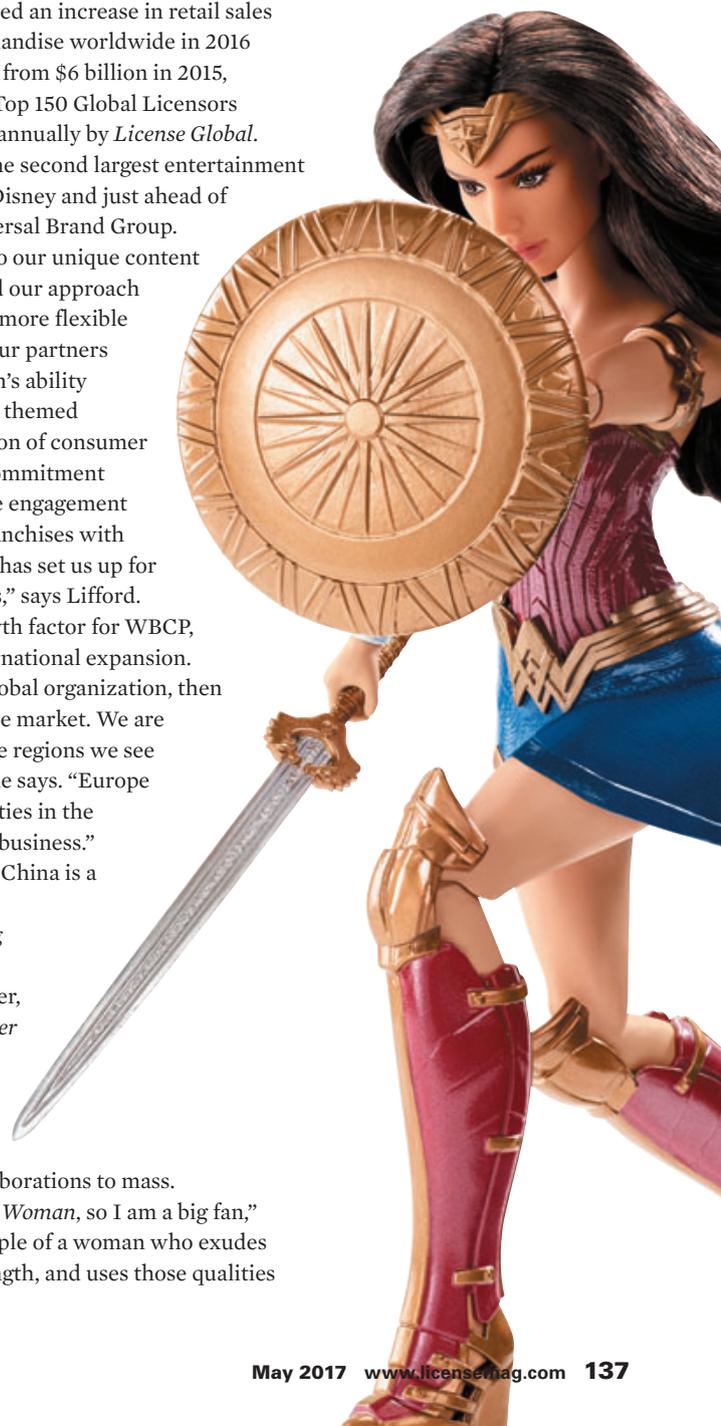
Another important growth factor for WBCP, according to Lifford, is international expansion.

“If you want to have a global organization, then you have to spend time in the market. We are very much entrenched in the regions we see as growth opportunities,” she says. “Europe and China are the top priorities in the growth of our international business.”

In fact, Lifford says that China is a company-wide priority and in 2018, “you will be hearing a lot of noise about China.”

In the near term, however, the focus is clearly on *Wonder Woman*, which began to flood store shelves last month with a multi-tiered retail approach that spanned high-end collaborations to mass.

“I grew up with *Wonder Woman*, so I am a big fan,” says Lifford. “She’s an example of a woman who exudes confidence, power and strength, and uses those qualities





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PONY
The
MOVIE

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LIONSGATE



for the good of humankind. We looked to her character and core DNA to translate to lifestyle collections and products for fans of all ages that includes apparel, toys and collectibles that support her first solo feature film.”

To kick off the worldwide *Wonder Woman* program, WBCP partnered with Walmart and global toy licensee Mattel to launch an assortment of *Wonder Woman* toys in the U.S. including themed dolls and role play items.

Also in April, WBCP rolled out exclusive offerings at Toys ‘R’ Us and at LEGO stores.

This month, Walmart is rolling out additional exclusive products from licensees Jakks Pacific, Funko and Fisher-Price, as well as *Wonder Woman*-themed flower bouquets for Mother’s Day.

Additional *Wonder Woman* toys and collectible licensees include:

- Mattel for action figures, Hot Wheels and a Barbie collection for adult collectors; Rubie’s Costume Co. for costumes and accessories; Funko for collectibles; Jakks Pacific for oversized collectible figures; Nobel Collection for authentic prop replicas; Sideshow Collectibles for movie-inspired statuettes; Hallmark for greeting cards, gift presentation and Itty Bitty plush; Jada Toys for metal collectibles; Icon Heroes for novelty replicas; QMX for

collectible figures; Tonner Dolls for fashion dolls; Madame Alexander for dolls; and many more.

- On the apparel front, WBCP teamed with Bioworld for apparel and accessories, Evy’s of California and Richard Leeds International for apparel lines, New Era for caps and Underboss for undergarments and sleepwear.
- Other licensees that have signed on for the program include Franco Manufacturing, The Northwest Company and Trends International for bedding, blankets, throw pillows, home décor and novelty items, as well as HarperCollins, Centum and Titan Books for publishing.
- In the EMEA region, WBCP partnered with major retailers. In Italy, partners like OVS are on board for themed apparel collections and dedicated window displays. In Germany, the film will be supported by Elbenwald, EMP and other partners including Spreadshirt Shop with t-shirts, hoodies and sweatshirts; Muckle with a life-size figure; and Schleich with a collectible figurine. Regional partners like GB Eye and Pyramid International will also offer posters and stationery.
- In Australia, retailers Coles, Big W, EB Games, Chemist Warehouse and more will feature apparel from Caprice, accessories from Vimwood, a fragrance from Game On



Product Group, home décor and gifting from Licensing Essentials, publishing from Scholastic and more.

■ In Latin America, the film will be highlighted by a series of regional licensees and retailers. In Mexico, licensees include Photo Pack for luggage and backpacks; Industrias Dark, Movis and Creaciones Guz for apparel; Oceanus International for bikes, scooters and camping gear; Regalos Siglo XXI for dinnerware; Carvajal Educacional and Industrias Danpex for stationery; and many others. In Brazil, partners include Havaianas for sandals, Risqué for nail polish and Chilli Beans for glasses and watches. Fashion retailers Riachuelo, Renner, C&A and Marisa will also debut apparel collections and accessories. Based on the extensive efforts for *Wonder Woman*, WBCP is planning a similar, if not more aggressive, roll out for *Justice League* beginning in August.

“This is the first time that we will have all of the characters and the expanded story line all together in a feature film,” says Lifford. “We are introducing new products and continuing to celebrate the core franchises and what our consumers really love. We are thrilled that we will have such a powerful opportunity at retail and have engaged major retailers around the globe to



promote the expansive product line extensively.”

Furthermore, WBCP is gearing up for *Aquaman*, which is scheduled for release in December 2018, and will be a major focus during Licensing Expo 2017, along with new opportunities for J.K. Rowling’s *Wizarding World*, which includes the *Fantastic Beasts* film series.

Beyond the extensive content related to consumer products initiatives, Lifford is also committed to expanding the division’s themed experiences business, which she believes offers unique opportunities beyond traditional retail. Last year, Warner Bros. announced a new theme park in Abu Dhabi in partnership with Miral.

“Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi will be a state-of-the-art themed experience that authentically brings some of the studio’s most iconic characters and stories to life under one roof for the first time in the Middle East,” says Lifford. “We have been closely collaborating with our partners at Miral to construct immersive worlds that resonate with precise details and are thrilled to share these unique experiences with fans next year.”

The new theme park will feature six immersive worlds: Metropolis and Gotham City, inspired by the universe of DC Super Heroes and Super-Villains; Cartoon Junction, Bedrock and Dynamite Gulch, themed after iconic animated brands such as “Looney Tunes” and Hanna-Barbera; and Warner Bros. Plaza, reminiscent of old Hollywood.

Following what Lifford says was a record-breaking year for WBCP in 2016, she is confident in the future based on the people, structure and goals of the division, which includes being a world-class organization.

“We are more nimble and flexible than ever before,” explains Lifford. “We are meeting with retailers on a regular basis, and it’s something that licensees have not seen from our organization. We are highly creative and innovative in our approach to the business and products; we are now investing in technology and are active in the inventors’ community.

“The company is in full support of the consumer products business and it is one of the top three initiatives for studio chairman and chief executive officer, Kevin Tsujihara,” adds Lifford. “I have invested as much time driving the consumer products business as I have building relationships across the studio, and everyone is engaged in helping us be successful.” ©



GO!
GO!



**HERE'S TO
ANOTHER
POWERFUL
25 YEARS!**





Saban Brands is gearing up with a wide range of initiatives from new products to live events that will celebrate 25 years of “Power Rangers” in 2018.

by TONY LISANTI

From the first “Mighty Morphin Power Rangers” television episode in August 1993 to the newest big screen reboot in March, the “Power Rangers” franchise has been a consistently strong performer throughout its history. Now, it is clearly re-energizing its position worldwide as parent company Saban Brands gears up to celebrate the 25th anniversary milestone of this venerable property.

While “Power Rangers” did not invent the mega superhero genre as we know it today, the team of teens dressed in colorful costumes established a superhero cult following of a different kind that has remained popular and relevant among generations of fans. And the new big screen iteration from Lionsgate, which demonstrated a strong box office performance with more than \$133 million worldwide through April 28, has elevated the franchise and better positioned it for the future. The movie is debuted May 12 in China, where it is projected to produce strong results based on the popularity of the franchise historically, and also provide new opportunities for licensing and merchandising.

“Power Rangers’ is the longest-running and most-watched kids’ action series in television history—it has become a pop culture phenomenon,” says Janet Hsu, chief executive officer, Saban Brands, who joined the company in July 2015 from Sanrio. Hsu has quickly influenced the innovation and scope of Saban’s product assortments and its push toward more fashion and lifestyle-driven ranges.

“The importance and value of being disruptive and really thinking differently about how to grow a brand is what can take it to the next level,” Hsu says. “That’s what connection is when you are evolving



JANET HSU
chief executive officer, Saban Brands

POWER RANGERS

M I L E S T O N E S

1993

The "Power Rangers" franchise was created by Haim Saban and launched with the TV series "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers." "Power Rangers" quickly became the No. 1 kids' action brand, including Bandai's top-selling action figures. The show is the second longest running non-soap opera scripted program on American TV after "The Simpsons," and has produced 830-plus episodes.

The "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers" cast appears at Universal Studios to record-breaking crowds and causes the closure of Los Angeles' 101 freeway.

1994



1997

The "Power Rangers Live Tour" plays to sold out arenas in 35 cities.

Haim Saban forms Saban Brands and re-acquires "Power Rangers" from The Walt Disney Company.

2010

2011

Saban Brands partners with Nickelodeon to launch "Power Rangers Samurai," the 18th originally produced season of the franchise. Launched on both Nickelodeon and Nicktoons, the show once again becomes the No. 1 kids' action series.





"Power Rangers" celebrates its 20th anniversary with the season premiere of "Power Rangers Megaforce."



The Red Ranger balloon debuts at the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. (It continues to be the longest balloon in the parade.)

2013

2015

"Power Rangers" celebrates its 800th episode with "Power Rangers Dino Charge."



The Power Rangers Boom! Comics series launches.

2016

2017

The feature film, *Saban's Power Rangers*, produced by Lionsgate and Saban Brands, is released in theaters on March 23. With the feature film, the Power Rangers continue to reinforce core brand messages of inclusivity, diversity and empowerment by scripting one of the heroes, Billy the Blue Ranger, as being on the Autism spectrum.



"Power Rangers" will celebrate its 25th anniversary on August 28, 2018.

2018

{ Power Rangers 25th }

with how the world is thinking and providing something that is relevant to customers.”

Hsu credits Haim Saban, founder and creator of “Power Rangers” and chairman of Saban Brands, for being the driving force behind the series, its history and its storyline.

“Haim has always stayed true to the original DNA of the brand, which focuses on inclusivity, teamwork, diversity and five ordinary teens who morph into superheroes,” she says.

Saban re-acquired the “Power Rangers” property in May 2010 from The Walt Disney Company, which held the property for seven years, but had done little to expand it in a “Disneysque” kind of way that has become the standard for the world’s largest licensor. At the same time, Saban also formed and funded Saban



Brands. Since then, in addition to the continued growth of “Power Rangers,” Saban Brands has made various other acquisitions, including popular art and lifestyle brand

Paul Frank, and is now ranked No. 57, according to the Top 150 Global Licensors report, published annually by *License Global*, with a reported \$900 million in retail sales of licensed merchandise worldwide

The “Power Rangers” franchise is well entrenched in the world of pop culture and has become a multi-generational, multi-platform, multi-faceted and multi-tiered brand at retail that is well-positioned to extend and sustain its global popularity, fan loyalty and unique appeal. According to Hsu, “Power Rangers” is aired in more than 150 countries and now has more than 150 licensees worldwide.

“For almost 25 years, ‘Power Rangers’ has had a fan base of adult men and women who grew up with the franchise to the

A vibrant promotional graphic for the 25th anniversary of Power Rangers. The background is a bright blue space scene with stars, planets, and colorful alien spacecraft. In the center, the text "SABAN'S POWER RANGERS" is written in large, bold, 3D letters. Below this, the number "25" is prominently displayed in a similar style. Underneath the "25", the "Space Toon Kids TV" logo is visible. At the bottom, the text "spacetoon kids tv celebrates 25 years of Power Rangers congratulations!" is written in a white, sans-serif font. On the right side, there is a vertical copyright notice: "TM & © 2017 SGG Power Rangers L.L.C. All Rights Reserved".

girls and boys currently watching the series,” Hsu says. “The movie gave us the greater opportunity to re-imagine the franchise and to open up the market in diverse new ways. It allowed some of the older fans to relive the ‘Power Rangers’ moment and have that touchpoint with the brand.”

Saban Brands has demonstrated a multi-platform approach, which is evident with more than 830 episodes across 24 series, two prior movies, the current film, various fan events and a new digital game, “Power Rangers: Legacy Wars” from Lionsgate and nWay, which was introduced last month.

“Power Rangers’ has lasted for 25 years by continually refreshing the teams and themes that drive a



particular season,” points out Brian Casentini, executive producer, “Power Rangers,” who is also a huge fan and trivia buff. “The fact that fans can project themselves into the role of a Ranger more realistically than that of other superheroes out there is appealing.

The new movie makes the franchise multi-generational again, not only in a nostalgic way, but by also actively re-engaging fans with the brand.”

Casentini recalls attending a party in the early days when “Power Rangers” first launched.

“Someone said to me, ‘What are you going to do after that series is done?’”

And now 25 years later, he still oversees content across all platforms for the brand.

For each season, each of which have their own name and theme,



BRIAN CASENTINI
executive producer,
“Power Rangers”



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{ Power Rangers 25th }

Saban develops a specific consumer products program, driven by toys, that has slowly expanded into various other categories including apparel, accessories and home.

“Our latest expansion into publishing, video games and digital products shows how we are taking content and ensuring we are diversifying it to satisfy all fans of different ages and wherever they connect with the brand today,” says Hsu.

In January, Saban Brands unveiled the 24th season of the franchise, “Power Rangers Ninja Steel,” with a new line of products. The “Power Rangers” licensing program has been anchored by the toy category since the beginning of the series with longstanding master toy licensee Bandai, and according to Hsu, toys remain a key driver with an extensive position in action figures, role play, the Zord builder, Dino Charger and collectibles.

Furthermore, Saban Brands has significantly expanded “Power Rangers” position as a lifestyle brand and has elevated its image to designer status with various collaborations. One recent example is a capsule collection launched by Kith founder and “Power Rangers” fan, Ronnie Fieg. The collection, which featured hoodies, tees and beanies, sold at Bergdorf Goodman as well as Kith stores in New York City.

Other recent promotions and partnerships include deals with Target for an exclusive merchandise range including masks, shield shirts and swords, apparel and accessories, sleepwear, bedding, action figures, t-shirts, books, mini figures, housewares, backpacks and party supplies; Johnny Cupcakes for exclusive “Power Rangers” merchandise including shirts, hoodies and posters; Build-A-Bear Workshop plush figures, costumes, accessories and a sound chip; and Krispy Kreme for branded doughnuts.

Saban Brands is developing extensive plans to celebrate the brand’s 25th anniversary that will include products across the history of the franchise, including new Legacy



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items from Bandai, new mythology stories from its publishing partner Boom! Comics, a special commemorative book that will be the ultimate visual history of the “Power Rangers,” plus other initiatives tied to location-based entertainment and live events. In December, Saban Brands announced plans for the first “Power Rangers” theme park in Dubai as part of IGM’s Worlds of Legends, which will feature nine branded zones. Hsu says the anniversary products will launch at retail in fall 2018.

Another important component to Saban’s consumer products strategy is the launch last month of the first “Power Rangers” e-commerce site.

“The site offers more flexibility in execution and design,” says Hsu. “We are creating products that are different than what’s available at retail and using icons and other elements from the ‘Power Rangers’ DNA, incorporating them in a trend-right way.”

As it has been throughout its 25 years, the driving factor for the “Power Rangers” franchise is content. What began with a TV series in 1993, has now evolved into a multi-platform content strategy that keeps the brand relevant on a regular basis. One recent example of short-form content is “Meower Rangers,” a digital series and parody that follows five felines as they morph into super cats. The first episode, released on YouTube in January, has produced more than 3.6 million views.

Based on all of its initiatives in consumer products and content, and the strong global performance of the *Power Rangers* movie and the potential for several sequels, Saban Brands has strengthened the franchise, not only for its 25th anniversary next year, but for growth throughout the next decade as well. ©



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THINKING INSIDE THE BOX

Subscription box services are offering a whole new avenue for brands and retailers to reach and interact with consumers.

by NICOLE SILBERSTEIN



Over the past few years, a new kind of retail concept has been steadily gaining popularity among consumers and brand owners alike. Subscription box services—recurring, physical delivery of niche-oriented products—have created a wealth of new opportunity for retailers and manufacturers to reach new segments of consumers.

The phenomenon started in 2010 with what is widely considered the first such service, Birchbox, which delivers 4-5 personalized beauty samples every month. In the seven years since, the world of box services has exploded, with some estimates now putting the total number at more than 2,000.

Box services are part of a growing segment of e-commerce being referred to as subscription commerce, a.k.a. “subcom,” which also encompasses services that offer recurring delivery of household staples like Amazon Subscribe & Save.

The concept of subcom is not actually new. Think of the Columbia Record Club, which hit its peak of 16 million subscribers back in 1996. What is different now is the application in a world of e-commerce.

The subcom giants of today operate on a wholly different level than their predecessors, using data metrics and complicated algorithms to produce product suites that appeal to consumers based on their self-identified preferences, as well as larger cultural trends that can now be tracked via social media and Internet traffic.

The appeal to retailers and manufacturers is clear: not only do box services offer a form of recurring revenue, but they also offer access to a wealth of information about consumers and fans that, in this data-driven age, is invaluable. This is why many major retailers, including Walmart, Target and Starbucks, are entering the box game. They already have successful retail platforms in place, but what a box service provides them that their stores—and even their websites to some extent—don’t is data, detailed metrics on consumer behavior and preferences.

Additionally, these services appeal to a highly desirable group of consumers: the majority of box service subscribers are 25- to 39-years-old with above average income and education levels, according to Hitwise.

What is somewhat more surprising is consumer enthusiasm for the concept, which goes against common purchasing paradigms. In most cases, box service subscribers commit to spending a certain amount of money on a regular basis without knowing exactly what they’re buying. In fact, this is a large part of the appeal.

“It probably seems a bit strange to people who don’t participate in it, but for people who do, it’s very interactive and community-driven,” explains Mark Robben, director of marketing, Funko, which launched its first box service in



2015. “It’s just a little bit more nuanced than walking into your neighborhood store and picking up exactly what you want off the shelf. Instead,

it’s about fun, surprise and anticipation. It’s about knowing that you’re going to get a box delivered to your house, but not knowing specifically what’s going to be in it.”

That aspect of surprise and anticipation is in fact central to the format’s success, along with a few other key factors including:

- **Value:** Most boxes offer a suite of products whose total retail value is much more than the subscription fee.
- **Convenience:** Boxes are delivered directly to a consumer’s home, with free return shipping in many cases.
- **Curation:** In addition to data, which allows for individualized customization of product compilations, most services also boast a team of category experts helping to select the products and identify trends.
- **Exclusivity:** For collector-targeted box services, the idea of receiving products that can’t be found anywhere else is a key draw.
- **Experience:** Social media teasers about the contents, the packaging and box itself coupled with the experience of receiving, discovering and then sharing the moment with other subscribers are all a huge driver of the format’s popularity.

Brian Mann, vice president of licensing at Loot Crate, a leader in fan-targeted box services, says that the experience surrounding each of its boxes is just as important as the box itself.

“We look at what we do as a transmedia storytelling vehicle. We’re telling stories through product,” he says. “It becomes a place where community can gather, where you can find people with a shared interest and shared values.”

Unboxing videos have become a web mainstay, and Loot Crate takes it a step

further with pre-box teasers and even content exclusives coordinated with IP owners.

For example, in April, Loot Crate worked with Twentieth Century Fox and GoPro to release a series of “leaked transmissions” from the spaceship *Covenant*, exclusive video content that teased both the upcoming film *Alien: Covenant* and Loot Crate’s limited edition *Alien*-themed box (which was released on *Alien* Day, April 26).

“Anything facing our community, we’re there, physically and digitally, creating content and surrounding it with experience,” says Mann. “We deliver from a point-of-view that is distinctly fan-first. We interpret the inside or deep cut of a brand—the elements that get at the emotion of the IP—so that when someone opens up our crate, they think, ‘You get me Loot Crate, and I love that feeling so much, I want to share it with all my followers.’”

This kind of consumer engagement creates a huge marketing opportunity for brands that goes well beyond product sales.

“Our partners see our service as a vehicle that introduces their brands to customers or gets product into customers’ hands who may not have considered that brand,” says Miki Racine Berardelli, chief executive officer, KidBox, an apparel box service for kids. “It’s a strong brand awareness and brand positioning moment.”

Box services also present a huge opportunity for licensees. Loot Crate features a vast array of brands across its various services ranging from Marvel and WWE to its newest segment, sports, in partnership with Major League Baseball. And Loot Crate boxes, which sell for anywhere from \$16-\$50, are filled with licensed products (about 80 percent of which are exclusive to the box, according to Mann) that are created both in-house by Loot Crate under license and by third-party licensees.

One licensee in particular, Funko, creator of the popular Pop! Vinyl collector’s figures, saw the launch of their own subscription box services as an opportunity to branch out from wholesale and reach consumers directly.

“We knew that we wanted to start a direct-to-consumer business, but we didn’t want to compete with our retailers,” explains Robben. “The subscription business was a great way for us to do that.”

Funko now has four different box services—Marvel Collector Core, the *Star Wars*-



themed Smuggler's Bounty, the DC Comics-themed Legion of Collectors and its newest offering, Disney Treasures, which sell for \$25-\$30 each. Funko uses its expertise as a licensee to develop all the products in its boxes in-house, and each item is exclusive to the box.

The ability to directly source the products in their boxes both helps Funko and Loot Crate deliver on a key component of all box services—value. The value factor has proven to be one of the more challenging aspects of the business model, making it difficult for fledgling box providers to make a profit, especially when factoring in the expense of shipping and quality packaging.

In fact, the packaging of the boxes themselves has become a core attribute of the experience, and consumers now have high expectations.

Loot Crate has set the bar with innovative boxes that often can be transformed into a product in and of itself. A recent *Ghostbusters*-themed box created in partnership with Sony Pictures, could be turned into a replica of the proton pack; while a "Walking Dead" box created in partnership with AMC included a zombie mask that pulled out of the corrugate packing material. Loot Crate's boxes are so popular they have their own hashtag: #CrateCraft.

Of course, fan-targeted collector box services are only one iteration of this new retail format. Fashion box services such as StitchFix and Trunk Club are also a hugely popular segment, and operate a bit differently. Rather than an up-front charge (although some services do charge a small, initial "styling fee"), these services ship a box of items that can be purchased a la carte. Generally, there is an additional discount if a subscriber chooses to keep the whole box.

One such service, newly launched in the fashion space, is KidBox, which sends kids a box of 6-7 seasonal apparel items based on a style profile filled out by parents. The family has 10 days to decide which items they'd like to keep and the cost to keep the whole box is \$98. Additionally, for every complete box sold, the company donates an outfit to a child in need through the charity K.I.D.S./Fashion Delivers.

A healthy portion of the brands on offer from KidBox are licensed including Diesel, Lucky, 7 for all Mankind, Roxy and Jessica Simpson, along with a host of owned brands like Giggle and Butter. CEO Berardelli refers to the KidBox approach as "assisted commerce."



"Time is the ultimate luxury, especially for busy parents and households," she explains. "Services like KidBox take the hassle and time consumption out of shopping."

Berardelli comes to the company with more than 20 years' experience in e-commerce for labels such as Ralph Lauren, Tory

Burch and Chico's FAS, and she sees only opportunity for the box service format on the horizon.

"It's very easy to execute in this age of mobile, because it's not a lengthy shopping experience," she says. "Basically a consumer opts in. That's a very easy task to complete on a mobile device. I think that's part of what's driving the success—it's a very simplified, rewarding experience."

Another type of box service that leverages the appeal of convenience and simplicity are meal kit services like Blue Apron and Chef'd.

The meal kit segment is also rife with licensing opportunity, although it tends to take the form of a larger branding moment rather than a branded product offering.

Blue Apron has partnered with Endemol Shine's "MasterChef Junior," while Chef'd has worked with Meredith's *Allrecipes*, Hershey's and the NFL Players' Association, whose themed box featured recipes from the Minnesota Vikings' Kyle Rudolph and Chad Greenway. In the same vein, the New England Patriots' Tom Brady recently launched his own meal kit series with Purple Carrot; and Sequential Brands Group signed a deal to box up the famed cooking of Martha Stewart in partnership with Marley Spoon.

In the end though, the overall appeal of box services might be much more simple than data, exclusivity or even convenience.

"Even in this day of iPhones, text messages and SnapChat, people still love to receive things in the mail," says Berardelli. ©

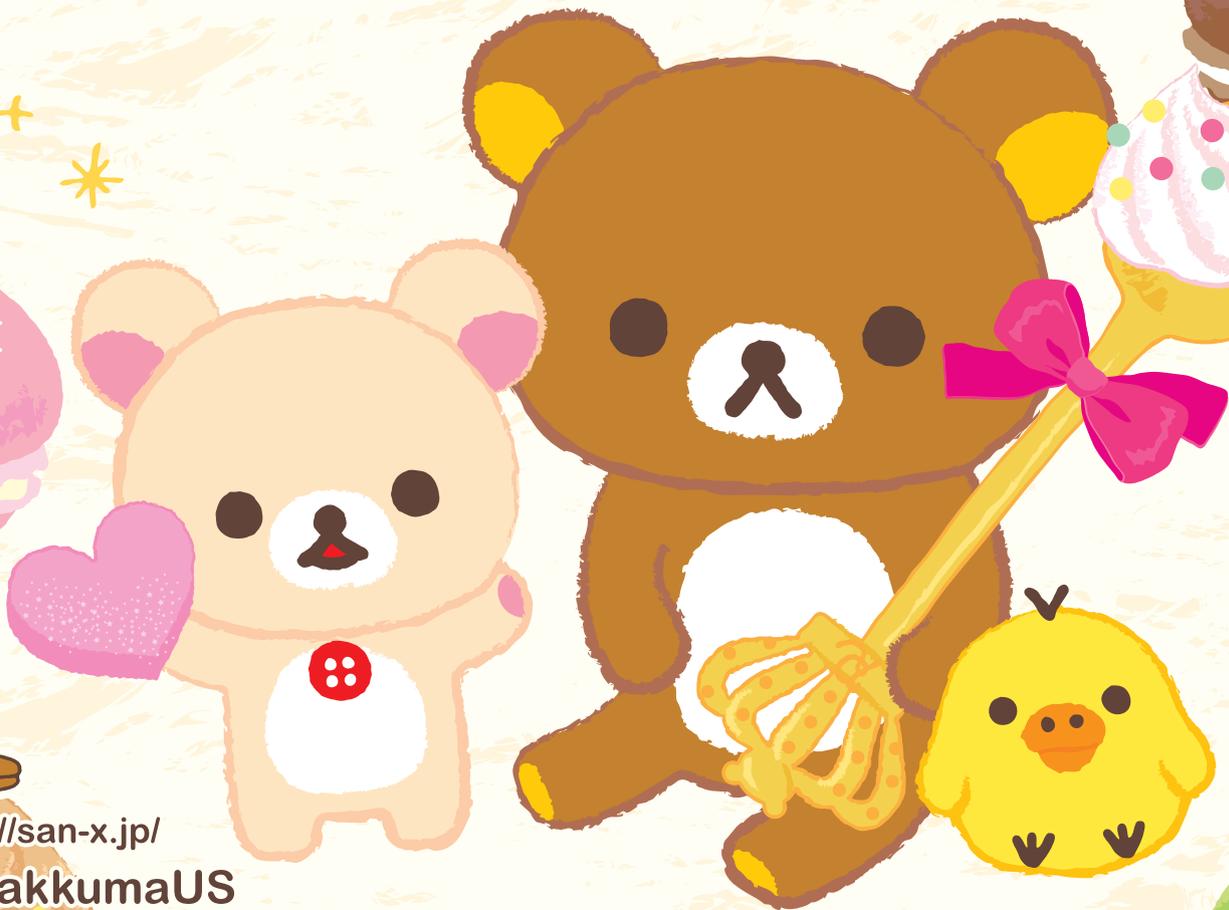


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CREATING THE RIGHT MOOD FOR A NEW FRANCHISE



Hasbro, the No. 6 Global Licensor, reporting \$6.2 billion in retail sales of licensed products, is making a major commitment to establish “Hanazuki” as its next franchise.

by TONY LISANTI

In the spirit of its storytelling strategy and focus on multi-platform content, Hasbro is shooting for the moon with its newest property, “Hanazuki.”

Since its involvement with the world of “Hanazuki,” which began in 2011, Hasbro has made a major commitment and investment to establish the Dutch-influenced property as its newest girl’s lifestyle franchise. It joins other well-established brands such as My Little Pony, Transformers and Littlest Pet Shop as an integral part of the company’s portfolio and, more importantly, as a key potential driver of future growth.

Hasbro has grown consistently as a global licensor, reporting \$6.2 billion in retail sales of licensed merchandise in 2016 and ranking No. 6 on the exclusive Top 150 Global Licensors report, published annually by *License Global*. To put the long-term potential of “Hanazuki” in financial perspective, consider that My Little Pony generated more than \$1.2 billion in retail sales last year.

With “Hanazuki,” Hasbro has taken a very



SIMON WATERS

senior vice president, consumer products, Hasbro



ANDREA HOELAIN

vice president, marketing and global marketing strategy for Hanazuki, Hasbro



MICHAEL KELLY

senior director, global publishing, Hasbro



VICTOR LEE

vice president, digital marketing, Hasbro



MEGHAN MCCARTHY

head of storytelling, girls' brands, Hasbro

different approach to market launch, utilizing a digital strategy versus the more traditional and perhaps more challenging approach (and certainly a longer development cycle) of linear television and film. While Hasbro has experienced tremendous success building its Transformers franchise more traditionally on the big screen (a fifth installment debuts in June), as well as My Little Pony, which will make its movie debut in October, “Hanazuki” was able to launch in January with nine digital episodes on YouTube and nine more episodes in March, and debuted on the “YouTube Kids” app in April. An additional nine more episodes will be released later this year.

In addition, the consumer products rollout across multiple categories is launching simultaneously this year beginning in June through 2018 with various fashion and jewelry collections, comic books, toys and exclusive retail partnerships and promotions.

For “Hanazuki,” which Hasbro first began previewing for its licensee and retail partners during Licensing Expo 2016, the most important factor is the property’s incredibly rich world and storytelling prowess. The series follows the adventures and many moods of a girl named Hanazuki, who has gifted powers that she uses to save the galaxy. As Hanazuki explores her lunar world, she meets various characters including bunny-like creatures called Hemkas, a sleepy moon child known as Little Dreamer who delivers daily treasures, the self-appointed sheriff of Hanazuki’s moon, Dazzlescence Jones, who sparkles and shines while making sure law and order is preserved, and the Sleepy Unicorn.

The animated digital series, which is produced by Hasbro Studios in collaboration with Titmouse

Studios, features 27 11-minute episodes, 18 of which have already released on the Hasbro YouTube page and in the “YouTube Kids” app.

Amsterdam artists Niko Stumpo and Hanneke Metselaar created the original characters for “Hanazuki,” which in turn inspired Hasbro to develop the property.

“We couldn’t be happier that our beloved ‘Hanazuki’ inspired Hasbro to further develop the colorful cast of characters and create such a unique and dynamic new world full of surprises and magical mayhem,” says Stumpo and Metselaar. “It’s been incredible to see Hasbro evolve the ‘Hanazuki’ brand into so much more through vibrant storytelling, toys and beyond.”

“We fell in love with this property from the moment we saw it,” says Simon Waters, senior vice president, consumer products, Hasbro. “It was so differentiated from anything else in the market, and it was unique enough in terms of story that we knew intuitively there was something special there. We looked at insights about tweens, and we realized that there is nothing in the marketplace that speaks to her (and his) attitude the way ‘Hanazuki’ does. It’s the perfect platform of creativity, insight, fun and adventure in the moment.”

While “Hanazuki” is still very much in the early phases of its launch, Waters believes that the series has translated to engagement very rapidly.

“Story and engagement first,” he emphasizes, “which is something Hasbro has always said it wanted to do, and we are doing it with ‘Hanazuki.’”

“We’re leading with stories, because stories are key these days,” adds Meghan McCarthy, head of storytelling for Hasbro’s girls’ brands. “And we’re meeting [tweens]

where she is 11 hours a week: on the web. ‘Hanazuki’ offers a different dynamic, visual aesthetic and characters that were just waiting to be built out. We are creating a unique mythology based on quirky characters in which moods are a superpower and it’s important to express how you feel.”

With a total of 300 minutes of entertainment and 27 episodes, “Hanazuki” has released 18 episodes since January, has established a presence in 17 markets and 10 languages and has amassed a significant audience with more than 110 million views and counting, according to Andrea Hopelain, vice president, marketing and global marketing strategy for “Hanazuki,” Hasbro.

“We are targeting an older girl of 8- to 9-years-old because of the theme of the series that is promoting and supporting the idea for colorful mood expression, which is very much a white space in the market,” explains Hopelain. “There are not a lot of brands in the market that say it’s okay to be true to your feelings and that it’s okay to feel sad, it’s okay to feel frustrated or to feel wacky and excited. The message is something that resonates with these girls, and they’re at a place where they are discovering who they are and understanding their feelings. ‘Hanazuki’ lends credibility to the message we are trying to deliver.”

Hasbro will roll out an extensive collection of consumer products over the next year beginning in June

at select retailers and nationwide in August featuring more than 175 collectible treasures and figures, plush items and a Bluetooth-enabled and app-connected wearable that allows kids to share and express their moods. This summer, Hasbro will also debut apparel, leggings, backpacks, jewelry, publishing and collectibles based on the surprise element in each story.

In addition, Hopelain says Hasbro is planning several launch partnerships with top retailers around the globe beginning in June that will include store signage, in-store events and short-form content that will be distributed by each retailer across their own channels.

“We are taking some of the editorial from ‘Hanazuki’ and the Hemkas—wacky, silly and unpredictable characters—which allows us to be quite irreverent in what we are doing in our product development. But we are still evaluating which characters resonate,” says Waters. “We have taken a complete cross-category approach so that everything we create has a shred of consistency that is true to the franchise.

“While each Hasbro franchise has its own methodology as to how we roll it out, the reality is that ‘story first’ is how we have evolved as a company and everything rolls from that,” adds Waters. “The difference here is in terms of speed and that we are seeing consumers adapt much faster. Traditional broadcast has evolved as consumers have become more digitally savvy, and that’s the reason we chose YouTube for this platform to launch. Fan engagement is happening much quicker and satisfying consumer needs sooner rather later is definitely the right thing to do.”

Waters says that initially “Hanazuki” has a female lead, but he believes it absolutely has boy appeal in the same way My Little Pony has broadened its audience over the years.

Another key component of the “Hanazuki” property is leveraging and expanding its digital platforms to build its audience and further engage fans, according to Victor Lee, vice president, digital marketing, Hasbro.

With the first episode already totaling more than 3.5 million views, Hasbro was quick to release the “Hanazuki” app in April. The app allows fans to explore their moods and feelings and engage with the actual stories from the series. It also gives free access to all episodes, as well as various digital stickers.

“The app allows fans to get more involved with the world and with the product, and it allows fans the opportunity to take the world of ‘Hanazuki’ and put it in their pocket,” says Lee.

“Hanazuki” also launched on Instagram this spring and will expand to other social media platforms later in the year.

Publishing is one of Hasbro’s strongest categories across all of its franchises, and it will be a key part of the “Hanazuki” rollout, according to Michael



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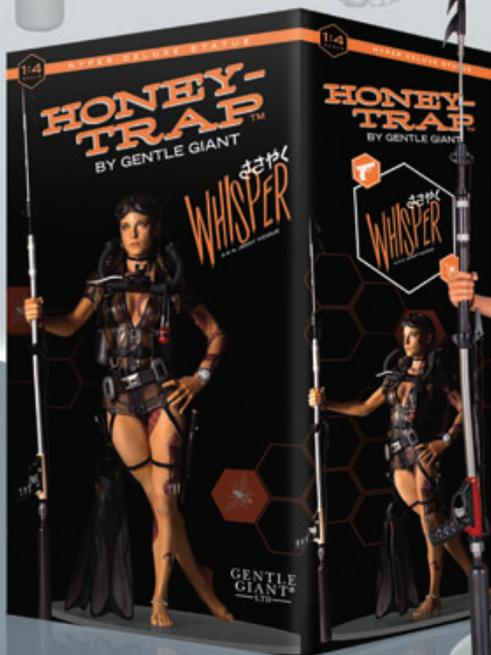
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Kelly, senior director, global publishing, Hasbro, who has been working on the story development for the past several years.

The “Hanazuki” publishing strategy will begin this year with IDW comics and graphic novels; and Abbot Books is producing a guidebook to the world of Hanazuki, which will be released in November, and then continue more aggressively in 2018 with middle grade chapter books.

The initial approach will be to publish books based on the existing series stories, with original content coming next year.

“It’s always important that we reinforce the original story and build upon that world like we have done for Transformers and My Little Pony,” says Kelly. “We plan to stay with the core age group and maybe trade up a little as we are looking at guidance journals and other interactive storytelling, plus coloring and activities that the more sophisticated younger kids will enjoy as well.”

Kelly says that a magazine and additional story books are also being developed in several European territories, as well.

“When I look at our storytelling opportunities over the next few years, the character is so strong, unique and perky that I believe the sky’s the limit for what we can do with ‘Hanazuki,’” says Kelly.

Last year, Hasbro president John Frascotti, told *License Global*: “We have evolved from selling toys on shelf to building franchises and experiences with an underlying message.”

“Hanazuki” is not only the perfect example of Frascotti’s message, but also the company’s overall strategy that “just scratches the surface of what’s possible,” he says.

“We want our audiences to have a deep love for the characters and stories and build the mythology, we want to establish ‘Hanazuki’ as a lifestyle brand, we want to own the idea and brand that celebrates colorful expression and we want to build the Hanazukian audience,” says Hopelain.

It’s a safe bet not only to believe that Hasbro has other properties in development but also to draw comparisons between “Hanazuki” and well-established Hasbro franchises in terms of consumer products, multi-platform content, location-based entertainment and the like. As this new franchise grows, it can easily leverage the synergies and best practices of the company’s other properties. And what this means is a huge upside growth potential and a strong future for Hasbro and the new world it is creating. ©

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SCOTT LIVING: BUILDING A BROTHERLY BRAND

Jonathan and Drew Scott, known as the Scott Brothers or the “Property Brothers” (from their popular HGTV show), are rapidly building a global lifestyle brand with a strong position at retail.

by TONY LISANTI

They are singers and sellers. They are writers and designers. They are entertainers and entrepreneurs. And now the Scott Brothers are becoming prime time licensors as well.

Their consumer products business, Scott Living, which was launched in 2014, has already established a strong presence at retail, and the twin brothers have extensive plans to expand into various new lifestyle product categories—more than doubling sales volume over the next few years.

For more than 20 years, Jonathan, a designer and licensed contractor, and Drew, a real estate expert, have bought and renovated real estate properties. Known as the “Property Brothers,” which is the name of their TV series on HGTV, the Scotts have the passion and commitment it takes to create the licensed products they believe are needed—and wanted—in the marketplace.

“We didn’t want to be reality show hosts, but within three months, we were



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the No. 1 show on the network. People seem to resonate with what our ideals are about the business,” says Jonathan. “The standing principle we have across every business is integrity. We want to make sure that everything we do is in the best interest of the client. It has never been about a commission or making a quick buck. We always give our word to a client and stick by it.”

“Property Brothers,” which airs in more than 150 countries and is watched by millions, has also led to various spin-off shows including “Property Brothers: At Home,” “Brother Vs Brother,” “Buying & Selling” and “Off Topic.”

The Scott Brothers have also built a huge following on social media; and in between their TV shows and other lives as musicians, they are building a significant consumer products business.

Scott Living has been described as “Jonathan’s and Drew’s take on all things home.” The eclectic collections include indoor and outdoor furniture, décor and bedding available at retailers including QVC, Costco, Lowe’s and Orchard Supply.

“We are always very brand-focused and strategic in everything we do,” says Jonathan. “It’s always about listening to the fans, listening to each other and having the strategy sessions to figure out where we think there is a niche we can fill, but also where we can have some fun. We always



want to reinvent ourselves.”

“We realize that we are lifestyle experts and not celebrities—we are personalities. But people are making purchasing decisions based on our suggestions,” adds Drew.

“We don’t just want to slap our name on something and do a quick licensing deal that doesn’t represent our brand,” emphasizes Jonathan. “We turned down a lot of offers from major companies because we didn’t think it really aligned with what we wanted to do.”

When they first started, the Scott Brothers actually sketched

out and designed hundreds of décor pieces. They continue to be intimately involved throughout the product development process.

“We are designing everything in our collections based on what is needed in the marketplace and where we see a gap that no one is addressing,” they explain. “We haven’t necessarily tied our style or aesthetics to the shows, but the shows are simply a reflection of the aesthetics and designs we bring to clients.

“We are very involved with our partners and particular about the standards we set for what we expect, but also for the creativity that we want to bring to the marketplace. We don’t like to follow trends, we want to be on the front end of introducing trends



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and to create something that delights people,” they add.

The brothers attend all of the major markets to understand what’s trending in products, design and color so they can better serve the needs of their customers.

“Our shows are not just inspiring people to what’s already in the marketplace, but our shows create trends, and that resonates throughout the entire industry,” says Drew. “We want to make sure people can aspire to have a beautiful home, but not have to break the bank to obtain it.”

The Scott Brothers launched their Scott Living collection of outdoor furnishings and accessories on QVC in 2015, and the collection continues to remain one of the most popular home furnishing collections on the shopping network. In fact, the Scotts recall the very first time they were on QVC: they created a hanging lantern with cracked glass that sold 6,000 units in two minutes. It has since become one of the anchor products of the QVC collection. Another product that resonates with the QVC audience, according to Jonathan and Drew, is the Portofino fountain collection, which also sold thousands of units in minutes—the brothers are now becoming known as fountain experts.

Scott Living, which continues to add new products and diversify its offerings, recently unveiled an all-new fabric collection comprised of more than 70 fabric selections, which are available by the yard at select retailers.

And earlier this year, the company launched Dream Homes by Scott Living, which features three modern home concepts that can be constructed anywhere in the world. Each home is a one-of-a-kind design that can be customized to suit individual specifications.

The brothers are also authors.

In April 2016, Jonathan and Drew released their first book, *Dream Home: The Property Brothers’ Ultimate Guide To Finding & Fixing Your Perfect House*.

Beyond Scott Living, Jonathan and Drew are also aspiring musicians and recently wrote and recorded two original tracks, “Hold On” and “Let the Night Shine In,” with Victoria Shaw and Chad Carlson. In January, the

Scott Brothers put their own country spin on Flo Rida’s single “My House” and are donating 100 percent of the single’s proceeds to the St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

As the Scott Brothers head to Licensing Expo, they will be focused on expanding their existing offerings and driving future growth.

They are currently developing various new products in the technology space, kitchen cabinetry, storage products and tiles.

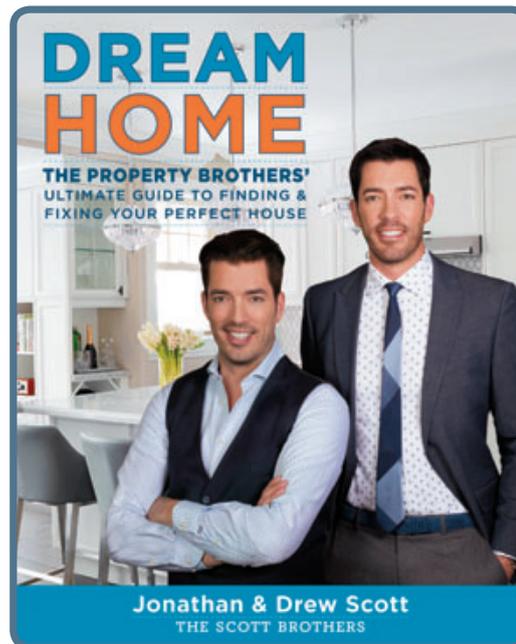
“We will be looking for the right partnerships that can help us sustain our growth, continue to expand our brand, reach a broader audience and take Scott Living international, as well,” says Jonathan.

“We broke the \$100 million mark with Scott Living this year, and we plan to break the \$250 million mark by the end of next year.”

“We plan to focus on areas where we know that there is a need, but where people are looking for quality also. At the same time, we do not want to over stretch it. We need to

make sure we are growing at a nice, steady pace,” they say.

Says Jonathan: “It’s not about being a short-term, exciting brand. We want to be the brand that people can and want to grow and evolve their home into over the next several decades.” ©





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With a new brand licensing team, National Geographic Partners is revamping its strategy in order to drive growth worldwide for the lifestyle and experiential brand.

by **TONY LISANTI**

With its longstanding reputation in science, exploration and travel across its media platforms, National Geographic Partners is plotting a new course that will strengthen its brand extensions business across core product categories, location-based entertainment and retail development.

As part of its commitment to expand its licensing initiatives worldwide, National Geographic Partners chief executive officer and business veteran, Declan Moore, recently established a new brand team under the leadership of former Mattel executive Rosa Zeegers, who was appointed executive vice president, consumer products and experiences, in December. Zeegers now oversees National Geographic's global licensing, merchandising, travel, location-based entertainment and National Geographic Live businesses.

"National Geographic is one of the most storied brands in the global media landscape that resonates with consumers worldwide. Our opportunity is to extend the brand and our sterling brand values built over the last 128 years and translate that into new spaces that deliver products and experiences that are authentic to National Geographic and relevant to the lives of our consumers.

Rosa's keen insight into consumer behavior, her expertise in building strategic partnerships and her global experience, will be integral to helping us achieve those goals," said Moore, when he announced Zeegers appointment.

In March, Zeegers strengthened her team with two executive appointments: Juan Gutierrez was named senior vice president, consumer products and live events, overseeing global licensing and location-based entertainment; and Cynthia Rapp was named as senior vice president, creative, and will lead the development of the division's creative strategy and execution.

The restructuring of National Geographic actually began in September 2015, when National Geographic Society and 21st Century Fox expanded their 18-year partnership to form National Geographic Partners, which combined National Geographic television channels with National Geographic's media and consumer-oriented assets including *National Geographic* magazines, National Geographic Studios, related digital and social media platforms, books, maps, children's media and ancillary activities such as travel, location-based entertainment, archival sales, catalog, licensing and its e-commerce businesses. The new entity is owned 73 percent by 21st Century Fox and 27 percent by the National Geographic Society.

EXPLORE NEW

“It’s such a well-known and beloved brand, as generations have grown up with it,” says Zeegers. “The power and reach of this brand is unbelievable.”

Consider the following statistics:

- National Geographic reaches 730 million consumers a month.
- The TV channel reaches 438 million households in 172 countries and is translated into 43 languages.
- *National Geographic* magazine has 54 million print and digital readers in 35 languages, plus counts 4.1 million kids as readers across 15 languages.
- Its travel business offers programs that take place in 80 destinations.
- National Geographic is the No. 1 brand on Instagram, says Zeegers, with 100 million followers, bringing its total to 316 million fans across all social media platforms.

Based on its popularity and reach, the National Geographic franchise offers significant growth opportunities from its rich archive of photography and other assets that can extend to related apparel and outdoor gear down to consumer experiences.

“The business, when it was still the National Geographic Society, wasn’t motivated by profit, per se, but it was a mission-driven business,” explains Zeegers. “The beauty is that, while it’s still a mission-driven business, now this new company—National Geographic Partners—has a very clear profit objective.

“In terms of licensing, we must identify a clearly defined target consumer and value proposition that will not only attract target consumers, but

also make it clear to our partners why they want to work with us in a win-win situation,” she adds.

Zeegers explains that her team identified a mindset consumer segmentation versus an age demographic segmentation.

“We believe we should focus on those consumers that are already avid fans—people that are curious, that are explorers at heart, that care about the world around them, that care about climate, conservation and culture, but also care about nature. Consumers that seek out authentic experiences and what to be inspired and informed are the people who seek brands that are demonstrative of those values—we are that brand.”

Zeegers also points out that National Geographic Partners has crafted a unique value proposition, not only for its huge global audience, but also for its partners.

“National Geographic is the only brand that empowers and enriches the explorer in all of us with authentic products and experiences that help support science, conservation and ultimately more exploration,” she explains. “Because 27 percent of NGP’s proceeds go back to the Society to support their mission, partners who do business with us will also help the mission work of the Society by supporting a need among today’s consumers and from the revenue we generate.”

Says Juan Gutierrez, who joined National Geographic Partners after serving 19 years at Mattel in various positions: “[National Geographic] is a beloved brand with a real meaningful purpose. Our objective is to extend that purpose into consumer products by positioning it as the premier exploration brand. As part of 21st Century Fox, this

RING DEALS



gives us a significant competitive advantage to leverage the vast global network to scale our business around the world.

“This revamped licensing program will support our overall brand mission and premium position by extending our values to consumers through trend-right and relevant products and experiences that give back to the Society,” he adds. “National Geographic’s values have also allowed us to attract like-minded, best-in-class licensee partners going forward in different categories because we share a lot of the same values.”

The licensor recently agreed to a new partnership with Eagle Creek, a 40-year-old manufacturer and premium adventure travel gear and accessories brand focused on enriching travelers’ experiences.

“This will be a truly integrated partnership and will establish Eagle Creek as the National Geographic adventure travel gear partner in North America,” says Gutierrez. “We are also taking a strategic approach to launching the licensing program by positioning our products in the Explorer outdoor space, focusing the first phase of our rollout on apparel, outerwear, accessories, camping gear and the EC adventure gear.”

Gutierrez says that National Geographic is also bringing the brand to life and inspiring its explorers through the company’s entertainment initiatives. NG is developing Ultimate Explorer Family Entertainment Centers with IP2 Entertainment, which will roll out internationally beginning in the third quarter of 2018 in China and then throughout Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

Another exciting example that will bring the National Geographic brand to life will take place this fall in New York City’s Time Square. In conjunction with SPE Partners, National Geographic will open its first Encounter: Ocean Odyssey experience, which will be a 60,000-square-foot venue with new media, technology and a private party event space.

“It’s a groundbreaking, immersive attraction that transports audiences from deep ocean to outer space. It’s a fact-based concept based on Nat Geo’s expeditions and research,” says Gutierrez.

National Geographic Partners is also committed to creating experiences at retail targeting not only specialty and higher end stores, but also promoting its own stores. In South Korea, for example, National Geographic has a partnership with the Nature Company, which operates 24 branded flagship stores. Gutierrez says he also plans to target mid-tier and mass retailers within 18 months.

Other merchandising opportunities include expanding existing categories, various product collections at its location-based entertainment sites, new content and programs and its archive of photos and other assets.

“I believe we will help grow the licensing industry as whole because we bring partners to the table who are not your traditional licensing partners,” says Zeegers.

With its premium explorer positioning, a heritage of 130 years and a new brand licensing leadership team in place, National Geographic Partners is poised and ready to explore new opportunities and brand initiatives. ©





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CLASH OF THE ‘GODS’

FremantleMedia is gearing up to support its new series “American Gods” with a product suite fit for fans of the property, both old and new.



ANDREA BRENT
senior vice president, licensing
and franchise management,
FremantleMedia North America

by **BARBARA SAX**

FremantleMedia North America’s Starz Original Series “American Gods” is poised to become the next must-see series, and Fremantle has a licensing strategy in place to harness the power of this new pop culture player.

The series has plenty of creative talent in its corner. Executive produced by Bryan Fuller and Michael Green, the eight-episode series is based on Neil Gaiman’s best-selling contemporary fantasy novel that boasts a star-studded cast including Ricky Whittle, Ian McShane, Gillian Anderson, Orlando Jones, Pablo Schreiber, Crispin Glover, Emily Browning and Kristin Chenoweth. The series debuted on April 30 in the U.S. on the Starz network and will also go global on Amazon Prime Video this month.

“American Gods” follows Shadow Moon, an ex-con left adrift by the recent death of his wife, who becomes bodyguard and traveling partner to conman Mr. Wednesday. Mr. Wednesday is a powerful old deity in disguise preparing for a war that’s brewing

between traditional old gods, with mythological roots from around the world, and new gods that have powers over technology and media. Shadow Moon is thrust into a hidden world where magic is real and where the old gods seek to defend their existence in a new America against the growing power of the new gods.

The series has been generating buzz long before its debut. Attendees at the 2016 San Diego Comic Con got a first look at a series trailer last summer after a panel discussion with some of the cast, and SXSW attendees were treated to a premiere of the show in March. Anticipation for the series has been “out of control,” says Andrea Brent, senior vice president, licensing and franchise management, FremantleMedia North America.

“There’s a lot of excitement around this show,” says Brent.

“The show has magic, mystery and eye-popping scenes. It really delivers

on everything fans of the book and fantasy genre fans are hoping for and more, since the original characters have been expanded.”

FMNA has built a robust licensing program to support the series launch with initial products rolling out now, with more to follow in 2018.

“Since it has recurring themes, interesting props and is visually stunning, the property lends itself to licensed product and unique consumer product categories,” says Brent.

For example, items such as Shadow’s coin and fellow character Czernobog’s hammer are iconic among readers and will be touchstones for viewers of the series, so they are natural themes for collectibles.

The Crocodile Bar, the watering hole of the gods that is a regular location for the show’s action, will be referenced on a barware line from licensee Dark Horse and will include a pint glass, shot glass and ceramic and metal steins based on props from the show. Dark Horse will also produce a sculpted coin replica pin, playing cards, coffee cups (including heat sensitive and ceramic cups), an embroidered patch, a coaster set, lenticular cards, lenticular posters, 3D crystal laser-etched cubes, journals/notebooks, an optical illusion mirror coin bank and other optical illusion novelty collectibles.

Licensee Rittenhouse Archives has also signed on for trading cards and albums. Funko will create stylized vinyl figures for both its Pop! and Dorbz lines, water bottles, lanyards and keychains; Titan will produce non-articulated vinyl figures; and NECA has articulated action figures, foam prop replicas and foam figures covered. Chronicle Books will publish a behind-the-scenes look at the making of season one, Rizzoli will produce wall calendars and Trends has signed on for posters and bookmarks. Ripple Junction is on board as licensee for men’s and junior’s t-shirts, tanks, fleece, fashion tops, jackets, socks, dresses, buttons, pins and stickers.

The show’s characters also have catchphrases that are



tailor-made for licensing.

“We’re extracting signature taglines for apparel and other categories,” says Brent. “For example, Shadow Moon’s ‘I don’t believe in anything I can’t see’ catchphrase and Mr. Wednesday’s tagline ‘Damn right I’m a hustler, swindler, cheater and liar’ will be licensed for product lines from apparel to stationery.

“We anticipate just as much interest in Britain as in the U.S., and quite a strong demand in Germany and in Australia as Amazon gets off the ground there,” says Brent. “Those will be our key markets at launch.”

In the U.K., Trademark Products is the apparel licensee for t-shirts, sweatshirts, vests and fashion tops; Forbidden Planet will also produce apparel and accessories; Pyramid Posters is the partner for posters, wall art, mugs, coasters, badges, stickers, key chains, notebooks, door mats, magnets and wristbands; and Danilo Promotions will create calendars and journals. ©

nick jr

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PAM KAUFMAN
chief marketing officer and
president, consumer products,
Nickelodeon



RON JOHNSON
executive vice president,
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Consumer Products, Viacom
International Media Networks

Nickelodeon and Viacom's Nick Jr. preschool business is on fire with some of the hottest kids' properties currently on the market and a strong pipeline of content that will keep the excitement growing.

by **BARBARA SAX**

Nick Jr. is dominating the preschool market in the U.S. with six top 10 shows. Around the world, Nick Jr. is also a growing phenomenon.

"We've significantly expanded our Nick Jr. household penetration internationally in the past 12 months," says Ron Johnson, executive vice president, Nickelodeon and Viacom Consumer Products, Viacom International Media Networks. "In the U.K., through a partnership with Channel 5, we own the preschool space. We've grown 20 percent in Mexico, we're up significantly in Brazil, and we're adding several million households in Columbia."

And that's just part of the success story.

Johnson says Viacom has re-invested in platforms in Germany to get more eyes on its properties and is working with partners in Spain and France to expand there, as well.

"We've taken advantage of our great preschool content to foster deals and increase our distribution, and that's driving our consumer products business," he says. "Internationally, we've had our best year ever in 2016 driven by the series 'Paw Patrol,' 'Blaze and the Monster Machines' and 'Shimmer and Shine,' and we're currently at double-digit (23 percent) organic growth for our business, including recreation, home entertainment and our core licensing business. We're on track to deliver double-digit growth over last year's revenue. We're really hitting on all cylinders."

Johnson says Nick Jr.'s record revenue is driven by three engines: its core consumer products licensing, promotions such as retail loyalty programs and on-pack promotions and on-ground, real world recreational experiences that take the Nick Jr. brand to hotels and amusement parks worldwide.

Retail activations are also a crucial component.

"We have great tie-ins with partners like Walmart, Target, Tesco and Toys 'R' Us," says Johnson. "The amount of money, time and effort we spend in assets, exclusives and marketing programs is critical for our brands. Our retail partners do a great job, so we make sure we continue to support them."

The company's approach is certainly working. Product sales for "Paw Patrol" are up 60 percent, and DVD sales for the brand are stronger than ever.

"'Paw Patrol' is the No. 1 DVD franchise around the world, and we're pacing to sell more than 1.5 million units in fiscal 2017," says Johnson.

Nickelodeon International's publishing division saw more than 50 percent growth from 2015 to 2016, and its current second quarter estimates are predicting triple-digit publishing growth for "Blaze and the Monster Machines" and "Shimmer and Shine."

"Paw Patrol" also remains hugely popular worldwide.

"The show continues to be a worldwide phenomenon on TV, in consumer products and off-channel with wide

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cross-gender appeal,” says Pam Kaufman, chief marketing officer and president, consumer products, Nickelodeon. “Paw Patrol’ was the No. 1 show for kids, ages 2 to 5, on all of TV for the first quarter of 2017 in the U.S., and the ‘Mission Paw: Quest for the Crown’ episode delivered an 18.9 rating, drawing 4.2 million total viewers.”

The show is taking off in Germany where it’s the fastest-growing preschool brand and is expected to be the No. 1 toy brand next year. The brand ranks in the top five in many other countries.

“It’s one of the rare properties in the preschool space that appeals to both boys and girls, and it’s been a huge licensing success,” says Kaufman.

The brand’s products enhance its appeal. “Paw Patrol” was the winner of the Toy Industry Association’s Toy of the Year and License of the Year awards, and the Toy Award Winner for Best Preschool Toy of 2016 in the U.K.

Licensees are also showing their support for “Paw Patrol.” TY has taken on its first-ever license for its

yet to be announced. The property will be significantly expanded to a broader category base this year.

“Blaze and The Monster Machines” continues to gain ground through on-air story arcs, consumer product tie-ins and increased off-channel marketing. The show is a top 10 preschool program around the world including in the U.K., Hungary, Poland, Russia, Germany, Spain, Italy, South Africa, Australia, Brazil, Canada and India, according to NVCP, and has launched on free-to-air channels in more than 20 markets.

Consumer products in the U.S. have expanded “Blaze” into new categories including bedding, home décor, accessories, oral care, gift sets and social expressions. Key product rollouts for this year include CPG categories such as fruit snacks, bandages and more.

NVCP/VIMN recently launched another key property, “Nella The Princess Knight,” an animated series about an 8-year-old who possesses the royal qualities of a princess but also the courage and determination of a brave knight, in February, and will soon begin an international rollout in English-speaking markets.

“Nella” is one of the first properties Viacom has developed in the U.K. with its newly acquired Channel 5 partners.

“Nella is our first true princess, and what an awesome princess she is. She comes from a multi-ethnic family and is a princess by day and a strong action figure by night who solves problems with great collaborative solutions. We’re excited about the toy and role-play possibilities of this property,” says Johnson.

NVCP/VIMN named Vivid Group as the exclusive international master toy licensee for “Nella” in all countries outside of the U.S. Categories include dolls, figures, playsets, plush and role-play toys, all set for a spring 2018 international launch. A U.S. launch will follow later.

Another new show is “Rusty Rivets,” an animated TV series produced by Spin Master Entertainment for Nickelodeon, that is inspired by elements of the maker culture and will move into toy licensing later this year.

“The show has tapped into the DIY movement and is a natural for toy licensing,” says Kaufman. “Our other new property, ‘Sunny Day,’ is launching in the U.S. this summer, with consumer products coming in 2018 and international to follow at a later date.”

With a full schedule of hits and more properties launching soon, Viacom is making sure Nick Jr. holds its leadership position.

“This is the most robust pipeline we’ve had to-date,” says Kaufman. “Nick Jr. will be keeping the momentum going with new consumer product partnerships, more character appearances and many other ways for consumers to interact with their strong stable of characters.” ©



Beanie Boos range, and the brand will have some new CPG and food deal announcements in the near future.

On the live events front, the “Paw Patrol Live Tour” has “performed beyond expectation,” says Johnson, selling out across the U.S., Mexico and Canada. The tour has been extended through the remainder of this year.

“Shimmer and Shine,” Nick Jr.’s girl-focused property, recently launched in more than 10,000 retail stores with soft lines (bedding and home accessories from Franco), a toy line from Fisher-Price, role play products from Just Play and Halloween costumes from Rubie’s Costume Co. Expansions of the Fisher-Price range and new construction from Mega Bloks are planned. The brand has more than 300 international partners, including 10 global publishing partners. A magazine partner is

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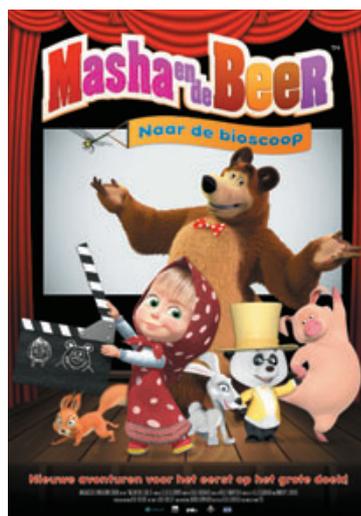
Animaccord Animation Studios’ “Masha and the Bear” is continuing to find success in the worldwide market, from its roots in Russia to the Americas and Europe.

Animaccord Animation Studio has a hit on its hands with “Masha and the Bear,” a 3D-animated series targeted to young children.

The History of “Masha”

Created by Oleg Kuzovkov in Moscow, Russia, in 2008, the series was slow to launch, taking eight years to secure funding and develop. But the slow and steady pace paid off when Kuzovkov found a partner in Dmitriy Loveyko, who joined as co-producer, and the series began to take off.

The first episode of “Masha and



the Bear,” titled “How They Met,” hit Russian airwaves via the popular children’s series “Good Night, Kids” in 2009. Simultaneously, content was also released via YouTube, which allowed the property to gain viewership around the world from its onset.

Now the series airs in more than 50 countries and has generated more than 10 billion views online, says Animaccord.

Licensing Takes Off

In just three years, “Masha” gained worldwide popularity as the series began to get picked up by leading broadcast networks in all major markets.

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Growing

eOne is finding much success in North America with its stable of children's programs. So much so, it's growing its U.S. team to keep charging forward.

by AMANDA CIOLETTI

Entertainment One is continuing to carve out space for its entertainment properties in the U.S., bringing its classic British series such as “Peppa Pig” and “Ben and Holly’s Little Kingdom” stateside, as well as finding much success with the France-born “PJ Masks” CG-animated hit.

“Peppa” is by now a well-established evergreen in the U.K., and in North America, it’s on its way to achieving similar status thanks to its top 5 ranking on the Nick Jr. network, where it airs daily.

Globally, the brand generates more than \$1 billion at retail annually, with \$200 million of that collected in the U.S. in 2016.

In North America, the brand has more than 70 licensees on board including top-tier partners such as Jazwares, its master toy partner, and Scholastic, its master publisher. Others include Colgate, American Greetings, VTech and many more.

“Peppa’ continues to expand—I don’t think we’ve reached the ceiling yet of what this property will be in the U.S.,” says Joan Grasso, vice president, licensing, North America, eOne.

According to Grasso, in 2016, eOne onboarded 20

additional licensees for “Peppa,” and will look to expand the brand even further into wider categories such as consumer packaged goods and food and beverage.

The property is also backed by a traveling live show. Launched in 2015, “Peppa Pig’s Big Splash” has recently launched a new leg in both the U.S. and Canada, and will get a refreshed stage presence this fall with the premiere of “Peppa Pig’s Surprise!”

Abroad, the series is gaining momentum in China, Korea and India, specifically, where merchandise launched this year. In China, the show enjoyed more than 12 billion views via various online platforms.

From the same creators as “Peppa” is “Ben and Holly’s Little Kingdom,” which also airs on Nick Jr. in the U.S.

Launched in the U.S. in October 2015, the series continues to roll out new episodes this spring, and has secured a major product range in partnership with Jazwares. The brand’s first U.S. range will hit retail this August.



JOAN GRASSO
vice president, licensing, North America, eOne



and



“We’ll have more news on other product categories for ‘Ben and Holly’ soon,” says Grasso.

But the big story is “PJ Masks,” eOne’s runaway hit based on the French picture book series *Les Pyjamasques*.

The series hit U.S. airwaves in September 2015, premiering on Disney Junior and the Disney Channel.



Even with only one season (57x11) to draw from, the brand is finding no issues tackling retail, as it enjoys placement at mass with ranges at Toys ‘R’ Us from global master toy partner Just Play.

“This property became hot so quickly,” says Grasso. “We’ve signed over 55 deals already—companies and manufacturers want to work with us on this brand.”

Grasso says much of the product has yet to launch, but is slated to hit shelves later this year.

New episodes are also on deck for the brand—season two will hit Disney Junior this fall. Continued short-form content, music videos and interstitials will refresh the brand as anticipation for the new series gains momentum.

“PJ Masks” is also getting its own live show, “PJ Masks Live!,” which is set to debut in September and visit more than 50 cities in the U.S. and Canada.

To manage these and other programs eOne has in development, eOne has recently begun to expand its North American licensing team.

“Because we’ve seen a lot of growth in our licensing portfolio and for each of our individual properties, our team is expanding here in North America,” says Grasso. “We started out with just me, and now we have a team of seven people. It’s a full U.S. team, and it will continue to grow this year as the properties and programs continue to expand.”

Joining Grasso in the New York-based eOne office are Janice Lam, director, licensing; Danielle Merkrebs, licensing manager; Megan Rodenbucher, licensing coordinator; Julie Christopher, vice president, marketing; and Ashley Sutton, marketing manager.

Grasso says more internal growth is also expected in 2017 and into 2018. ©

VR: BEYOND THE GAME

From video games to theme parks, virtual reality is taking the world by storm and is helping to bring top brands to new heights.

by ERICA GARBER

In recent years, virtual reality has been revered as one of the top trends across multiple fields, particularly within the licensing industry. When VR comes to mind, many people associate the software with gaming, however, innovators within the licensing sector have utilized the software to not only produce a raft of branded VR games, but to build on and expand theme parks, exhibitions, live events and more.

Consumer VR software generated more than \$80 million in 2016, according to The NPD Group. NPD also reports that PC and console VR owners spent an average of \$157.92 on VR software for their system, and that the most endorsed reasons for buying a VR headset is to play immersive games (87 percent) and

to travel virtually to interesting places (75 percent).

One company that has taken a big leap into the world of VR is Six Flags Entertainment. The theme park partnered with Samsung Electronics America in 2016 to debut a series of roller coasters (including three Superman-themed

coasters) that utilize Samsung Gear VR headsets. The first Superman-themed VR coaster debuted at Six Flags Fiesta Texas last summer and requires riders to wear VR headsets that enable them to be transported into Metropolis to help Superman defeat Lex Luthor.

DreamWorks Animation teamed with Honda earlier this year to demonstrate the automaker's in-car augmented and virtual reality content by featuring the animated movie *Trolls*. Called the Honda Dream Drive, the new car enables passengers to immerse themselves in a VR



world that is triggered by the motion of the vehicle.

Cirque du Soleil has also leapt into the world of VR. The entertainment brand recently partnered with Felix & Paul Studios to develop “Dreams of O,” a 12-minute, 360-degree 3D experience comprised of aerial acrobatics, dives, fire and surreal amphibious characters, for the Samsung Gear VR powered by Oculus.

Sony also expanded its live experience capabilities last summer by partnering with Madame Tussauds New York, Ghost Corps. and The Void to create an immersive, VR experience based on the newest *Ghostbusters* movie. Titled, “*Ghostbusters: Dimension*,” the live experience launched exclusively as part of Madame Tussauds’ “*Ghostbusters Experience*” and combines state-of-the-art technology, props, costumes, a vehicle, gadgets and exclusive content. The experience also includes a ghost hunt where visitors must battle a paranormal villain to save New York City.

Beyond experiences, brand owners have begun using virtual reality to transport fans directly into the heart of the action of their favorite series, movies, sporting events and more. And with VR becoming in-demand with consumers, it makes sense.

Most recently, Aardman released a VR experience for its “Shaun the Sheep” franchise. The experience, called “Shaun the Sheep Movie Barn VR,” serves as a 360-degree movie theater environment that will allow users to view “Shaun the Sheep” adventures. It also includes exclusive content from the studio such as film trailers and animated shorts, which will air ahead of the classic episodes.

The National Basketball Association capitalized on VR capabilities to help bring fans closer to the action. For the 2016-17 season, the league partnered with NextVR to bring NBA League Pass subscribers select regular season games via virtual reality.

Finally, Mattel, in collaboration with Warner Bros. Consumer Products, DC Entertainment and Warner Bros.’ digital studio Blue Ribbon Content, teamed with Otoy to develop original episodic content based on “Batman: The Animated Series” for the View-Master VR Viewer, which was released late last year.

Despite the various experiential capabilities of VR, it would be remiss to ignore the number of entertainment properties that have expanded their content through VR games. Examples include:

- Nickelodeon partnered with Mattel and Climax Studios to launch “View-Master TMNT VR,” a new VR app that will put kids in the center of the action alongside the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

as well as visit fan-favorite locations from the series. The new game is compatible with Google Cardboard and View-Master VR Viewers.

- Viacom and artist Nick Koenig (a.k.a. Hot Sugar) released a VR music and gaming experience, titled “The Melody of Dust.” The new game features more than 80 original melodies hidden within objects, which together form a VR album shaped by the unique gameplay.
- Paramount Pictures teamed up with VRWERX to develop a VR game based on the *Mission: Impossible* franchise. The video game offers an original storyline inspired by the classic spy film franchise and is available for a variety of platforms, including the HTC Vive, PlayStation VR and Oculus Rift.
- Sony Pictures Virtual Reality and Ghost Corps., a subsidiary of Columbia Pictures, tapped CreateVR to bring the world of *Ghostbusters* to PlayStation VR. The



game, titled “*Ghostbusters VR—Now Hiring, Act 1: Firehouse*,” will allow fans to explore the iconic firehouse, meet characters like Mooglie and get up close with Slimer. Fans will also be able to access the Ecto-1, assemble and fire a proton pack, see the basement where the Ghost Containment Unit is and more.

- VRWERX is also developing a game inspired by the *Paranormal Activity* franchise, titled “*Paranormal Activity: The Lost Soul*,” for the HTC Vive, PlayStation VR, Oculus Rift, PlayStation 4, Xbox One and PC.
- CBS Consumer Products and Ubisoft joined forces to launch “*Star Trek: Bridge Crew*.” In addition to a new ship created for the game, it will also feature the original U.S.S. Enterprise that users will be able to command on their own voyage.
- Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment, in partnership with DC Entertainment, launched “*Batman: Arkham VR*” last year. Developed by Rocksteady Studios, players will be able to immerse themselves in the virtual reality world through the eyes of the “World’s Greatest Detective.” The game is available exclusively for PlayStation VR.
- Cartoon Network, in collaboration with U.K.-based VR specialist Opposable, launched a VR mobile game, as well as a themed viewer, based on the animated series “*Adventure Time*.” Titled, “*I See Ooo*,” the game transports fans to the Land of Ooo to take on three different themed games.
- Lionsgate and SilVR Thread released “*Nerve—Do You Dare*,” a VR game inspired by the movie *Nerve*, which was released late last year, and is available for Samsung Gear VR and Google Cardboard. ©

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FOLLOW

Social media influencers have expanded their reach and can be found on every platform from YouTube to Instagram with millions of followers. This report highlights 10 popular content creators spanning entertainment, home, fitness and more that could begin to influence the licensing industry.

by ERICA GARBER



Lauren Riihimaki (LaurDIY)

Lauren Riihimaki, also known as LaurDIY, is a fashion, lifestyle and DIY YouTuber. The 23-year-old influencer

currently makes and publishes several videos a week about do-it-yourself crafts, clothes, school, relationships, her morning routine, workouts, healthy snacks, organization and home décor.

In addition to her 5.5 million followers on YouTube, LaurDIY boasts more than 2.47 million followers on Twitter, 2.9 million on Instagram and 393,000 on Facebook.

With a wide range of categories and followers under her belt, Riihimaki tapped The Brand Liaison last September to grow her brand via licensing to categories such as DIY and crafting projects, apparel and accessories, jewelry, school supplies, organization and home décor.

For its first deal, The Brand Liaison recently signed licensee PopSockets to create a line of branded mobile accessories for the DIY guru, which are now available online.



Rosanna Pansino

Rosanna Pansino is a YouTube personality known for her weekly cooking show “Nerdy Nummies,” which is considered one of the most

well-known baking shows on the content network. The series sees Pansino craft special treats inspired by various properties such as *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Power Rangers*, “The Legend of Zelda,” “Game of Thrones,” “Star Trek” and many more.

The influencer currently has collected more than 8.2 million followers on YouTube, nearly 500,000 on Twitter, 2.6 million on Instagram and 750,000 on Facebook.

Most recently, Pansino partnered with Wilton to create a collection of branded kitchen tools, sprinkle mixes and decorating products. The new products are set to launch later this summer at Michael’s and Jo-Ann Fabric & Crafts. The deal paves the way for further licensing deals for this baking guru.



Nikki Blaketter

Nikki Blaketter is a fitness model and Instagrammer with more than 1.5 million followers on the platform. The 25-year-old has

been featured on the cover of *Muscle* and *Performance* magazine and offers a series of online coaching and workout programs.

Capitalizing on recent trends in activewear, Blaketter partnered with Gymshark, a U.K. fitness apparel and accessories brand, manufacturer and online retailer, to develop the NikkiBxGymshark collection. The new line will feature Blaketter’s Nikki B logo and will include a number of activewear pieces, such as shirts, leggings and more. The new line is set to launch in the next several months on Gymshark.com

In addition to her Instagram profile, Blaketter also has more than 550,000 followers on YouTube, 122,000 on Twitter and 75,500 on Facebook.



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Kayla Itsines

Kayla Itsines is an online fitness guru from Australia known for creating the Bikini Body Guide (BBG) and accompanying community,

which currently has more than 10.5 million members. In 2008, Itsines began her career with a personal training course and from there developed her own set of exercises. As her client base grew, Itsines began to build a presence on Instagram and Facebook, and since has amassed more than 11.75 million followers on Facebook, 6.8 million on Instagram and 412,000 on Twitter.

Itsines has also released an app, “Sweat with Kayla,” as well as several eBook guides to complement her BBG program. With a raft of followers and a continuously growing fitness community, Itsines is poised to lunge into the licensing industry—both agents and licensees should definitely keep an eye on this fitness star.



Mindy McKnight & Family (Cute Girls Hairstyles)

Launched in 2001, Cute Girls Hairstyles is now a YouTube tutorial channel

that currently has more than 5.15 million subscribers, as well as 2.72 million followers on Facebook, 1.5 million on Instagram and 185,000 on Twitter. In each video, McKnight demonstrates a variety of hairstyles including several inspired by popular entertainment franchises such as *The Hunger Games*.

The brand has already partnered with several major partners including Disney and Walmart, and late last year Cute Girls Hairstyles appointed agency Brand Central as its exclusive licensing representation.



Zoe Sugg (Zoella)

At 27-years-old, Zoe Sugg, popularly known as Zoella, has already amassed more than 11.75 million followers on YouTube, where she posts

weekly videos about shopping hauls, beauty tutorials, her monthly favorites and more.

Furthermore, the lifestyle blogger has

also published a novel, titled *Girl Online*, and already has a line of beauty products at the U.K. high street chain Superdrug. As she continues to highlight a range of categories, Sugg is opening up her brand to new licensing opportunities across apparel, DIY categories and more.

Sugg also has 10.9 million followers on Instagram, 2.65 million on Facebook and 8.14 million on Twitter.



Joe Wicks

Joe Wicks is an online nutrition and fitness expert from the U.K. known for creating The Body Coach brand,

which includes the 90 Day SSS Plan, a tailored fat loss plan which has helped transform the lives of millions of people.

Last month, Wicks appointed Global Merchandising Services to serve as his exclusive worldwide licensing and merchandising agent. To build the program, the licensing agency will work to secure licensees spanning activewear, homewares, gifting, food/FMCG and sporting goods. The agent is also planning to launch an exclusive range of The Body Coach fitness apparel online.

Wicks’ current social media roster includes 267,000 followers on Twitter, 1.8 million on Instagram and 2.55 million on Facebook, as well as 328,000 subscribers on YouTube.



Michelle Phan

In addition to being a popular social media influencer in the fashion and beauty spaces, Michelle Phan is also an entrepreneur

who has already expanded her brand well beyond its online roots.

After amassing 8.82 million subscribers on YouTube, 2.1 million on Instagram, 926,000 on Twitter and 3.15 million on Facebook, Phan helped create a subscription cosmetics box, called Ipsy.

Phan also partnered with Endemol Beyond USA to launch a premium lifestyle network on YouTube, named ICON. The channel serves as an online global

destination for the empowerment of viewers through inspirational content, conversation and community.

Despite no longer posting sponsored content, Phan’s lifestyle and media empire has the opportunity to continue to grow through a variety of licensing options.



Joey Graceffa

Joey Graceffa currently has more than 7.5 million subscribers on YouTube who are able to flock to his channel daily to view

a raft of entertainment content ranging from playing with kids’ bath toys to trying “sad girl” products, taste testing Starbucks drinks and more. Adding to his popular entertainment content, Graceffa has also published several books including the fiction book *Children of Eden*.

The YouTube star has already taken his first steps in the licensing industry. In 2015, he partnered with Throwboy for a throw pillow inspired by his logo. Although Graceffa hasn’t inked any recent licensing deals, his entertainment brand, as well as his new book, could easily lend themselves to a raft of products.

Graceffa also boasts 5.3 million followers on Instagram, 1.45 million on Facebook and 3.56 million on Twitter.



Paloma Contreras (La Dolce Vita)

Paloma Contreras is an interior designer who launched her blog La Dolce Vita in 2007. On social

media, she has nearly 75,000 followers on Instagram, 18,600 on Twitter and 11,823 on Facebook. Although her social media followers may not be as robust as other influencers on this list, Contreras has been featured in multiple publications and websites including *The New York Times*, *New York* magazine, *The Washington Post*, *ELLE* and *Better Homes & Gardens*, among many others.

The designer and influencer currently has a book slated for 2018 and, according to *Forbes*, is ready to expand into licensing in the home furnishing space. ©

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CATCHING THE BUZZ

Global media company BuzzFeed is entering the consumer products space, and with it comes exciting new ideas from the network that just about invented the sharable moment. **by AMANDA CIOLETTI**



BEN KAUFMAN
head, BuzzFeed Product Labs

Put simply, BuzzFeed is a distributed network that produces and disperses original news, entertainment and video. In practice, however, the company is re-defining online advertising with its social, content-driven publishing that reaches a worldwide audience of more than 500 million each month. Major studios are also backing BuzzFeed—in November 2016, NBCUniversal made an additional \$200 million investment in the company, up from its initial investment of \$200 million just a few months prior.

It's got a movie in the works with Warner Bros., and plenty of additional content in its pipeline every single day.

It's a safe bet to say BuzzFeed is going places, and consumer products and brand extensions are an organic additional piece of the growing business portfolio.

To do this, BuzzFeed brought in Ben Kaufman to head up the BuzzFeed Product Labs division with the purpose of leveraging the company's audience and hero and sub-brands for unique business development and commerce opportunities.

"In the world of licensing, I think BuzzFeed represents a new set of brands that have a truly unique angle with its audience in that we talk to these people every day in a way that isn't commercial," says Kaufman. "So when we do licensing deals, we are going to be extremely thoughtful in making sure that they are authentic to these brands and can provide value to our audience, making the licenses themselves that much more valuable."

BuzzFeed has several licensable brands under its banner, including the master BuzzFeed channel, as well as Tasty, which is centered on cooking and recipes; Goodful, which caters to healthy eating and healthy lifestyle choices; Nifty, BuzzFeed's home décor and DIY space; and Top Knot, a collection of style and beauty videos and content moments. Each of these, along with the many others certainly in BuzzFeed's back pocket or in development, present numerous classic and innovative avenues for consumer products.

"What's cool about having these handful of brands under management, depending on what the product or what the experience is, chances are we have a brand that speaks directly to that audience," says Kaufman. "What's very interesting about the series of properties that we manage is, depending on what a licensee is trying to achieve, it's likely that we have a multi-million person audience and a brand that can suit those needs, and we can custom tailor a licensing program around what they are trying to get after."

Early licensing deals for the company's cache of brands are largely for Tasty, which has secured brand extension deals for cookware and bakeware, and has a custom cookbook in market.

But BuzzFeed is not necessarily looking to be your average licensor—it certainly recognizes that content and ideas can come from anywhere, and that opportunity lies in the undiscovered, from concept all the way down to retail.

Take the Fondoodler, an off-the-wall product concept that BuzzFeed licensed in to not-so-surprising success, which it managed from top to bottom. In Kaufman's words, it's "literally a hot glue gun for cheese."

"The Fondoodler is an invention we found that we know is ridiculous, but we know that recipes, crafting and cheese resonate with our audience. We licensed the idea from the inventor, we got the product through the supply chain, we launched it specifically through our channels, creating appropriate videos through all of our social pages and we run Fondoodler.com as a standalone e-commerce property.

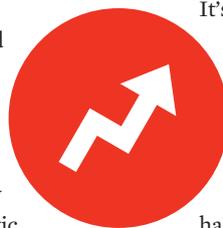
It's silly but it has sold a ton. What is fun about BuzzFeed is to create these sharable moments," explains Kaufman.

And that willingness to go anywhere the idea/concept needs to go is what sets BuzzFeed up for opportunity in the licensing realm as well.

"One of the more interesting parts of our licensing program is that we're open to everything. If a licensee has a relationship with the big box guys, by all means," says Kaufman. "Some of the first licenses we have done are targeted at big box retailers, but we are also, through the Product Labs group that I am heading up, very active in the e-commerce world and the series of shops that we have opened up that can target specific sub-sets of our audience. When a licensee does a deal with us, not only will they be able to build product and experiences that they can sell to traditional brick-and-mortar retailers, but they will also be able to leverage BuzzFeed stores and BuzzFeed Product Labs experiences to sell their product as well."

In the meantime, find BuzzFeed hitting the Licensing Expo show floor for the very first time, where the company will debut its portfolio of brands.

"Our goal is to put a spotlight on the BuzzFeed brands and show how immensely popular they are and tell the licensing world that we are open for business," says Kaufman. "Licensing is a new practice for BuzzFeed, and we're excited to form new partnerships with folks that see the value in our audience and our unique ability to build content that they love and share." ©



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