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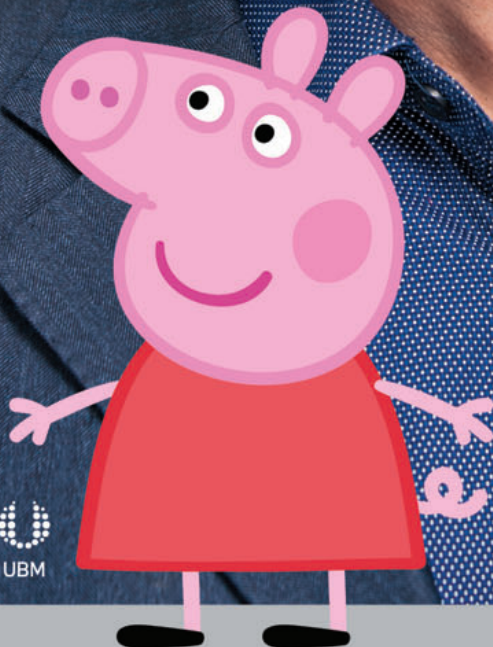
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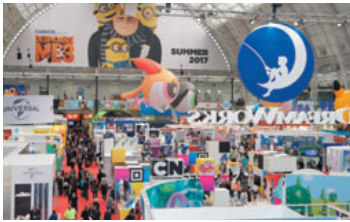
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30 READY FOR LONDON!
 Nearly two decades in, Brand Licensing Europe is kicking off this month stronger than ever.

34 MARKET REPORT: THE U.K.
 An in-depth look into Brexit and how it will affect the licensing industry in the U.K.

42 THE GAMING INDUSTRY LEVELS UP
 The video game industry is moving into crossover content and creating an entirely new way for brands to reach consumers and further expand their IP.

60 WRITING A NEW LANGUAGE
 The Emoji Company secured its first license in mid-2015 and now boasts more than 350 active licensees and unfettered growth around the world.

66 SVOD RE-ENERGIZES ENTERTAINMENT LICENSING
 Streaming video-on-demand is offering opportunities in brand licensing beyond traditional TV and film.

72 THE NAT GEO REVOLUTION
 National Geographic is ramping up internally to focus on a worldwide push for consumer products and experiences.



50 BUILDING FOR THE LONG-TERM
 Entertainment One is a nimble entertainment organization that is taking its portfolio of preschool properties to every major market in the world, with an eye toward sustainability.

80 INFLUENCING THE BUY
 Influencers are increasingly finding their place in brand campaigns and are becoming essential to building awareness and driving product programs.

84 ENGAGE! 'THE NEXT GENERATION' TREKS INTO 30 YEARS
 CBS Consumer Products is celebrating "Star Trek: The Next Generation's" pearl anniversary with content-inspired merchandise, live events and more.

88 FANS TAKE CENTER STAGE
 Cartoon Network is building its experiential programs around fan affinity.

94 SIGN IN: A LOOK AT SOCIAL PLATFORMS
 A special report that highlights several fresh social platforms that offer new avenues for consumer engagement.

96 COMING TOGETHER
 Studio 100 and m4e have merged to create a European powerhouse of kids' entertainment.

100 JOIN THE CLUB
 BBC Worldwide is building the product program for "Hey Duggee!"

104 AN EPIC OUTLOOK
 For Epic Rights, music licensing is more than just a t-shirt business.



76 FAST AND FURIOUS
 Universal Brand Development is shifting gears and becoming more active in its approach to licensing.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENTS

06 TRENDWATCH
 Millennials are killing everything.

08 GUEST EDITOR
 Brand broadcasting in a narrowcasting world.

10 CHARTBUSTER
 Popular toy IP around the world.

14 BIZ BRIEFS
 Retail news, licensing deals and more.

ON THE COVER



Andrew Carley, head of global licensing, Entertainment One Family

License Global (Print ISSN 1936-4989) (Online ISSN 1936-5047) Published 6 times a year in Feb, Apr, May, Aug, Oct, and Dec, by UBM LLC, 131 W First St., Duluth MN 55802-2065. Subscription rates: \$100 for 1 year in the United States & Possessions; \$132.24 for 1 year in Canada and Mexico; all other countries \$190 for 1 year. International pricing includes air-expedited service. Current-issue copies (prepaid only): \$12 in the United States & Possessions; \$14 in Canada and Mexico; \$26 all other countries. Back issues, if available: \$17 in the U.S. and Possessions; \$22 in Canada and Mexico; \$39 in all other countries. Current-issue and backissue copies shipped inside the United States, include \$6.50 for shipping and handling plus \$2 per additional copy. Current-issue and back-issue copies shipped outside the U.S., include an additional \$10 per order plus \$5 per additional copy. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to License Global, P.O. Box 6255, Duluth, MN 55806-6255, Canadian G.S.T. number: R-124213133RT001. PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40612608, Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: IMEX Global Solutions, P. O. Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2, CANADA. Printed in the U.S.A.



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MILLENNIALS ARE KILLING EVERYTHING

Millennials have changed the marketplace for good. Is this a good thing or a bad thing?



by **AMANDA CIOLETTI**
executive editor

On social media, there's a meme that pops up pretty regularly, particularly around cultural institutional shifts. It's usually clickbait, but the message is always prominent: Millennials are killing everything.

The gist of the posting is that XYZ troubled industry or business is a result of Millennials not buying or buying into whatever institution is at stake.

In July, *Mashable* published a tongue-in-cheek article that outlines 70 things Millennials have killed, with the lede stating "Millennials are many things, but above all, they are murderers."

The article lists generalized industries that Millennials have weakened or pushed out of relevancy including beer, department stores, motorcycles, diamonds, golf, bar soap, college football, lunch (ha!), vacations, napkins (double ha! and so true), marriage, etc., as well as specific businesses that are struggling, including brick-and-mortar retailers, largely, as well as some restaurants. No. 70 is simply, "everything."

This article is one of many you can find, but the message is always clear: Millennials are very influential, and they are finally coming of an age that is affecting change on the total market in a real, meaningful way, and not in the abstract future. No longer are we prepping for the marketplace that Millennials want, we are firmly in that marketplace and we're seeing the shifts.

The latest casualty at retail is one of the world's largest toy stores, Toys 'R' Us. On Sept. 19, the corporation filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection to manage its huge debt load, which totals more than \$5 billion.

Depending on who you talk to, the impetus and implications of its filing are varied. It's the "Amazon Effect" and Millennial shopping habits, it's a management issue that's plagued the company for more than a decade (the company was purchased in 2005 in a \$6 billion leveraged buyout by private equity firms to combat the first inklings of trouble, according to *The New York Times*) or it's the nearly \$400 million in interest on its debt which is due next year that the company needs to address.

TRU is not the only brick-and-mortar struggling, as we're all very aware—it's one of many. Everyone is facing challenges, not just in the U.S., but globally. If you look to this month's "Market Report" feature (page 34) that delves into the U.K.'s economic outlook, challenges exist in that market equally, thanks to further large-scale, institutional shifts like Brexit. Spain, Greece, France... everyone has issues that need tackling, and brick-and-mortar is just one of many.

The world economy is changing, and many more well-versed than I are much more compelling to address it, but a

general underlying sense is that Millennials, while maybe not responsible entirely, are very much a component.

I should be clear, I'm a Millennial. Without getting too personal, I straddle the late end of the classification, and could sometimes fall into the Gen X category, depending on who is making the call. I tell you this because of what I will say next: I don't feel responsible for the collapse of economic institutions, and I for one embrace the change. Let me tell you why.

Change is inevitable. Change is positive.

Change fosters innovation.

Professionally, I want to see markets succeed. I want licensors and licensees to have a space to sell their goods, to see profit margins soar and to see content creation so prolific, we can't keep up with the coverage.

Personally, I like the comforts that are being afforded to me with these new changes.

Let's take a look at the biggest advantage to the Millennials are Killing Everything movement, and the most obvious: Amazon and mobile commerce!

Yes, Amazon is the Goliath and we're all David. Yes, Amazon is taking down mom and pop stores left and right, and other not so mom and pop stores as well, but Amazon is also allowing access to many more people and categories than ever before. Now, niche products are sharing virtual shelf space with big brands. Now, choice abounds. Now, you can shop at 2 a.m.! And from your mobile phone! This is a boon for the consumer products industry—*your consumers are shopping at 2 a.m.* (Or other off-peak times, and in the place of their choosing.) Industry is not going to best Amazon at this point, so, as the saying goes, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

Other great advantages to this new, Millennial-murdered business-scape: SVOD. (See *License Global's* in depth look into the sector on page 66.)

No longer is content determined by just the big networks. Now, there is choice and, again, access, to content in multiple ways, on multiple platforms and on multiple devices. And as social platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Netflix, Hulu, Apple, and, yes, even that Goliath again, Amazon, continue to evolve the ways in which content is delivered, we'll have even more choice, viewership and avenues to get brand messaging out that it can only mean more ways for consumer product to evolve and find its ways to the consumer.

There are many more benefits to Millennial's influence on the consumer marketplace, but I'm thinking the point has been made—yes, the world of business is changing, and change can be very painful, but it's also given way to innovation that needs to happen. After all, without an innovation of 700 years ago, you would not be reading this magazine. ©

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BRAND BROADCASTING IN A NARROWCASTING WORLD

IMG's Bruno Maglione breaks down the modern outlook and growth of retail, and how it will evolve in a way that accommodates brand licensing.



by **BRUNO MAGLIONE**
*president, licensing, IMG,
 and executive vice president,
 WME/IMG*

Since joining IMG in 2006, Maglione has driven the division's growth into one of the world's largest independent licensing agencies with more than 200 agents across the globe. Based in London, Maglione oversees the representation of preeminent corporate trademarks, media and entertainment properties, sporting brands, personalities and estates.

Prior to joining IMG, Maglione held the positions of president of Marvel Entertainment International, and managing director and senior vice president of Universal Studios Consumer Products. He is a graduate of the Harvard Business School and Brown University.

The original modern retail revolution of the past 70 or so years was mainly a movement from "narrowcasting" (smaller, independent, regional or specialist stores) to "broadcasting" (larger, centralized, national or diversified retail). Supermarkets, department stores and shopping malls were all developments favoring one-stop-shopping solutions of greater efficiency and consistency. As the leaders of these modern retail formats gained in size and strength, "being there" (i.e. getting listed) was half the battle won for a brand. Notwithstanding the larger retail footprint of these formats, they remain governed by physical space constraints to the number of brands and products they can carry. Therefore, securing shelf space from limited real estate would at a minimum guarantee a brand a share of sales just by being on shelf vs. not. The growth of retailer private-label products was testament to this reality—to a degree, people will buy what's there.

These dynamics favored larger companies and bigger brands that had the resources to service the increasing needs and demands of the big national (or international) retail players. And bigger brands were reinforced by similar "broadcasting" dynamics in media. In a three national broadcast networks world, it took size and financial strength that only the bigger players could afford to occupy the airwaves, and therefore mindshare, of the consumer.

While these retail formats and mass media channels remain dominant factors, we're witnessing significant and rapid change from this old order that so greatly advantaged size. Technology is pushing us back to a more narrowcasted commercial world. The efficiency of online sales has placed great competitive pressure on malls, department stores and mass merchandisers alike. While the No. 1 e-commerce company, Amazon, is a broadcaster of sorts, the user interface and predictive selling of its digital marketplace allows for a narrowcasted, curated user experience. Shelf-space is, if not entirely unlimited, almost so in the virtual merchandising world.

Accordingly, consumers are presented with wider choices, and this is augmented by the simplicity of the buying transaction. Finding, buying and getting merchandise home is a click away at any time. Similarly, the explosion of social media platforms has dramatically lowered the barrier to communicating and marketing a brand or product. As with physical retail shelf space, the limitations of 30-second broadcast advertising inventory in primetime has been replaced by the virtually unlimited inventory, ubiquity and variety of messaging afforded by the Internet and its platforms, be it digital ads, Facebook postings, blogs, apps or YouTube tutorials. Furthermore, the entire media world has moved to a narrowcasting environment. Mono-themed channels (like ESPN) are competing with mono-subject channels (like The Olympics Channel), OTT platforms and

individual programs on demand via Apple TV or Netflix.

In summary, physical, marketing and financial barriers to entry for brands have been greatly reduced or lifted altogether, and the consumer purchase transaction simplified. Price levels for most mainstream consumer items have lowered thereby additionally reducing the risk of brand trial or brand switch decisions. The collective impact of this is a proliferation—more new brands that are more widely available, cheaper and easier to try and purchase than ever before, and consequently a commercial culture favoring less traditional brand loyalty. Harry's can challenge mighty Gillette.

How does a brand stay relevant and retain top-of-mind consideration in a digitally fragmented retail world of exploding choices?

Fundamentally, brands facilitate consumer choices. A meaningful brand will resonate in the consumer's mind as reliably delivering desirable attributes. A good brand is like an old friend you know can be relied on to get a particular job done. But a proliferation of brands can confuse the consumer with too much choice. It turns out that, presented with more choices, we seek more information and assurances.

To compete and retain leadership, established brands need to recognize this higher bar for attention and retention. Brands are counseled to occupy the digital space, leverage social media, engage with consumers at a deeper level on matters they care about, be more present in their lives... Business press have filled pages with this advice, which in substance is a call to "try harder" as the old Avis campaign famously promised the No. 2 brand would do.

Now both leader and follower brands need to try harder, but less discussed is the enhanced role brand licensing can play to engage with consumers in this new environment.

Brand licensing is in effect brand broadcasting—a useful counter-action to the narrowcasting world. Well-executed brand licensing reinforces core brand attributes that drive confident brand choices. Delivering the brand experience across more product categories creates incremental opportunities for consumer trial and involvement. Visibility in more channels and locations supports greater top-of-mind awareness and recall. In summary, brand licensing increases consumer engagement opportunities through diversified product purchases and experiences, and that greater engagement can be a valuable contributor to consumer attention, loyalty and sales. These aspects were always intangible benefits of brand licensing, supplementing their quantifiable core financial return. They are arguably more valuable now in the brave new world of exploding brand choices, limitless brand merchandising landscapes and enhanced challenges for the consumer's attention. ©

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POPULAR TOY IP AROUND THE GLOBE

The NPD Group's Frederique Tutt examines top-performing properties around the world.

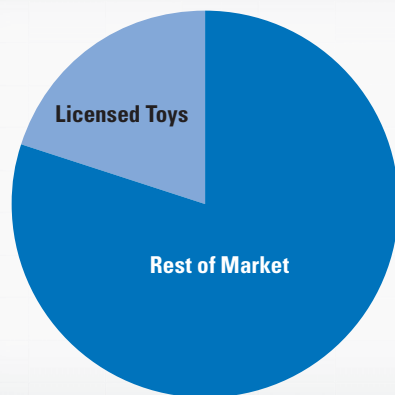
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Licensed toys account for 27 percent of global toy sales. The highest penetration is in Mexico, where they account for 34 percent of overall sales, and the lowest is in the Netherlands, where they represent 17 percent of the toy market.

“There is a wealth of choice available for consumers when it comes to licensed toys. Reflective of the wide variety of markets NPD tracks, it is clear that there is a lot of diversity in the top 10 list. In certain markets, consumers favor content-driven or aspirational toys, whereas in others the draw is more toward

Global Toy Market



“THERE IS A WEALTH OF CHOICE AVAILABLE FOR CONSUMERS WHEN IT COMES TO LICENSED TOYS. REFLECTIVE OF THE WIDE VARIETY OF MARKETS NPD TRACKS, IT IS CLEAR THAT THERE IS A LOT OF DIVERSITY IN THE TOP 10 LIST.”

Top 10 Global Toy Properties, Based on Dollar Sales

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>Star Wars</i> | 6. Batman |
| 2. Pokémon | 7. Hot Wheels |
| 3. Nerf | 8. LEGO City |
| 4. Barbie | 9. LEGO <i>Star Wars</i> |
| 5. “Paw Patrol” | 10. Playmobil |

Top 10 G12* Toy Licenses

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Star Wars</i> | <i>Trolls</i> |
| Batman | “Minecraft” |
| <i>Disney Frozen</i> | Spider-Man |
| <i>Cars The Movie</i> | Power Rangers |
| Disney Princess | <i>Disney Moana</i> |

*NPD's G12 toys footprint covers Australia, Benelux, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Russia, Spain, the U.K. and the U.S.

branded products with no characters attached,” says Frederique Tutt, global toys analyst, The NPD Group.

NPD says that the wide variety of toy categories is not determined by any singular factor, and can include varied thematic elements that are not sourced from any one channel or category. Tutt also notes that toy-based or comic/publishing properties can be boosted by crossover content.

“The list of top performers is not dominated by any one theme. Ranked No. 1 is *Star Wars*, the biggest franchise of all time with another movie release in time for the holidays, followed by Pokémon, a very different, perennial property, which came to new heights last year thanks to a mobile game,” she says. “Barbie is another evergreen property that has reinvented herself on screen. ‘Paw Patrol,’ a more classic, preschool small screen property, has seen huge success, as has Batman, which has seen its highest-ever sales this year thanks to the *LEGO Batman* movie.” ©

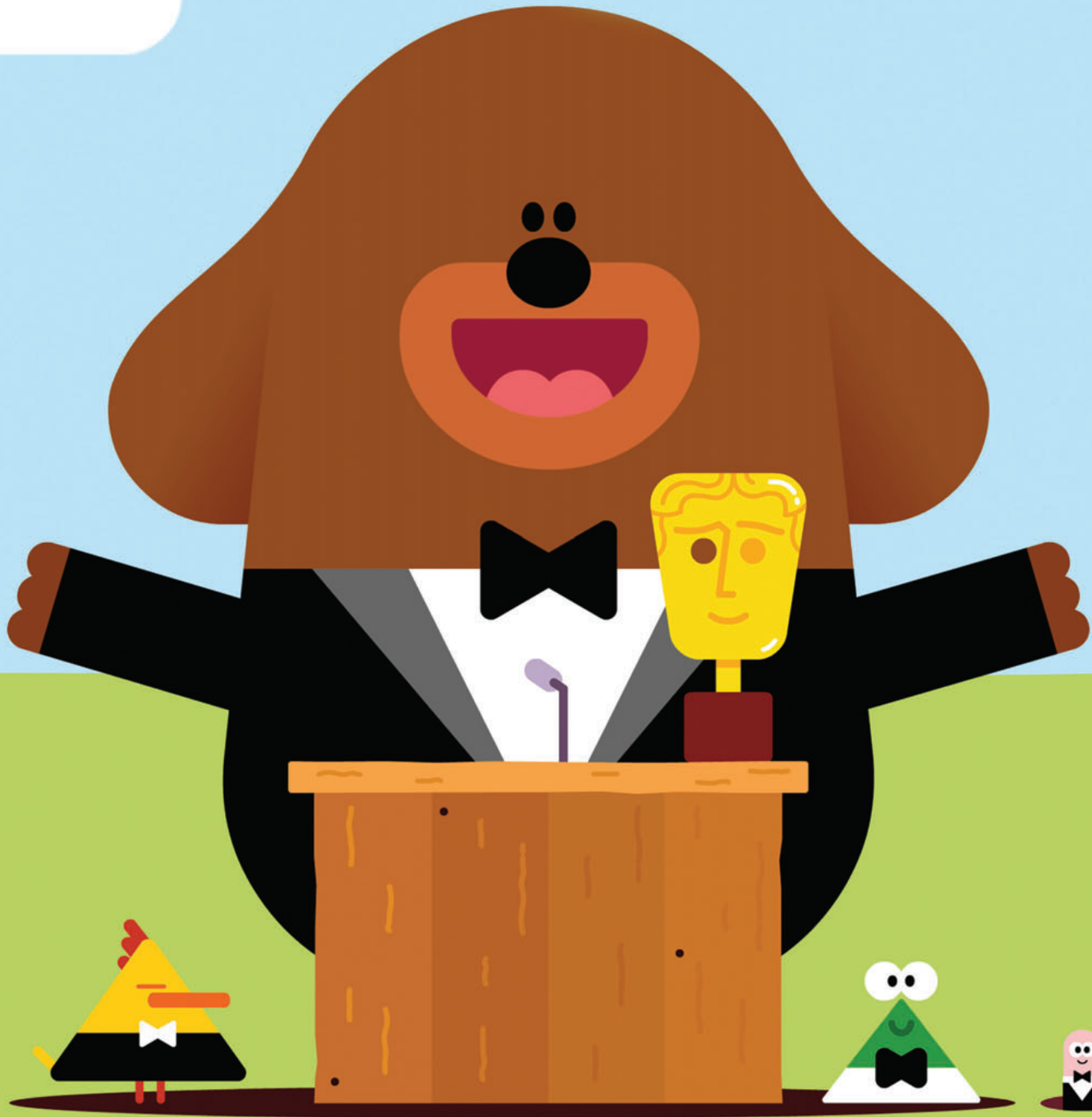
* Source: : The NPD Group, Inc. / Retail Tracking Service, January-July 2017



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Xilam Doubles Production, Builds Licensing Program

French production studio Xilam has seen massive growth in the last few years, with the opening of two new production studios in France and the development of a new consumer products strategy, headed by licensing veteran Marie-Laure Marchand.

With the addition of two new studios in Lyon and Angoulême (joining the company's existing studios in Paris and Vietnam), production output has now doubled, and the company is currently producing six, half-hour series.

Key among these is Xilam's flagship brand "Oggy & the Cockroaches," a slapstick show targeted to children ages 4 to 9, that features Oggy, who constantly find his plans to sit at home watching TV disrupted by his three cockroach roommates.

The series, which has been sold in more than 160 markets worldwide, first debuted in 1998, and three new seasons (5-7) are now headed to airwaves.

Xilam handles licensing for the brand in France in-house, and has appointed agents in a host of other key markets including Italy, Germany, Southeast Asia, India, Russia, Latin America, the Middle East and the U.K.

"Oggy & the Cockroaches" is a unique brand in the entertainment area, and its TV and digital success is proof that there is already a captive audience for the

show that will be delighted to discover and enjoy fun and innovative products around the brand," says Marchand. "The fact that the brand appeals to a gender-neutral audience makes a huge difference, and paves the way for lots of licensing opportunities in all categories."

Lansay has come on board as the master toy partner for "Oggy" in France, and Xilam is currently working on building out the brand's licensing program in other key categories, which will be an easy task with season five of the series performing strongly in markets worldwide.

At the same time, Xilam has also launched its first preschool brand, "Paprika," and is getting great feedback on the new show "Zig & Sharko," another non-dialogue, slapstick comedy in the vein of "Oggy."

"Paprika," which follows the antics of twin tigers Stan and Olivia, has been commissioned by Disney Junior EMEA, France Television and Discovery Kids Italy (K2 and Frisbee). Xilam is currently developing a style guide for the brand and is already in discussions with toy and publishing partners.

"The Paprika twins take everyday life and turn it into a wonderful, colorful and spicy adventure," says Marchand. "The show itself has been created as a toy playground, which will be great for toys and games. The overall kawaii look, along with creative secondary characters, will bring a fresh air to the preschool sector."

For Xilam's newest hit, "Zig and Sharko," which takes place on the beach, Marchand sees opportunities in outdoor toys, apparel and summer items.

"Xilam is experiencing an extensive expansion in terms of production capacities, as well as diversity of shows produced or in development," says Marchand. "One of my goals is to establish a steady licensing business for the group and focus on key strategic brands, so we can become an important player in the licensing industry."



Goodyear Makes Tracks

With the help of its licensing agent, IMG, the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company is driving into Europe with a host of new categories in its lineup.

First, Goodyear has teamed up with PWB to launch a collection of Goodyear-branded workwear that adheres to safety standards. The new range will be available next spring. Goodyear has also debuted a new safety footwear collection that will be available in the U.K. and France.

IMG has also signed on Punc to develop Goodyear-inspired clothing, which is available via the Goodyear e-commerce site, as well as partnered with Nostalgic for a collection of vintage signs throughout Europe. The company is also currently planning to release Goodyear apparel and footwear in Portugal and footwear in Turkey.

The licensing agency has also tapped Carrefour to distribute Goodyear power tools throughout its retail locations in France, Spain and Poland.

Additionally, the brand most recently teamed up with Itrike to launch its range of environmentally friendly, three-wheel vehicles throughout Europe. The range includes two vehicle models designed for those who want an eco-friendly way to travel. The Goodyear three-wheel vehicles are now available throughout Europe.



TRU Returns to NYC

It's been an interesting past few months for the world's largest pure play toy retailer.

In September, Toys 'R' Us announced that it was filing for bankruptcy in the U.S. and Canada.

The company was quick to reassure analysts and consumers that Toys 'R' Us and Babies 'R' Us stores and websites would remain fully operational throughout the proceedings, including during the critical holiday sales period.

And in fact, Toys 'R' Us had just made a triumphant, if temporary, return to New York City's Times Square one month earlier in August, two years after it closed its flagship due to rising rent.

The 35,000-square-foot pop-up shop, just steps away from where its permanent destination store used to stand, boasts three floors and a dedicated play area. The temporary holiday location features New York City theming and a series of branded zones for Nerf, *Star Wars*, Barbie and more.

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Tuning in to MIPJunior

With a smattering of new programs in development and fan-favorite series expanding into new markets, MIPJunior is gearing up to set records with more than 1,300 kids' programs, projects and IPs on board for this year's show.

The annual event for kids' programming, which will take place Oct. 14-15 at the JW Marriott in Cannes, France, will certainly serve as a hub for new content this year. However, with so many programs in development, it will likely be up the buyers to determine which new series will be the next big thing among children. Here are a few IPs to consider that could also bud into a series of brand extensions.

In addition to its growing portfolio of content, Mattel Creations will kick off the MIPJunior World Premiere TV Screening with its new production "Thomas & Friends: Big World! Big Adventures!" The premiere will also mark a huge transformation in content for the iconic children's show.

"Thomas & Friends: Big World! Big Adventures" will see the famous train engine travel farther than ever before, taking kids on his adventures to experience new countries, learn about other cultures and make new friends along the way.

Meanwhile, Digital Television Russia and Signal Media will lead off the second MIPJunior World Premiere TV Screening with the new kids' fantasy series "Heroes of Envell." The new series follows four promising pupils—Art, Phil, Vik and Kira—after they find a laptop containing



a mysterious game. The laptop turns out to be a portal to the game world with real adventures and dangers. Together, the pupils must defeat the evil genius Morgarth, who dreams of getting to Earth and gaining control of the population.

In addition to the World Premiere TV Screenings, many companies will also be debuting new properties and expansions for the first time.

Mondo TV will showcase its popular series "Heidi, Bienvenida a Casa," "Heidi Bienvenida Al Show," "Yoohoo," "Robot Trains," "Invention Story," "Sissi," "Cubby Zoo," "Adventures in Duckport," "Partidei" and "Treasure Island." The company recently revealed that the first season of "Heidi, Bienvenida a Casa" has launched in Israel on Yes Kidz Israel. Russia-based JSC First HDTV has also signed on to distribute the series throughout the region via pay TV.

Technicolor will debut the new CGI series "Chamelia," which stars 6-year-old chameleon Chamelia Pickle, who changes color to match her feelings and embraces life with a "flare and style all her own."

Meanwhile, Genius Brands International will showcase new animated series "Rainbow Rangers," which is slated to premiere on Nick Jr. in 2018. Genius Brands will also highlight its tween brand "SpacePop."

Nelvana will also be showcasing a host of new and fan-favorite properties including "Esme and Roy," "Hotel Transylvania," "Mysticons," "Ranger Rob" and "The ZhuZhus."

Next, MarVista Entertainment will unveil

Platinum Films' new preschool series "Dream Street." The new series incorporates core learning principles and follows the adventures of Buddy the Magical Truck, Daisy the Police Car and their toy box friends as they tackle everyday challenges.

Next up, Calm Island will unveil the first episodes of its CGI-animated preschool series "Badanamu Cadets," which is currently in production and set for delivery in January 2018. The new program will introduce six heroes-in-training who must work together to protect the balance of nature in Badanamu. The show first launched as a preschool educational brand in 2011, with a series of video shorts following in 2013. The series has also already been pre-sold to France's Lagardere Active for its Gulli and Tiji channels, as well as to Cartoon Network Italy.

Nitro Circus has partnered with Propagate to handle the international distribution of its series and specials. Propagate will debut the Nitro Circus catalog during MIPCOM.

Fred Seibert, founder of Frederator Networks and chief creative officer of Wow! Unlimited Media, as well as Andy Yeatman, head of kids and family programming at Netflix, will host two keynote sessions that highlight their vision of the future of the kids' animation industry in an on-demand environment.

Cartoon Network will also host a 25th anniversary panel featuring its chief content officer Rob Sorcher and chief marketing officer Michael Ouwelen on Saturday, Oct. 14, at 11:45 a.m. local time.



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Mondo TV Set to Shine

With both Brand Licensing Europe and MIPJunior quickly approaching, Mondo TV has revealed several new programs as well as a slate of licensing partners and initiatives for its most popular programs that are sure to excite fans throughout the EMEA region.

Continuing to build on its popular series “Heidi, Bienvenida a Casa,” Mondo TV has signed on Panini to produce a wide range of products for the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking regions of Europe and Latin America. The new products are expected to launch in 2018.

Heading into BLE, Valentina La Macchia, licensing director at Mondo TV, says the company hopes to appoint a number of agents for the series throughout the EMEA region. She also notes that the company is currently seeking a European partner to produce a live stage show for the series following the success of the series’ live stage show in Buenos Aires, Argentina, which took place for two days in June. For MIPJunior, Mondo TV will aim to secure a series of distribution partners for the program across EMEA.

Another key focus for Mondo TV, according to La Macchia, is “Invention Story,” which is a new 3D-animated, comedy-action series for kids that follows the adventures of an intelligent, creative fox who, in each episode, comes up with a new invention that amazes the rabbit population in

Carrot Town, his adopted home. The series is slated to air next year, and both Mondo TV and its co-production partner Henan York Animation have already reached an agreement to develop five seasons of “Invention Story.” During BLE, the company hopes to appoint a master toy licensee for the new series as well secure a global publisher. Meanwhile, at MIPJunior, Mondo TV will focus on securing TV broadcast partners, covering both pay and free-to-air, on major channels worldwide.

In addition to “Invention Story,” Mondo TV will also be introducing the new series “Metalions” in collaboration with the Korean toy company Young Toys. The new animated series will follow Elon, an 8-year-old inventor whose world changes forever when he discovers his role as a protector for the Earth and its environment. The new series will be available in 2018.

While the new series’ licensing program is already underway, in large part thanks to Young Toys, La Macchia says the company is still seeking to appoint a master toy distributor in Italy while beginning to actively work on the licensing program.

The series “Robot Trains” is also performing well for Mondo TV, according to La Macchia. Most recently, the company has secured several licensing partners for the brand in the Italian market—including Preziosi Food for confectionery such as



Easter eggs and surprise eggs; Grani & Partners for collectible products, particularly 3D figurines; Ravensburger for puzzles and memory games; and Gribaudo La Feltrinelli for publishing. Meanwhile, in the Iberian region, new partners include Comansi for PVC figures and Gedis for collectibles.

The upcoming second season of “Robot Trains” will be a co-production between Mondo TV and CJ E&M; however, Mondo TV will continue to handle the series’ TV distribution and licensing in various European territories, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

Taking Smiley Viral

SmileyWorld, the brand behind the seminal smiley icon, is continuing to build its lifestyle collections with a renewed focus on tweens.

“The tween market is very important for us, and we are very successful there with our lifestyle products,” says Nicolas Loufrani, chief executive officer, Smiley Company. “For tweens, we are quite a cool brand that they don’t see on television as a cartoon. Tweens believe they are grown up, so they are into everything that is music, celebrity, sports and Internet, and it is a market where we can meet them, both boys and girls, in fashion, accessories, back-to-school, food products, novelties and home décor.”

Smiley recently launched a range of collectibles in partnership with Simba Toys. The collection of 50 expression accessories attach to a mobile phone or keyboard, or can be used as pen toppers.

While the range is fashionable and cute, it also serves a function that is close to Loufrani’s heart—it offers children and tweens a way to develop their emotional intelligence, which is an individual’s ability to recognize their own or other’s emotions.

To support the growing Simba range, SmileyWorld launched a robust marketing campaign that included TV, vlogger and social components, as well as leveraged influencers for unboxing videos.

This summer, Smiley launched a range of canned juices, called Smiley Fruity, in partnership with beverage manufacturer and licensee L’Abeille. The beverages hit shelves across European retailers such as Auchan, Carrefour, Leader Price, Leclerc, Casino, Monoprix and Toys ‘R’ Us.

To coincide with the launch, Smiley and L’Abeille launched a TV ad campaign that extended



to YouTube with a DIY call-to-action for kids to create their own Smiley Fruity videos, which they can then share via social media.

The viral marketing strategy and continued development of influencer marketing is one that Smiley is committed to furthering in 2018.

“We have plans to invest substantially in the next year in our influencer strategy, because now it is key,” says Loufrani. “We have realized that... a successful marketing campaign is created by mixing broadcast and viral [content].”



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Level-5 Brings Japan to Global Audiences

Multimedia entertainment company Level-5 Abby creates, produces and distributes content for children, adults and gaming and anime fans around the world.

A joint venture with Dentsu, one of the top ranking global advertising networks, and video game publisher Level-5, Level-5 Abby brings its Japan-born franchises, including tentpoles like “Yo-Kai Watch,” “Inazuma Eleven,” “Snack World” and “The Layton Series,” to screens in all major markets.

Now the company is focusing on expanding its IP to consumer products around the world, and has established a global network of offices and staff, as well as signed on to exhibit at Brand Licensing Europe, taking place Oct. 10-12, to reinforce that mission.

“Going forward, we’ll aim to work directly with partners on a local level to build ecosystems where video games, mobile games, TV content and consumer products interact with each other, creating a rich and engaging universe for the end consumer,” says

Sandrine de Raspede, senior vice president, licensing and marketing, Level-5 Abby.

To that end, Level-5 opened a Hong Kong office late last year to manage the company’s properties directly in the EMEA regions and Asia, excluding South Korea and Japan.

Properties driving that growth and product extensions include a diverse portfolio of entertainment brands.

“All of our IP has TV content and video games at its heart,” says de Raspede. “From there, we layer on other key categories such as mobile games, publishing, consumer products and promotions.”

“Inazuma Eleven—Ares no Tenbin” is an animated TV series (126 episodes) based off of Level-5’s soccer RPG video game franchise. De Raspede says that

for this property, self expression will be an important focus for the brand across its product categories. Product launch for the brand is targeted to hit retail in spring 2018, just prior to the World Cup.

Another property focus for the company is “The Snack World.” The cross-media project follows the magical adventures of a boy named Chup and his friends, and has CGI animation, a full product line, mobile games, comic books and a video game from Nintendo to support it.

The TV series launched in Japan this spring, and toys and the video game rolled out over the summer. More than 110,000

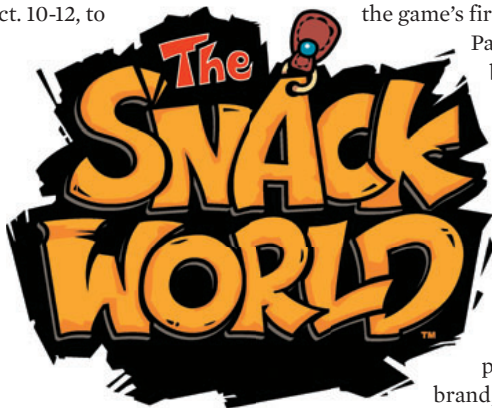
Nintendo 3DS games were sold in the game’s first week, says Level-5.

Partners on board for the brand on the product side include Kellogg’s and Calbee, with more in the works. The property will launch into EMEA in Q3 next year with a range of collectibles.

Lastly, “The Layton Series” is a push for Level-5. The brand, based off a series of puzzle adventure games,

expanded this year with the launch of the mobile “Layton’s Mystery Journey: Katrielle and the Millionaires’ Conspiracy” in July, and a video game from Nintendo that hit market this fall. This is the first mobile launch for “The Layton Series,” but the franchise has seen more than 16 million units sold and generated \$650 million-plus in sales over its six video game titles and 10-year history. A new TV series is in development, and 50 episodes are on-track to deliver in 2018.

Beyond EMEA and Asia, the company has big plans for product extensions around the world including a focus in Latin America and the U.S. with early driver categories such as toys, apparel and publishing, as well as additional game extensions for console and mobile games.



L.O.L.’s Success is No Surprise

MGA Entertainment has tapped into a global phenomenon—unboxing. And with it, the toy company has brought a new range of collectibles to market that are winning the world over.

The toys, which launched in December 2016, were the No. 1 item in the dolls category and No. 2 item in the total toys category by June, according to The NPD Group, which is no surprise either—the range has placement at major mass retailers. L.O.L. Surprise! is also grabbing big sales in Australia, France, Benelux, Russia and Belgium.

“We’ve hit on two really big trends in the market—blind packs, where kids get the element of surprise and not knowing what they are going to get, and the unboxing experience. When you put the two together, it becomes one of the most innovative products in the market, and it’s doing extremely well,” says Juli Boylan, head of global licensing, MGA Entertainment.

According to Boylan, the core toy brand is truly a global one, with product in every major market and all key territories.

The brand is also set to begin rolling out extensions, with an initial launch set to include apparel, accessories, back-to-school, stationery, games and puzzles, novelties, health and beauty and home décor led by the U.S. in spring 2018 and continuing in the U.K., Australia and more into 2019.

Next spring, MGA will also begin rolling out series three of the collectibles in key territories around the world, bolstered by new surprises, new characters and new innovations.





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Adventures in Moominvalley

With more than 600 licensees around the globe, bringing in annual retail sales of €700 million, Moomin is one of the most successful art-based brands in the world.

Inspired by the stories and artwork of acclaimed Finnish artist Tove Jansson, the Moomins are unique characters who inhabit a fantastical world. The brand dates back to 1945, but Moomin stays relevant for modern audiences with a slate of innovative brand extensions and product partnerships.

“The key for us is integrity—with regards to both Tove’s original artwork and the spirit of her storytelling,” explains Gustav Melin, head of international licensing, Bulls Licensing, which manages the brand worldwide. “We’re often asked whether we’re tempted to give the brand a revamp, but with this wealth of artwork, the answer to us is obvious... [Tove’s] artwork was exceptional, so why use anything else? The same applies to the spirit and values of the stories, which we always remain true to.”

That doesn’t mean that the Moomin brand hasn’t entered the modern age—a recent call-out by YouTube influencer Zoella was viewed over 2 million times, and Moomin’s social media channels reach upwards of 20 million people every month.

In April, Moomin Characters and RealityXpander joined forces to launch the mobile game “Moomin Move” as part of Kew Gardens’

Moomin-themed Easter Festival in London.

Moomin has had a huge year outside of the digital world as well, particularly in the U.K., where the brand is represented by sub-agent Caroline Mickler. London’s Southbank Centre put on an immersive Moomin exhibition; as previously mentioned, Kew Gardens themed their annual Easter Festival around the brand; and Dulwich Picture Gallery is currently hosting the U.K.’s first Tove Jansson retrospective.

June saw the opening of the world’s first Moomin Museum in Tampere, Finland, and the brand also launched a new charity partnership with Oxfam.

And all of this is in addition to the brand’s robust consumer product program.

“There are some licensees that Moomin has worked with for decades—for example, Arabia/Fiskars, who have made Moomin products since the 1950s,” says Melin. “We hugely value these lasting relationships, and work closely with our long-term partners to ensure that we’re always innovating and finding fresh ways to approach the original artwork. At the same time, we are continually on the lookout for new and exciting licensees with different takes on the brand. There are some fantastic companies that we have begun to work with in the U.K. in the past year alone, and of course, our publishing partners are very proactive about keeping the stories alive for each new generation.”



In 2019, the Moomin brand will raise its profile even further with the launch of a new animated TV series called “Moominvalley.”

“This will present a huge opportunity for licensees as a wealth of beautiful new artwork will be created and made available for new product lines,” says Melin. “We’d like to work with as many of our licensees as possible during the coming year to help them take advantage of this huge moment for the brand.”

And Melin’s plans for the brand don’t stop there. With a firm presence in Finland and now the U.K., he hopes to bring the Moomins to other international markets on a bigger scale.

Diving ‘Deep’ with Technicolor

Technicolor’s new animated TV series “The Deep,” based on the graphic novel series by author Tom Taylor, is ramping up distribution and its consumer products program around the world.

“The Deep” follows the adventures of the Nekton family, a team of underwater explorers. The series airs in more than 130 markets around the world, and season two is rolling out now and into the fall in the U.K., Germany, Australia, Canada, the U.S. and more.

“For the U.S. market, we are particularly excited about being one of the premiere shows chosen by the new U.S. kids network, Universal Kids, which launched on Sept. 9,” says Pam Kunick Cohen, head of brand management, licensing and merchandising, Technicolor. “And in overseas markets, while we are anticipating that most of our

current partners will be on board for season two, we have new enquiries coming in on a regular basis due to the ratings successes to-date for this show.”

Products are a focus for the brand now that it’s established itself around the world, and Technicolor, which manages global rights for the brand, has appointed Simba Dickie Toys as master toy licensee, in a deal brokered by licensing agency CPLG, a DHX Media company. (“The Deep” is a co-production between DHX, which also handles distribution, and Australia-based A Stark Production.)

“Under the Simba brand, the toy company will initially release a range of figures, play sets and role-play toys and accessories,

before expanding into outdoor, die-cast and radio-controlled vehicles,” says Kunick Cohen. “Beyond the key toy and publishing categories, we are looking to expand into apparel, accessories, novelty, home décor, back-to-school and seasonal items.”

Technicolor will also be announcing a global publishing partner this fall.

Location-based entertainment is also a focus for “The Deep” brand.

Merlin Entertainments Group launched an immersive entertainment experience based on the series at more than 20 of its Sea Life aquariums in the U.K. and Germany, says Kunick Cohen.

Other initiatives include online engagement activities to meet children on all platforms.





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OpSec Revamps Trademark InSight Platform

OpSec Security has revealed a new version of its Trademark Insight platform that will be available to the licensing industry on Nov. 15.

The Trademark Insight platform is a suite of web-based licensing tools that aids in the management of agreements and royalties, distribution of digital assets and simplifies product approval workflows. The latest release will also provide brands with actionable information to manage and protect their licensing program from a single platform.

The upgraded platform is set to offer increased capabilities and updated features including licensee sales submission improvements, which will append, replace and edit sales data prior to reporting for the period; multi-faceted search in the design submission center, allowing users to utilize advanced search



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and filter criteria; multi-stage design submission lifecycles, which will assign one or more stages to a design submission with the ability to create approval routings and data collection; keyword assignment to digital assets, which will associate keywords to an asset with search capabilities; royalty advances and administration fees, allowing companies to invoice and manage

royalty advances and administration fees more easily than ever; and email agreements, which will allow users to email documents for review and/or approval from within the platform.

“This pivotal release of the Trademark InSight platform makes it a robust licensing management application that offers best-in-class functionality,” says Ben Stump, chief technology officer, OpSec Security. “In conjunction with authentication track and trace, online brand protection and consumer engagement, Trademark InSight is poised to change the way brands manage business intelligence.”

Attendees at Brand Licensing Europe, taking place Oct. 10-12 at London’s Olympia, will have the opportunity to receive a sneak peek at several of the new features that will be included in the upcoming release.

The End of an Era: Saying Goodbye to Colette

Colette Roussaux and her daughter Sarah Andelman shocked the worlds of retail and fashion this summer when they announced that the Paris concept shop Colette will close at the end of the year.

The boutique has wielded immense sway in fashion and pop culture circles for 20 years, serving as a launchpad for new labels and a purveyor of upcoming trends.

While no stranger to the challenges of retail at the moment, Roussaux and her daughter cited motives much more simple for closing the shop—Colette

wants to retire.

“Colette Roussaux has reached the time when she would like to take her time; and Colette cannot exist without Colette,” reads a statement on the boutique’s website.

Many people begged to differ, with the news

prompting a flurry of questions about why the mere-fille duo wouldn’t rather sell the enterprise so their name could live on.

“I know people think it’s crazy that we decided to close rather than sell the name, because it has value, but we knew if someone else ran it, it would not be the same,” Andelman told *The New York Times*.

And so, crazy as it may seem, Colette will exist no more come 2018.

Founded by Roussaux in 1997, Colette became a model for a new kind of retail format that catered to an aesthetic rather than a specific product category, carrying an eclectic array of merchandise ranging from camera film to gowns.

In recent years, the shop has featured exclusive, multi-product collaborations with a range of brands including The Smiley Company, Care Bears, The Secret Life of Pets, Fido Dido, SpongeBob SquarePants, Babar and many others.

A few months remain to enjoy the wonders of Colette before it’s gone, so if you happen to find yourself in Paris’s First Arrondissement between now and December, be sure to stop by 213 rue Saint-Honoré to say au revoir.

Creative Licensing Thrills with *Halloween*

Los Angeles, Calif.-based Creative Licensing is riding into the Halloween season with a spooky thrill of its own as it continues to build on the nearly 40-year legacy of one of the scariest movie villains of all time, Michael Myers.

John Carpenter’s 1978 classic *Halloween* remains a fan favorite year-round, and Creative Licensing is bringing a new array of product to market to support the perennial scare-fest.

Last spring, Bottleneck Gallery released a new, collectible *Halloween* art poster that Creative Licensing says had an enormous launch.

Microgaming has launched an online gambling game based on the property for players in the U.K. and Europe.

“The mechanics on the ‘Halloween’ game from Microgaming are truly exceptional,” says Stephanie Kupperman, director of business development, Creative Licensing.

The film also has an array of collectibles in its roster this year from global partners such as Park Agencies in the U.K. (apparel), Licensing Essentials in Australia (apparel) and CreepyCo (collectible pins).

In 2018, Creative Licensing will be celebrating the film’s official 40th anniversary and will unveil the new logo for the milestone at Brand Licensing Europe, taking place in London Oct. 10-12.





Dr. Seuss'
The GRINCH

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Harry Potter Inspires Home Collection

Warner Bros. Consumer Products has tapped PBteen to develop a range of home décor inspired by the *Harry Potter* universe.

The *Harry Potter* Collection from PBteen will showcase classic imagery and references from the franchise—including the four Hogwarts houses, the Hogwarts house common rooms and Quidditch—on more than 100 pieces ranging from bedding to decorative accessories and lighting to giftables.

“We are thrilled to debut a home décor collection inspired by the magical world of *Harry Potter*,” says Jennifer Kellor, president, PBteen. “The *Harry Potter* Collection for PBteen allows fans of all ages to bring the beloved series into their homes.”

The *Harry Potter*-inspired range is now available exclusively at PBteen.com/HarryPotter and will be available at PBteen stores later this month.



Sony Scares Up *Hotel Transylvania 3* Program



Sony Pictures Consumer Products is ramping up in preparation for the third installment in its *Hotel Transylvania* franchise, due out next July.

Consumer product plans are underway and the property has secured several partners to lead the charge.

“*Hotel Transylvania* is a billion dollar franchise for Sony Pictures,” says Jamie Stevens, executive vice president, worldwide consumer products and licensing, Sony Pictures Entertainment. “It has broad appeal across kids and family and to both boys and girls, which is one that has made it very unique—it’s not just for a specific age or gender demographic.”

The new program evolves the film property, which now also has a TV series component as well that is a co-production with Corus Entertainment’s Nelvana, into a 365-day franchise.

Jazwares is on board for toys, and publishers Simon & Schuster Children’s Group, Papercutz Comics and Bendon Publishing have all inked deals for books inspired by the film and new TV series, which launched in June on Disney Channel in the U.S.

“Up to this point we’ve had a relatively narrow consumer products program for *Hotel Transylvania*,” says Stevens. “This will be the first time we’ve had toys to support it, and a pretty robust consumer program behind it, which is a testament to the focus of the studio and the focus on the consumer products business and

leveraging our properties.”

First products are expected to begin rolling out soon.

The *Hotel Transylvania* universe is continually expanding. A new computer-animated short, *Puppy*, directed by *Hotel Transylvania*’s Genndy Tartakovsky, and featuring many of the film’s characters, debuted in July 2 in theaters worldwide in front of *The Emoji Movie*.

But *Hotel Transylvania* is not all that’s on deck for Sony. The studio has a lineup of films that will be supported by corresponding products.

Set for release this holiday season is *The Star*, Sony Pictures Animation’s film about a small but brave donkey named Bo, who yearns for adventure and finally manages to set out on a journey that finds him teaming up with Ruth, a lovable sheep who has lost her flock, and Dave, a dove with lofty aspirations.

Also out in time for the holidays is an update to *Jumanji*, which Stevens says is a “fun, action-packed adventure featuring an amazing trio of Jack Black, Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson and Kevin Hart.” The film will have an array of product to accompany its release, with partners on board for apparel, a mobile game and board games. Early licensees include Cardinal and Isaac Morris.

Looking forward to spring 2018, Sony will be pushing a live-action hybrid film, *Peter Rabbit*. Early licensees on board to support the property include Just Play, Franco and Happy Threads.



DREAMWORKS
Trolls

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READY FOR LONDON!

Nearly two decades in, Brand Licensing Europe is kicking off this month stronger than ever.

Brand Licensing Europe is heading into its 19th year with more than 50 fresh exhibitors, new activations and a revamp of parts of the show floor, all in an effort to bring licensing front and center for three solid days of deal-making and networking.

Taking place Oct. 10-12 at London's Olympia, BLE will offer many of the features that exhibitors and attendees have come to rely upon, such as its differentiated zones for easy floor navigation, as well as new and enhanced offerings that will add to the experience.

BLE will welcome back many exhibitors including popular brands such as Nickelodeon, Toei Animation, Mattel, "Masha and the Bear," Moomins, Smiley, and more; while attendees will find new brands on the show floor like 24H Le Mans, Admiral Sportswear, Ducati, Emoji, Endemol Shine, Juventus, Level-5 Abby, OpSec Security, Rugby World Cup 2019, TF1 Licenses, The Point 1888, SYBO Games, Striker Entertainment and more.

Brands & Lifestyle Gets a New Look

This year, the team behind BLE has revamped the show's Brands & Lifestyle Zone to include a product showcase that will highlight the vast diversity and creativity of licensed products targeted toward adults. The showcase will feature more than 25 exhibitors that have donated over 150 licensed products representing 60 brands and a host of categories including apparel, health and beauty, food and beverage, accessories, giftware, electronics and furniture. Those participating in the showcase include companies such as Beanstalk, CAA-GBG, IBML, Global Icons, Pink Key Consulting,

JELC, V&A, Juventus, FIFA, Brandgenuity and more.

The Brands & Lifestyle Zone is further enriched by its annual seminar program, which will feature conversations on topics that are meaningful to the business at large.

This year, thought leaders from major players in the licensing arena are set to host talks including Lauren Sizeland from V&A; Angela Farrugia and Lisa Shapiro from CAA-GBG; a straight-talking panel hosted by Richard Pink from Pink Key Consulting that includes Penguin Random House's Susan Bolsover, Perfetti Van Melle's Christine Cool, Fat Face's Gabrielle Sims and The Smiley Company's Nicolas Loufrani; and a presentation from football brand Juventus.

Additional educational opportunities can also be found in the Licensing Academy, sponsored by the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association and positioned in the Character & Entertainment Zone. The free programming is designed to keep BLE attendees abreast of key trends affecting the European licensing industry.

Gaming Features Big in 2017

Another key focus and new feature for BLE 2017 is the video game category, which will be anchored by the inaugural Gaming Activation Zone.

The dedicated area will provide attendees with insight into some of the many ways gaming IP can be taken from screen to store, including a mock retail environment that will showcase a range of properties.

A keynote conversation with Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe's Mark Howsen, commercial development director, will further bring this new feature to life.



DREAMWORKS
DRAGONS

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“Games have such a broad fan base today,” says Howsen. “Of course, there are those who have been playing for years and grown up with certain characters who provide an opportunity to brand holders, but there are also newcomers to the field attracted by technological advancements such as smartphones and AR. Playing games is accessible to all, and we’ve discovered there are lots of different ways to appeal to players of all styles and walks of life. We are looking forward to discussing the opportunities our industry offers.”

In the demonstration area, visitors will be able to get hands-on with leading gaming IP across all platforms and for all ages. Titles confirmed to-date include Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe’s “Horizon Zero Dawn,” Capcom’s “Street Fighter,” Ubisoft’s “Assassin’s Creed,” King’s “Candy Crush,” Activision’s “Call of Duty,” Blizzard’s “Overwatch,” SEGA’s “Sonic Forces,” Rovio’s “Angry Birds Evolution” and “Halo,” which is presented by Tinderbox.

Exhibiting this year from the gaming category are Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe, Ubisoft, Capcom, Sega, King, Activision Blizzard, Rovio, Pokémon, Tinderbox, Animal Jam, Level-5 Abby, Those Licensing People, Sybo Games, Striker Entertainment and more.

Leading licensed apparel and accessories merchandiser Bioworld International will sponsor the retail environment, which will be housed within the Gaming Activation Zone.

Richard Radford, vice president, licensing, Bioworld International, will also take part in the gaming keynote panel. A selection of the company’s licensed gaming products will appear in the retail outlet including merchandise from properties such as “Five

Nights at Freddy’s,” “Call of Duty” and “Destiny.”

Additionally, BLE has partnered with Mojo Nation to host the Toy & Game Innovation Zone, which will feature examples of licensed toys and games launched within the past 12 months, and preview new lines coming for the holiday season and into 2018.

BLE Plays Matchmaker

Returning again in 2017 is BLE’s Matchmaking Service, which offers exhibitors and visitors the opportunity to pre-book business meetings ahead of the event. The free online service launched last year and resulted in more than 1,200 arranged meetings in 2016.

This year, the Matchmaking Service incorporates a host of new system enhancements, including improved search functionality. This increased accuracy will make it easier for visitors and exhibitors to request meetings with the businesses and brands most relevant to them, increasing ROI. A team of matchmaking professionals will support the service, assisting with meeting arrangements and managing the show’s Matchmaking Lounge.

And There’s More...

Other features, services and programs on offer at BLE 2017 include the Retail Mentoring Programme, which is designed to give buying and merchandising professionals from companies such as Character.com, Toymaster, M&Co, Morrisons and theater chains Odeon and UCI Cinemas Group a deeper understanding of the licensing industry.

Brand Licensing Europe is part of the Global Licensing Group, organized by UBM and sponsored by LIMA. ©



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MARKET REPORT: THE U.K.

License Global takes an in-depth look into Brexit and how it will affect the licensing industry in the U.K.

by SEAN MCGRATH

These truly are unprecedented times, for both the United Kingdom and Europe. Even the most audacious of pundits couldn't have predicted the result of the Brexit referendum, and the outcome has sent shock waves through markets around the world.

One thing is clear—for the next two years, all bets are off. The only certainty is that the ramifications of Brexit will outlast any of the policy-makers involved in the negotiations.

This report takes a look at the current economic landscape in the U.K. and explores the potential ramifications of Brexit for the country as well as for the brand licensing sector in the world's second-largest licensing market.

A Brief History of the EU

The U.K. is the fifth largest economy in the world and the second largest in Europe. Great Britain has established itself as one of the leading licensing markets on the planet, and is the second largest contributor to global licensing revenues, behind only the U.S.

Given the nation's economic prominence on the world stage, it's of little surprise that Brexit, the June 2016 vote that effectively removed the U.K. from the European Union alliance, remains a topic of intense scrutiny for investors, retailers and the licensing community at large. Of all economic and political dramas to unfold throughout the European bloc in recent years, the U.K.'s decision to sever ties with the EU is undoubtedly the most significant of them all.

The European Economic Community was established in 1957 in an attempt to foster economic cooperation between European nations in the wake of World War II. It was hoped that by promoting trade between

European states, future conflicts could be avoided.

It took some 13 years for Britain to join the EEC, but it has since become a central pillar in the economic bloc, playing a key role in shaping the policies that define the EU as it is known today. To date, no country has ever left the EU. It was, in fact, legally impossible until 2007.

It is not an understatement to say that Britain's decision to sever ties with the EU threatens the stability of the European project and casts a very long shadow over the U.K.'s economic future.

Economic Overview

U.K. economic growth held up better than expected in the six months following the Brexit vote, particularly with regards to consumer spending. However, 2017 has shown clear signs that the consumer economy is under threat. A depreciation of sterling, rising fuel and commodity prices and subdued wage growth have led to inflationary pressures.

The consumer price index rose to 2.7 percent for August, up from 2.6 percent in July and close to the four-year high of 2.9 percent reached in June. Increases in business rates, rising staff costs, a freeze on public sector wages and a tumultuous general election have only exacerbated the poor retail outlook.

Investment also held up well in the first quarter of 2017, but market uncertainty is expected to begin taking a similar toll in the coming months.

The labor market continues to be a shining light in an otherwise dreary picture, with the unemployment rate at its lowest level since 1975.

Prime Minister Theresa May triggered Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty on March 29, which means that Britain should officially leave the EU no later than April 2019.

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This leaves a two-year period of intense negotiations between the U.K. and its European neighbors. Chief among the topics up for discussion is Britain's access to the single market, which allows members to sell their goods and services freely anywhere in the EU, without their customers having to pay import taxes.

Britain is, of course, pushing for continued access to the single market. Brussels, on the other hand, has little choice but to push for sanctions on Britain's access to the market if it is to protect its interests and dissuade other EU states from following a similar path.

Many industries across Europe (car manufacturers in Germany and wine makers in France for example) are keen to ensure that they have access to the U.K. market, but given the political tensions, it is difficult to visualize a deal in which all stakeholders will be satisfied.

In the absence of a deal between the U.K. and the EU (commonly referred to as a "Hard Brexit"), the U.K. would then have to fall back on the World Trade Organization rules on tariffs.

This period of uncertainty makes it difficult, if not impossible, to forecast economic performance, because every projection is based on political assumptions surrounding Brexit.

Based on the assumption that the U.K.'s external trade will operate on a "most favored nation" basis (WTO tariffs) from April 2019, the British economy is projected to slow in 2017 and 2018, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. The OECD says that a Hard Brexit would undoubtedly undermine spending and investment.

"Policies have supported private confidence and consumption, but household spending is projected to ease as the combination of a weakening labor market and higher inflation reduces real wage growth," the OECD said in its June update.

The Impact of Brexit on Licensing

The U.K. is a very well-established market for licensing. The country saw \$13.6 billion in retail sales of licensed merchandise in 2016, a year-over-year increase of 3.86 percent. This makes the U.K. the second-largest licensing market in the world and the most dominant player in Europe.

On paper, the market appears healthy, but past

results are not necessarily an indicator of future performance, given the political situation.

Kelvyn Gardner, managing director, U.K., the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association, and a veteran of the licensing industry, believes that the industry faces a raft of challenges in the coming years.

"The LIMA Global Survey for 2016 shows the U.K. still as the No. 2 market after the U.S., with overall sales at retail up by 4 percent, on a par with worldwide results. The raw figures mask some major issues, however, which are coming home to roost," Gardner explains. "In the natural course of things, a huge amount of licensed merchandise sold in the U.K. is manufactured in Asia and beyond. Toys, apparel, accessories, consumer electronics, sports equipment and many other categories are imported in great volumes. The collapse in the value of sterling after June 2016's Brexit vote

is costing all licensees in this market upwards of 20 percent of their margin."

Gardner says that until the outcome of Brexit becomes clearer, the dreaded word "uncertainty" will continue to dominate economic and licensing communities.

"The multiple alternative outcomes of Brexit will, one way or another, affect how

license agreements are drafted and how trade between the 28 EU countries will function. Put simply, right now no one can be sure how this will play out," says Gardner. "The plain fact of a Hard Brexit is that U.K. licensees will no longer be able to take orders from retailers in the EU, and outside Britain, in other individual territorially licensed EU countries, licensees will be reciprocally blocked from shipping to U.K. customers."

Gardner concludes by saying that despite these economic uncertainties, he believes the regional licensing market will ultimately prevail.

Ian Downes, founder and director of independent licensing agency Start Licensing, does see one potential positive outcome of Brexit—increased manufacturing within the U.K.

"Most of our business is with U.K.-based brands and is focused on the U.K., so day-to-day, we haven't felt any great changes yet," Downes explains. "But I know people are concerned in regard to issues such as manufacturing costs and how this may impact the price of goods to retailers and consumers. In terms of



agreements, I don't think it will have too much of an impact on day-to-day business as licensing agreements have been developed over time to reflect contractual and business requirements regarding distribution."

Downes says that he has noticed more licensees looking at manufacturing product in the U.K., and while this is not exclusively a result of Brexit, he believes that it has spurred decision-makers on to look at U.K. manufacturing as a viable option.

"Of course, this may not mitigate against changes in manufacturing and labor costs, but it may well provide the licensing industry with a different way of working. I think the implications of Brexit are a real concern to the manufacturers in the industry, and I suspect many of them are preparing their businesses for the forthcoming change.

"As an agent, we will listen to our licensor and licensee clients and try to take a view on how this impacts the shape and form of licensing deals in the future. Licensing is a flexible business and has to adapt to change and respond to opportunity. Whilst there are going to be some challenges, I think as an industry we will find a way through," he continues.

Beanstalk, the global agency behind brands such as Guinness, Baileys, Febreze and Energizer, is taking a measured approach to Brexit.

"It would be unwise to make businesses decisions based on speculation of what changes may or may not happen 18 months or longer from now," says Lisa Reiner, managing director, Europe and Asia Pacific, Beanstalk. "Naturally, we continue to monitor the ongoing Brexit discussions, and when there is clarity around new legislation, we will react accordingly to meet the needs of our clients and licensees. Beanstalk's success has always been and will remain our ability to leverage our roster of world-class clients to bring consumers new and innovative ways to experience and engage with brands. Regardless of legislation, we believe consumers will still want to engage with brands that they know and love, and retailers will seek to offer new products that answer current consumer demands."

Licensing in the U.K.—Key Segments

Market share among key property categories in the U.K. remained largely unchanged in 2016, according to the LIMA Global Survey. The characters and entertainment segment retained its spot as the most substantial product category, accounting for more than 70 percent of total retail revenues. The corporate and fashion categories made up the bulk of remaining sales, accounting for 8.6 percent and 8.3 percent of revenues, respectively.

Looking at revenues by product type, toys remained the most dominant force by a significant margin, accounting for nearly 22 percent of total sales.

Percentage of Total Retail Revenues by Product Type

Toys	21.80%
Apparel	16.70%
Accessories	7.80%
Publishing	6.20%
Software	5.80%
Gifts	5.00%
Food	4.80%
Paper products	4.40%
Music/Video	3.90%
Health	3.40%
Infant	3.40%

Source: LIMA Global Licensing Industry Survey 2017

Trends—An Agency Perspective

Start Licensing's Downes says that bigger retailers seem to be consolidating their licensing ranges, especially in the children and entertainment categories.

"This is making it harder to break through into grocery retail in particular. I think this is part of a general trend for the bigger retailers to reduce their supplier base and to be more focused on tighter ranges," he says.

To counter this trend, Downes believes the industry needs to push new areas of the retail market to embrace licensing. Downes also says that consumers seem to be gravitating toward personalization, thanks to the likes of Moonpig, and believes that the licensing industry could easily capitalize on this trend.

"I think licensing will also benefit from the trend of consumers seeking out experiences by licensing visitor attractions, plays, concerts, exhibitions and pop-up events. These present good opportunities for IP owners to reach and engage with consumers. Licensing is starting to make great in-roads in this direction. Operators like Blackpool Pleasure Beach are using properties like 'Wallace & Gromit' to create themed rides and experiences, knowing that consumers recognize the characters and the legacy they bring with them."

One thing is clear: with consumer spending under significant pressure for the foreseeable future, both licensees and licensors will need to refocus their efforts in order to better understand their customers. The U.K. licensing market is incredibly buoyant, and most industry experts agree that it is dynamic enough to survive anything that Brexit can throw; but the agility and flexibility required to weather the impending storm will undoubtedly come at a cost.

How high will that cost be? Only time will tell. ©

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LEVELS UP

The video game industry is moving into crossover content and creating an entirely new way for brands to reach consumers and further expand their IP.

by ERICA GARBER

Video games have experienced a significant boom in recent years, with licensed retail sales growing 8 percent from 2015 to 2016 globally, according to the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association's Annual Global Licensing Industry Survey 2017. In fact, gaming companies today are turning to crossover content, experiential events, traditional licensed merchandise and more to bring their characters and franchises to broader audiences via new stories and avenues of fan engagement.

The industry has also captured the eye of Europe's largest licensing trade show, Brand Licensing Europe. During the event, taking place Oct. 10-12 at London's Olympia, a brand-new Gaming Activation Zone will be on display and will also feature a gaming-focused keynote panel, entitled "Gaming: Dispelling the Myths," featuring executives from Sony, Activision and more.

Beyond the Platform

One company that has successfully brought its properties beyond traditional console play is Level-5 Abby, which boasts brands like "Yo-Kai Watch," "Layton's Mystery Journey" and "Inazuma Eleven." Simon Waldron, senior vice president, marketing and licensing, Level-5, cites the company's continued focus on creating

crossover content in categories such as anime and publishing as one of the reasons for each brand's success.

"From my own perspective, the video game is a story itself, and sometimes you forget it's a game because it's so immersive," says Waldron. "They're stories in their own right, and it's not too difficult to think about ways to place and tell those stories."

Most recently, Level-5 expanded its "Layton's Mystery Journey" franchise with a new mobile game, called "Layton's Mystery Journey: Katrielle and the Millionaires' Conspiracy," with plans to launch a slightly different version of the game on Nintendo 3DS in early October. The company is also focused on creating a variety of content for the series, ranging from animated products to experiential events. Earlier this year, for example, Level-5 ran a worldwide campaign, entitled Real World Puzzle Solving. During the event, a total of 50 puzzles popped up in famous locations throughout 10 countries and online via an official website and platforms like YouTube.

An additional "Layton" title is slated to launch in late summer 2018 to support the series.

Level-5 is also currently planning to reboot its classic video game property "Inazuma Eleven." The rebooted franchise, which is grounded in soccer (or football, depending on where you hail from in the

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world), will re-tell the original story in a slightly altered way and will be available on Nintendo platforms. As a sports-driven video game, Level-5 will aim to secure traditional licensing partners spanning apparel and footwear, as well as publishing. The company is also developing a suite of anime content to coincide with the game

and is currently looking at additional digital elements such as digital stickers to tell the brand's story.

For "Yo-Kai Watch," Level-5 is currently preparing to premiere season three of the TV series, which will broadcast across Europe and North America in early 2018, and will be supported by a raft of new toys, publishing and more. The company is also releasing a new "Yo-Kai Watch" video game this fall to coincide with stories from the upcoming season.

Additionally, Level-5 recently launched a new video game property in Japan, titled "Snack World." The new game features physical, collectible pieces that interact with the game by enabling new challenges, adding new powers and more. Looking ahead to 2018 and 2019, Level-5 hopes to introduce the brand to its European partners in order to develop a robust consumer product program similar to its model for "Yo-Kai Watch."

In a move to further connect with its players, WildWorks, the company behind the popular online game "Animal Jam," partnered with National Geographic to launch *AJ Academy: Amazing Animals*, an animal e-book library for mobile devices that explores the lifecycle and habitat of multiple animal species.

WildWorks is also preparing to launch a "top-secret" mobile game for the "Animal Jam" brand. The new game will feature the popular "Animal Jam" pets that have driven the success of the brand's collectible range from Jazwares. Further details about the game have not been released, however, the game is set to launch later this year. Also on the gameplay front, WildWorks has launched the "AJ Desktop" app, which allows players to access the game without the use of a web browser.

Currently, the company is looking to expand into additional promotional and experiential partnerships as well as FMCG categories. It will also continue its licensing efforts in categories such as toys, apparel and accessories.

"As a well-established gaming property that only broke into licensing recently, we want to share our story and help other properties

make the transition," says Talia Goldsmith, licensing director, WildWorks. "Kids interact differently with character they embody in a game (rather than the ones they admire from a distance on TV) and this is an important point to consider when licensing a game."

Activision Blizzard has also been building out its consumer product program for "Call of Duty." In April, the company appointed Tinderbox, the digital division of Beanstalk, to represent the franchise for licensing in Europe. Since, the company has teamed up with Dreamtex to develop a range "Call of Duty"-themed textiles including bedding, blankets and towels.

In a global deal to celebrate the franchise's upcoming title "Call of Duty: WWII," Activision also partnered with Loot Crate to launch a limited edition mystery crate that features a score of exclusive, branded merchandise spanning apparel, gear and other collectibles.

Another example of a brand expanding and moving into crossover content is "Minecraft." Earlier this year, Mojang teamed up with Egmont Publishing to launch a new monthly magazine based on the video game. The new magazine further connects fans with the game, providing a series of tips and guides for players. The magazine is now available in the U.K.

Finally, SEGA has launched a host of its classic video games on mobile devices as part of a collection called SEGA Forever. The lineup includes free-to-play, ad-supported and playable offline games and will initially feature five Mega Drive/Genesis titles—"Sonic the Hedgehog," "Phantasy Star II," "Comix Zone," "Kid Chameleon" and "Altered Beast." As the collection expands in the coming months and years, it will also include both official emulations and ported games that span all SEGA console eras.

The first set of SEGA Forever games are now available for iOS and Android devices.

Entering the Field of Play

While video game brands are adding even more categories to their licensing lineups and reaping the benefits of crossover content, classic entertainment properties and brands are continuing to move into the segment to bring their stories to life for fans in new ways.

Earlier this summer, Cartoon Network teamed up with Outright Games to create two new video games based on its animated television series "Adventure Time" and "Ben 10." Both video games will introduce new adventures to the beloved franchises and are set to be released this winter.

Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products tapped Imaginarium Studios to release a new console game inspired by the *Planet of the Apes* film franchise.



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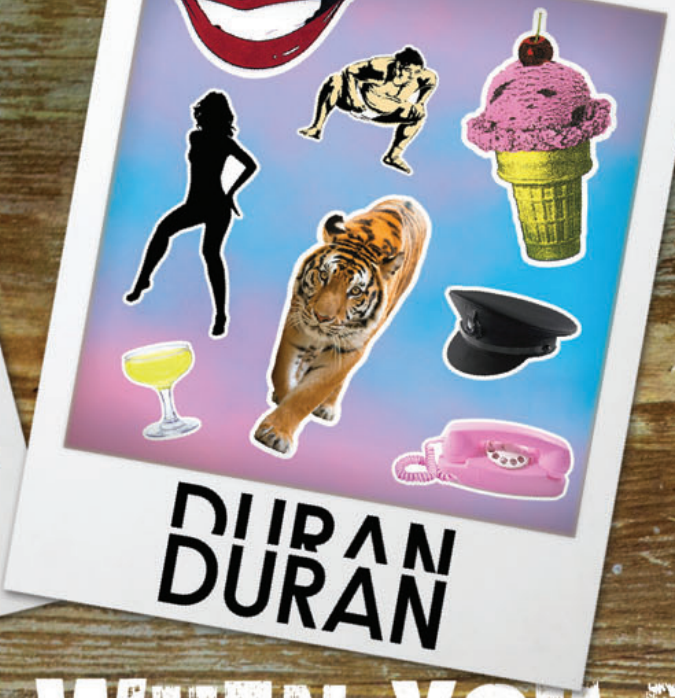
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The new game, “Planet of the Apes: Last Frontier,” will be set between the films *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* and *War for the Planet of the Apes*, and will allow players to play on both sides of the growing conflict. The game will be available this fall.

Coolabi Group has entered the video game space with its publishing series *Beast Quest*. Maximum Games is on board to publish the first *Beast Quest* console game, which will feature a score of RPG elements and will have the same look and the feel as the brand’s mobile gaming app, which was launched in 2015 by Miniclip.

Also entering the category is The Emoji Company, who recently teamed up with Net-Ent for “Emojiplanet,” an online casino game; Novomatic for coin-operated video machines; and Blue Ocean for the new mobile game “Emojitown.” Both “Emojiplanet” and “Emojitown” are now available worldwide; while, the coin-operated video machines will initially launch in Europe before rolling out to additional territories.

The Emoji Company has also begun conversations with game developers to create an Emoji-themed console game or a multi-player online game.

“For us, the gaming market is a complementary category,” says Marco Hüsges, chief executive officer, The Emoji Company. “The right product, whether it is a game or an app, can catch additional attention of the consumer and lead to more merchandising sales. The popularity of online gaming, or gaming in general, surely opens the door to get more brands exposure, providing the concept suits the target audience.”

Brand Licensing Europe Plugs In

Brand Licensing Europe will also put video games in the spotlight this year with a brand-new Gaming Activation Zone and a gaming-focused keynote.

The dedicated Gaming Activation Zone will serve as both a showcase and demonstration area, as well as provide visitors with the chance to gain insight into some of the ways popular gaming IP can be taken from the screen to the store. The area will also feature a mock retail environment, which will showcase a variety of IP including titles like “Halo,” “Assassin’s Creed,” “Horizon Zero Dawn,” “Sonic Forces” and “Street Fighter,” among others, as well as cross-category merchandise, allowing visitors to see the full potential and applications of each brand.

Exhibitors that will be participating in the Gaming Activation Zone include Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe, Ubisoft, Capcom, SEGA, King, Activision Blizzard, Rovio and Tinderbox.

In addition, Bioworld International has signed on to sponsor the brand-new Gaming Activation Zone to support its European expansion. During BLE, Bioworld will feature product assortments from popular properties like “Call of Duty,” “Destiny” and “Five Nights at Freddy’s.” Further details are still in the works, but be sure to check out BLE’s Gaming Activation Zone to see everything Bioworld International, as well as other gaming exhibitors, have in store.

Other video game exhibitors that will be on-site at BLE, but will not be participating in the Gaming Activation Zone, include Pokémon; Level-5 Abby; Striker Entertainment, which represents video game properties like “Five Night’s at Freddy’s” and “We Happy Few”; Sybo Games; and Those Licensing People.

Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe has signed on to serve as the theme’s headline partner and will be on-site to explain how gaming can help reach a broader audience with examples from PlayStation 4’s back catalog.

Mark Howsen, commercial development director, Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe, has also been confirmed as a participant in this year’s keynote panel, entitled “Gaming: Dispelling the Myths.” Other panelists include Seth Barton, editor, *MVC*; Stuart Dinsey, board member, UKIE; Ashley Maily, vice president and head of global licensing and partnerships, Activision; Richard Radford, vice president, licensing, Bioworld International; and Yann Le Bouedec, commercial director, Paladone Products.

“Gaming: Dispelling the Myths” is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, Oct. 10, at 12 p.m. local time as part of BLE’s Licensing Academy.

“According to the LIMA Annual Global Licensing Industry Survey 2017, global retail sales of licensed merchandise within software, video games and apps grew by 8 percent from 2015 to 2016 and is predicted to continue growing over the next five years at least,” says Anna Knight, brand director, BLE. “It’s BLE’s responsibility to support all parts of the industry and shine a spotlight on the ones showing growth.

“Also, the gaming market remains largely untapped when it comes to licensing thanks in part to a lack of understanding about the end user, the products and the potential—we want to educate licensees and retailers on the possibilities as gaming remains one of the most creative, exciting, forward-looking and lucrative entertainment markets,” continues Knight. “The power of the gaming industry working together to educate is so exciting to me, and I hope our visiting licensees and retailers will be inspired by what they see.” ©



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by AMANDA CIOLETTI

Entertainment One is an increasingly unique company in a world dominated by entertainment power players and licensors.

The organization, which does not define itself as a formal entertainment studio in the traditional sense, reported \$1.1 billion in revenue last year across its various units that include film, television, music and family brands, and ranked at No. 44 on *License Global's* Top 150 Global Licensors report, with \$1.3 billion in retail sales of licensed merchandise in 2016.

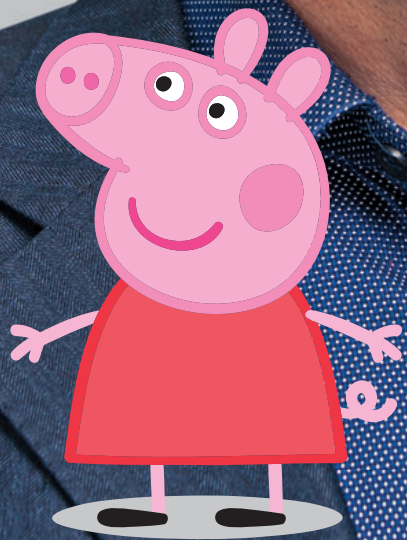
Its relatively small size affords it luxuries that larger studios and production houses may not be able to enjoy or capitalize on.

With a mantra of "Bringing the Best Content to the World," eOne is devoted to bringing quality entertainment offerings to a global market and the organization is meeting that demand in every corner of the Earth.

Consumer products are one such area where eOne Family, its children's content division, is

ANDREW CARLEY

head of global licensing, Entertainment One Family



truly benefiting from the size and scope of the organization.

“We recognize that we work in a very different way than major studios, and there is strength in that which gives us a very different profile, particularly in the kids’ arena, where it is to our advantage—we don’t want to lose that,” says Andrew Carley, head of global licensing, eOne Family. “While the organization has grown, we do have a very entrepreneurial, nimble mentality, and it is something that we aim to keep a hold of.”

eOne is further set apart by its integrated approach to brand licensing that holistically addresses the life cycle of an entertainment property. All divisions are aligned and work closely together—from creative to product development, its commercial arms and marketing—from the very earliest stages of an IP to create long-term, sustainable propositions.

“We all sit closely together and think very deeply about how we can make a show as effective as possible on all of the various levels,” says Carley. “You end up with sort of a jigsaw puzzle where no one piece is more important than another and together they make for a very compelling story.”

With two major hits in its portfolio—the evergreen “Peppa Pig” and the on-fire “PJ Masks”—as well as new IP in development, eOne is positioned well to concentrate its efforts to fully support and bolster its work in key markets on almost every continent.

Small, But Mighty

Headquartered in Canada and with consumer products operating largely out of the U.K., eOne’s brand licensing efforts are helmed by Carley.

“eOne Family is all about building content from the ground up, aimed at children. Our business has grown up over the past 10 years, certainly on the back of ‘Peppa Pig,’” says Carley.

Carley joined eOne a decade ago to manage and build

up licensing programs and infrastructure to support the then burgeoning U.K. IP “Peppa Pig.” A preschool animation (in partnership with animation studio Astley Baker Davies) about a precocious little pig and her piggy family, “Peppa” debuted in the U.K. market where it stayed for several years, maturing and finding its footing in the landscape of children’s animation.

“When I first started 10 years ago, ‘Peppa’ was predominantly a U.K. business, and we rode that wave until about seven or eight years ago, when it began to grow into a global business,” says Carley. “On the back of that global business we have created an infrastructure with the belief that if we want to develop long-term, sustainable properties—and that is certainly our aim—we need to have people on the ground in territories around the world to build that business.”

Under Carley’s tenure, eOne’s consumer products business has grown exponentially—what started out centralized in London with just a few employees, has now grown to include continually expanding teams in North America, Asia Pacific, China and Latin America.

Carley recognizes that it takes a close, symbiotic network within all corners of the organization to create a successful, long-term proposition, and it’s a tactic the eOne Family team takes to heart.

“The shows that we work on such as ‘Peppa Pig’ and ‘PJ Masks’ have teams that all work together and are able to input and make decisions with an eye to building a campaign that takes into account the various different elements—we take great pains to not work in silos,” he says. “If you can avoid doing that, and you’re able to bring in the knowledge from the various teams, that connects for the long-term.”

Market by Market

Each global market is unique, but the goal is similar: to bring quality children’s



KATIE ROLLINGS
head of licensing, U.K.,
Entertainment One Family



JOAN GRASSO
senior vice president, licensing,
North America, Entertainment
One Family



AMI DIECKMAN
head of licensing, international,
Entertainment One Family



REBECCA HARVEY
global head of brands and
marketing, Entertainment One
Family



entertainment to an engaged audience.

And with properties such as “Peppa Pig” and now “PJ Masks,” as well as up-and-coming properties like “Ben & Holly’s Little Kingdom,” setting the stage and template for property rollout around the world, eOne is arming each territory with boots on the ground to encourage sustainable properties that reach multiple segments of the market.

Each territory is managed by a division head. They are:

- Katie Rollings, head of licensing, U.K.
 - Joan Grasso, senior vice president, licensing, North America
 - Ami Dieckman, head of licensing, international (all territories outside of the U.K. and North America)
 - Rebecca Harvey, global head of brands and marketing
- “Our U.K. team is the biggest licensing team, and often what is done in the U.K. is used as a best practice template to be rolled out in other territories,” says Rollings.

Within the U.K., where eOne’s biggest hit “Peppa” took off, the market is mature, and the property is what many would consider an evergreen. Globally, “Peppa Pig” is considered one of the top performing preschool properties. The series is broadcast in 180 countries and translated into 40 languages.

For product, it has more than 800 licensees in place in all major markets, and has a strong retail presence in the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, the U.S., Iberia, France, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, Russia and Asia.

“Peppa Pig’s’ core age group is 2- to 4-year-olds, but it is now such a household name and so mature in the U.K., that its reach spans generations and most children, parents and grandparents as part of its wide-ranging audience,” says Rollings. “The first children to watch ‘Peppa Pig’ are now reaching an age when they can engage with it nostalgically.”

Brand extensions for “Peppa” in the U.K. are ongoing. Last spring, the film *Peppa Pig My First Cinema*

Experience hit U.K. theaters and has grossed more than £3.4 million to-date. Toy sales in the region continue to grow as well, with a 12 percent rise thus far in 2017, and more than 87 licensees on board in support, says eOne.

Activity in the U.K. looks a bit different than it does in North America, for example, where “Peppa” is rather new. In fact, North America was the last market “Peppa” entered. On the flip side, in Australia, “Peppa” launched not long after the U.K.

“In Australia, we’ve been in the marketplace for as long as in the U.K.,” says Dieckman, but notes that the market took a bit longer to take hold because the “magic formula” was not in a place-critical broadcast positioning that Dieckman feels ensures a winning program.

“We launched in Australia with okay coverage and some support, but once we clicked in that magic formula of 20 minutes of programming, twice a day in a prime time slot, ‘Peppa’ really began to gain traction,” says Dieckman.

eOne says Australia is now one of its most successful markets, as is Brazil, where the show airs daily on Discovery Kids and has sold more than 2 million toys and more than 2.5 million books; China, where it’s supported by 25 licensees; and Russia, which saw merchandise debut in October 2014 and now has 35 partners across toys, apparel, accessories, publishing, live events, homewares and FMCG. This month, “Peppa” will launch into Japan with broadcast.

“Globally, everybody has their nuances and everybody has their challenges, it seems now more than ever,” says Dieckman. “But in the last five years, we’ve opened offices in Hong Kong, Australia and Brazil because we see an opportunity. We see a chance to get into the market. We know our content is right, that it’s strong, and if you have faith in that, you can build a program around it.”

In the U.S., “Peppa” will grow its product assortments with new variations on the property that diversify its offerings.

“This fall, we are very excited about the first theme that we have ever done for ‘Peppa,’ and that is a princess theme, that is being executed in a very organic way,” says Grasso. “We have a great product line that soft launched recently from some of our key partners including Jazwares, Scholastic and Happy Threads. Out of the gate, products are performing phenomenally well.”

In the territory, the property is also further enhanced by an upcoming DVD release and on-air support from network partner Nick Jr., as well as a fully-integrated marketing campaign.

“Peppa Pig” is currently in development on season eight, which will include 117 new episodes scheduled to launch in markets globally beginning in 2019, coinciding with the brand’s 15th anniversary. Significant plans are

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underway to celebrate the milestone, including major campaigns and merchandise that will support the celebration that will continue through 2020 and 2021.

‘PJ Masks’ Offers New Opportunities

A co-production between eOne and Frog Box, in collaboration with French animation studio TeamTO, along with Disney Junior and France 5, “PJ Masks” is based on the French picture book series *Les Pyjamasques* by Romuald Racioppo, and is about a group of friends that masquerade as superheroes come nightfall. It hit television screens in 2015 first in the U.S. on Disney Junior. Quickly, a consumer products assortment rolled out in fall 2016, led by master global toy partner Just Play. Thanks to infrastructure put in place to meet “Peppa” demand around the world, eOne was easily able to meet the needs of the runaway “PJ Masks” phenomenon.

The success of the series, which now airs in more than 85 countries worldwide, has transformed the eOne business, giving the company two global preschool hits in its portfolio and has opened up new opportunities with partners around the world.

“We launched the ‘PJ Masks’ licensing program two years ago in the U.S., and it has taken us by surprise with the speed in which it’s expanded around the globe,” says Carley. “Thankfully, we’ve got a strong infrastructure in place that is able to manage it. Now, it’s all about building the program into something that is long-term and sustainable with all of the various stakes and partners, and looking to the future, it’s about creating a pipeline of content.”

Season two of the series will hit airwaves in the U.S. early next year, and in EMEA in spring, both on Disney Junior. The new series will introduce exciting new characters and locations that will give licensees and retailers fresh inspiration for product lines.

A third season is also in development.

“Retailers have been very excited about the brand, and are wanting to do more and more,” says Grasso. “Internally, we are excited that season two will be launching early next year. We feel that the TV show and our consumer products program will be brought to the next level as the new content extends beyond the core.”

Grasso says that in-store retail events and custom character appearances also bring the brand additional exposure.

Now, the series has merchandise in-market or coming to market around the world including the U.K., Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Benelux, the Nordics, Central and Eastern Europe, Turkey, the Middle East, Latin America, Asia and Australia.

Beyond Just Play, licensees on board for the program include Bandai (wooden toys and puzzles,

Japan), Amscan (dress up, U.K.), Sambro (stationery, U.K.), Parragon (publishing, Australia), Froebel-kan (publishing, Japan) and The Entertainment Store (character appearances, Australia), and many more; while agents have been secured in territories such as mainland China (Medialink), South Korea (Dianos), India (Bradford Licensing), Mexico (Bandai), Brazil (DTC) and others.

Experiential Drives Growth

In addition to the core product ranges for its properties, experiential marketing and promotional partnerships are key drivers of fan engagement and essential to building the brands’ profiles around the world, driving sales and cutting through the clutter at retail

“We think of experiential as giving the consumer that hook to the brand that is so long-lasting—much more so than almost anything else,” says Carley. “The child who visits a theme park will experience it in a way that they can’t on other products. People want to see and experience the real thing. We take great pains to ensure that the experience is one that enhances the brand and is valuable. It needs carefully thought out, and, when it’s managed right, it is a very powerful tool.”

Carley says eOne very much recognizes the importance of live experiences to the modern marketing plan for all brand extensions, and that the company is building a standalone division to focus purely on the channel, which will sit within eOne Family.

“Experiences and activations are a huge focus,” says Harvey. “It’s so important for the preschool audience to immerse themselves into the brand beyond the screen, and experiential and live event activities give them unique opportunities to feel as though they are part of the characters’ world, that they belong with them, and it stimulates so many senses. We are committed to executing a wide range of experiences globally.”

For “Peppa Pig” in the U.K., multiple charity partners have



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been engaged to create experiences and raise awareness on a host of issues that affect children around the world.

Campaigns such as Save the Children Muddy Puddles with the Save the Children organization, which organized a walk that raised more than £228,000, and Bath Book Bed in partnership with the BookTrust, which distributed more than 450,000 booklets to children's centers and libraries, do more than just raise the profile of the perennial children's property but also serve important community functions.

Last month, Paulton's Park, a theme park based in Hampshire, England, unveiled details of a significant new expansion to Peppa Pig World.

The attraction now includes two new rides, The Queen's Flying Coach Ride and Grampy Rabbit's Sailing Club. Both will open to the public in May 2018. The brand also has a permanent attraction at Milan, Italy's Leolandia.

Live shows have been a solid driver for eOne Family, as well. "Peppa Pig's Big Splash," the first live show starring Peppa, debuted in the U.S. and Canada in 2015 and saw more than 150-plus sold out shows and did more than \$13 million at the box office. The next leg, "Peppa Pig's Surprise!," is currently on tour in the U.S. and Canada through spring 2018.

"We've found that these extensions to live entertainment, particularly for 'Peppa,' have worked really well for us," says Grasso. "We'll continue to look to potentially run the show for years to come with new themes."

"PJ Masks" is also kicking off a live show, "PJ Masks: Time to Be a Hero," this fall in the U.S. and will run through December. An international tour is planned for next year and will include stops in South America, the U.K., Europe and Australia.

China is also a major focus for experiential activity, says eOne. The brand had significant mall activity in China with 10 immersive retail activations planned for 2018, as well as in Brazil.

The Digital Component

Digital activity is also growing, says Harvey.

"The digital environment is constantly shifting, and we are always exploring new options and opportunities across a variety of channels," she says.

In China, eOne is utilizing the "WeChat" platform to engage fans. Its "Peppa Pig" account has amassed more than 190,000 followers in just one year, says eOne, and to capitalize on this, the company created bespoke emojis for "WeChat" during China's Children's Day and Chinese New Year festivities. More than 13 million "Peppa Pig" emoji sets were downloaded over a nine month period.

The company sees YouTube, which acts as a hub for

the "PJ Masks" brand with varied content available via its dedicated channel to its more than 170,000 subscribers, as another platform to facilitate deep fan engagement around the world, along with Facebook and Twitter.

For "PJ Masks," a new app, "Time to Be a Hero," launched in July and has since garnered 110,000 downloads. The app is one of many, which Harvey says have amassed 13 million downloads around the world.

The brand also capitalizes on short-form content such as music videos to continue to build awareness via its network partnerships internationally, and which have been viewed more than 48 million times.

"These are fantastic fillers but also incredibly engaging as they show off our heroes' characteristics, powers and are completely unique, as opposed to taken from the episodes," says Harvey.

A complete "PJ Masks" album debuted early this year on iTunes, Google Play and Amazon, garnering more than 8,000 visitors each month, says eOne.

eOne has also created bespoke 90-second animations for Disney, as well.

eOne is additionally working with influencers such as bloggers and vloggers, which serve as VIP ambassadors, in all major markets for the "PJ Masks" brand.

More in the Pipeline

eOne has other content in its portfolio as well, including "Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom."

"Ben & Holly" is a really special story for us," says Dieckman. "It's created by the producers of 'Peppa Pig,' and has the same appeal and feel, but with a slightly more sophisticated story line."

The 11-minute series currently has two seasons and skew to a slightly older preschool audience thanks to its themes that center on imaginative play.

A diverse consumer products program began to roll out in the U.K. this summer that includes partnerships with licensees such as Naturelly for "Magic Jelly" fruit pouches; master toy partner Character Options for figures, accessory packs and play sets; and Jolly Roger for coin-operated rides.

In the U.S., a program launched in August at Target that included toys from Jazwares and publishing from Scholastic, as well as apparel from Happy Threads available on Target.com.

The property continues to grow in Asia with Pro Pacific preparing to launch Character Options' toy range in Taiwan, and Viacom18 has been named the brand's licensing agent in India with an array of new video-on-demand broadcast deals in place for the region.

As the series matures and audience share grows, so will product programs. ©

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The Emoji Company

Writing a New Language

The Emoji Company secured its first license in mid-2015 and now boasts more than 350 active licensees and unfettered growth around the world.

by ERICA GARBER

The Emoji brand and its robust lineup of icons are everywhere nowadays. From our cell phones to general merchandise to various marketing campaigns and more, we can't seem to escape the cute little icons. Although The Emoji Company started with small beginnings, the company has now expanded its reach to all corners of the Earth, and is set to continue to take the world by storm.

"The thought of creating the lifestyle brand Emoji came to me in July 2013, surprisingly during a summer holiday," says Marco Hüsges, chief executive officer, The Emoji Company. "I was inspired about this digital phenomenon of saying it all by using expressive little icons on your smartphone and thought about transforming this power of communication into a brand for physical products and services."

It didn't take long for Hüsges to act on his idea. On Aug. 9, 2013, he filed for the Emoji trademark, and following two years of groundwork, Hüsges debuted the brand concept at Licensing Expo in 2015.

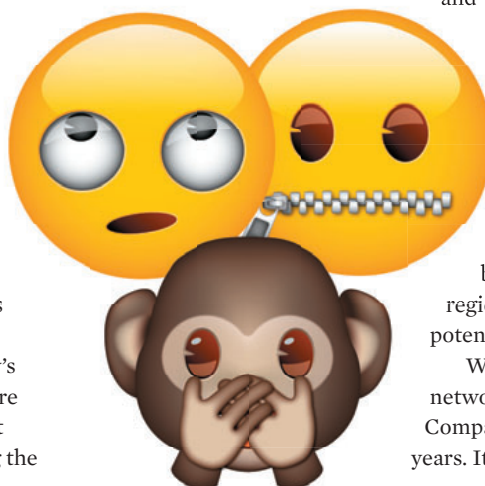
Today, the company has secured the trademark to the term "emoji" in more than 150 countries and in up to 25 classes for goods and services. In total, the company's trademark portfolio comprises more than 750 trademarks in all relevant markets across the globe including the

U.S., Canada, Europe, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, Australia, India, Russia, Turkey and many other countries.

The company has also developed more than 6,000 icons, all of which are registered with the U.S. copyright office and are available for licensing. To further develop the company's merchandising strategy worldwide, Hüsges has secured 19 international licensing agents to assist in growing the brand including Global Merchandising in the U.S.; Segal Licensing in Canada; Medialink in Asia, excluding South Korea; Asiana in South Korea; Exim in Mexico, Argentina, Colombia and Brazil; Clap Licensing & Promotions in Central America and the Caribbean; Bavaria Media in G/A/S and Benelux; ELC in Eastern Europe; Pullman Licensing in Russia; Bravado and Universal Music in Europe and Turkey; and 20too in the Middle East.

"All of our agents have extensive knowledge and long-lasting experience in representing strong brands and lifestyle properties," says Hüsges. "Because of the global popularity of the Emoji brand, we might even broaden our network throughout 2018 by adding new agents for specific regions to exploit the maximum brand potential in each specific market."

With a robust assortment of IP and a network of agents on board, The Emoji Company has faced rapid growth in recent years. Its first licensing agreement was



MARCO HÜSGES
chief executive officer, The Emoji Company

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signed in the middle of 2015, and in 2016, the company signed close to 200 agreements. Presently, the company expects to sign just as many new agreements this year.

Currently, the company has more than 350 active licensees that are producing and distributing merchandise all over the world. Partners include companies such as Nestlé, Fuji, Nikon, Kellogg's, PepsiCo, Zara, C&A, Random House, Walmart and more. The Emoji Company is also benefiting from Sony Picture Animation's *The Emoji Movie*, which was created under license.

For 2017, new licensees that have joined Emoji's robust program include Nuk, Revell, Panini and the Swiss Post. Emoji also crafted a loyalty program for Swiss-based retailer Coop for collectible toys; secured a promotional water deal with Nestlé Waters and Danone Aqua in various parts of the world; and entered into an agreement with IAAF to create customized icons for the IAAF World Championships, which took place in London in August.

The brand signed more than 50 promotional partners in the past year including PepsiCo in Europe and Turkey, Cola Cao in Spain, Kellogg's in India, Hochland in Spain and Alpina in Colombia.

Emoji has also secured several other licensing deals, which will begin rolling out during Brand Licensing Europe, taking place Oct. 10-12, and has deals finalizing into 2018.

Despite the number of diverse categories the brand is already in, Emoji continues to find new areas to expand. For example, Nestlé debuted Emoji-shaped water bottles; Vinda created a range of facial tissues in China; Lornamed launched the brand's first personal care products for teens exclusively at the German drugstore chain DM; and Specsavers has released a series of themed glasses in the U.K. The first Emoji-branded

credit cards will also be released in multiple markets.

Historically, the U.S. has been a strong performing market for Emoji-branded products. However, in the past year, the G/A/S region has grown, particularly in the apparel category and for loyalty programs. The company also cites Mexico as a strong market, where it boasts a direct-to-retail agreement with Walmart, as well as 34 additional active licensees.

In China, The Emoji Company operates more than a dozen mall events and has signed on with partners such as Kipling, Zippo, Lee and New Era. Other strong performing

markets for the brand in recent years include the U.K., Spain, Canada and France.

"In-store activities and mall events have also increased significantly as the brand offers so much variety to its operators and is loved and recognized by kids, teenagers and adults, which is a competitive advantage of the Emoji brand," says Hüsages. "There are so many things you can do with the Emoji brand, which makes it so attractive and commercially successful."

Looking ahead to 2018, The Emoji Company plans to keep developing new IP to keep the brand fresh and attractive to consumers. It also plans to create more visibility for the brand beyond standard licensing categories. These activities may include pop-up stores, theme park activities, an official Emoji collectible toy line, Emoji Beats and a dedicated sticker app.

The company also plans to create recognizable QSR activities, loyalty programs with European retailers and fashion collaborations with well-known designers.

And as for Hüsages favorite Emoji icons?

"My favorite icons are the monkeys and the zipper mouth face, followed by the face with rolling eyes, which you can use in multiple ways," says Hüsages. ©



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COMING SOON

SVOD Re-Energizes Entertainment Licensing

Streaming video-on-demand is offering opportunities in brand licensing beyond traditional TV and film.

by STEVEN EKSTRACT

SVOD, or streaming video-on-demand, are Internet-based video providers that are building momentum with consumers and creating a renaissance for video programming and licensed consumer products. Some of the largest SVOD providers today include Netflix, Amazon Prime, BBC iPlayer, HBO, CBS All Access and Hulu, among many others that are emerging and growing in favor with audiences around the world.

SVOD's greatest attractions are three fold: first, subscribers pay a low monthly fee and can watch what they want, when they want; second, the choice of

programming is extremely varied with wide appeal to all ages and demographics; third, SVOD networks are largely commercial-free, enabling viewers to enjoy uninterrupted programming and spend more time enjoying the content. As a consequence of SVOD's increasing popularity, the traditional model of linear TV viewing is changing, and we will likely see Hollywood studios' theatrical distribution model change as well.

By far the largest player in the SVOD market is Netflix, with more than 100 million subscribers worldwide. In the U.S. alone, Netflix has more than 50 million subscribers—more than cable TV. As more and more consumers cut their cable, Netflix and other SVOD providers will continue to grow.

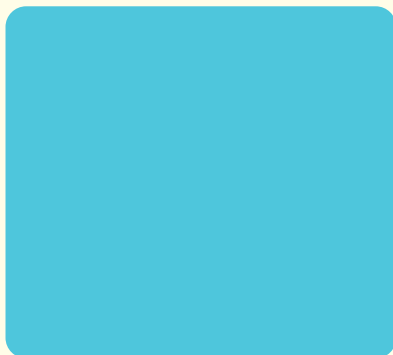


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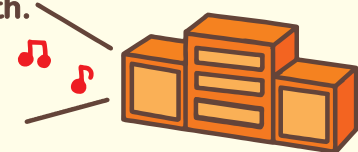
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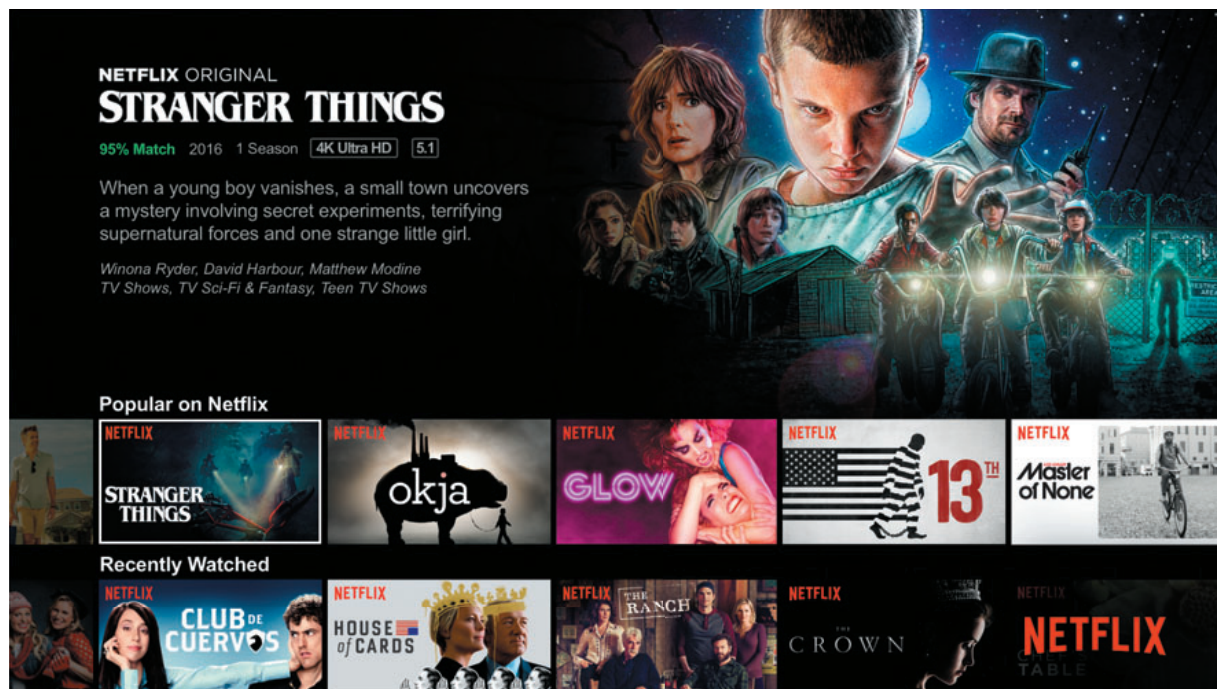
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Those on the entertainment side of the licensing industry understand that the secret to success with a movie or TV show is the ability to create a successful consumer products licensing program. It's not for nothing that the majority of Hollywood films released these days are tentpole franchise films with multiple sequel/prequel spin-offs on the schedule. These films are leveraged strategically to build a franchise and exploit opportunities for brand extensions through a variety of lucrative areas such as amusement parks, video games, publishing, toys, apparel, accessories and all areas of fast-moving consumer goods. Emulating a *Star Wars*, *Frozen*, *Wonder Woman*, *Toy Story*, *Cars*, *Harry Potter*, *Despicable Me*, *Avengers*, *Transformers*, *Batman*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* or any other mega hit has become the expectation of all Hollywood studios.

The gamble that faces licensing partners that look to movies has always been the short theatrical release window. To a lesser degree, the gamble with linear TV licensing is the ratings. These days, networks need ratings, and they cannot afford the luxury of a slow build over a couple of seasons before the show is a hit.

SVOD solves the problem of short theatrical windows and ratings stress, as programming runs long enough on SVOD providers to build a fan base. The fact that it is Internet-based allows users to share their favorite movies and shows with friends and family, as well as increases access and convenience,

building a much more viral "word of mouth."

Take Netflix's original series "Stranger Things," for example. A science-fiction/horror production that became a major hit for Netflix, "Stranger Things" had no consumer products plan until pop culture retailer Hot Topic pursued Netflix to create an exclusive program. Hot Topic credits the program to customer demand.

To address the business segment, Netflix has recently hired two licensing veterans, Tara Sinclair and Jess Richardson, to run the newly formed licensing, merchandising and promotions division.

The digital revolution we are collectively experiencing has created a renaissance of sorts for consumers who engage with entertainment. Until about a decade ago, viewing choices were limited and relatively one dimensional. Audiences could go to a theater, rent a DVD, watch linear TV/cable channels, read a physical publication or play a video game on a console. High-speed Internet and video compression technology have combined to allow SVOD providers to stream video seamlessly without lags or glitches.

All it takes is a cursory glance at the Top 150 Global Licensors report published annually by *License Global* to see just how much licensing impacts the entertainment industry. Despite the current challenges brick-and-mortar retail faces, it's important for the industry to remember that content will always be king. To take that a step further, product based on said content is merely



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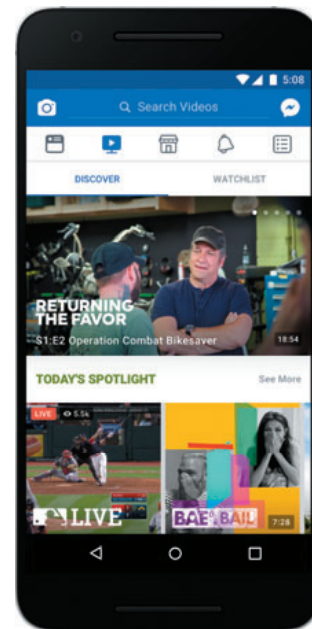
an extension of the king, and thus products will create more royalty revenue. The next step with SVOD and consumer products licensing will be the integration of online retail stores into SVOD network apps. Crunchyroll, a special interest SVOD app for Japanese anime, already has an online retail store component where it sells licensed consumer products from the shows it streams.

Things in the SVOD world have begun to move very rapidly, some recent examples:

- In August, Disney announced that it will phase out its distribution deal with Netflix. At the same time it acquired BAMTech, a video streaming service formerly owned by Major League Baseball. The new Disney-owned service will become the exclusive home in the U.S. for its live-action and animated content beginning in 2019.
- CBS expanded the availability of its streaming platform, CBS All Access, to global markets. The service will launch first in Canada early next year, with other markets to follow. The broadcaster has significant confidence in its platform, so much so that its newest series in the “Star Trek” franchise, “Star Trek: Discovery,” is available exclusively on the platform. Clearly, CBS sees the future of its business in CBS All Access.
- The U.K.-based BBC iPlayer received 274 million program requests in April, a 23 percent increase over April 2016. In the country, Ofcom reports in its Communications Market Report 2017 that eight in 10 adults (79 percent or 40 million people) use BBC iPlayer or similar SVOD services to binge watch episodic content regularly. The report also states that 76 percent of people ages 16 to 24 use an SVOD service, compared to 19 percent of those over age 65.
- Social platform Facebook launched Watch, a space for original, episodic series. Watch will tap into Facebook’s ability to customize or personalize a user’s viewing based on what those in his/her community or friend group are watching. The service, which Facebook clearly sees as critical to maintaining engagement with its user base, is available now in the U.S.



- Apple budgeted \$1 billion for original content acquisitions. An early adopter with services such as Apple TV and iTunes, expect to see Apple pursue a strategy that enables it to have major access to top content. Apple is sitting on a war chest of \$261 billion in cash that offers it the ability buy anything it needs, including a major Hollywood studio. This writer speculates a Disney deal could be in the offing.



- In other Netflix news, it entered the M&A market with its acquisition of Millarworld, a comic book publisher, and has lured writer and producer Shonda Rhimes and her Shondaland productions into the Netflix portfolio and away from the ABC network.
- Discovery Communications bought Scripps Networks Interactive for \$14.6 billion in July. The purchase includes lucrative franchises like Food Network and HGTV, which are proven licensing juggernauts.
- iflix, an SVOD service for emerging markets in Asia, closed a \$133 million funding round for growth, led by Hearst, this summer. Since going live in May 2015, iflix has established itself in 19 international markets across Asia, the Middle East and Africa, as well as built integrated distribution partnerships with 27 telecommunications operators to bundle iflix with mobile and data subscriptions. The latest round of funding brings iflix’s pot to \$220 million.
- Telefonica, a Spain-based telecom company with operations throughout Europe and Central and South America, announced its plan to launch international OTT TV service in Europe with a library that includes original content.
- Turner has purchased key rights to UEFA European football league games, and is planning to launch a standalone OTT service in the U.S. beginning with the 2018-19 season.

Most of this activity took place just this summer... can you imagine what is next? It’s clear that the sky is the limit, then, for SVOD and the licensing business. ©

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REVOLUTION

THE NAT GEO

National Geographic, a perennial global brand, is ramping up internally to focus on a worldwide push for consumer products and experiences.

by BARBARA SAX



DEBORAH ARMSTRONG
executive vice president, National Geographic Partners, Europe and Africa

Generations of curious consumers in every corner of the world have grown up with the National Geographic brand. With a revamped licensing program, National Geographic Partners, a joint venture between 21st Century Fox and the National Geographic Society, is launching an aggressive expansion of its extensive brand, which includes growing the business internationally.

National Geographic is leveraging the full power of its wide media and commercial portfolio, including the channels, magazines, books, maps, a kids' business, a travel business, social, digital, web and consumer products licensing, to evolve this powerful brand into meaningful experiences, products and content to reach explorers of all ages.

The brand's media platform is formidable, reaching 760 million consumers a month through its universal storytelling assets. According to National Geographic, its broadcast channel reaches 438 million households in 172 countries and 43 languages, has 54 million print and digital magazine readers in 35 languages, 3.8 million kid readers in 15 languages and is the No. 1 corporate brand on Instagram, with 360 million social media fans and followers across all platforms. The brand also has high engagement with Millennial consumers.

By harnessing the full power of its media platforms, NGP is using its history, businesses and philanthropy to move beyond linear television and its flagship magazine to deliver experiences, products and content on all platforms. The company is committed to finding what it calls "The Curious Class" of consumers, where ever they are.

To bolster regional operations across all areas

of its brand, NGP recently announced a range of key appointments in Europe and Africa.

"We've taken the next steps to invest in senior-level hires who are dedicated, talented and seasoned leaders and will build on our commitment to expand National Geographic's reach across all areas of the brand, including its publishing, broadcasting, travel and consumer products licensing businesses," says Deborah Armstrong, executive vice president, National Geographic Partners, Europe and Africa. "With recent appointments across these departments, we can begin executing a global strategy that further creates and develops premium experiences and products and brings out the explorer in all of us in these essential markets."

NGP recently appointed Maria Maranesi to the first regional consumer products and experiences position in Europe. Based in Barcelona, Maranesi will build National Geographic's regional business and begin staffing a local team, which currently includes Angela Reuber, director consumer products in Germany, and Irem Ilke Ariburnu, consumer product manager for Turkey, with two positions based in the U.K. and Italy to be added in the coming months.

"Our investment in Europe is a big priority as we unveil our new licensing strategy to the region," says Maranesi. "Our immediate focus will be on the Euro 5 (U.K., Italy, Spain, France and Germany), but we are already working in Turkey and Israel on some exciting and authentic partnerships which will result in meaningful experiences and products for our consumers."

"In terms of unique opportunities for this region, loyalty promotions provide a meaningful proposition for



MARIA MARANESI
vice president, consumer products, National Geographic Partners, Europe and Africa



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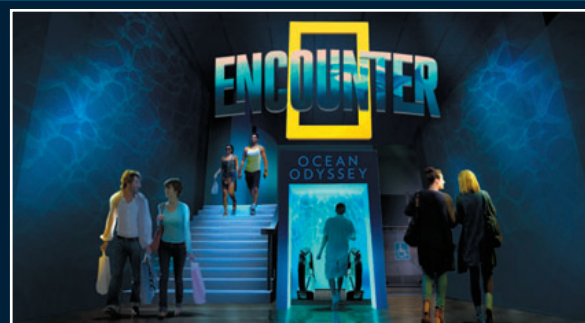
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consumers and licensees alike and allow our business to communicate our core brand values of conservation, exploration and science,” she says. “For example, we have developed two programs in Italy that encourage repeat purchase at select retailers by allowing consumers to redeem points for National Geographic plush all while driving conservation and environmental messaging.”

Nathan Philpot has also joined the organization as director, travel, NGP, Europe and Africa, to develop and launch branded consumer travel experiences across Europe and Africa. Two new positions reporting to Philpot, one in the U.K. and the other in Germany, will be added soon.

Already one of the most popular travel products in the U.S., National Geographic Expeditions creates bespoke holidays including branded cruises, eco-lodges and multi-destination hosted trips. Its expeditions take place in 80 destinations across seven continents.

“The branded travel component is an important part of our consumer products and experiences business. Through Nathan, we are actively looking to market these experiences to a regional audience, building on each of the core products as we begin to educate the market about National Geographic vacations,” says Armstrong.

In the consumer products arena, the revamped licensing program now positions the 130-year-old company as the premier Exploration Brand and will focus its first phase of the new brand rollout on apparel, outerwear, accessories, footwear and STEAM products.

“Given that our strategy is to grow within the outdoor space, our focus has been to find relevant licensees to begin to execute the global strategy here in Europe,” says Maranesi. “We’ve partnered with an outdoor technical footwear company, Dachstein Outdoor and Lifestyle, on a phased rollout, with the first product launching next year and a full product portfolio coming in 2019.”

The brand also partnered with Manfrotto, the Italy-based camera and photography accessory company, for new camera bag ranges.

“The Earth Explorer and Walkabout collection are already in development for 2018, which also includes

camera tripods as part of the collections, which are a new category for us at National Geographic,” says Maranesi.

NGP has collaborated with The Nature Company to operate more than 46 National Geographic-branded flagship stores and retail spaces throughout South Korea. Inspired by National Geographic’s stunning visual storytelling in travel and adventure, the stores feature outdoor adventure apparel, accessories, bags, luggage and camping gear and is the brand’s fastest growing licensee.

“Nature designs and manufactures apparel, luggage and camping gear and owns and operates the National Geographic stores under license with our approval. They plan to have 58 stores open by end of 2028, and 150-plus in 3 to 5 years in Korea only,” says Armstrong.

National Geographic will also bring the brand to life through its Ultimate Explorer Family Entertainment Centers, which are rolling out internationally in partnership with iP2 Entertainment.

“In China, we are excited to open our first National Geographic Ultimate Explorer Family Entertainment Center by 2018, a concept that we are actively rolling out worldwide over the coming years,” says Maranesi. “We’ve teamed up with iP2 Entertainment to develop this series of indoor, family exploration centers worldwide, drawing on National Geographic’s award-winning content geared toward families with school-aged children, ages 5 to 12. It is our aim to have full merchandising and food/beverage experiences as part of this concept, related to the activity and IP that consumers will experience within these new entertainment centers.”

National Geographic recently worked with SPE Partners for “Encounter: Ocean Odyssey” in New York City’s Times Square. The first-of-its-kind immersive entertainment experience transports audiences on a breathtaking undersea journey from the South Pacific across the ocean to the west coast of North America.

With its new team in place and a revamped licensing program rolling out globally, National Geographic is positioned to expand its brand exponentially in the next several years. ©



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MARC LOW

senior vice president and general manager, international consumer products, Universal Brand Development

FAST AND FURIOUS

Universal Brand Development is shifting gears and becoming more active in its approach to licensing.

by **AMANDA CIOLETTI**

NBCUniversal is continuing to overhaul its consumer product division, changing the course it has been charting as DreamWorks completes its integration into the studio's core business and widens an already rich portfolio.

In August, Universal Brand Development, the consumer product, games and digital and live entertainment arm of the studio's ecosystem, announced two key appointments: Joe Lawandus, who joined last month as senior vice president and general manager, North America consumer products, and Marc Low, who was elevated to senior vice president and general manager, international consumer products.

"Our global consumer products business unit has grown exponentially over the last two years, both in the U.S. and international territories. As we continue to expand our business both creatively and categorically, both Joe and Marc have the proven ability to amplify both our businesses and partner relationships as we set new benchmarks for the future," says Vince Klaseus, president, Universal Brand Development.

Low's escalated position will enable him to continue to help Universal Brand Development transition its business model, which has relied on overseas agents, to a direct business, giving the company enhanced advantages to leverage its ever-growing portfolio of diverse IP.

"Agents can be very good for the business—and we do have many in a lot of countries in the world that we will continue to use—but for us in the key markets, going direct allows us to have boots on the ground so that we can engage with partners locally," says Low.

Universal Brand Development has identified four international regions that the company will focus on and manage in-house: Latin America, which includes Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, etc.; EMEA; Greater China, which includes Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan; and Asia-Pacific, which incorporates India, Australia, Korea and Japan.

“Within each of these regions, we’ve identified key markets that we think will be growth drivers for the future, and that’s where we’ve put our emphasis and focus for the years to come,” says Low.

The international territories are then headed up by country managers, who will work to ensure that each market has offerings that are locally relevant and can be tailored and customized on an individual basis.

“Going direct allows us to broaden our offer because we can talk to retailers and licensees in real-time without the filter of a third party,” says Low. “It allows us to deepen our categories and our relationships, and it also allows us to start to tailor our offer to local trends and customize how we appear in each market. It’s less of a one-size-fits-all model, and more of a focus on regional or local needs and tastes.”

Local country directory appointments, which have been sliding into place over the past two years, are:

- Allen Wang, vice president, consumer products, Greater China
- Jeffrey Daggett, vice president, consumer products, Asia Pacific
- Maria Ancieta-Risher, vice president, consumer products, Latin America
- Jonathan Baker, vice president, consumer products, EMEA

“Building a robust leadership team is a crucial element for our international group as we look to forge new opportunities for business expansion across Universal’s ever-growing portfolio,” says Low. “We’re thrilled to welcome a strong team of seasoned experts as we form a more integrated approach for our EMEA territories and continue to establish the Universal brand as a global leader.

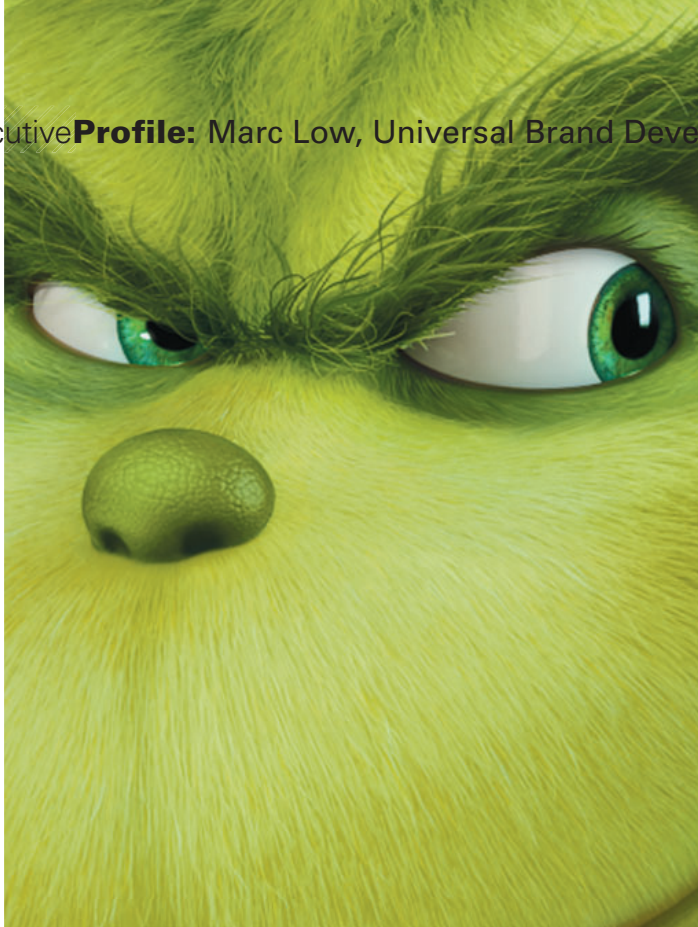
“Each country will have a local structure that will have category experts who are focusing on hard lines, soft lines and creative in-market so we can get closer to local tastes, and we will have retail in-market who can build the relationships with the retailers,” he continues.

The direct model is one that

was kicked off domestically in North America, and is now rolling out around the world, with advantages that reach deep into Universal’s catalog of IP, allowing for a more nimble local approach and stronger relationships with licensees and retailers. With “boots on the ground” now, as Low says, Universal is able to present its total portfolio, which includes DreamWorks, as well as its live-action and Illumination animation offerings, and can appeal to a wider demographic, from preschool to adult.

“By removing the agent layer, we’re now able to interact





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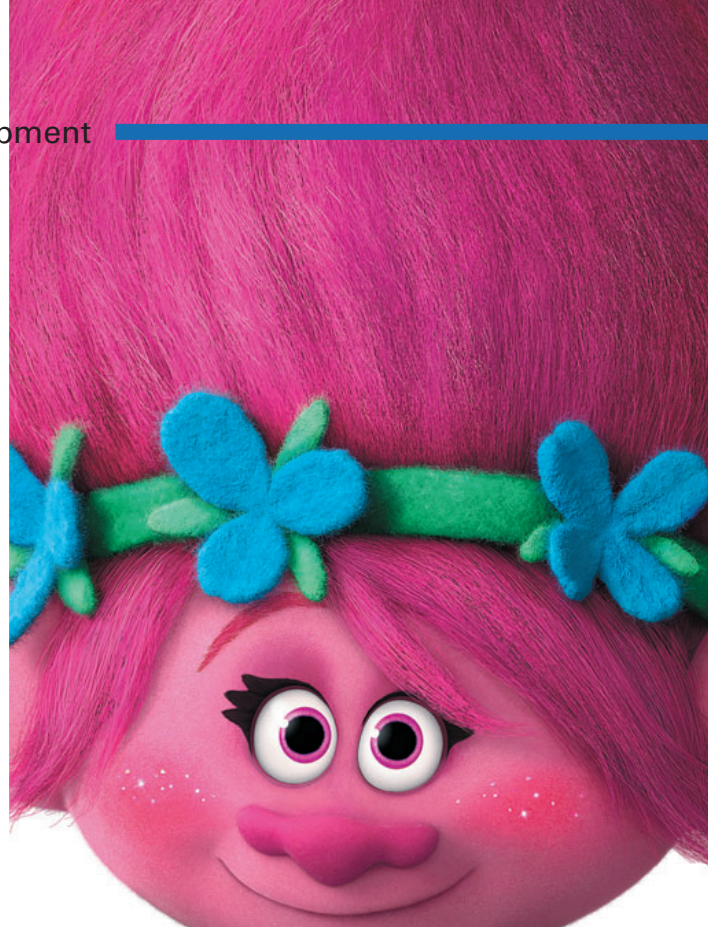
with retailers and licensees directly, allowing us to have deeper relationships and offer our broader portfolio," he says. "Previously, we had agents that managed the Universal portfolio and separate agents that managed the DreamWorks portfolio. Now we're able to put everything together and go out to market with one combined statement that covers various ages and consumer segments."

Low also sees the advantage of increased synergies between the consumer products teams and NBCU's wider organization, including theatrics, home entertainment, TV distribution and theme parks.

As the company heads into 2018, major initiatives are taking shape, says Low.

"What's really wonderful about what we have going forward are these three big content engines that drive very different and complementary offers. As we head into 2018 and beyond, we have a wealth of IP we can start to grow and develop in these markets," he says.

On the live-action side, NBCUniversal is putting a lot of muscle behind the *Jurassic World* franchise. 2018 marks the 25th anniversary of the original *Jurassic Park* film, and the company is planning to celebrate the milestone with plenty of activations that build the brand



DREAMWORKS
Trolls

into one of the largest dinosaur properties in the world.

On the heels of the eighth installment of the *Fast and the Furious* franchise this spring, Universal will launch a "Fast & Furious Live" arena tour that will be making stops throughout Europe, beginning in London, and hitting the major markets, and building momentum for the next *Fast and the Furious* film coming in 2019.

Shifting gears to Illumination, the company will continue to build on the success of *Despicable Me* and the *Minions*, which "continues to remain popular around the world," says Low. Illumination is also ramping up for another new theatrical release this holiday season with *The Grinch*.

DreamWorks is now fully integrated into NBCU, and so plans for that portfolio are rolling ahead full steam. According to Low, Universal will continue to build a 365-day program around the *Trolls* property, and will create activations stemming from the film.

DreamWorks' television offerings are also a push for the Universal group, and will focus on series "Voltron: Legendary Defender," "Spirit: Riding Free," "Noddy, Toy Town Detective" and "How to Train Your Dragon," which has a third film coming out in 2019. ©



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INFLUENCING THE BUY

Influencers are increasingly finding their place in brand campaigns and are becoming more and more essential to building awareness and driving the success of product programs. **by AMANDA CIOLETTI**

What is an influencer? As it turns out, it depends on who you are talking to. For some, it's a celebrity, for others, it's anyone with a large following on a social platform and for others still, it's an intangible. While the definition is fluid, the underlying truth is fairly firm: influencers are an important piece of the brand promotion puzzle, and their impact is becoming more and more essential to building any sort of brand or brand extension.

Today, YouTube creator collaborations have proven four times more effective at driving brand familiarity and two times more effective at driving brand affinity than integrations with traditional celebrities. (Source: Nielsen/Carat/Google YouTube Branded Video Study, May 2017)

YouTube defines an influencer as “an expert at all things video,” says Agnes Kozera, co-founder, Famebit by YouTube. Famebit, which was acquired by Google in 2016, is a marketplace that connects video influencers to marketers.

Continues Kozera: “We see that audience trust [of influencers] is especially high on YouTube, because the audience themselves seek out these creators and make the choice to subscribe and to tune into their channels. Also, unlike traditional celebrities, most influencers have built their

social media following from the ground up, which means they have a stronger connection to their community.”

“At Nickelodeon, we are very focused on the post-Millennial generation, and Nick has built its success on understanding that audience better than anyone else,” says Pam Kaufman, chief marketing officer and president, consumer products, Nickelodeon. “When we look in-depth at the younger generation, a big surprise we discovered is that, next to their parents, influencers are the most important people to them. They are more important than the president, people at school or their friends. Understanding that is what led us to partnering more with influencers for marketing activities.”

Famebit and Nickelodeon are not alone. Entertainment companies, global corporate brands, apparel licensors, toy companies, you name it, are looking to influencers and influencers' reach to better communicate directly with their target demographic. With the reduction in time-tested avenues for brand marketing, these new, micro-celebrities are becoming increasingly more essential to promotions and traditional advertising functions.

This summer, Amazon re-opened its Influencer program, which is a service for YouTube influencers to promote products to their followers and receive commissions. According to TechCrunch, this is the first time the program has become available openly, and is a way for “Amazon to better tap into social media's power to drive sales.”

Logically, it's a no-brainer for a brand, be it a start-up or a heritage, to look to influencers to build awareness with the very people marketers are struggling to connect with in such a fragmented modern market.

“The benefit of partnering with an influencer is having a guaranteed, engaged fan base from the start. Influencers have such tight knit relationships with their community and can instantly share information with them. Once a brand taps into an influencer's network, they are able to reach new audiences with efficiency and speed,” says Ross Misher, chief executive



officer, Brand Central Group. Brand Central is a licensing agency that represents some of the top digital influencers for brand extensions. “An ideal successful influencer campaign is when an influencer partners with a brand, retailer or manufacturer that they authentically feel passionate about in their lives. Audiences and fans are savvy enough to see through paid brand partnerships that lack authenticity.”

For example, let’s look at Disney.

In 2015, Disney and Lucasfilm kicked off Force Friday, a global event that celebrated the launch of products from its then brand-new, upcoming installment to the *Star Wars* franchise, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. The world’s No. 1 licensor, according to *License Global’s* Top 150 Global Licensors report, orchestrated an 18-hour unboxing event that streamed live on YouTube around the world, engaging influencers and celebrities to showcase hot, new products.

The result of this engagement? A feeding frenzy at market. And while direct correlations to this one event were not available, Disney did manage to up its retail sales of licensed merchandise in 2016 by \$4.1 billion to a total of \$56.6 billion on the back of *Star Wars*, as well as its other flagship properties. It’s safe to say, it certainly helped.

Nickelodeon took another approach to influencer marketing by engaging the Eh Bee family, a Canadian family of four that has more than 4 million subscribers on YouTube, to promote its new, family-friendly Nickelodeon Hotels & Resorts Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic. The Eh Bees made various videos of their stay at the Nick hotel, and the resort enjoyed a nice bump in brand awareness as a result.

But Nick’s big success story in the influencer arena is Jojo Siwa. Previously, Siwa may be best known as a star on the Lifetime series “Dance Moms.” Now, Siwa is a star in her own right thanks to her prolific YouTube videos, her social media accounts and her partnership with Nick.

The network onboarded Siwa for various campaigns and series last year. Since, it has developed an entire product program centered on the 13-year-old celebrity.

In May, Nick unveiled a global consumer products program across multiple categories for the U.S., U.K., Australia and Canada markets that includes accessories (Siwa is known for her signature hair bow), apparel, arts

and crafts, cosmetics, costumes, dolls, role play, electronics, games, home goods, party, publishing and more.

“The influence on the audience, the need for growth in the teen and tween market and the appetite for our advertisers to want a live person to help with the marketing of their products helped drive us to Jojo,” says Kaufman. “With Jojo, it is the first time we are representing someone who did not grow up on Nickelodeon. Jojo is a very interesting new model for us in how we are trying to work with talent, and, obviously, influencers.”

Warner Bros. Consumer Products is also active in engaging influencers for its promotional efforts. In August, WBCP partnered with musician and YouTube star Megan Nicole for the Get Your Cape On campaign around its “DC Super Hero Girls” property. Nicole launched a brand-new

take on the series’ theme song, and shot a music video in support, which is viewable across the “DC Super Hero Girls” web site and its dedicated YouTube channel.

“Everyone needs profile, for their brand, for their point-of-view, for their merchandise,” says Dell Furano, chief executive officer, Epic Rights, who manages the brand promotions for mega rock stars KISS, among many, many other foundational music outfits. “Today the big challenge is getting enough media profile that licensees and retailers will take your product. You can have the greatest product in the world, but if it doesn’t have the profile that is generated by influencers, brand ambassadors and promotions... it is more critical than ever.”

Furano sees influencers as anyone

who can affect a purchase, be it a celebrity in the traditional sense or the self-built, online star.

Talent and brand management company United Talent Agency takes a different position on influencers—it represents them directly.

“The relationship we have with influencers is the same as we have with our actors, writers or producers, that is, we represent them for everything they do in their careers,” says Greg Goodfried, head of digital talent, UTA. “With this type of talent, that extends to working with brands, launching their own consumer products, which is more and more important, and everything else.”

UTA does not define its talent as an influencer, as





such, but the gist is the same—it's people that began their career on the Internet, and through creating Internet content, have amassed a very large following that is passionate about the creator and what they do.

Goodfried agrees that YouTube is the platform of choice for influencers, and that they must be engaging their audience regularly (about once a week at minimum) with fresh content. He says that the platform is the “best to convert fans to something monetizable.”

UTA has found success leveraging its talent roster for product, as well. The agency paired Kande Johnson, an influencer with nearly 4 million subscribers on YouTube, with retailer Ulta for an exclusive collection of makeup and beauty products, and SinfulColors for a 24-piece collection of nail lacquers.

UTA also found success for YouTube star Jenn Im of the channel ClothesEncounters, who marketed her first-ever fashion brand Eggie to her 4.1 million-plus followers. Goodfried says the collection saw total sell-through.

To UTA, this type of talent is just as important and prolific as TV or film stars, and will often pair big brands with its digital talent pool for marketing and advertising campaigns.

The measure of success of these campaigns can be incremental, or they can be sweeping, it all just depends on the brand.

On YouTube, the results are obvious fairly quickly and rather straight-forward—an influencer makes a video, and those views are public simultaneously.

For bigger brands that use the influencer to sell-through product, measuring results is layered and nuanced, much like any mode of advertising.

But all agree, it's a truly unique and organic way to appeal to the Millennial and Generation Z consumer who value connections over blanket statements, and looks

for customization and personalization in everything that they do and purchase.

“One of the reasons why we see influencer/brand collaborations working through Famebit is precisely because they are not filmed in some remote production studio, but most are usually done in creator's own homes where they show how the products/services fit into their lives very naturally,” says Kozera.

And that organic connection to a brand, that personal touch, seems

to be the magic formula for influencer marketing.

“The truth is that authenticity is a key component for a campaign. I know that buzzword is overused, but it is a major factor for a brand to use the right celebrity/influencer to engage their consumers,” says Maximilian Ulanoff, agent, branding and licensing, Don Buchwald & Associates Talent Agency. For Ulanoff, the channel where the campaign appears, such as Instagram and YouTube, is important, but so is the direct connection the content offers its viewers.

“Traditionally a client's social following would help dictate a campaign,” says Ulanoff. “However, now brands are focusing on if the talent is multifaceted. They are looking for ambassadors that engage their fans and bring the campaign to life outside their social feed.”

Furano echoes this sentiment, even when considering brand campaigns for mega celebrities like Céline Dion, who recently launched a high-end range of fashion accessories in collaboration with Bugatti. Epic Rights, in partnership with Prominent Brand + Talent, is working with Dion to develop her lifestyle brand. Dion made numerous appearances to support her brand as it has built, as well as promoted via social media.

“The celebrity has to be highly engaged with brand endorsements to have a successful sponsorship or brand licensing program. It is absolutely essential. It is vital that the authenticity is there, and that the celebrity embraces the product and tells the story,” says Furano.

Ultimately, though, the goal is to cut through the clutter and touch those that brands are trying to reach. And at the end of the day, the mediums available to brands to connect with their target demographics is democratized now in a way that it never was before. No longer do you absolutely need a multi-million dollar TV ad campaign to build a brand. Perhaps you just need the right influencer. ©

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ENGAGE! 'THE NEXT GENERATION' Treks into 30 Years



For three decades, 'Star Trek: The Next Generation' has amassed generations of fans. This year, CBS Consumer Products is celebrating the brand's pearl anniversary with a score of content-inspired merchandise, live events and more that are sure to guarantee the series even more years of triumphs.

by ERICA GARBER

For the past 30 years, Captain Jean Luc Picard, Commander William Riker, Lieutenant Commander Data, Lieutenant Worf and Lieutenant Commander Geordi La Forge and other members of the U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-D have managed to "make it so" and "boldly go where no one has gone before" to create an indelible mark on pop culture.

Serving as the follow-up series to the original "Star Trek" developed by Gene Roddenberry, "Star Trek: The Next Generation" starred Patrick Stewart, who memorialized the role of Captain Picard; Jonathan Frakes as Picard's first officer Commander William Riker; LeVar Burton as Lt. Commander Geordi La Forge; Marina Sirtis as the thoughtful and insightful Counselor Deanna Troi; Brent Spiner as Lt. Commander Data, an android seeking to learn the intricacies of humanity; Michael Dorn as Lt. Worf; Gates McFadden as Dr. Beverly Crusher; and many more who made their mark on "Star Trek" fans' hearts.

Premiering on Sept. 28, 1987, "Star Trek: The Next Generation" went on to produce seven seasons and four movies, including *Star Trek Generations* (1994), *Star Trek: First Contact* (1996), *Star Trek: Insurrection* (1998) and *Star Trek Nemesis* (2002).

Like its predecessor, the show placed a strong emphasis on community, inclusion and diversity, and continued to serve as a ground-breaking program on multiple levels. It featured a blind man, La Forge, as an integral member of the crew, as well as Starfleet's first Klingon officer, Worf. It also continued to tackle topics such as working together, cooperative and peaceful resolution and other key themes from the "Star Trek" universe. The series was also on the cutting edge of technology with touchscreen interfaces, communicator badges and more.

Even now, 30 years on, "Star Trek: The Next Generation" has an impressive fan base with 1.5 million likes on Facebook.

"We're very focused on fan engagement as a company," says Veronica Hart, senior vice president, consumer products, CBS Consumer Products. "The brand has such a passionate fan base that they're constantly in touch with us, and we're always communicating with them, whether it's engaging with them through social media, our gaming partners or other forms of content distribution, spanning from CBS All Access to syndication."

From the beginning, consumer products have been a natural brand extension for "Star Trek: The Next



VERONICA HART
senior vice president, consumer
products, CBS Consumer
Products

Generation.” A key partner for the program’s very first consumer products rollout was Playmates Toys, who had more than 300 different figures in its portfolio, as well as other core toy categories. Other highlights from the height of the series’ licensing program were “Star Trek: The Next Generation”-branded water and Borg-inspired bubble bath.

To fully celebrate the series’ 30th anniversary, CBS Consumer Products has unveiled a robust merchandising lineup. However, unlike its licensing campaign for the 50th anniversary of “Star Trek,” the campaign focuses more on content-inspired pieces for the “true” fan rather than co-branded deals that would appeal to a larger audience.

“Our focus right now is very heavily on the content of the show to a level that we had never done before. We really looked at signature characters and signature moments to develop high-quality collector programs,” says Hart.

One example of CBS Consumer Products’ focus on content is its upcoming book *The Autobiography of Captain Jean Luc Picard*, which details the life and career of Captain Picard—ranging from court martials, unrequited love, his capture and torture by the Cardassians, his assimilation by the Borg and countless other encounters. Titan Books will release the title this month.

The company has also tapped artist Juan Ortiz to develop *Star Trek The Next Generation: The Art of Juan Ortiz*, which features every episode from the series (178 in total) showcased as it would have appeared as a movie poster in Ortiz’s well-known style.

On the collectibles side, the company has teamed up with Quantum Mechanix for a fully articulated, 1:6 scale Picard figure. QMx has also developed anniversary badges and merchandise inspired by the series’ mirror universe.

In addition, CBS Consumer Products and QMx partnered with Loot Crate to create and launch a new bi-monthly subscription crate that highlights the “Star Trek” universe. The new “Star Trek” Mission Crate will include exclusive, officially licensed collectible merchandise spanning figures, ships, wearables and prop replicas.

ThinkGeek has also signed on to release branded swimwear and a Warp Core Charger. The company will also release “Star Trek: The Next Generation” Geeki-Teekis, which are produced by Beeline Creative.

On the apparel front, CBS Consumer Products has tapped a variety of partners including BifBangPow, Trevco, Her Universe and Freeze, among others. Anovos also released replica uniforms, including a new range of the women’s skant uniform, which according to the book *The Art of Star Trek* is a skirt designed for men following the total equality of the sexes

presumed to exist in the 24th century.

Other partners on board to celebrate the series’ 30th anniversary include FanSets Pin for 30th anniversary pins; FameTek for a Bluetooth Communicator Pin, as well as an Enterprise 1701-D Bluetooth speaker; Cherry Tree for a Borg computer; Spyr Games for a Borg invasion in its game “Pocket Starships”; IDW for “Star Trek The Next Generation: Mirror Broken” comics; Hallmark for itty bitty plush and ornaments; Gallery Books for a new publishing title; Shmaltz Brewing for craft beer; and Modiphius for the RPG game “Star Trek Adventures.”

Live events have also been a popular push during the “Star Trek: The Next Generation” activities. Earlier this year, CBS Consumer Products hosted its signature event in Las Vegas, Nev., “Star Trek Las Vegas,” which featured a cast reunion, exclusive merchandise and showcased the art of Ortiz.

The company will also host a number of “Star Trek: The Next Generation” actors and events on board its “Star Trek”-themed cruises in January. In 2018, CBS Consumer Products will host a variety of actor reunions and fan events to continue the celebrations at sea.

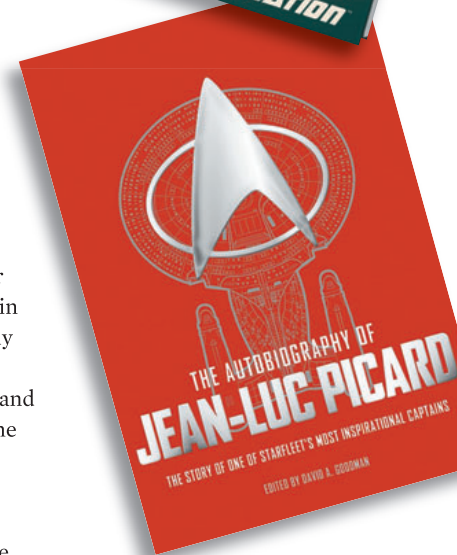
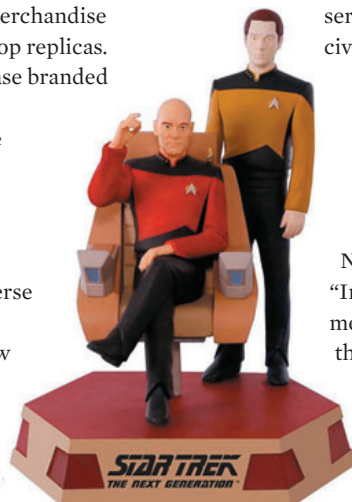
On the international front, CBS Consumer Products will host a large fan event in Dortmund, Germany, in April as well as the fan event “Destination Star Trek” in Birmingham, England, in October 2018. Many of its 30th anniversary licensed products will also be available internationally through its U.S. licensees.

While the 30th anniversary celebrations will primarily culminate as 2017 comes to a close, CBS Consumer Products is continuing to look to the future with more “Star Trek” content in the works.

On Sept. 24, the brand-new “Star Trek” series, “Star Trek: Discovery,” debuted on CBS and is now available in the U.S. on CBS All Access. The new series is set roughly a decade before the events of the original “Star Trek” series, introduces all-new characters, worlds and civilizations and continues the classic storyline that has endured through the decades.

Even though CBS Consumer Products is shifting gears to live and breathe the new the series, the overall “Star Trek” franchise will continue to be a focus for the company.

“We’re seeing constant growth of ‘The Next Generation’ fan community,” says Hart. “In addition, we have more ‘Next Generation’ merchandise than we’ve ever had before, other than when it was on air, but now it’s much more tied to the content of the show. The 30th anniversary has been a great halo for us, but we’re still focused on extending ‘The Next Generation’ footprint going forward.” ©



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JOHANNE BROADFIELD
vice president, Cartoon Network
Enterprises EMEA

Cartoon Network is building its experiential programs around fan affinity, putting those that matter most to the brand at the center of everything it does. **by BARBARA SAX**

It takes more than great content to create a devoted fan base, and Cartoon Network is putting fandom front and center to keep fans deeply engaged with its properties.

“At a corporate level, Turner has put fandom very

firmly in the center of our global strategy. We don’t talk about audiences anymore, we talk about fans and fandom,” says Johanne Broadfield, vice president, Cartoon Network Enterprises EMEA, a part of Turner Entertainment. “For the past 18 months, we’ve been all about a 360-degree brand experience.”

Putting fans at the heart of the business ups a property’s game by fueling growth and fan commitment. In creating a foundation based on strong core content,

Cartoon Network is building its brands out to engage fans on a deeper level with a wide and varied set of temporary and permanent experiences.

“We’re creating authentic, personal experiences specifically designed for fans of each brand to interact with the properties in new and unique ways,” says Broadfield.

Far from a one-size-fits-all approach, Broadfield says the company



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is designing experiences tailored to each brand and its retail partners so that activations are meaningful and connect with fans in a personal way.

“We’re developing experiences that reflect each band’s DNA. Fans know what’s right and what’s not—if something is manufactured and cookie-cutter, it won’t succeed,” she says. “To do this well requires a lot of thought and a deep understanding of how fans want to engage in your brand. Brands are living things, and how fans engage in that is totally unique. It’s not something you take on lightly, but it’s a hugely important part of any 360-degree brand management that’s become all the more important with the growth of social media. For Millennials, experiences are even more important than product.”

Guided by its research and insights, Cartoon Network is crafting one-of-a-kind experiences for its series “Ben 10,” “The Powerpuff Girls” and “Adventure Time,” as well as other core franchises and new properties. Since “Ben 10’s” core focus is on the main character’s transformation, Cartoon Network has developed a traveling “Hero Truck Tour,” an immersive, augmented reality experience that allows kids to transform into one of Ben’s alternate alien personas and save the world, at least for a few minutes. The truck recently completed a 17-stop retail tour of the U.K., hosted more than 2,000 visitors and gave

away 10,000 alien craft activities. The truck will travel throughout Europe making stops in Poland, Spain and Italy to support the property’s toy launch this fall.

For retail toy partners, Cartoon Network is also supporting the launch of the toy range with the rollout of a free-standing Rustbucket (Ben’s RV) display large enough for kids to sit in.

“The display received a tremendous thumbs-up from retailers,” says Broadfield. “We’re already working on a new iteration of that display for 2018. We’ve got some great ideas.”

“Ben 10 Challenge,” a live-action game show set to launch in eight EMEA markets this year, gives kids a chance to compete as Ben 10. The show was produced in Madrid and will air this fall. Eight local versions will follow in France, Germany, Italy, the Middle East, Poland, Spain, Turkey and the U.K.

“The show is a fantastic piece of family entertainment that allows kids to interact with the brand in a really fun and different way,” says Broadfield. “We did something like this years ago, but not on this scale and at this level of execution.”

Each of the 10 22-minute episodes will feature two three-person teams (two kid fans and one supportive adult) who compete in a series of physical and mental challenges to test their speed, strength and other “Ben 10” villain-conquering skills, as well as their knowledge of the series. The live-action game show format dials up engagement and excitement for the brand and perfectly complements Cartoon Network’s “Ben 10” franchise strategy.

“The Powerpuff Girls,” which features characters that are super cute yet super fierce, required a different approach. Cartoon Network created a three-day pop-up emporium in London where fans could pamper themselves at a nail bar, spar with a Mojo Jojo punch bag, pet a snake and a rabbit and visit a science lab. “Britain’s Got Talent’s” Alesha Dixon fronted the campaign, and the emporium welcomed more than 1,700 visitors.

“We’ve done a lot in the fashion arena with ‘Powerpuff Girls,’” says Broadfield.

Moschino and Cartoon Network teamed up on a fashion collection to celebrate the 2016 reboot of the animated show. The franchise hit the runway again in February in a collaboration with Fyodor Golan, which debuted part of its 15-piece “Powerpuff Girls” collection. To further



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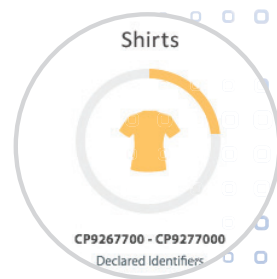
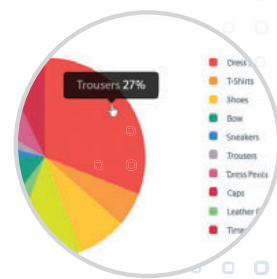
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support the apparel collection, Cartoon Network created a bespoke piece of animation that featured Fyodor Golan in a special episode, while the designers created mini digital versions of certain pieces, giving fans around the world a chance to “try on” the clothes. The collaboration was such a success that Fyodor Golan brought “The Powerpuff Girls” collection back to the runway yet again this year for a four-day pop-up shop at London Fashion Week Festival, which took place last month.

An ability to engage fans in innovative ways has enabled Cartoon Network to deliver big results for its partners when new products are launched. To support the launch of Dr. Martens’ “Adventure Time” collection of boots for girls, boys, men and women in 2015, Cartoon Network created events that generated media coverage and lit up social media.

“The Dr. Martens designers and marketers really got under the skin of the ‘Adventure Time’ brand. It was a solid brand fit for us, since Dr. Martens is a brand that’s all about authenticity, and that meant that whatever we did with them had to feel different, fresh, fun and right for their customer base. It also had to be appealing to younger and older fans,” says Broadfield.

In a twist on Dr. Martens’ tag line “Stand for Something,” Cartoon Network created an “Adventure Time” Bounce for Something stunt in which a 100-strong “bounce mob” bounced on Jake space hoppers to the store on London’s Carnaby Street. To support the launch of the Dr. Martens Princess Bubblegum collection, Cartoon Network held a Princess Bubblegum street party filled with bubbles.

Fans of “Adventure Time” can experience the Land of Ooo with an augmented reality experience that has toured shopping malls, public spaces and conventions across EMEA, including last year’s London Comic Con and at Brand Licensing Europe 2016. A home-based “Adventure Time” bespoke Jake the Dog viewer and “I See Ooo” mobile VR game launched last year, and allows fans to engage with technology and interact with some of their favorite characters in an affordable and accessible way. It’s a channel that is appropriate for the brand, and one that its fans readily continue to embrace.

“How you connect the fan bases takes a lot of thought and is totally unique for each partner and property,” says Broadfield.

Cartoon Network’s most recent partnership with LEGOLand Discovery Centre, an indoor family attraction chain operated by British leisure group Merlin Entertainments, saw the creation of a Cartoon Network-branded temporary experience in the park’s Manchester location.

Kids and parents had an opportunity to create stop-motion animation from “Adventure Time” with LEGO figures from the LEGO Dimensions range, and make a LEGO mosaic of “The Powerpuff Girls.”

“We used our Imagination Studios initiative to create bespoke activity experiences branded around our key properties,” says Broadfield.

The experience will travel to Berlin next, says Cartoon Network.

“The people who take part in the activities like the

immersive nature of the experience. The great thing about offering experiences alongside product is that they carry a lot of value and they carry it with them over time. They create a memory of the experience,” she says.

The Cartoon Network Zone at IMG Worlds of Adventure, the world’s

largest indoor theme park in Dubai, has been open for year. The park experience features branded rides, restaurants and retail locations, including the world’s largest “Ben 10” store. IMG World’s second park, World of Legends, will also add a Cartoon Network Zone.

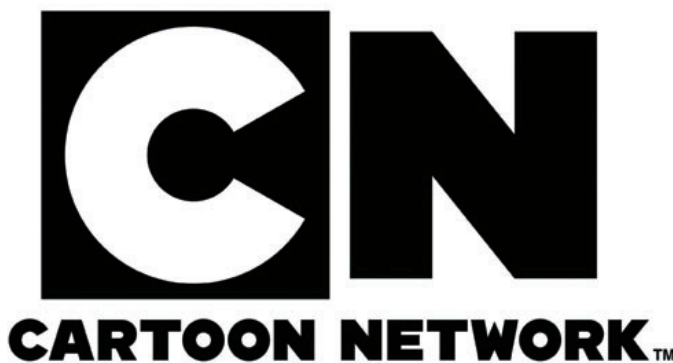
Cartoon Network also recently announced a partnership with Live Nation Middle East to launch a multi-property stage production, “Cartoon Network Live! Heroes Unite,” that will feature Cartoon Network’s most popular heroes from “Ben 10,” “The Powerpuff Girls,” “Adventure Time” and “The Amazing World of Gumball.”

“We’re in the heat of rehearsals and final sign off,” says Broadfield.

The live show will launch in the du Forum on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi in October and will tour the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

Cartoon Network is hard at work on new activations for its evergreen and new properties.

“Our fan-centric approach helps to us bring to life the individuality of our brands and supports both our brands and our partners, while creating experiences that fans can’t wait to talk about and share,” says Broadfield. ©



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A LOOK AT SOCIAL PLATFORMS

While social platforms like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube continue to dominate consumers' hearts and occupy their time, a host of new social media networks have emerged in recent years, and with them comes new opportunities and exposure for licensed merchandise, branded marketing campaigns and more. This report highlights several fresh social platforms that offer new avenues of consumer engagement. **by ERICA GARBER**

'Musical.ly'

"Musical.ly" is a platform for creating, sharing and discovering short videos. With more than 200 million users in over 30 countries, the app sees millions of people every day express themselves through singing, dancing, comedy and lip syncing.

Seventy percent of "Musical.ly" users are women as of June 2017, according to *Forbes*, and 50 million users are under the age of 21, according to Vice. CNN also reports that, as of November 2016, "Musical.ly" boasts more than 20 million active users in the U.S.

With such a popular platform, which is consistently growing, the video social networking app's push into licensing makes sense, and in late 2016, the brand appointed Brand Central to develop a consumer products program spanning apparel, accessories, consumer electronics, home décor, toys, health and beauty, back-to-school and more.

Brand Central has already secured several partners for the social platform. In April, Tween Team signed on to create a branded back-to-school collection that consists of notebooks, folders, binders, pencils, pencil cases, stickers, tattoos, DIY bracelets, locker accessories and more.

Other licensees for the "Musical.ly" platform include Jerry Leigh of California for apparel in the U.S.; JCorp for apparel in Canada; Quest USA for tech/consumer electronics in the U.S., Canada and Mexico; American Marketing Enterprises for sleepwear in the U.S.; Jammers Apparel Group for sleepwear in Canada; Iscream for bags,



backpacks and home accessories in the U.S. and Canada; and SGCompanies for footwear in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

"Musical.ly" teamed up with Apple Music in April to allow its users to stream full-length songs—rather than just 15-second clips—from Apple Music's catalog directly within the app. The partnership also allows users to save particular songs to their own playlists as well as access "Musical.ly"-branded playlists via the streaming service.

'Snapchat'

Unlike "Musical.ly," the "Snapchat" social platform has focused less on licensing out its brand, but rather licensing in properties across multiple brand categories.



The brand has featured multiple, exclusive lens (called filters by consumers) that are offered for a limited time, and are often timed to events, movie releases or other marketing campaigns. Recent examples include filters showcasing the Super Bowl, *Ghostbusters*, Sanrio, Pikachu, *Transformers*, *Suicide Squad*, Pepsi, Taco Bell and Starbucks, among many others.

"Snapchat," which launched in 2011, has transformed significantly in recent years. It originally launched as a private, person-to-person photo sharing app that would allow users to save photographs. However, it now has the ability to send short videos; communicate through video chat; compile images into storylines accessible to everyone on a users' friend list; contribute to live stories, which feature snaps curated for all

“Snapchat” users; access a designated area within the app for ad-supported, short-form content from major publishers such as *Daily Mail*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Buzzfeed*, *Self* and iHeart Radio; and much more.

The social network is also one of the most popular in the U.S., with its user base expected to grow by 25.8 percent to 79.2 million monthly users, according to eMarketer’s projections. eMarketer also notes that “Snapchat” nearly doubled its user base in the U.K. between 2015 and 2016 and is expected to see an increase of 20.2 percent this year.

According to Omnicore, a digital advertising and marketing agency, 71 percent of “Snapchat” users are under the age of 34; roughly 70 percent of users are female; 30 percent of U.S. Millennial internet users use the app regularly; 50 percent of male college students share selfies on the app, while 77 percent of female college students share selfies; 45 percent of users are between the ages of 18-24; and active Snapchatters open the app more than 18 times every day.

‘Line’

“Line” is a mobile messaging app that allows users to exchange text messages, images, video and audio, as well as make free voice calls. In 2011, the messaging service launched a series of sticker characters, called Line Friends, which quickly expanded into a worldwide character brand. The messaging app has also featured outside brands such as Cartoon Network’s “Adventure Time” in a series of branded stickers.

Today, the messaging app boasts 217 million monthly active users as of January (according to TechInAsia). eMarketer also reports that “Line” is used by 95 percent of female smartphone owners, ages 10-19, in Japan, as well as 89.1 percent of male smartphone owners, ages 10-19.

Most recently, the Asia-based character brand and messaging service opened a new flagship retail location in the heart of New York City’s Times Square.

The 4,600-square-foot flagship, which is the first permanent Line Friends location in North America, also serves as a launch pad for the global expansion of the company as it sets its sights on global enterprise.

Line Friends is well-established in Asia where the brand already boasts 84 stores and cafés across 11 countries including Korea, Japan, Thailand, Hong Kong, Indonesia and more, as well as numerous activations at malls and theme parks.

Recent collaborations for the brand include a partnership with Samsung Electronics, which saw the launch of Line Friends-branded accessories for Galaxy devices, as well as with McDonald’s China for a series of promotions for the 2016 Rio Olympics. Other companies



that have launched products featuring the brand include Bompom, Lamy, Thermos, Vans, Mr Maria, Moleskine, Uniqlo and Rivers Drinkware, among many others.

Despite all the recent success of the Line Friends characters, the “Line” app is continuing to engage fans throughout Asia and is slowly creeping onto cell phones in North America and beyond.

‘WeChat’

“WeChat” is a Chinese social media, instant messaging, commerce and payment services application that was first released in 2011. Today, the application is one of the largest standalone messaging apps with more than 963 million active users monthly.

In 2016, *Business Insider* reported that 93 percent of the population in Tier 1 cities in China used “WeChat.” Technode also found that 69 percent of the population in Tier 2 cities in the country used the app. It also reported that 60 percent of “WeChat” users were between the ages of 15 and 29.

As China’s application of choice, “WeChat” has participated in a number of brand collaborations to not only promote brands, but also to allow users to access additional services from China Southern Airlines, Airbnb, Western Union, China Airlines, Ten Sports and more.

For example, China Southern Airlines allows “WeChat” users to buy tickets, check-in, pick seats, get flight status, track baggage and handle their loyalty program miles. Airbnb also allows “WeChat” users to login and register through the app, and provides the option to share listings with friends.

The *New York Times* has also benefitted from “WeChat”—users in China are able to access the U.S.-based publication via daily push messages filled with relevant news articles in both Chinese and English. Another publishing service utilizing the social networking app is BuzzFeed, which enables followers to receive a daily piece of viral content. Users can also chat with the company to request instant customized content by using keywords such as cats, dogs, lol, omg, fail, win and wtf.

Other brands are extending their reach to the Chinese application as well. The National Basketball Association allows fans to watch games (live or recorded), buy tickets and merchandise, check player stats and get updates. It also offers NBA digital stickers. The France-based brand Chanel also used the popular application to implement a QR code-based ticketing system for its “Paris in Rome” fashion show in Beijing, China, which took place in May 2016. The fashion house also used “WeChat” to deliver push notifications and reminders to its guests. ©



coming together

Studio 100 and m4e have merged their strengths to create a European powerhouse of kids' entertainment. **by BARBARA SAX**

What do you get when you cross children's entertainment powerhouse Studio 100 Group with the German brand management and media company m4e? One of the largest children's and family entertainment companies in Europe.

By acquiring a majority stake of m4e in February, Studio 100 has become a stronger player in an increasingly consolidated market.

On their own, each of the companies has a distinct advantage. Belgium-based Studio 100 is a leading global family entertainment company with offices across the Netherlands, France, Germany and Australia, a live-action studio in Belgium and two animation studios (Flying Bark Productions in Australia and Studio 100 Animation in Paris), as well as a stable of evergreen properties and newly created shows.

The company extends its properties, which include "Maya the Bee," "Heidi" and "Vic the Viking," into multiple consumer touchpoints, including live-action and animated content, digital platforms, film, publishing, merchandising, theme parks, theater and music.

Germany-based m4e has been creating innovative, award-winning shows such as "Mia and me" and "Wissper" for more than 150 territories worldwide since 2003. The studio has a robust pipeline of new properties and operates a full-service licensing and merchandising agency/division that represents international entertainment brands, as well, such as "Beyblade," "Yo-kai Watch" and "Super Wings."

Together, the two entities are a formidable player on the European family entertainment stage with expanded local and international distribution capabilities, a stable of top talent and enhanced in-house production possibilities.

"Studio 100, with the acquisition of m4e, is by far the leading animation and live-action studio in Europe with more than 17,500 episodes of kids and family entertainment programs," says Hans Ulrich Stoeff, who will continue as chief executive officer of m4e and Studio 100 Media. "The international markets are in a huge upheaval with consolidation on every level, and this partnership gives us the strategic advantage to compete and thrive in this market."

"When you join forces with the biggest talent available with animation

studios in Sydney and Paris, you become a global producer of content, and you become a critical partner for important licensees," says Hans Bourlon, chief executive officer, Studio 100. "The portfolios of Studio 100, which contains classics such as 'Maya the Bee,' 'Heidi,' 'Vic the Viking,' 'Nils Holgersson' and new productions, and m4e, which has successfully developed and produced new and original content, combine well to offer a broad range of content for potential licensing partners."

Combining teams with different core strengths from both the Studio 100 and m4e offices in Munich has allowed the merged company to "create the strongest sales and marketing force in the European market," says Bourlon.

"Since Studio 100 is a leading producer of live-action in Europe, and we have our own facilities in Belgium, from sound stages to editing suites, we can do everything in house," he says.

All of the m4e properties will be incorporated into Studio 100's leisure segment, which produces live shows in German-speaking countries and operates six theme parks under the Plopsa brand in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. The leisure business is increasingly becoming a more significant part of the business, and additional theme parks are planned for Poland in the near future.

"The leisure business is booming, and unlike other content, experience-based entertainment doesn't face digital competition," says Bourlon. "Families are increasingly willing to spend money on spending quality time together. Featuring all of our properties in



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chief executive officer,
Studio 100



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chief executive officer, m4e and
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our theme park attractions is good for the marketing side of the business as well as for licensees, since it raises visibility and builds a wider fan base on the combined mix of characters.

“We’re always in search of new opportunities in the theme parks, and we’ve recently bought two parks and refurbished them—we have more ambitions in this area. We have plans to build two water parks in Belgium, and are hoping to start construction in the next year. We are always looking to acquire companies which have strong content in television and feature films,” Bourlon continues.

Looking forward, Studio 100 and m4e have an ambitious five-year plan for animation and live-action properties, with five feature films set for release in 2018 and 2019 alone. Plans include debut feature films for “Mia and me,” “Heidi” and “Vic the Viking,” as well as a second feature film for “Maya the Bee” and the debut of a new television series, “The Beatrix Girls.”

“The Beatrix Girls,” a hybrid of live-action, puppet animation and CGI, is now in development for the worldwide market.

“It’s a comedy show about a girl band of puppets, and we have really high hopes for this property,” says Stoef of the new series.

Another new property, “100% Wolf,” produced by the Australian animation studio Flying Bark Productions, will include a TV show and a feature film.

“We will announce broadcasters soon and bring the property to the licensing market next year,” says Stoef.

With more than 350 licensing partners and 10,000 licensed products across all categories, Studio 100 has a strong licensing track record with product implementation.

On its side of the business, m4e recently named a number of new licensing partners for “Wissper” and “Mia and me.”

Simba Dickie Group was appointed as the international master toy manufacturing partner for “Mia and me” and is developing a range of dolls and toys based on the show and its characters that will



initially launch in Germany, Austria and Switzerland next year, before being made available to international markets.

“Mia and me” is broadcast in more than 80 territories and holds a top five spot in Germany, France, Greece and the U.K., with 170 licensing partners on board including Ravensburger, Egmont, Unilever, Nestle, Random House, Panini and Ferrero.

Giochi Preziosi was recently named master toy partner for “Maya the Bee” and will create an extensive range of licensed products set to launch in fall 2018. The collection will include figurines, playsets, role play and feature plush. The licensing deal covers key territories including Italy, France,

Spain, the U.K., Portugal and Greece.

“Maya the Bee” season two, a brand-new season with 52 new adventures, is set to launch on major international networks such as Gulli, Tiny Pop and RTP. The property has attracted more than 25 million viewers worldwide with the online Maya dance video, and will continue to grow its digital presence with a web series based on Maya and her friends, which will be tailored for specific digital platforms.

Alicom Licensing was named as the licensing and merchandising agent in the Nordic region for “Mia and me,” and “Wissper” and is working with Baumhaus Verlag, the children’s book imprint of Bastei Luebbe, to create a publishing range for the series in its territories.

Stoef and Bourlon have great expectations for the growth of the combined company’s stable of brands, new and old, in the future.

“Our aim is always to create new properties from a blank page, whether through remakes of well-known classic characters that let parents and grandparents share their nostalgia for those characters or through new properties developed

by our studios,” says Bourlon. ©



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Having established a loyal following among preschoolers in the U.K., BBC Worldwide is now looking to build the product program for 'Hey Duggee!' in the U.S. and Canada.

by **NICOLE SILBERSTEIN**

BBC Worldwide's latest children's hit, "Hey Duggee!," is picking up steam on both sides of the pond, with continually strong ratings in the U.K. and the first line of licensed products hitting shelves in North America.

The BAFTA award-winning animated preschool series first aired in the U.K. in late 2014 and made its U.S. debut in summer

2016. The show centers on a children's group called The Squirrel Club, akin to the Cub or Beaver Scouts, but for preschoolers, run by a big dog called Duggee.

The BBC Worldwide co-production with Studio AKA taps into the ethos that has made organizations like the Cub Scouts so popular for decades—community, adventure, accomplishment and, of course, fun. The series currently

airs on CBeebies in the U.K., BBC Kids and Treehouse in Canada, Nick Jr in the U.S. and in more than 80 other territories worldwide.

"'Hey Duggee!' is a fantastic program loved by kids and parents," says Sergei Kuharsky, executive vice president, enterprise and digital franchises, BBC Worldwide–Americas. "The show encourages both play and learning, laughter and problem-solving, and it was



SERGEI KUHARSKY
executive vice president,
enterprise and digital franchises,
BBC Worldwide–Americas



CARLA PEYTON
senior vice president,
licensing, BBC Worldwide–
Americas



RIKESH DESAI
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important for us to engage in partnerships that would reflect the spirit of the brand.”

In the U.K., the licensing program for the brand is well-established, having been in place for several years now. And with new episodes on the way, that success looks set to continue.

Master toy partner Golden Bear is developing a new “Hey Duggee!” plush range for fall/winter 2018, and recent launches of nightwear, underwear and swimwear from Aykroyd and TDP, as well as art, stationery and activity products from Blue Sky Designs have seen immediate success. New licensees for this year in the U.K.



include Dreamtex for bedding and home textiles, and Paper Projects for stickers. Additionally, publishing partner Penguin Random House has a range of companion books, and Immediate Media publishes the official “Hey Duggee!” magazine.

“We are thrilled to be working with a whole host of best-in-class partners to expand the ‘Hey Duggee!’ offering this autumn,” says Rikesh Desai, licensing director, merchandise and gaming, BBC Worldwide. “It’s a really exciting time for ‘Duggee.’”

And that excitement is trickling outward, as the brand expands its product program into the U.S. and Canada.

In February, BBC Worldwide–Americas named Jazwares as the master toy licensee for the series in the U.S. and Canada, marking the brand’s first product partnership in the region with a line of collectible figures, vehicles, plush and play sets.

“Jazwares has done an excellent job bringing ‘Hey Duggee!’ to life for children in the U.S. and Canada,” says Carla Peyton, senior vice president, licensing, BBC Worldwide–Americas. “The Huggable Duggee plush, Duggee’s Police Car, and Duggee’s Rescue Vehicle have been particularly popular in the region.”

BBC Worldwide–Americas announced two additional licensees for “Hey Duggee!” in May—Children’s Apparel Network for girls’ and boys’ apparel, swimwear, layettes and outerwear; and Jay Franco for bedding, bath goods, beach products and storage products. Both licensees are planning product launches for spring 2018.

“We knew fans would love the Jazwares toys, and Children’s Apparel Network and Jay Franco are perfect partners with whom to take the next step in expanding the brand,” says Peyton. “Next year will see the launch of two new lines of products that are both practical and fun, and we can’t wait to introduce them to fans.” ©

HEY DUGGEE





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AN EPIC OUTLOOK

For Epic Rights, music licensing is more than just a t-shirt business.

by ERICA GARBER

Rising beyond the traditional model for music merchandising (think programs featuring strictly t-shirts and posters), Epic Rights has separated itself from the pack and changed its outlook on the way licensing for music artists should be—infusing a raft of categories into its lineup and proving music is more popular than ever across multiple generations.

“We aren’t just a licensing and branding company,” says Lisa Streff, executive vice president, global licensing, Epic Rights. “We have multiple divisions of the company, and Dell Furano actually started the company with the services he did to increase fan engagement as well as incremental revenue for the artist.”

Founded in 2014 by Furano, the company now boasts five divisions—retail licensing, VIP programs, tour, fan community and e-commerce—and is responsible for building more than 35 artists’ brands including classic rock artists such as AC/DC and KISS, global artists like John Lennon, Celine Dion, David Bowie and Zac Brown, as well as brands such as Woodstock Festival, CBGB and the Lyrics of Lennon and McCartney.

Epic Rights’ licensed programs for each artist are deeply

set in apparel—after all, it will always remain one of the most popular categories among music merchandise. However, the company has transformed the category and is focused on growing the segment beyond t-shirts as well as across multiple age groups and demographics.

“When we started the business in 2014, our initial deals were giving one licensee the rights to create apparel for young men, junior’s, kids and infant/toddlers,” says Streff. “As we noticed that the music business started to pick up due to bands touring, social media accounts growing and new generations being introduced to these artists and going to these shows, we realized there was a real business opportunity to pick partners based on their expertise and not just give away blanket rights.”

With that, Epic Rights has secured a robust assortment of licensees for each core market. The company currently boasts licensees focused strictly on the young men’s apparel business, the junior’s market, the kids’ category and more. It has also created programs for each segment of the business, with rock ‘n’ roll apparel available in every channel of distribution—including big box retailers like Target and Walmart;



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department stores such as Neiman Marcus, Bloomingdales, Nordstrom and Macy's; fast-fashion retailers like Zara, H&M and Forever 21; and typical music merchandise specialty outlets including Hot Topic and Spencer's.

According to Epic Rights, the licensed apparel category is doing better now than it was in the company's beginnings, with multiple categories—beyond t-shirts—doing well. Streff also notes that the company has seen a significant increase in sales and licensed merchandise among Millennial women, a trend they noticed started to take place around 2015.

The company's success in the licensed apparel business has also allowed it to grow to include backpacks/tote bags, fashion jewelry, watches, footwear and more.

Beyond licensed apparel, Epic Rights is focusing on growing its artists in a range of new categories, truly bringing the music merchandising business beyond its traditional model of t-shirts and posters.

Presently, the company is growing its figure business. For example, KISS has secured multiple deals in the category spanning various sizes, scales, and material types. Epic Rights has also extended the brand into comic books from Dynamite Entertainment; racing bikes by Sciacallo Bikes; 3D-printed figures from Staramba; Rocketfizz KISS-branded soda; waffle makers, toasters and popcorn makers from Pangea Brands; amusement park products from Rhode Island Novelty; cornhole games from AJJ Enterprises; and many more categories.

Other brand-new deals for KISS include Sproing for a new digital game, which will be released next month globally; Kick Off Games for figures and play sets; NECA for collectible figures; and Dark Horse Comics for coloring books.

Additionally, Epic Rights also recently partnered with Merch by Amazon to launch its artists' licensed apparel and cell phone accessories on Amazon.com. The initial rollout includes shirts for men, women and kids that feature graphics from KISS, Aerosmith and John Lennon. However, Epic Rights is planning to add additional product categories as well as additional artists to the e-commerce giant's product assortment.

Looking ahead to 2018, the company is gearing up



to further develop lifestyle programs for Celine Dion and Zac Brown.

Earlier this year, the company teamed up with The Bugatti Group to launch an array of handbags, luggage sets and small accessories for Celine Dion's brand. The range, which recently launched at Nordstrom, is expected to grow its distribution. The company is also planning to build the artist's lifestyle business around the initial deal.

For Zac Brown, Epic Rights is planning to create a lifestyle program that spans apparel, outdoor/sporting goods, food and beer/wine/spirits.

The company will also continue to add to its roster with new genres of artists in 2018.

Meanwhile, the company has also partnered with a series of sub-agents to represent select artists to extend its licensing efforts worldwide. Sub-agents include: Celebrities Entertainment in G/A/S and Scandinavia; Eureka in Turkey; J&M Brands in Benelux, Spain and Portugal; and Spectrum in South America. In key markets like the U.K., Epic Rights continues to manage its client roster.

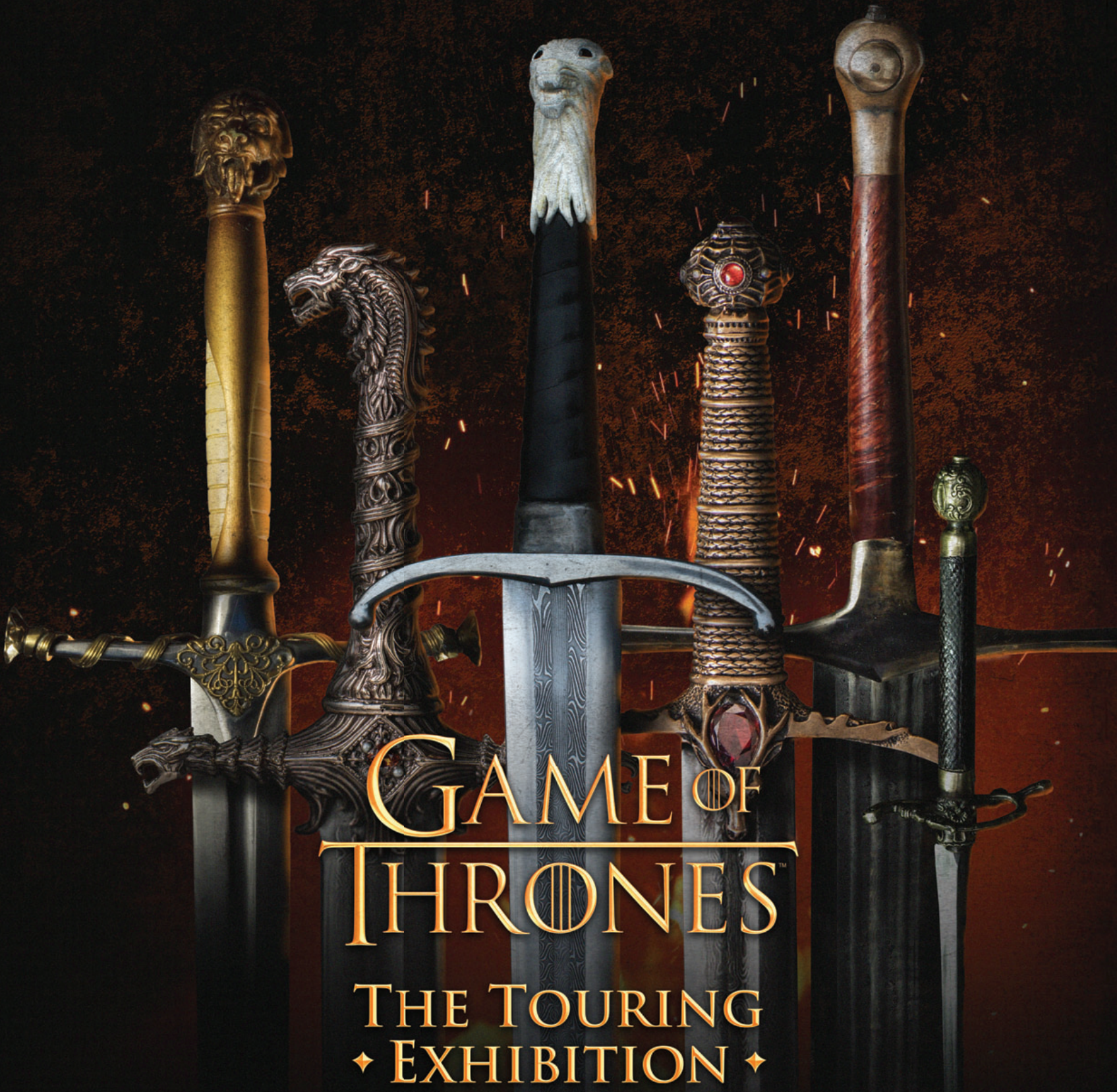
International markets that are currently performing well for Epic Rights, according to Streff, include the U.K., Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Spain, Mexico, South America, Turkey, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, among others. To further enhance its efforts in each region, the company is currently focused on going beyond apparel and replicating what they've done in the U.S. for each region.

"I believe we're making strides and changing the way people are thinking about music merchandise, and that's the goal," says Streff. "We don't want people to think of it as just a t-shirt business anymore. Yes, that's the core product category, but it's a fashion statement as well; and when consumers buy an item because it's a fashion statement, because it's creating a great memory or simply because it's something nostalgic, we're reaching all demographics now and not just the consumer who wants his great classic rock 'n' roll t-shirt." ©



LISA STREFF
executive vice president, global
licensing, Epic Rights

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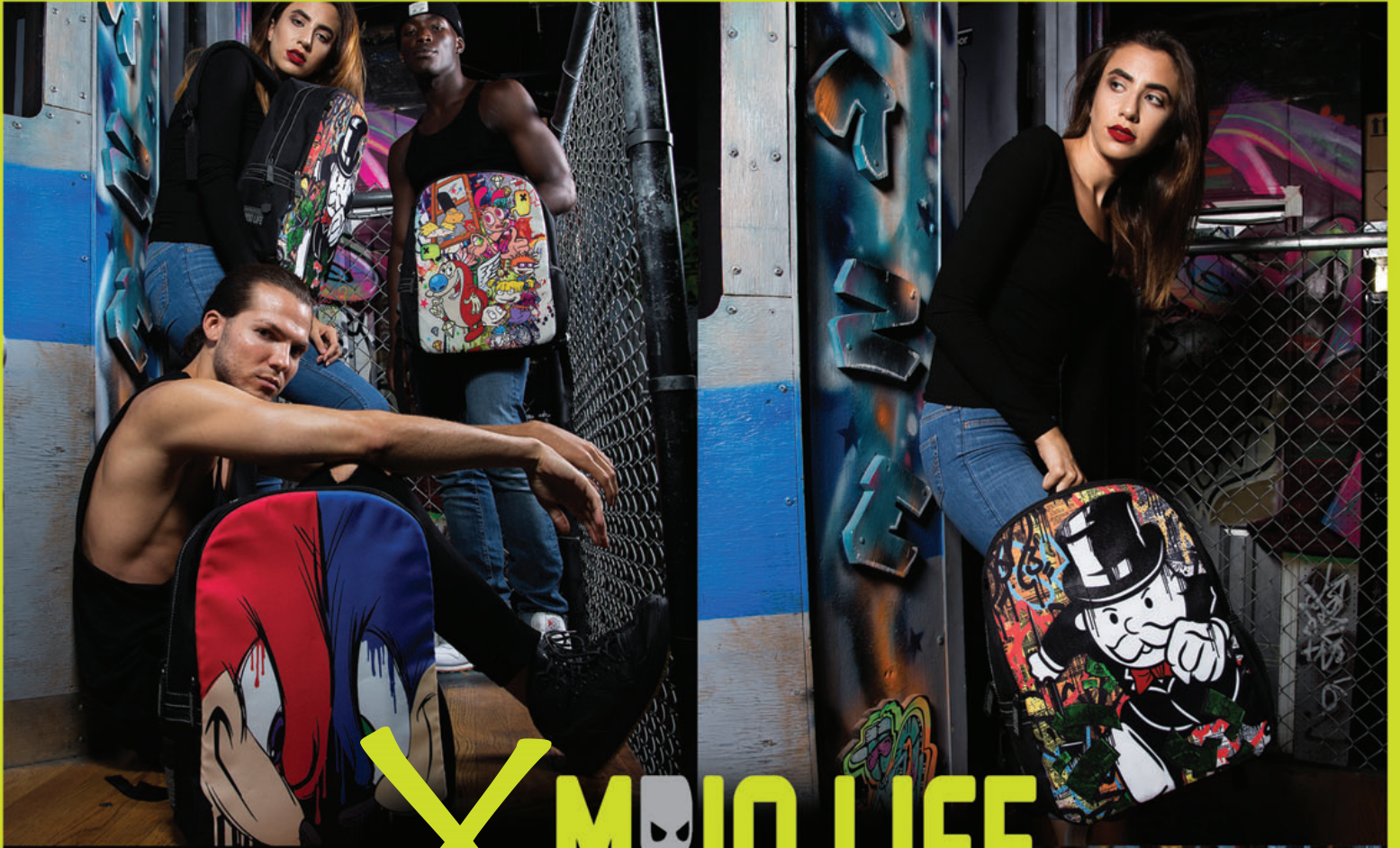
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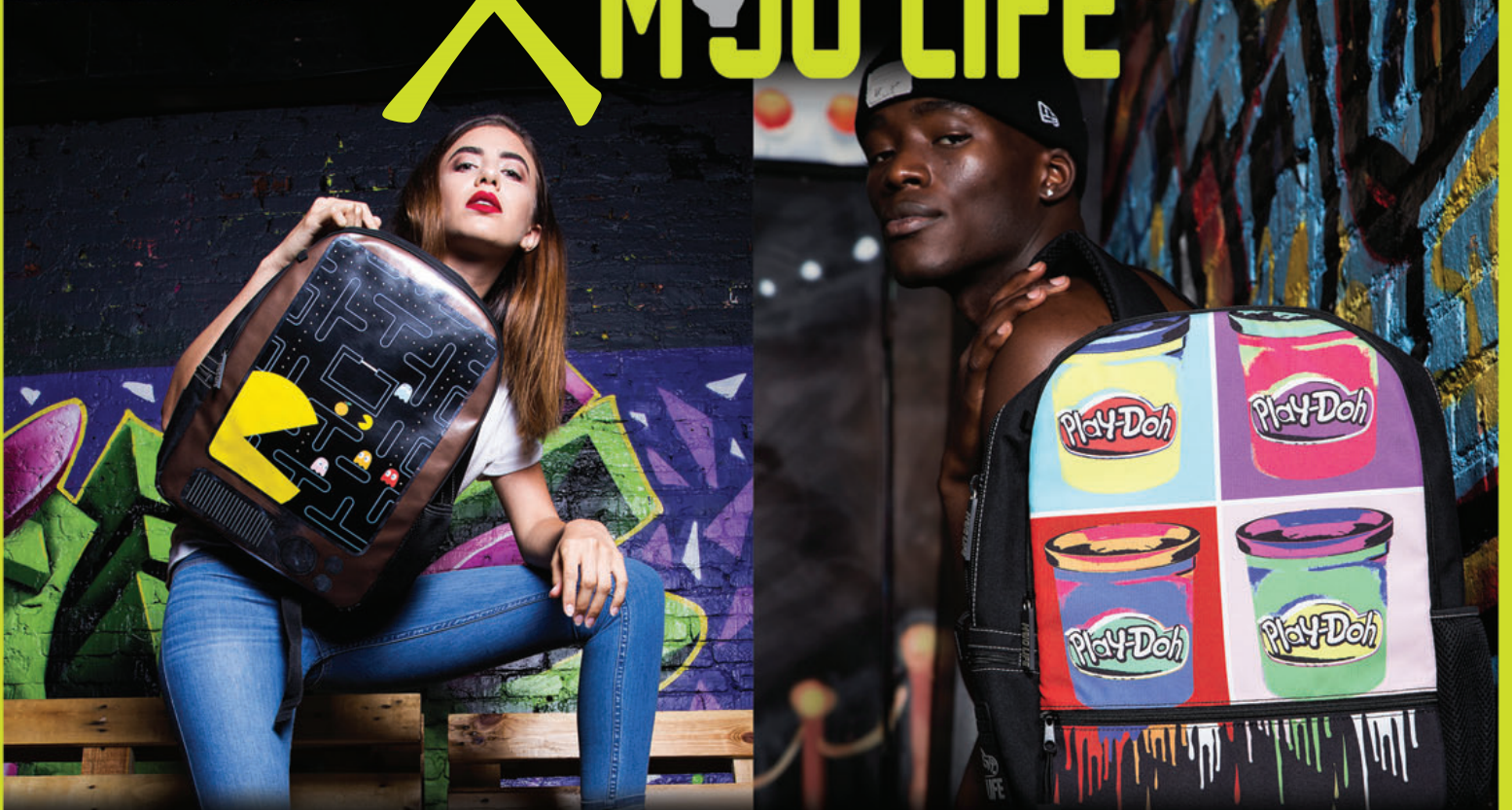
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