

TLL THE LICENSING LETTER

THE DEFINITIVE SOURCE FOR DATA, ANALYSIS, NEWS AND CONTACTS SINCE 1977

NYTF18: Blind Bags, Glitter & Poop 🍌

This last week saw the latest iteration of New York Toy Fair and offered a clear formula for success in toy aisles this coming year—if a toy or game includes one or more of the following fads, it might sell: (1) low-price collectible with blind packaging, (2) “cute” sparkles and magic, or (3) “gross” material like poop, slime, and dirt.

Retail sales of licensed toys and games generated over \$8 billion in retail sales in the U.S./Canada for 2016—up from \$7.5 billion the previous year. While sales somewhat softened in 2017, for 2018 consumer spending on licensed toys and games is expected to rebound.

A quick note on the mood from the floor; the aisles were decidedly more sparse than in years prior, although most major booths were crowded. The historically under-appreciated traditional toys/games section actually saw a lot of traffic (and sales) in the first two days, and then saw a steep fall-off later on in the show. There were a lot more social influencers on the floor, including kids aged 14 and under—making for some strange sights.

The aftermath of the Toys “R” Us bankruptcy had a chilling effect on the floor. Some exhibitors professed their good fortune that their merchandise wasn’t picked up by the retail giant last year—if they had shipped a couple of containers of their product to TRU in time for the holiday season (and before the announcement), their businesses wouldn’t have lived to tell the tale. On the flip side, there were some rising stars from 2017 that weren’t seen in the aisles this year (hopefully for unrelated reasons). For those toy manufacturers remaining, there was a greater focus on selling into smaller, independent retailers and specialty shops.

This year’s MVP was, to no great surprise, Jurassic World—sparking the “Year of the Dinosaur” trend as described below. Licensees broke out all the stops, with master toy partner Mattel boasting a massive toy line including

hundreds of dinosaur action figures. But the newest film in the franchise isn’t expected to generate the roughly 50% of toy sales *Jurassic Park* had in years prior; the wealth is going to be more widespread in 2018.

Unsurprisingly, given the vast roster of Marvel and DC Comics films and TV shows set to be released this year, superhero properties featured prominently. The top “new face” on the floor was Nickelodeon’s *Sunny Day*, a preschool TV series that has sparked a resurgence in hair-based play patterns across all varieties of toys. Surprisingly, there was no action on the floor from the upcoming DreamWorks film *How to Train Your Dragon 3*—but, as discussed below, dragons more generally were popular on the floor.

Continued on page 3

ENTERTAINMENT/CHARACTER

Superpowered Franchises Dominate Film Calendar

Every iteration of the Planned Feature Films with Licensing Potential chart (see page 17) slams home the message that studios are increasingly investing in franchises. And superheroes are some of the best sources to mine—with a diverse and deep reserve of characters and storylines.

Breaking it down by the numbers, the latest list counts 137 films with licensing potential through 2025. Of those, 39% are sequels, 18% are reboots, and just 6% are original projects. Twenty-three percent of films on the list are based on a comic property, 15% on a book, 9% on a game (traditional or video), 9% on a TV series, and just 5% on a toy.

As of writing, the biggest film launches of Q1 have landed. Feb. 16, 2018 is the day that will set the standard for box offices around the world. In the east, *Monster Hunt 2* launches from Edko Films. And hailing from Hollywood,

Continued on page 17

Inside This Issue

- Licensing Ledger.....2
- Award-winning Toys & Games 4
- Spending Up as Love Sets In 5
- Licensing News..... 6
- Contacts & Connections 12
- Planned Feature Films with Licensing Potential 17
- As Generations Shift, Preschool Market Follows 21
- Company Spotlight: On Scaling Niche to Mass 23
- Amid Rocky 2017 Performance, Toyco Boosted by Licensing 25
- Franchises Drive Comic Sales in 2017 25
- Publishing Driven by Kids; General Market Softens..... 26
- Who’s News..... 27

➡ Licensing Ledger

Global streaming giant **Netflix** grabs hands with **Pearl Studio**, formerly known as Oriental DreamWorks, to work on *Over the Moon*, a musical adventure directed by Disney animator Glen Keane. The project is positioned as a modern-day retelling of a classic Chinese myth and will premiere worldwide in 2020 exclusively on Netflix and theatrically in China.

A CMC-China consortium recently took full ownership of Oriental DreamWorks (creator of *Kung Fu Panda 3*), which operated as a joint-venture between China Media Capital (CMC), DreamWorks Animation, Shanghai Media Group, and Shanghai Alliance Investment Ltd. The acquisition follows media reports that Warner Bros. would buy Universal's 45% stake in Oriental DreamWorks, which Universal took over when Comcast acquired DreamWorks Animation in 2016.

DreamWorksTV, a division of Awesomeness that creates family-friendly digital content distributed via YouTube, partners with **Amazon** to launch its first subscription offering. The individual OTT network will offer exclusive programming including *Schneck & Eck Crack The Case*, *Action Figures In Action*, *Secret Agent Challenge*, and *Neighborhood Super Watch*.

Toy and novelty company **Basic Fun!** has acquired the assets of Pennsylvania-based construction toy company **K'Nex**.

German games publisher **Asmodee** buys **Lookout Games**, the outfit responsible for titles such as *Agricola*, a Euro-style board game. Lookout will remain an independent studio within Asmodee. In related news, **Mayfair Games** announces its withdrawal from games publishing and enters into an agreement with Asmodee to assume all their current IP.

Dentsu Aegis Network acquires San Francisco-based branding and design agency **Character**. Character will retain its leadership team, which will report to Nick Brien, CEO Americas for Dentsu.

Gentle Giant/3D Systems launches a new division, Gentle Giant Toys, dedicated to lower price-point collectible toy lines. It is branding

itself independently from its parentco with a new logo, website, and social media handles.

Tokyo-based **Sony Creative Products**, which manages **Mattel's** Pingu in Japan, strikes a deal with licensee **Mitsui Fudosan Retail Management Co. Ltd.** The major Pingu-themed event—called **ENJOY SHOP-PINGU** at LaLaport Fujimi—launches in conjunction with the airing of the new Japanese-made and produced computer-animated TV series *Pingu In The City*.

In the U.K., dedicated pay-as-you-go energy supplier **Boost** launches a major advertising campaign starring a character called "Boost Lee"—an homage to the late martial artist and movie star Bruce Lee. Utility customers can add credit to their prepayment meter, check their balance, and get alerts through their smartphones. The deal was brokered by **Beanstalk**, the licensing agent for **Bruce Lee Family Companies**, as well as **Born Licensing**, which represents London creative agency **SNAP LDN**.

WorldStrides is now the approved educational travel provider of the **Smithsonian Institution**. WorldStrides will offer domestic, teacher-led travel programs to middle and high schools throughout the U.S. meant to guide kids through

history, science, music, and more. Programs are designed as extensions of the in-classroom experience in a variety of destinations such as Washington, D.C., New York City, and California.

Per Leger, as of Dec. 2017 one out of five U.S. adults reported watching an esports event, with YouTube the leading way for them to do so. Meanwhile, between June and Dec. 2017, awareness of esports jumped from 36–50% among U.S. adults.

PlayMonster acquires **Kid O Toys**, a manufacturer known for its developmental and educational toddler and preschool lines.

Hasbro launches its new community crowdfunding platform, **HasLab**—its production platform for rare editions and items. The first toy up is a Star Wars offering; it won't be manufactured unless the project receives 5,000 backers pledging \$499.99 each for the toy.

In addition to opening a new 20,000 sq. ft. flagship location in New York's Rockefeller Plaza, **FAO Schwarz** partners with travel retailer **Hudson Group** to open a chain of branded airport shops in the U.S. and Canada.

FAO Schwarz will also launch in mainland China thanks to an agreement with toy distributor **Kidsland**. The long-term, multi-channel partnership will see FAO Schwarz enter the market with flagship locations in Beijing and Shanghai. Kidsland will also open 30 smaller branded specialty stores and shop-in-shops in 200 department stores across China over the next 5 years.

ReedPOP buys up **Gamer Network**, the parentco of EGX and the Euro-gamer content network. EGX is the U.K.'s largest consumer video game show and is held annually in the fall.



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NYTF18

Continued from page 1

The film with the most merchandise backing it? The sequel to *Fantastic Beasts*, to a certain extent. Warner Bros. is not pushing its licensees as hard this year to adopt the Wizarding World branding that it created as an umbrella to the broader Harry Potter universe. With the launch of the Harry Potter touring museum exhibition, the live Cursed Child theater show, and the Niantic mobile game app, the franchise is expected to sell even better than in years prior.

Looking into 2019, superhero franchises and video game brands are expected to continue to do well in one of the most crowded film years ever. The year after next will see the release of expected hits for franchises including the LEGO Movie, Godzilla, Fast & Furious, the Avengers, Minecraft, Justice League, Toy Story, Transformers, Spider-Man, Angry Birds, Wonder Woman, Frozen, and Star Wars. Franchises with films expected to launch in theaters in 2019 (but have no release date) additionally include Batman, Pokémon, Hello Kitty, Shaun the Sheep, Shrek, and Suicide Squad. Note that at this point, it's more likely than not that a few will be pushed back into 2020 just to avoid a packed weekend. See page 17 for more.

And it's not just films—the announcement of a new, multi-season adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* from Amazon Studios has sparked renewed interest in goods for the property. All of these entertainment releases will no doubt contribute to even shorter merchandising windows—and make it increasingly difficult for toyco and retailers alike to safely hedge their bets on just one or two licensed properties.

Engineering Fun

In regard to STEM (STREAM seems to have not caught on), this year the trend was “less talking, more doing.” The biggest focus in toys this year was teaching kids basic science (read: chemistry and earth science), reading, mechanical engineering, and coding skills.

For the last two years, Mattel has been leading the pack in headline-hitting tech offerings (namely, baby monitor Aristotle and the Barbie Dream House)—this year, the toyco has scaled back. Its offerings this year might be less innovative technically, but are more focused on promoting traditional kid's play patterns and value. And Mattel wasn't the only one—there was much less emphasis on screen-based play on the floor, even for toys and games that had smartphone-connected elements (usually, the toy could be played with sans screen).

Last year saw a surge in alternate materials like wood, plush, and even metal. The top new tactile trend this year, however, is squishy foam. According to kids: the softer the material is, and the slower it takes to return to its original shape, the better.

A-side/B-side Dichotomy

Intelligent design is key when it comes to soft toys, play sets, mats, storage, and basically anything that won't be relegated to a toy box at the end of a play session. Toyco's are increasingly catering to parents who want their kid's toys to match their home decor and not stick out like a sore thumb. To accomplish the dual goals of appealing to kids with bright colors and favorite characters as well as parents with discerning sensibilities, more and more goods are featuring two or more different sides to themselves.

For example, TCG Toys offers play mats with Marvel and Sesame Street characters (among others) that can be flipped over to feature fashionable home textile patterns. Pillow Pets carries licenses from partners like Disney and DreamWorks; its plush can be unfolded to create a fun character pillow, or, when flipped over, a chic patterned throw. TeeTurtle plush, on the other hand, can be flipped inside out to feature two different characters.

Year of the Dinosaur (And Don't Forget the Dog)

The unicorn (just because) and dragon (in part because of the release of *How to Train Your Dragon*, in part because of HBO's *Game of Thrones*, in part because it's a cousin to the dinosaur) have taken center stage as the best-represented mythical creatures.

But the true winners on the floor were the household cat and dog, which were the most common animals featured on the floor. Somewhere in the middle of the scale between the familiar and the supernatural rests the dinosaur—truly the king of the toy world thanks to the launch of Universal's new *Jurassic World* film this summer—and the narwhal, or the unicorn of the sea—which, you will remember, is a real, living creature.

Oddly enough, officially licensed merchandise from the best-selling children's book series of 2017 and 2018 (so far, according to *Publisher's Weekly*)—Dav Pikey's *Dog Man and Cat Kid*—was not spotted on the floor. But there was some for Nickelodeon's CatDog, which was close enough.

Hasbro impressed with its successor to the holiday hit FurReal Roaring' Tyler, the licensed Star Wars Chewie, who is powered by the same tech. But its real star was FurReal's Ricky, a dog who boasts over 100 sound and motion combinations including tricks like bone-flipping and shaking paws. Before you prepare yourself to retire your flesh-and-blood friends in favor of our new robot overlords, note that Ricky isn't potty-trained (yes, he poops too). Similar offerings abounded on the floor, ranging from adorable dolls to furry plush.

The breakout animal of the year was the sloth, whose representation on the floor rose approximately 2,500% compared to the previous year. There was no specific reason for the sloth's sudden rise; most attendees on the floor were puzzled, although one cited the Geico commercial. Nevertheless, it is true that the slow-moving creature has

Continued on page 4

been trending online since at least 2012—and it might just be that the toy industry has simply caught up to the fad and is ready to embrace pent-up consumer demand.

Potty Humor

Maybe it's just that we're tired of STEM and ready to go back to the most base schools of humor. No matter where you went, poop featured heavily on the floor. But not all offerings were made equal.

For the youngest age group, ranging from toddlers to pre-schoolers, the inclusion of devices like poop (but mostly pee) was nothing short of inspiring. Multiple toy companies offered their own version of realistic baby dolls and animals that can drink, eat, laugh, cry, and—yes, answer to the call of nature. While some dolls were babies, others were slightly older toddlers that celebrated the joy potty training (with sensors that track if the doll is on its designated spot).

Pre-tween-oriented offerings used poop as a gross-out humorous device, usually with some “cute” element (see the familiar emoji shape, a friendly smiling face). For the older kids, games begin to incorporate social sharing elements by encouraging group play and having “shareable” moments that could be easily filmed and disseminated online. For adults, the humor gets a little darker—enough said.

Video Games Rising

The creeping influence of video game brands on the floor hints at the emergence of a new powerhouse player in licensing. What's more, the branded toys and games emerging from this space have broad appeal to both children and adults. Retail sales of licensed merchandise based on video game/interactive/online-based properties amounted to \$61 million in 2016, up from \$59 million in 2015, according to *TLL's Annual Licensing Business Survey*.

Hot properties on the floor included, in no particular order: Minecraft, Overwatch, Mario, Pokémon, Mega Man, Five Nights at Freddy's, Halo, Destiny, Call of Duty, Assassin's Creed, Hello Neighbor, Silent Hill, Rocket League, Bendy and the Ink Machine, Angry Birds, and Mortal Kombat. The one exception? Yo-Kai Watch has not been performing as well as expected.

It's not just video game-branded goods that are seeing an uptick, but a broader aesthetic. Retro-inspired designs like “pixel blocks” are playing off of the construction toy trend and rebounding into areas like plush, fashion, and home design.

The surge in video game-based licensing is, in part, thanks to speciality retailers like GameStop and mass retailers like Target and Walmart that have signaled a

Award-winning Toys & Games

At the 18th annual Toy of the Year Awards, the Toy Association honored the top toys, games, and licenses according to votes cast late last year.

- ▶ Toy of the Year: Fingerlings, WowWee USA and L.O.L. Surprise!, MGA Entertainment (tie)
- ▶ License of the Year: Star Wars, Disney Consumer Products & Interactive Media
- ▶ People's Choice: Mystery Minis, Funko
- ▶ Action Figure of the Year: Marvel Guardians of the Galaxy Dancing Groot Figure, Hasbro
- ▶ Collectible of the Year: Fingerlings, WowWee USA
- ▶ Construction Toy of the Year: LEGO Star Wars BB-8, LEGO Systems
- ▶ Creative Toy of the Year: Star Wars Droid Inventor Kit, LittleBits
- ▶ Doll of the Year: Wonder Crew Superhero Will, PlayMonster
- ▶ Game of the Year: Soggy Doggy, Spin Master
- ▶ Infant/Toddler Toy of the Year: Teddy Ruxpin, Wicked Cool Toys
- ▶ Innovative Toy of the Year: Rubie's Jurassic World T-Rex Inflatable Costume, Rubie's Costume Company, Inc.
- ▶ Outdoor Toy of the Year: Bunch O Balloons Filler Soaker, Zuru
- ▶ Playset Toy of the Year: Hot Wheels Super Ultimate Garage, Mattel
- ▶ Plush of the Year: Disney Junior Minnie's Walk and Play Puppy, Just Play Products
- ▶ Preschool Toy of the Year: PAW Patrol My Size Lookout Tower, Spin Master
- ▶ Rookie of the Year: Antsy Pants Build & Play Kits, Beach House Group
- ▶ Specialty Toy of the Year: LEGO Star Wars Millennium Falcon, LEGO Systems
- ▶ Tech Toy of the Year: LEGO BOOST Creative Toolbox, LEGO Systems
- ▶ Vehicle of the Year: PAW Patrol Sea Patroller, Spin Master Ltd.

Meanwhile, the NPD offered its own U.S. Toy Industry Awards based on the top-sellers according to its Retail Tracking Service.

- ▶ Top Property of the Year: Nerf, Hasbro
- ▶ Top Selling Toy of the Year: L.O.L. Surprise! doll assortment, MGA Entertainment
- ▶ Action Figures & Accessories: Beyblade Starter Pack assortment, Hasbro
- ▶ All Other Toys: Antsy Labs Fidget Cube assortment, Zuru
- ▶ Arts & Crafts: Easy Bake Ultimate Oven Baking Star Play Set, Hasbro
- ▶ Building Sets: Mega Bloks First Builders Big Building Bag (80 Pieces), Mattel
- ▶ Dolls: L.O.L. Surprise! doll assortment, MGA Entertainment
- ▶ Games & Puzzles: UNO card game assortment, Mattel
- ▶ Infant/Toddler/Preschool Toys: Paw Patrol Basic Vehicle & Pup assortment, Spin Master
- ▶ Outdoor & Sports Toys: Bunch O Balloons (3 pack), Zuru
- ▶ Plush: Hatchimals Pengualas Pink Egg assortment, Spin Master
- ▶ Vehicles: Hot Wheels Singles (1:64 assortment), Mattel
- ▶ Youth Electronics: Cozmo, Anki

greater willingness to stock this type of merchandise next to their video game selections. Although sales of physical game disks and console systems has been unstable, retail sales of merchandise like plush, figures, blind bags, t-shirts, and accessories like wallets and key chains has remained strong.

Warner Bros. film *Ready Player One* is expected to pique further interest and nostalgia in video game brands with hundreds of pop culture references to properties new and old. While it's doubtful the movie itself will have much in the way of officially licensed merchandise, all video game-inspired goods are expected to see a jump in sales. Just in time for the *Minecraft* and *Angry Birds* movies opening in 2019.

And on the sports side, some esports analysts believe that the gaming competitions could be added to the Olympic Games roster as early as 2024. Esports is already confirmed to be an official medal event at the X Games and the

Asian Games, making its inclusion in the world's largest sporting platform only a matter of time.

Outside the Show: Horror

Last but not least, we close with licensed merchandise from brands that weren't as heavily promoted, but are nevertheless expected to be big hits during the holiday shopping season. Representative properties include Hotel Transylvania, Tim Burton's *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (celebrating its anniversary), and preschool TV series *Vampirina*—in addition to breakout survival horror video games like *Hello Neighbor* and *Bendy and the Ink Machine*. While they weren't represented on the floor, upcoming films like *Slender Man* and *Goosebumps: Horrorland* also fall into this category and are expected to steer toy trends.

Looking for more?

Check out our Twitter @licensingletter for pictures and thoughts taken directly from the scene.

HOLIDAY SPENDING

Spending Up as Love Sets In

The NRF estimates that just over half of U.S. adults would have celebrated Valentine's Day this year by buying a gift for a significant other, friends, or pets—reaching \$19.6 billion in spending, up from \$18.2 billion in 2017.

The research firm estimated that those 25–34 years-old would be the biggest spenders, with an average bill of \$202.76. By product category, a total of \$4.7 billion will be spent on jewelry (given by 19%), \$3.7 billion on an evening out (35%), \$2 billion on flowers (36%), \$1.9 billion on clothing (17%), \$1.5 billion on gift cards/gift certificates (15%) and \$894 million on greeting cards (46%).

Candy is the most popular item this year, with 55% (up from 50% last year) planning to buy for a total of \$1.8 billion. Interestingly, experiential gifts such as tickets to a concert or sporting event were sought by 42% of consumers, but only 24% planned to give such a gift—with 25–34 year-olds the most likely to give such a gift (41%).

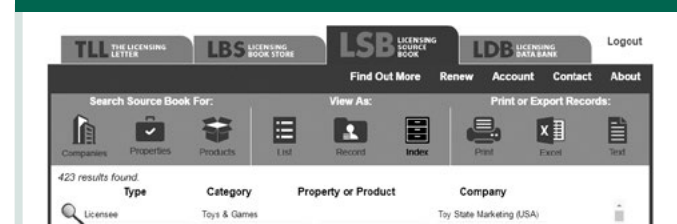
Consumers planned to shop at department stores (35%), discount stores (32%), online (29%), specialty stores (19%), florists (17%), and local small businesses (14%).

Globally, 20% of consumers planned to buy Valentine's Day presents in-store, with another 9% (or 31% of expected shoppers), planning to do so online, according to a survey by One Hour Translation across 11 countries. Most consumers did not plan to buy gifts this year at all, with the highest rates of abstention hailing from Brazil (85%), Spain (82%), Australia (81%), Canada (71%), the U.S. (70%), Mexico (66%), Japan (60%), Holland (54%), Germany (45%), Italy (44%), and France (33%).

Among those who planned to buy a gift, the respondents most likely to buy gifts in physical stores hail from Japan

(35%), Italy (33%), Holland (30%), Mexico (29%), U.S. and Canada (19% each), France and Spain (13% each), Brazil and Australia (11% each), and Germany (7%). The country with the largest number planning to make a purchase online was Italy (23%), followed by Holland (16%) and the U.S. and Canada (10% each). Surprisingly, the study found that those aged 18–24 years-old were the least likely group to buy gifts online (8.9%), while the highest rate was among 35–44 year-olds (12%).

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The *Licensing Source Book Online* lists over 10,000 licensing executives doing business in 83 countries worldwide—from Australia to the UAE. These executives include licensors; agents; licensees; and consultants, service providers, retailers, and trade associations.

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Licensing News

Properties Available Or Recently Assigned, U.S.

| PROPERTY | DESCRIPTION | CATEGORIES AVAILABLE | LICENSING CONTACT |
|--|---|---|--|
| Amy Coe | Designer of children's and fashion brand for over 25 years, celebrating individual style with playful details, modern lines and pure colors. | All | Steven Heller, Brand Liaison (The) |
| BalanceDiet | Established health and wellness brand with over 25 yrs. of quality reputation and expertise in the wellness and healthy living space. | Cookware, food, health & beauty aids, home goods | Christopher Palumbo, Leisure Growth Holdings |
| Campbell Soup | American manufacturer of soups and related products, trusted for generations and sold in 120 countries around the world. | All | Stu Seltzer, Seltzer Licensing Group |
| Cup Noodles | Brand of instant ramen noodle snack introduced in 1970 and manufactured by Nissin, packaged in a foam food container. | All (non-food products) | Jim Rippin, Licensing Management Intl. of LA |
| EmojiOne | Authentic digital emoji brand, with thousands of digital icons and stickers and 10 new collections. | All | Steven Heller, Brand Liaison (The) |
| Forks over Knives | Plant based nutrition lifestyle brand. | Frozen foods, meal kits, nutritional products, snacks | Todd Lustgarten, Perpetual Licensing |
| Jel Sert | Multi-product company with family favorite brands incl. Wyler's, Wyler's Light, Otter Pops, Royal Pudding, Fla-vor-ice and My-T-Fine Pudding. | All | Lisa Marks, Lisa Marks Associates (LMA) |
| Louis XVI Racing & Polo Club | Contemporary club brand conveying the quintessence of the royal sporting heritage, embracing the long held traditions and values of the club environment. | Apparel | Paul Berrington, PJB Brand MEPE |
| Romano's Macaroni Grill Italian Restaurant | American restaurant chain est. 1988, known for Italian-American infused, inventive, and modern flavors. | All | Robert Schwartz, CAA-GBG Global Brand Management Group |
| Top Ramen | Brand of instant dried noodles introduced in 1970. | All (non-food products) | Jim Rippin, Licensing Management Intl. of LA |

Licenses Recently Granted, U.S.

| PROPERTY | GRANTED TO | PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED | GRANTED BY |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Arctic Justice | Menchie's | Frozen yogurt | Firefly Brand Management |
| BalanceDiet | Ohana U.S.A. Corp. | Vitamin supplements, weight loss | Leisure Growth Holdings |
| Betty Boop | Innovent Brands/Limited Gifts & Collectibles LLC * | Folding camping chairs, throws | King Features Syndicate |
| Billionaire Boys Club | Italia Independent Group S.p.A | Apparel, eyewear | Billionaire Boys Club & Ice Cream LLC |
| Black Panther | BoxLunch | Accessories, apparel | Disney Consumer Products |
| | Her Universe | Apparel | |
| Carole Hochman | DreamWave div. Bentex Group | Swimwear | Komar Sleepwear |
| Crayola | Wicked Cool Toys | Creative plush toys | Crayola |
| Disney Princess | Her Universe | Apparel | Disney Consumer Products |
| Dream World | Finn + Emma | Accessories, apparel, toys | Random House Children's Books |
| | Kids Preferred | Bookends, nesting blocks, soft books | |
| | MerryMakers | Plush | |
| | New York Puzzle Co. | Puzzles | |
| ED by Ellen DeGeneres | Essential Brands | Loungewear, sleepwear | ED by Ellen DeGeneres/BCL-ED Newco |
| Fingerlings | Innovative Designs | Stationery | Striker Entertainment |
| | Super Impulse USA div. Topcat Worldwide | Toys | |
| | Tara Toy Corp. | Arts & crafts | |
| Geronimo Stilton | Headu Srl | Back-to-school, board games, puzzles | Atlantya Entertainment S.p.A. |
| HEAD | EastPoint Sports | Table tennis | HEAD Sport GmbH |
| JACHS New York | Prime Footwear Group | Footwear | Merchant Factors |
| Jelly Belly | Little Kids | Scented bubble products | Jelly Belly Candy |
| Jonesworks Design | New Sega Home Textiles | Bed & bath products | Moxie & Co. |
| Laura Ashley | Bon-Ton Stores (The) | Paint | Laura Ashley |
| Marie Claire | Marie Claire Sport | Athletic apparel | Brand Talent |
| Marvel | Gentle Giant Toys/3D Systems | Blind packs, bobbleheads, figurines | Disney Consumer Products |

*Extension or renewal.

Continued on page 7

Licensing News *Continued from page 6*

Licenses Recently Granted, U.S.

| PROPERTY | GRANTED TO | PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED | GRANTED BY |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| Mary Engelbreit | Looney Labs | Board games | Brand Liaison (The) |
| Mulan | BoxLunch | Accessories, apparel | Disney Consumer Products |
| New York Magazine | Pixels.com div Fine Art America | Prints | New York Magazine |
| PAW Patrol | Little Kids | Bubble toys | Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products (NVCP) |
| Peeps | Little Kids | Bubble toys | Just Born, Inc. |
| Penn | EastPoint Sports | Table tennis | HEAD Sport GmbH |
| PJ Masks | Little Kids | Bubble toys | Entertainment One (eOne) |
| pocket.watch | Bentex Group | Master apparel | pocket.watch |
| | Bonkers Toys | Toys | |
| Rainbow Rangers | American Marketing Enterprises (AME)/Briefly Stated, Inc. (BSI), subsidiaries of Global Brands Group USA (GBG) | Sleepwear | Genius Brands Intl. |
| | GBG Socks dba Planet Sox: Global Brands Group | Legwear, socks | |
| | Inkology | Floor decor, school supplies, stationery | |
| | Kid Galaxy | Bubble toys | |
| Rubik's | Brian's Toys dba Strictly Briks | Toys | Smiley Company (The)/SmileyWorld |
| Sesame Street | Green Toys Inc. | Outdoor activity sets | Sesame Workshop |
| | Little Kids | Bubble toys | |
| Shimmer & Shine | Little Kids | Bubble toys | Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products (NVCP) |
| Simon's Cat | Isaac Morris | Accessories, apparel, collectibles, home goods | Endemol Shine North America |
| Smarties | A&A Global Industries | Novelty candies | Lisa Marks Associates (LMA) |
| Smarties | JFL Enterprises/Just For Laughs Inc. | Dog toys, hand sanitizers, stickers | Lisa Marks Associates (LMA) |
| Star Trek | Looney Labs | Board games | CBS Consumer Products |
| Star Trek: Discovery | Coop (The)/form. A Crowded Coop | Bags, pet accessories | |
| | Cufflinks | Cufflinks, socks | |
| | Gentle Giant Toys/3D Systems | Miniatures | |
| | Her Universe | Dresses | |
| | Just Funky | Accessories, bags, home decor, housewares | |
| | Rittenhouse Archives | Trading cards | |
| | RockLove | Jewelry | |
| | ThinkGeek | Apparel, gifts | |
| | Underboss/Undergirl Productions | Sleepwear | |
| Star Wars | Gentle Giant Toys/3D Systems | Figures | Disney Consumer Products |
| | Her Universe | Apparel | |
| TeeRico | Entertainment Earth | Collectibles, toys | TeeRico LLC |
| Tommy Bahama | Pendleton Woolen Mills | Accessories, apparel, home products | Tommy Bahama |
| Top Wings | Hasbro | Figures, plush, toy vehicles | Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products (NVCP) |
| Volcom X Pro-Tec | Pro-Tec | Helmets | Volcom |
| Wonder | Out of Print Clothing | Accessories | Random House Children's Books |
| | Raymond Geddes | School supplies | |
| | SG@NYC | Jewelry | |
| | YOTTOY Productions | Plush | |
| World of Eric Carle (The) | Jigsaw Puzzle Factory (The) div. Leap Year Publishing | Jigsaw puzzles | Joester Loria Group (JLG) |
| WWE | Mattel | Action figures | World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) |
| Yellow Submarine | Vandor Products | Collectibles, novelty & gift items | Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group |

*Extension or renewal.

Continued on page 8

| International Properties Available or Recently Assigned | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| PROPERTY | DESCRIPTION | CATEGORIES AVAILABLE | LICENSING CONTACT |
| Abraham Hunter | Artist with a portfolio that continues to grow at a tremendous rate, portrays wildlife and landscapes in photo realism and often utopia like scenes. | Bath & kitchen, giftware, stationery, tabletop items, textiles (Worldwide) | Marty Segelbaum, MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| Bennigan's | American restaurant chain with an Irish pub-theme est. in 1976. | Beverages, frozen desserts, frozen meals, snacks (North America) | Todd Lustgarten, Perpetual Licensing |
| Chic & Love | Fashion and accessories brand, combining street style with an avante-garde look. Featuring Swarovski crystals in many of the collections. | All (France, GAS) | Joachim Knuedler, CPLG Germany/France(Copyright Promotions Licensing Group) |
| Christine Adolph | Artist introduces new handcrafted eclectic nautical and coastal inspired works using the historic cyanotype process. | Bath & kitchen, giftware, stationery, tabletop items, textiles (Worldwide) | Marty Segelbaum, MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| Cornell University | Founded in 1865, a privately endowed research university, partner of SUNY and home to nearly 22,000 students. | All (Worldwide) | Rick Merriam, Exemplar Associates |
| Crawford the Cat | Animated series promoting positive values using simple lessons on personal, practical and social skills; for preschool, kindergarten, and early elementary students. | All incl. publishing, mobile games, toys, bags, accessories, apparel (Worldwide) | Alita Friedman, Alita's Brand Bar |
| Cupcake Surprise | Collectible doll series of sweetly scented toys, that transform from a cupcake into a princess. | All (Worldwide) | Bill McClinton, Global Icons |
| Cuphead | Classic rapid fire action video game inspired by cartoons of the 1930's, visuals and audio are created with the same techniques of the era. | All (Worldwide) | Carla Silva, King Features Syndicate |
| Doodle Jump | Platform game in which the player helps the titular adorable character jump as high as possible onto a range of different hand-drawn platforms. | Accessories, apparel, gifts & novelties, promotional products, stationery, toys (North America) | Todd Lustgarten, Perpetual Licensing |
| emoji | Lifestyle brand featuring the emoji logo and more than 6000 different icons. | All (Nordics) | Gustav Melin, Bulls Licensing div. Bulls Press |
| EmojiOne | Authentic digital emoji brand, with thousands of digital icons and stickers and 10 new collections. | All (Europe) All (Caribbean) | Maria Strid, Art Ask Agency Robert Espailat, Big Star Licensing Group |
| Hostess Brands | Iconic baked goods brand, with treats such as; Twinkies, CupCakes, Ding Dongs, Ho Hos and Donettes. | All (Worldwide) | Jeff Lotman, Global Icons |
| KC HiLites | Automotive/off-road performance lighting company has been lighting adventure for off-road and outdoor enthusiasts since 1970. | Accessories, apparel, automotive, electronics, outdoor, publishing (Worldwide) | Vivian Velasco, Pacific Swell Brands |
| Luo Bao Bei | Chinese animation series follows a bright and spirited 7-year-old girl with a vivid imagination, on a quest to understand the world around her. | All (Worldwide) | Tian Jia, Hangzhou MagicMall Animation Production Co. Ltd. |
| Margaritaville | Lifestyle brand inspired by the casual island life state of mind. | Beverages, food, frozen foods, snacks (North America) | Thomas Keane, Margaritaville Foods |
| National Geographic | Since its inception 130 years ago, the core purpose of NatGeo has been to further knowledge and awareness of our world. | Greeting cards, plush, stationery (U.S., Canada) | Laura Takaragawa, National Geographic Partners |
| OOKS | An interactive storytelling app that allows children to create their own stories and create their own bespoke OOKS avatars personalised to themselves. | All (Worldwide) | Russell Neale Dever, Those Licensing People (TLP) |
| Power Rangers | Superhero franchise featuring a team of youths trained to morph into the Power Rangers,utilizing special powers and suits to overcome the periodic antagonists. | All (Spain, Portugal) | Laura Garcia Ortega, Nottingham Forest |
| Rise of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles | Animated series that follows the band of brothers as they discover new powers and encounter a mystical world they never knew existed beneath the streets of New York. | All (Worldwide) | Pam Kaufman, Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products (NVCP) |
| RuPaul | World famous and influential American drag performer, actor, model, singer, songwriter, TV personality and author. | Beauty aids, cosmetics, fragrance (Worldwide) | Andy Cohan, ACI Licensing |
| StarKist | Food brand since 1917 with iconic Charlie the Tuna character who was introduced 1961. | All (non-food products) (U.S., Canada) | Jim Rippin, Licensing Management Intl. of LA |
| Sunny Bunnies | Children's non-dialogue animated comedy that follows the adventures of five fluffy balls of light that can appear anywhere there is a light source. | All (Europe) | Steve Manners, CPLG U.K. (Copyright Promotions Licensing Group) |
| TATE | One of the most visited British museums since 1897, the national collection from 1500 to present day and intl. modern art, with nearly 70,000 artworks at their four major sites. | All (Worldwide) | Bethan Garton, Point.1888 (The) |
| Tina Higgins | Designer and artist, manipulates images to create a unique vintage style, coupled with her use of color and trends. | Bath & kitchen, giftware, home & garden, stationery, textiles (Worldwide) | Marty Segelbaum, MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| Turtle Wax | Innovated automotive car care brand for over 70 years. | Accessories, apparel, collectibles, novelty & gift items, toys (U.S., Canada) | Jim Rippin, Licensing Management Intl. of LA |
| Worlddeez | New brand of collectible toys with 120 different characters, 15 from each country, including a boy and a girl together with the items which make up their world. | All (Worldwide) | Russell Neale Dever, Those Licensing People (TLP) |

*Extension or renewal.

Continued on page 9

Licensing News *Continued from page 8*

International Licenses Recently Granted

| PROPERTY | GRANTED TO | PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED | GRANTED BY |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia | Playmobil Germany/Brandstätter Stiftung & Co. KG | Toys (Worldwide) | FIFA |
| 20Q | TCG (form. The Canadian Group) | Electronic games (U.S., Canada) | Irwin Toy |
| Abraham Hunter | Design Works Crafts | Felt calendars (Worldwide) | MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| Avanti | JFL Enterprises/Just For Laughs Inc. | Micro puzzles (North America) | Lisa Marks Associates (LMA) |
| Betty Boop | Bradford Exchange | Accessories, apparel, gifts & collectibles, jewelry (U.S., Canada, Europe, U.K., ANZ) | King Features Syndicate |
| | Imaginarium Comercio | Gifts, novelties (Brazil) | |
| | Lazy Oaf | Apparel (U.S., U.K., Europe, Australia, South East Asia, UAE, Russia) | |
| | Saborn Trading B.V. | Apparel (Benelux) | |
| Beyblade Burst Evolution | Bioworld Merchandising | Accessories, apparel, sleepwear (Canada) | Sunrights |
| Beyblade Burst Switchstrike | Hasbro | Toys (U.S., Canada) | |
| Buck Wear | American Sportsman Sign | Decals, wood signs (North America) | MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| Bullseye | C&M Licensing div. Cooneen Group | Nightwear, socks (U.K.) | Bulldog Licensing |
| | Hut Group (The, THG) | Hoodies, mugs, phone cases, prints, t-shirts (U.K.) | |
| Cleo&Cuquin | Mattel | Master toy (Worldwide) | Anima Kitchent div. Anima Estudios |
| Cuphead | Underboss/Undergirl Productions | Sleepwear, underwear (U.S., Canada) | King Features Syndicate |
| Darren Gygi | Leap Year Publishing | Calendars, planners (U.S., Canada, Australia) | MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| Discovery #Mindblown | MerchSource | Toys (Worldwide) | Discovery Consumer Products |
| Disney | Character World/TDS Enterprises | Bedding (U.K., Eire, Nordics, Benelux) | Disney Consumer Products |
| Dr. Seuss | Aurora World | Plush (Worldwide) | Dr. Seuss Enterprises L.P. |
| emoji | Zimpli Kids | Bath products (U.K.) | Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group |
| Fingerlings | Allstar Vending | Vending machine novelties (Canada) | Striker Entertainment |
| | Bioworld Merchandising | Accessories, apparel (Worldwide) | |
| | Cardinal Industries | Games (U.S., Canada) | |
| | Commonwealth Toy & Novelty | Toys (U.S., Canada) | |
| Flash Gordon | Trademark Products Ltd. | Hats, hooded sweatshirts, t-shirts, tops (U.K., Ireland) | King Features Syndicate |
| Frida Kahlo | Princesse tam.tam div. Fast Retailing Co., Ltd. | Lingerie, loungewear (Worldwide) | Frida Kahlo Corp., Art Ask Agency |
| Game of Thrones | Bacci Sourcing & Consulting SL | Apparel (Spain) | Bradford License Europe aff. Licensing Management Intl. |
| | Drop Dead Clothing Ltd. | Apparel (U.K.) | |
| | Half Moon Bay | Giftware (U.K.) | |
| | Nemesis Now | Drinkware (U.K.) | |
| Garfield | Poetic Brands Ltd./PoeticGem | Apparel (U.K.) | Bulldog Licensing |
| Happy News (The) | Blueprint Collections | Binders, notebooks, sticker sets, tote bags (U.K.) | DRI Licensing Ltd. |
| | Portico Designs | Calendars, diaries (U.K.) | |
| | WIDDOP and Co. | Giftware (U.K.) | |
| Harry Potter | PopSockets | Mobile phone accessories (Worldwide) | Warner Bros. Consumer Products |
| HEAD | Gorenje Group | Small kitchen appliances (Worldwide) | HEAD Sport GmbH |
| Iron Maiden | Robinsons Brewery | Ale (U.K.) | Global Merchandising Services |
| Jay Kemp | Northcott Silk | Fabric (Worldwide) | MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| | Stave Puzzles | Wooden puzzles (Worldwide) | |
| Jim Killen | Stave Puzzles | Wooden puzzles (Worldwide) | |
| Juicy Couture | Make It Real | Activity sets, jewelry kits (Worldwide) | Authentic Brands Group (ABG) |
| Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle | Cardinal Industries | Board games (U.S., Canada) | Sony Pictures Consumer Products |
| | Funko | Pop vinyl figures (U.S., Canada, U.K.) | |
| | Isaac Morris | Apparel (U.S., Canada, U.K.) | |
| | NHN Entertainment | Mobile games (Worldwide) | |
| Jurassic World | LEGO Systems | Construction block sets (Worldwide) | Universal Brand Development |
| Justice League | PopSockets | Mobile phone accessories (Worldwide) | Warner Bros. Consumer Products |
| Lionel Trains | Jaftex Corp. | Fabric, fabric kits (North America) | Lisa Marks Associates (LMA) |

*Extension or renewal.

Continued on page 10

Licensing News *Continued from page 9*

| PROPERTY | GRANTED TO | PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED | GRANTED BY |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Lionel Trains | Willow Creek Press | Calendars (U.S., Canada) | Lisa Marks Associates (LMA) |
| Lisa Jane Smith | Leap Year Publishing | Calendars, planners (U.S., Canada, Australia) | MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| Llama Llama | Cuddle Barn | Animatronic plush toys (North America) | Genius Brands Intl. |
| | Franco Manufacturing/Franco MFG | Bedding (North America) | |
| | Intimo | Sleepwear (North America) | |
| | Kids Preferred | Plush (North America) | |
| | Myself Belts/Myself Designs | Belts (children's) (North America) | |
| Marvel | Character World/TDS Enterprises | Bedding (U.K., Eire, Nordics, Benelux) | Disney Consumer Products |
| Massive Monster Mayhem | Alpha Group U.S. | Master toy (Worldwide (excl. Asia) | DHX Brands |
| Mentos | SmartWorks Consumer Products | Inflatable pool products, pool noodles (North America) | Lisa Marks Associates (LMA) |
| Miffy | Poetic Brands Ltd./PoeticGem | Apparel (U.K.) | DRi Licensing Ltd. |
| MLB | Northwest Co. (The)* | Bath products, beach products, bedding, blankets, throws (North America) | MLB Properties |
| Moomins (The) | Star Editions | Gift products (U.K.) | Caroline Mickler |
| | Strathberry | Leather goods (U.K., Ireland, U.S., Australia, Asia) | |
| Mr. Men & Little Miss | Star Editions | Prints (U.K.) | Sanrio Global Ltd. |
| Mysticons | Burger King | Promotional toys (U.S., Canada) | Corus Entertainment/Nelvana Enterprises |
| National Gallery: Vincent Van Gogh | White Stuff | Accessories, apparel (U.K.) | JELC Ltd. |
| Nickelodeon | Sambro Intl. | Slime (U.K.) | Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products (NVCP) |
| Pat Pauley | Plaid Enterprises | Paint-by-number kits (Worldwide) | MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| Peppa Pig | Jazwares GmbH | Master toy (GAS) | Entertainment One (eOne) U.K. |
| Popeye | Haid Werbeagentur GmbH* | Coasters, games (GAS) | King Features Syndicate |
| | Metamorph GmbH | Costume accessories, costumes (GAS) | |
| | Saborn Trading B.V. | Apparel (Benelux) | |
| | Traktor Clothing GmbH & Co.Kg | Apparel, giftware (GAS) | |
| | TVM Europe GmbH/Global Brands Group* | Long sleeve tops, pajamas, t-shirts (Poland, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Czech, Hungary, Slovakia) | |
| Powerpuff Girls (The) | Vision/Eleven Apparel Mgmt. | Hoodies, long sleeve tops, sweaters, t-shirts (Canada) | |
| Powerpuff Girls (The) | Peter Alexander div. Just Group | Sleepwear (Australia) | Turner Broadcasting System Australia, Cartoon Network Enterprises |
| Prince Valiant | Bocora Verlag GmbH | Comic books (GAS) | King Features Syndicate |
| Pudgy | Moschino SpA | Limited edition accessories, limited edition apparel (North America, Europe) | |
| Rainbow Rangers | Dynacraft BSC | Bikes, scooters, tricycles, wagons (Worldwide) | Genius Brands Intl. |
| | Kiddieland Toys Ltd. | Foot-to-floor ride-ons (North America, EMEA, Asia, LATAM) | |
| Rick & Morty | PopSockets | Mobile phone accessories (Worldwide) | Cartoon Network Enterprises |
| Romero Britto | Enesco* | Accessories, Christmas, gifts & collectibles, party goods, travel accessories (Worldwide) | King Features Syndicate |
| Royal Horticultural Society | Caspari | Gift bags, gift wrap, gifts, paper tabletop items, social stationery (U.S., U.K.) | Royal Horticultural Society/RHS Enterprises Ltd. |
| | Churchill China | Ceramic tableware (U.S., U.K., Europe) | |
| | Jayco (U.K.) Ltd. | Gardening gloves (U.K.) | |
| | Kelkay | Stepping stones (U.K.) | |
| Rubik's | Zels Co. | Apparel (Japan) | Smiley Company (The)/SmileyWorld/Smiley APAC Ltd. |
| Sanrio | PopSockets | Mobile phone accessories (Worldwide) | Sanrio |
| Sesame Street | Bioworld Merchandising | Accessories, apparel (Worldwide) | Sesame Workshop |
| | Drake General Store | Apparel (Canada) | |
| | Globe Brand (North America)/Globe Intl. Ltd. | Skateboard decks (Worldwide) | |
| | Land of Nod | Accessories, apparel, home decor, toys (North America) | |
| | Lauren Moshi | Apparel, bags, headwear (U.S., Canada) | |
| | Mad Engine | Apparel, beanies, t-shirts (U.S., Canada) | |
| | Zara div. Inditex | Accessories, apparel (Worldwide) | |
| Simon's Cat | Caseable GmbH | Mobile device skins, mobile phone cases, tablet cases (Worldwide) | Endemol Shine North America |
| Smiley | AmScan Intl.* | Party goods (Europe) | Smiley Company (The)/SmileyWorld |

*Extension or renewal.

Continued on page 11

Licensing News *Continued from page 10*

| PROPERTY | GRANTED TO | PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED | GRANTED BY |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Smiley | B.M. Fashion Ltd. t/a Fashion U.K. | Apparel (U.K.) | Smiley Company (The)/SmileyWorld |
| | Diakakis Imports SA* | Bags, gifts, novelties, stationery (Europe) | |
| | Hillman Group (The) | Key chains, keys (North America) | |
| | Luigi Zaini SpA | Candy, chocolates (Italy) | |
| | Lutti SaS | Gum (France) | |
| | NICI GmbH* | Gifts & collectibles (Worldwide) | |
| | Poetic Brands Ltd./PoeticGem* | Apparel (U.K.) | |
| | Tempe S.A./Tempe Grupo Inditex* | Footwear (Worldwide) | |
| | Things3D* | 3D printed products, digital content (Worldwide) | |
| | Trendy Foods Belgium s.a. | Candy (Belgium) | |
| | Undiz | Apparel (France, Belgium, Germany, Morocco, Spain) | |
| Witor's SpA | Chocolate surprise eggs, Easter eggs (Italy) | | |
| SpongeBob SquarePants | Alpha Group U.S. | Master toy (Worldwide) | Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products (NVCP) |
| | Vans | Footwear (Worldwide) | |
| Star Trek: Discovery | Bioworld Merchandising | Apparel, bags, hats (U.S., Canada) | CBS Consumer Products |
| | EMP Merchandising Handelsgesellschaft mbH | Apparel, gifts (Germany) | |
| | Fascinations Toys & Gifts | 3D metal models (U.S., Canada) | |
| | Katalyst Licensing & Promotions | Giftware (Canada) | |
| | Philcos | Glassware, loungewear, t-shirts, wallets (Canada) | |
| | Titan Merchandise/Titan Entertainment | Figures (Worldwide) | |
| Star Wars | Character World/TDS Enterprises | Bedding (U.K., Eire, Nordics, Benelux) | Disney Consumer Products |
| | Po-Zu | Footwear (Worldwide) | |
| Stephanie Ryan | Creative Tops | Ceramic items, mugs (U.K., Europe) | MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| | Design Design | Greeting cards (Worldwide) | |
| Stranger Things | PopSockets | Mobile phone accessories (Worldwide) | Netflix |
| Super Wings | Alpha Group EMEA | Toys (Europe, MENA, South Africa, Russia, Israel, Turkey) | Studio 100 Media GmbH/m4e AG |
| | Revell GmbH & Co. KG | Constructional toys, model kits (Europe, MENA, South Africa, Russia, Israel, Turkey) | |
| Tetris | SEGA Europe | PC games (Worldwide) | Tetris Co. (The) |
| Top Gear | Assured Products Ltd. | Car care products (U.K.) | BBC Worldwide |
| Victoria Schultz | Northcott Silk | Fabric (Worldwide) | MHS Licensing + Consulting |
| Warheads | ICEE Co. (The) | Frozen beverages (North America) | Lisa Marks Associates (LMA) |
| World of Dinosaur Roar! (The) | Golden Bear Toys | Plush (Europe) | Bulldog Licensing |
| WWE | Lids Sports Group | Headwear (North America) | World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) |

*Extension or renewal.



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contacts & connections

Contacts & Connections is an alphabetical listing of the licensing companies in this issue.

A&A Global Industries, Philip Brilliant, VP Marketing & Licensing, 410-252-1020 x349, pbrilliant@aaglobal.com, P. 7.

ACI Licensing, Andy Cohan, President & Co-CEO, 310-956-3592, acohan@acilicensing.com, P. 8.

Alita's Brand Bar, Alita Friedman, CEO, 774-322-1470, alita@alitasbrandbar.com, P. 8.

Alpha Group U.S., Brehan Maul, VP Global Brand Management & Marketing, 844-303-8936, brehan@alphagroup-us.com, P. 10,11.

American Marketing Enterprises (AME)/ Briefly Stated, Inc. (BSI), subsidiaries of Global Brands Group USA (GBG), Jennifer Nitz, Senior Director Licensing, 646-839-7000, jennifernitz@ameny.com, P. 7.

American Sportsman Sign, Mindy Young, President & CEO, 573-449-9077, amsprt@aol.com, P. 9.

Aurora World, Michael Kessler, SVP Sales & Marketing, 562-205-1222, michael@auroragift.com, P. 9.

Authentic Brands Group (ABG), Jarrod Weber, EVP Brand, 212-760-2410, jweber@abg-nyc.com, P. 9.

Bentex Group, Susan Peia, EVP Licensing, 212-594-4250 x2825, susan@bentex.com, P. 7.

Billionaire Boys Club & Ice Cream LLC, Mohamed Fofana, CEO, 212-777-2225, bbccicecream@bbccicecream.com, P. 6.

Bioworld Merchandising, Jennifer Staley, VP Licensing, 972-488-0655, jennifers@bioworldmerch.com, P. 9-11.

Bon-Ton Stores (The), Nancy Walsh, CFO & EVP, 414-347-5329, nancy.walsh@bonton.com, P. 6.

Bonkers Toys, Brian Bonnett, CEO, 858-692-3287, hello@bonkerstoys.com, P. 7.

BoxLunch, Cindy Levitt, VP General Merchandise Manager, 626-839-4681 x2216, clevitt@hottopic.com, P. 6,7.

Bradford Exchange, Maura Kelly, VP Licensing & Art Acquisition, 847-581-8200, maura.kelly@bgeldt.com, P. 9.

Brand Liaison (The), Steven Heller, Founder, 855-843-5424, steven@thebrandliaison.com, P. 6,7.

Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group, Joe Marziotto, VP Brand Marketing The Beatles, 212-445-3432, joe.marziotto@bravado.com, P. 7.

Brian's Toys dba Strictly Briks, Brian Semling, Founder, CEO & Owner, 608-687-7572, info@strictlybriks.com, P. 7.

Burger King, Fernando Machado, Global Chief Marketing Officer, 305-378-3000, fmachado@whopper.com, P. 10.

CAA-GBG Global Brand Management Group, Robert Schwartz, VP Licensing & New Business Development, 646-839-7465, robertschwartz@caaglobalbrands.com, P. 6.

Cardinal Industries, Joel Berger, President, 718-784-3000 x114, joelb@cardinalgames.com, P. 9.

Cartoon Network Enterprises, Peter Yoder, VP Consumer Products North America, 212-275-6535, peter.yoder@turner.com, P. 10.

Caspari, Douglas Stevens, Chairman & Owner, 203-888-1100 x4301, dstevens@hgcaspari.com, P. 10.

CBS Consumer Products, Veronica Hart, SVP Licensing & Consumer Products, 212-975-6894, veronica.hart@cbs.com, P. 7,11.

Commonwealth Toy & Novelty, Alec Kessler, EVP, 212-242-4070, akessler@cwt-ny.com, P. 9.

Coop (The)/form. A Crowded Coop, Mary Olsen, Partner, 360-243-3131, mary@crowdedcoop.com, P.7

Crayola, Warren Schorr, VP Business Development & Global Licensing, 610-253-6271 x4723, wschorr@crayola.com, P. 6.

Cuddle Barn, Bryan Mills, CEO, 888-883-1885, info@cuddle-barn.com, P. 10.

Cufflinks, Patty Bentley, Co-President, 214-780-0333, pattybentley@cufflinksinc.com, P.7

Design Design, Tom Vituj, Creative Director Product Development, 616-771-8319, tom.vituj@designdesign.us, P. 11.

Design Works Crafts, Susan Knopp, Owner, 631-244-5749 x202, suzicraft@aol.com, P. 9.

DHX Brands, Kaisa Nieminen, Senior Brand Manager North America, 323-790-8840, kaisa.nieminen@dhxmedia.com, P. 10.

Discovery Consumer Products, Carolann Dunn, VP Licensing, 212-548-5759, carolann_dunn@discovery.com, P. 9.

Disney Consumer Products, Josh Silverman, EVP Global Licensing, 818-544-0567, josh.silverman@disney.com, P. 7,9.

Disney Consumer Products, Karen Torpey, Director Licensing Disney Princess & Fairies, 818-560-1000, karen.torpey@disney.com, P. 6.

Disney Consumer Products, Paul Gitter, SVP Licensing Marvel, 818-544-1950, paul.gitter@disney.com, P. 6,10.

Disney Consumer Products, Paul Southern, SVP Licensing Star Wars, 415-623-1928, paul.southern@lucasfilm.com, P. 7,11.

Dr. Seuss Enterprises L.P., Susan Brandt, President, 858-459-9744, susanb@drseuss.com, P. 9.

DreamWave div. Bentex Group, Susan Peia, EVP Licensing, 212-594-4250, susan@bentex.com, P. 6.

Dynacraft BSC, John Bisges, MD, 707-603-1500, service@dynacraftbike.com, P. 10.

EastPoint Sports, Scott Schmaltz, VP Product Development, 908-852-4656, scott@eastpointsports.com, P. 6,7.

ED by Ellen DeGeneres/BCL-ED Newco, Rocio Roxy Castro, Licensing & New Business Development, 646-214-7203, contactus@edllc.com, P. 6.

Endemol Shine North America, Tamaya Petteway, SVP Brand & Licensing Partnerships, 747-529-8147, tamaya.petteway@endemolshine.us, P. 7,10.

Enesco, Shallu Chhabra, Director Licensing, 630-875-5841, schhabra@gund.com, P. 10.

Entertainment Earth, Jason Labowitz, President & Co-founder, 818-255-0090, jason@entertainmentearth.com, P. 7.

Entertainment One (eOne), Joan Grasso, SVP Licensing North America, 212-353-8800 x5219, jgrasso@entonegroup.com, P. 7.

Essential Brands, Richie Adjimi, CEO, 508-650-4200, sales@essentialbrands.com, P. 6.

Exemplar Associates, Rick Merriam, Founder, 616-212-9593, rick@exemplarassociates.com, P. 8.

Fascinations Toys & Gifts, William Hones, Administrator, 206-870-3000, sales@fascinations.com, P. 11.

Finn + Emma, Megan Hartley, Director Sourcing & Product Development, 973-771-5662, megan@finnandemma.com, P. 6.

Continued on page 13

contacts & connections *Continued from page 12*

Firefly Brand Management, Cynthia Modders, President & CEO, 415-513-5826, cynthia@fireflybrandmanagement.com, P. 6.

Franco Manufacturing/Franco MFG, Stacey Sobin, VP Licensing, 732-494-0500, stacey.sobin@franco-mfg.com, P. 10.

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Continued on page 13

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Continued on page 15



international contacts & connections

This section refers to the International listings in this issue. International calls from the U.S. and Canada must be preceded by the 011-prefix.

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Continued on page 16

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Superpowered Franchises

Continued from page 1

Black Panther makes its mark as the latest black lead from Marvel Studios.

China's *Monster Hunt 2*, a hybrid live action and CGI fantasy, saw its opening day coincide with the start of the Chinese New Year holiday. The film cleared \$86 million to score a first-day record in China, which was set last year by *Wolf Warrior 2*. Its weekend draw was an additional \$178.7 million. Edko Films will not stop at two installments; the studio plans to build the property as a long-lasting franchise complete with merchandising and theme park extensions, among other things.

But *Monster Hunt 2* wasn't the only Chinese film to do well—the Chinese New Year weekend saw a record \$506

million draw—far outpacing the U.S. record of \$305 million recorded during the opening weekend of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. Other hits included *Detective Chinatown 2* (\$147.3 million from Fri.-Sun.) and *Monkey King 3* (\$103.6 million)—which also saw limited distribution in the U.S., and, combined with the *Monster Hunt* sequel, earned \$1.1 million over the weekend stateside.

On the other side of the pond, *Black Panther* raked in a record \$25.2 million in Thursday preview showings—roughly double the previous record of \$12.7 million set by *Deadpool*. The film was projected to debut to as much as \$170 million over the Presidents Day weekend—and beat those projections by a landslide with \$202 million. Box office sales are expected to remain strong, as sources like online ticketing service Fandango report that 61% of customers who had seen *Black Panther* plan to watch it again.

Planned Feature Films with Licensing Potential, 2018–2025

| FILM | PLANNED RELEASE | FILM COMPANY | SUMMARY | SEQUEL | REBOOT | BOOK | GAME | TOY | COMIC | ORIGINAL TV |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|--------|--------|------|------|-----|-------|-------------|
| Tomb Raider | 3/16/2018 | Warner Bros. | Alicia Vikander stars in film detailing Lara Croft's first adventure. | | X | | X | | | |
| Anubis | 3/22/2018 | 20th Century Fox | Animated story of a mummy's curse and Underworld monsters, based on the 2006 novel by Bruce Zick. | | | X | | | | |
| Gnomeo & Juliet: Sherlock Gnomes | 3/23/2018 | Paramount Pictures | The gnomes recruit renowned detective Sherlock Gnomes to investigate the disappearance of other garden statuary; voices by Johnny Depp and Emily Blunt. | X | | | | | | |
| Pacific Rim: Uprising | 3/23/2018 | Universal Pictures | Sequel to the 2012 film about giant monsters and robots. | X | | | | | | |
| Ready Player One | 3/29/2018 | Warner Bros. | Scifi action adventure from Steven Spielberg based on Ernest Cline's bestseller; set in a futuristic VR dystopia. | | | X | | | | |
| Rampage | 4/20/2018 | New Line Cinema | Action adventure monster film based on the 1980s arcade video game; starring Dwayne Johnson. | | | | X | | | |
| Avengers: Infinity War (Part 1) | 5/4/2018 | Walt Disney Studios | This time the Avengers face the menace of Thanos. | X | | | | | X | |
| How to Train Your Dragon 3 | 5/18/2018 | DreamWorks Animation | The concluding chapter in the story between Vikings and dragons. | X | | | | | | |
| Han Solo: A Star Wars Story | 5/25/2018 | Walt Disney Studios | Standalone "anthology" film tells the Han Solo origin story; to be directed by Phil Lord and Christopher Miller. | X | | | | | | |
| Incredibles 2 | 6/15/2018 | Walt Disney Studios | Writer/director Brad Bird's sequel to 2004's <i>The Incredibles</i> . | X | | | | | | |
| Jurassic World 2 | 6/22/2018 | Universal Pictures | More mayhem in <i>Jurassic World</i> . | X | | X | | | | |
| Ant-Man and the Wasp | 7/6/2018 | Walt Disney Studios | Ant-Man joins forces with the Wasp on an urgent new mission to uncover secrets from the past. | X | | | | | X | |
| Hotel Transylvania 3 | 7/13/2018 | Sony Pictures | Third installment in the animated series about Count Dracula and his daughter Mavis. | X | | | | | | |
| Mission: Impossible – Fallout | 7/27/2018 | Paramount | Sixth entry into franchise features Tom Cruise and company, along with some familiar allies, race against time after a mission gone wrong. | X | | | | | | |
| Teen Titans Go! To the Movies | 7/27/2018 | Warner Bros. | Animated movie based on the 200+ episode TV series on Cartoon Network. | | | | | | | X |
| Scarface | 8/10/2018 | Universal Pictures | Reboot of the 1983 film from the Coen brothers. | | X | | | | | |
| The Meg | 8/10/2018 | Warner Bros. | Science fiction and 70' giant shark action thriller based on Steve Alten's book of the same title. | | | X | | | | |
| Slender Man | 8/24/2018 | Sony Pictures | Internet meme of an unnaturally tall man with a blank, featureless face who stalks, abducts, and/or traumatizes children. | | | | | | | X |
| The Predator | 9/14/2018 | 20th Century Fox | Fourth installment in the <i>Predator</i> film series, set to take place between <i>Predator 2</i> (1990) and <i>Predators</i> (2010). | X | | | | | | |
| Robin Hood | 9/21/2018 | Lionsgate | A gritty take on the classic Robin Hood story. | | | X | | | | |
| Venom | 10/5/2018 | Sony Pictures | Tom Hardy stars as the Spider-Man villain and alien symbiote; from scriptwriters Scott Rosenberg and Jeff Pinkner. | | | | | | X | |
| Monster High | 10/6/2018 | Universal Pictures | Based on the Mattel toy line, children of famous monsters experience high school in this live action musical. | | | | | X | | X |
| Goosebumps: Horrorland | 10/12/2018 | Sony Pictures | Director Rob Letterman and Jack Black return for the adaptation of one of R.L. Stine's most frightening tales. | X | | X | | | | |

Continued on page 18

Planned Feature Films with Licensing Potential, 2018–2025, *Cont'd.*

| FILM | PLANNED RELEASE | FILM COMPANY | SUMMARY | SEQUEL | REBOOT | BOOK | GAME | TOY | COMIC | ORIGINAL | TV |
|---|-----------------|--|--|--------|--------|------|------|-----|-------|----------|----|
| Mowgli (Jungle Book) | 10/19/2018 | Warner Bros. | Andy Serkis directs live action tale of an orphan boy raised by animals in the jungle. Voices by Benedict Cumberbatch, Christian Bale, Cate Blanchett. | | | X | | | | | |
| Inhumans | 11/2/2018 | Walt Disney Studios | In this Marvel film, an isolated community of superhumans fights to protect itself. | | | | | | X | | |
| X-Men: Dark Phoenix | 11/2/2018 | 20th Century Fox | Sequel focuses on Jean Grey as she begins to develop incredible powers that corrupt and turn her into a Dark Phoenix. | X | | | | | X | | |
| Bad Boys for Life (aka Bad Boys 3) | 11/9/2018 | Sony Pictures | Another sequel to the action comedy series about two loose cannon cops. Past films were in 1995 and 2003. Will Smith and Martin Lawrence return. | X | | | | | | | |
| Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas | 11/9/2018 | Universal Pictures | Reimagining of the Dr. Seuss Christmas tale from animation studio Illumination Entertainment stars Benedict Cumberbatch as the Grinch. | | X | X | | | | | |
| The Girl in the Spider's Web | 11/9/2018 | Sony Pictures | All-new cast to feature in the fourth entry of the Millennium book series by Stieg Larsson. | X | | X | | | | | |
| Fantastic Beasts & Where to Find Them 2 | 11/16/2018 | Warner Bros. | Second installment in J.K. Rowling's Fantastic Beasts trilogy. | X | | X | | | | | |
| Creed II | 11/21/2018 | MGM Studios | Sequel to 2015's next-generation Rocky hit, with Sylvester Stallone and Michael B. Jordan. | X | | | | | | | |
| Ralph Breaks the Internet: Wreck-It Ralph 2 | 11/21/2018 | Walt Disney Studios | Rich Moore returns to direct the sequel, which will see Ralph leave the arcade to explore the internet. | X | | | X | | | | |
| Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse | 12/14/2018 | Sony Pictures | Animated feature produced by LEGO movie directors Phil Lord and Christopher Miller. Developed separately from the live action Spider-Man movies. | | | | | | | X | |
| Alita: Battle Angel | 12/21/2018 | 20th Century Fox | Science fiction film from James Cameron based on Japanese manga; stars a female cyborg in a dystopian future. | | | | | | | X | |
| Aquaman | 12/21/2018 | Warner Bros. | The king of the seven seas appears in Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice and the Justice League movie before anchoring his own feature. | | | | | | | X | |
| Transformers Bumblebee spinoff (untitled) | 12/21/2018 | Paramount/ Hasbro | Follows Transformers daredevil Autobot Bumblebee in his own movie. | X | | | | X | | | |
| Bohemian Rhapsody | 12/25/2018 | 20th Century Fox | Queen biopic stars Rami Malek as Freddie Mercury. | | | | | | | X | |
| Mary Poppins Returns | 12/25/2018 | Walt Disney Studios | Emily Blunt stars, Rob Marshall directs this 20-years-later tale of the wonderful nanny. | | X | X | | | | | |
| 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea | TBA 2018 | 20th Century Fox | Captain Nemo explores the mysteries of the ocean deep in his submarine Nautilus. Based on the classic Jules Verne novel. | | | | X | | | | |
| Cruella | TBA 2018 | Walt Disney Studios | Emma Stone stars in live-action film following the evil exploits of dognapper Cruella de Vil. | | X | | | | | | |
| Empty Man (The) | TBA 2018 | 20th Century Fox | Adaptation of Cullen Bunn and Vanessa Del Rey's supernatural thriller comic book stars James Badge Dale. | | | | | | | X | |
| Gotham City Sirens | TBA 2018 | Warner Bros. | Spin-off film adaptation of Suicide Squad stars Margot Robbie as Harley Quinn alongside other female supervillians. | | X | | | | | X | |
| Metal Gear Solid | TBA 2018 | Sony Pictures | Video game adaptation to be directed by Jordan Vogt-Roberts. | | | | X | | | | |
| MIB 23 | TBA 2018 | Sony Pictures | Mashup of the 21 Jump Street and Men in Black franchises. | X | X | | | | | | |
| Mortal Kombat | TBA 2018 | Warner Bros. | Simon McQuoid directs the video game adaptation. | | | | X | | | | |
| Nightwing | TBA 2018 | Warner Bros. | Live action adaptation of the Batman-centric character with Chris McKay directing. | | | | | | | X | |
| Red Shoes and the 7 Dwarfs | TBA 2018 | Locus Creative Studios | Animated parody of "Snow White" stars Chloë Grace Moretz. | | | | | | | | X |
| Stan & Ollie | TBA 2018 | Fable Pictures, Sonesta Films, BBC Films | Centers on comedy duo Laurel & Hardy and their 1953 variety hall tour of Blighty; financed by eOne and licensed from Larry Harmon Pictures. | | | | | | | | X |
| T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents | TBA 2018 | Huayi Brothers | Ordinary people selected to be peace keepers for the United Nations are given super powers. To be filmed in the U.S. and China. | | | | | | | X | |
| Tuzki (untitled) | TBA 2018 | Turner Asia Pacific, Tencent | Live-action/CGI-animated film stars popular Chinese rabbit emoticon Tuzki. | | | | | | | | X |
| Pigeon Impossible | 1/17/2019 | 20th Century Fox | No details available, but may be related to the 2009 short Pigeon: Impossible. | | | | | | | | X |
| Silver and Black | 2/8/2019 | Sony Pictures | Another Spider-Man spinoff film stars two female sometimes-heroes Black Cat and Silver Sable. | | | | | | | X | |
| The LEGO Movie Sequel | 2/8/2019 | Warner Bros. | Sequel to 2014's block building blockbuster. | X | | | | X | | | |
| Bride of Frankenstein | 2/14/2019 | Universal Pictures | Part of the new Dark Universe; from director Bill Condon and screenwriter David Koepf. | | X | | | | | | |
| Gambit | 2/14/2019 | 20th Century Fox | Channing Tatum stars in this X-Men spinoff. | | | | | | | X | |
| Dark Universe: Monsters franchise film | 2/15/2019 | Universal Studios | Another Universal reboot of classic horror characters. | | X | | | | | | |
| The New Mutants | 2/22/2019 | 20th Century Fox | Based on the Marvel Comics superhero team of the same name. | | | | | | | X | |
| Captain Marvel | 3/8/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Marvel's first female superhero movie follows Captain Marvel, aka Carol Danvers, who can fly and shoot energy bursts from her hands. | | | | | | | X | |
| Godzilla 2: King of the Monsters | 3/22/2019 | Warner Bros. | Sequel to 2014's Legendary/Warner Bros.'s Godzilla. | X | | | | | | | |

Planned Feature Films with Licensing Potential, 2018–2025, *Cont'd.*

| FILM | PLANNED RELEASE | FILM COMPANY | SUMMARY | SEQUEL | REBOOT | BOOK | GAME | TOY | COMIC | ORIGINAL TV |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|--|--------|--------|------|------|-----|-------|-------------|
| Dumbo | 3/29/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Live-action adaptation of the story of the big-eared flying Elephant. | | X | | | | | |
| Shazam! | 4/5/2019 | Warner Bros. | Dwayne Johnson plays the titular ancient Egyptian wizard with a magical connection to a shy boy. | | X | | | | | X |
| Fast & Furious 9 | 4/19/2019 | Universal Pictures | Vin Diesel is expected to return to continue the F&F franchise. | | | | | | | |
| Playmobil: The Missing Piece | 4/19/2019 | Open Road Films | Planned as the first in a trilogy built around the 2 3/4-inch tall figures. | | | | | X | | |
| Avengers 4 Untitled (aka Avengers: Infinity War Part 2) | 5/3/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Second half of the third Avengers film. | X | | | | | X | |
| Marvel (untitled) | 5/3/2019 | 20th Century Fox | Candidates include a Deadpool sequel, an X-Men spinoff, or even a Fantastic Four reboot. | | | | | | X | |
| Aladdin | 5/24/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Live-action retelling of the 1992 Disney film directed by Guy Ritchie. | | X | | | | | |
| Aladdin | 5/24/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Live action reboot starring Will Smith as the Genie, Naomi Scott as Princess Jasmine, and Mena Massoud as Aladdin. | | X | | | | | |
| Minecraft: The Movie | 5/24/2019 | Warner Bros. | Swedish-American 3D film based on the video game; directed by Rob McElhenney. | | | | X | | | |
| The Billion Brick Race | 5/24/2019 | Warner Bros. | Another LEGO movie sequel built brick-by-brick. | X | | | | X | | |
| Charlie's Angels | 6/7/2019 | Sony Pictures | Elizabeth Banks directs the reboot of the 2000 film based on the 1970s TV series. | | X | | | | | X |
| The Secret Life of Pets 2 | 6/7/2019 | Universal Pictures | Sequel to 2016 animated hit The Secret Life of Pets. | X | | | | | | |
| Justice League: Part 2 | 6/14/2019 | Warner Bros. | Sequel follows the DC Comics-based superhero team. | X | | | | | X | X |
| Toy Story 4 | 6/21/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | It's one more Pixar play date for Tim Allen and Tom Hanks. | X | | | | | | |
| Transformers 7 | 6/28/2019 | Paramount, Hasbro | Hasbro has said the franchise will continue at least through Transformers 8. | X | | | | X | | |
| Bad Boys 4 | 7/3/2019 | Sony Pictures | Follows 2017's Bad Boys 3. | X | | | | | | |
| Spider-Man: Homecoming 2 | 7/5/2019 | Sony Pictures | Sequel to the 2017 film that was the second reboot of the Spider-Man film franchise. | X | | | | | X | |
| The Lion King (live action) | 7/19/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Live action remake of the 1993 animated film. | | X | | | | | |
| SpongeBob SquarePants 3 | 7/31/2019 | Paramount Animation | Director Paul Tibbitt returns to the TV-based franchise. | X | | | | | | X |
| Artemis Fowl | 8/9/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Sci-fi/fantasy book series stars a 12 year-old pitted in a battle of strength and cunning against a race of fairies who may have disappeared his father. | | | X | | | | |
| The Angry Birds Movie 2 | 9/20/2019 | Columbia Pictures | To be directed by Thurop Van Orman and John Rice; launches on the 10th anniversary of the original game. | X | | | X | | | |
| Wonder Woman 2 | 11/1/2019 | Warner Bros. | Gal Gadot returns as the lead; talks with director Patty Jenkins are ongoing. | X | | | | | X | |
| Frozen 2 | 11/27/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Sequel to the 2013 animated blockbuster. | X | | | | | | |
| Mulan | 12/20/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Live-action reimagining of the animated 1998 feature. Stars a young Chinese maiden who disguises herself as a warrior in order to save her father. | | X | | | | | |
| Star Wars: Episode IX | 12/20/2019 | Walt Disney Studios | Final chapter of the newest Star Wars trilogy. | X | | | | | | |
| Wicked | 12/20/2019 | Universal Pictures | Film adaptation of the Tony-winning musical. | | | X | | | | |
| Batman | TBA 2019 | Warner Bros. | Ben Affleck will star in and direct a standalone Batman film. | | X | | | | X | |
| Detective Pikachu | TBA 2019 | Universal Pictures | First ever live-action film in the franchise based on the 3DS game of the same name. | | | | X | | | |
| Dune | TBA 2019 | Legendary Pictures | Denis Villeneuve directs the adaptation of Frank Herbert's 1965 sci-fi novel. | | | X | | | | |
| Hello Kitty | TBA 2019 | Sanrio | Cartoon feline feature film. | | | | | | X | |
| Shaun the Sheep Movie 2 | TBA 2019 | Aardman | Director Richard Starzak returns with another comedy featuring Shaun and the gang . | X | | | | | | X |
| Shrek 5 | TBA 2019 | DreamWorks Animation | Sequel will revive the Shrek film brand. | X | | | | | | |
| Suicide Squad 2 | TBA 2019 | Warner Bros. | A director hasn't been secured yet. | X | | | | | | |
| Cyborg | 4/3/2020 | Warner Bros. | Cyborg, aka Victor Stone, is a member of the Justice League. | | | | | | X | |
| Trolls 2 | 4/10/2020 | Universal Pictures | Poppy and Branch return in sequel to the 2016 musical comedy-adventure. | X | | | | | | |
| Barbie | 5/8/2020 | Sony Pictures | Contemporary take on the toy that emphasizes feminism and identity. Anne Hathaway leads and Alethea Jones directs. | | | | | X | | |
| Scooby-Doo (aka S.C.O.O.B.) | 5/15/2020 | Warner Bros. | Scooby-Doo and the Mystery, Inc. gang roll again. | | X | | | | | X |
| Godzilla vs. Kong | 5/29/2020 | Warner Bros. | The two monster franchises are united in an ecosystem of giant superspecies. | X | | | | | | |
| Minions 2 | 7/3/2020 | Universal Pictures | Spinoff from the Despicable Me franchise made over \$1 billion worldwide when it was released in 2015. | X | | | | | | |
| Indiana Jones 5 | 7/10/2020 | Paramount Pictures | Leading actor Harrison Ford and director Steven Spielberg return for a 5th time. | X | | | | | | |

Continued on page 20

Planned Feature Films with Licensing Potential, 2018–2025, *Cont'd.*

| FILM | PLANNED RELEASE | FILM COMPANY | SUMMARY | SEQUEL | REBOOT | BOOK | GAME | TOY | COMIC | ORIGINAL | TV |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------|---|--------|--------|------|------|-----|-------|----------|----|
| Bob's Burgers | 7/17/2020 | 20th Century Fox | Emmy Award-winning animated TV series launched 2011 stars a family that runs a burger joint. | | | | | | | | X |
| Green Lantern Corps | 7/24/2020 | Warner Bros. | A group of humans join a peacekeeping force that protects the universe. | | X | | | | X | | |
| SpongeBob SquarePants 3 | 7/31/2020 | Paramount Pictures | Sequel to the 2004 and 2015 films, the latter which grossed \$323 million worldwide. | | | | | | | | X |
| Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them 3 | 11/20/2020 | Warner Bros. | More adventures of J.K. Rowling's Newt Scamander. | X | | X | | | | | |
| Avatar 2 | 12/18/2020 | 20th Century Fox | Sequel to the highest grossing film of all time. | X | | | | | | | |
| Vivo | 12/18/2020 | Sony Pictures | Project from Lin-Manuel Miranda follows a musical monkey who journeys from Havana to Miami to fulfill his destiny. | | | | | | | X | |
| Sing 2 | 12/25/2020 | Universal Pictures | Sequel to 2016 animated musical comedy set in a city of humanoid animals. | X | | | | | | | |
| Disney Animation (untitled) | TBA 2020 | Walt Disney Studios | Announced after the cancellation of Gigantic. | | | | | | | | |
| Nimona | TBA 2020 | 20th Century Fox | Animated feature based on Noelle Stevenson's graphic novel follows the titular shapeshifter and sidekick to the villainous Lord Ballister Blackheart. | | | | | | X | | |
| Pixar Animation (untitled) | TBA 2020 | Walt Disney Studios | Thirteenth Pixar movie; to be released in June. | | | | | | | X | |
| The Flash | TBA 2020 | Warner Bros. | Scientist Barry Allen becomes the super fast superhero, a member of DC Comics' Justice League. | | | | | | X | | |
| The Boss Baby 2 | 3/26/2021 | DreamWorks Animation | Alec Baldwin returns in the sequel. | X | | | | | | | |
| Fast & Furious 10 | 4/2/2021 | Universal Pictures | Franchise double digits for star Vin Diesel. | X | | | | | | | |
| Avatar 3 | 12/17/2021 | 20th Century Fox | Second sequel to the highest grossing film of all time. | X | | | | | | | |
| Avatar 4 | 12/20/2024 | 20th Century Fox | Third sequel to the highest grossing film of all time. | X | | | | | | | |
| Avatar 5 | 12/19/2025 | 20th Century Fox | Fourth sequel to the highest grossing film of all time. | X | | | | | | | |
| Ballerina | TBA | Lionsgate | Possible spinoff of the John Wick franchise; female-centric action script. | | | | | | | X | |
| Batgirl | TBA | Warner Bros. | Standalone movie from filmmaker Joss Whedon focuses on the original 1967 story. | | | | | | X | | |
| Bloodshot | TBA | Sony Pictures | First film for the Valiant Comics superhero. | | | | | | X | | |
| Borderlands | TBA | Universal Pictures | Video game adaptation will be a new story set in the universe; Shane Salerno is the scriptwriter. | | | | X | | | | |
| Clifford The Big Red Dog (untitled) | TBA | Paramount Pictures | Live-action/CG hybrid to be scripted by Justin Malen. | | | X | | | | | X |
| Cluedo | TBA | 20th Century Fox | Second movie based on the boardgame Cluedo. In development hell. | X | | | | | | | |
| Deadpool 3 | TBA | 20th Century Fox | Rumored to involve another popular group in the X-Men mythos, X-Force. | X | | | | | X | | |
| Deadshot (untitled) | TBA | Warner Bros. | Spin-off film adaptation of Suicide Squad stars the defacto leader of the task force team. | | X | | | | X | | |
| Fruit Ninja | TBA | Vinson Films | Live-action family comedy based on the popular mobile game app. | | | | X | | | | |
| Hard Boiled 2019 | TBA | Warner Bros. | Adaptation of Frank Miller and Geof Darrow's Dark Horse comic series. | | | | | | X | | |
| Highlander | TBA | Lionsgate | Director Chad Stahelski (John Wick) is on board for the reboot of the 1986 film; set to be a trilogy. | | X | | | | | | |
| Kim Possible | TBA | Walt Disney Studios | Live action adaptation of will be written and produced by the TV series' creators. | | | | | | | | X |
| Paddington 3 | TBA | The Weinstein Co. | Second sequel to 2014 film; based on the children's books by Michael Bond. | X | | X | | | | | |
| Sherlock Holmes 3 | TBA | Warner Bros. | Director Guy Ritchie and co-stars Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law reprise their roles in this sequel. | X | | X | | | | | |
| Snow White (untitled) | TBA | Walt Disney Studios | Live-action remake of Disney's classic animation set to feature new songs from songwriters Benj Pasek and Justin Paul. | | X | | | | | | |
| Sonic the Hedgehog (untitled) | TBA | Sony Pictures | Deadpool director Tim Miller set to executive produce a live-action CGI movie based on the videogame icon. | | | | X | | | | |
| Super Mario Bros. | TBA | Universal | Classic Nintendo video game is getting an animated film adaptation by Illumination Entertainment after failed a 1993 attempt. | | X | | | | | | |
| The Best Man Wedding | TBA | Universal | Next installment in the Best Man franchise. | X | | | | | | | |
| The Division | TBA | Ubisoft Motion Pictures | Tom Clancy video game adaptation; starring Jessica Chastain and Jake Gyllenhaal. | | | | X | | | | |
| The Matrix | TBA | Warner Bros. | A reboot is in the works for the 1999 sci-fi action film. | | X | | | | | | |
| The Wee Free Men | TBA | Jim Henson Co. | First novel in the bestselling Discworld series by the late Terry Pratchett. | | | X | | | | | |
| Uncharted | TBA | Sony Pictures | Video game spin-off follows a descendant of Sir Francis Drake, played by Tom Holland, on his quest to find the golden city of El Dorado. | | | | X | | | | |

Note: All details subject to change. Source: Companies, compiled by THE LICENSING LETTER

PRESCHOOL

As Generations Shift, Preschool Market Follows

Broadly speaking, the demographics of the world are changing—on a global level, parents are having fewer children while their financial prospects are improving. For some countries, that translates into increased spending on largely non-essential items, like licensed toys and premium-priced bottles. For other territories, that means decreased spending on essentials like diapers and juice boxes. But most of the time, it's a mix of both.

Today, the English-speaking world provides the bulk of preschool-aged entertainment media and content consumed by children throughout the world. Preschool properties hailing from the U.S./Canada make up roughly 44% of all which have some licensing activity, followed by the U.K. (29%) and the rest of Europe (16%).

But that picture will gradually shift—and it is largely expected that U.S.-based content dominance will be challenged by home-grown properties from countries like the U.K., China, Russia, and even India which (each at their own pace and level) realize the importance of publicly funding and regulating children's broadcasting content.

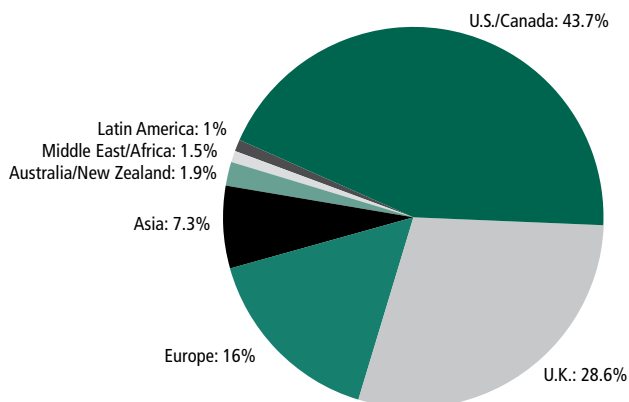
In one sense, it's just a numbers game. By analyzing the top 49 countries for which *TLL* tracks individual country retail sales, it is clear that the fastest-growing market for licensed consumer goods is Asia. On the other hand, it is important to note that just because a country has more children, does not mean that its economy will pour more dollars into content production and consumer goods development. Certain countries with lower birth rates and lower child populations will obviously outspend others. But the 49-country comparison below has, at its starting point, countries whose economies are developed enough to generate at least some licensed retail sales. By observing general population trends, it is possible to predict, to some extent, the largest territories of growth with reference to other economic indicators.

The countries with the largest populations in the world are India and China, which respectively are home to 19.3% and 12.6% of the world's children. But what makes each of these country's economies so appealing is the fact that as birth rates have decreased, income has increased—and consumer spending has gradually eroded manufacturing's share of GDP.

In China, this latest generation is one of the most economically powerful to date because of multiple one-child generations. While generational wealth is typically spread out in a pyramid shape from one ancestor to increasingly successive (plural) decedents in western countries, that model is flipped in China. Wealth is instead concentrated from two sets of parents into one child over successive generations.

And of course, restrictive government controls on what type of content may be distributed throughout the country play a key role in elevating the importance of domestic

PRESCHOOL PROPERTIES WITH SOME LICENSING ACTIVITY, BY ORIGIN TERRITORY, 2016



Note: Numbers may not add up exactly due to rounding.

SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

Chinese production houses. Similar policies in Russia, however, do not mean that foreign producers are as eager to partner with internal players because the market for children's goods has been shrinking along with lowered birth rates in that country.

The “flipped triangle” trend is also visible in Southeast Asian countries like Thailand, Singapore, and Vietnam. South Korea has also seen rapid tapering of the “triangle” and increased levels of consumer spending—in addition to content production and export (albeit not as much for kid's content). But the trend shines in the Middle East, especially in countries like UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, where a developed market for consumer goods already exists—and it is relatively simple to expand it further. The region will likely remain dependent on foreign entertainment for the upcoming decade, however, especially as internet penetration in the region increases.

While the U.S. has quite a lot of children, ranking 6th in the world in terms of sheer number, declining birthrates have translated into decreased sales of staple goods like formula and diapers. Despite low unemployment numbers, higher insurance and childcare costs are still pressuring American families.

But it is important to remember that spending doesn't necessarily originate from parents. Because U.S. families tend to have siblings more often than only kids, the declining marriage rate actually translates into higher “non-essential” sales of preschool products as aunts, uncles, and even family friends have more room in their pocketbooks to lavish on the youngest members of their pack.

Continued on page 22

**AVERAGE BIRTHS PER WOMAN, BY DECADE,
IN TOP COUNTRIES FOR LICENSED RETAIL SALES**

| RANK, 2016 | COUNTRY | 1960–1979 | 1980–1999 | 2000–2015 | CHANGE, 1960s TO 2010s* |
|------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | U.S. | 2.5 | 1.9 | 2.0 | -38% |
| 2 | Japan | 2.0 | 1.6 | 1.4 | -30% |
| 3 | Canada | 2.5 | 1.7 | 1.6 | -49% |
| 4 | U.K. | 2.4 | 1.8 | 1.8 | -32% |
| 5 | China (mainland) | 5.1 | 2.2 | 1.6 | -74% |
| 6 | France | 2.5 | 1.8 | 2.0 | -28% |
| 7 | Germany | 2.0 | 1.4 | 1.4 | -41% |
| 8 | Italy | 2.3 | 1.3 | 1.4 | -44% |
| 9 | Brazil | 5.1 | 3.1 | 1.9 | -69% |
| 10 | Australia | 2.7 | 1.9 | 1.9 | -40% |
| 11 | Spain | 2.8 | 1.5 | 1.3 | -54% |
| 12 | Mexico | 6.4 | 3.6 | 2.4 | -66% |
| 13 | Netherlands | 2.4 | 1.6 | 1.7 | -43% |
| 14 | Belgium | 2.2 | 1.6 | 1.8 | -29% |
| 15 | India | 5.5 | 4.1 | 2.7 | -58% |
| 16 | Sweden | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.8 | -15% |
| 17 | Taiwan** | — | — | — | — |
| 18 | Turkey | 5.6 | 3.3 | 2.2 | -65% |
| 19 | South Africa | 5.6 | 3.8 | 2.6 | -57% |
| 20 | Austria | 2.3 | 1.5 | 1.4 | -46% |
| 21 | Switzerland | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.5 | -38% |
| 22 | Denmark | 2.2 | 1.6 | 1.8 | -30% |
| 23 | South Korea | 4.4 | 1.8 | 1.2 | -77% |
| 24 | Finland | 2.1 | 1.7 | 1.8 | -28% |
| 25 | Hong Kong | 3.6 | 1.4 | 1.1 | -73% |
| 26 | Portugal | 3.0 | 1.7 | 1.3 | -59% |
| 27 | New Zealand | 3.1 | 2.0 | 2.0 | -44% |
| 28 | Norway | 2.5 | 1.8 | 1.8 | -36% |
| 29 | Greece | 2.3 | 1.5 | 1.4 | -40% |
| 30 | Russia | 2.1 | 1.7 | 1.5 | -24% |
| 31 | Saudi Arabia | 7.3 | 5.9 | 3.1 | -62% |
| 32 | Chile | 4.0 | 2.5 | 1.9 | -61% |
| 33 | Argentina | 3.2 | 3.0 | 2.4 | -24% |
| 34 | Ireland/Eire | 3.7 | 2.3 | 2.0 | -49% |
| 35 | Poland | 2.4 | 2.0 | 1.3 | -48% |
| 36 | Singapore | 3.5 | 1.7 | 1.3 | -74% |
| 37 | Philippines | 6.3 | 4.4 | 3.3 | -55% |
| 38 | Malaysia | 5.2 | 3.6 | 2.2 | -65% |
| 39 | Czech Republic | 2.2 | 1.7 | 1.4 | -29% |
| 40 | Indonesia | 5.3 | 3.3 | 2.5 | -56% |
| 41 | Macau | 2.7 | 1.6 | 1.0 | -68% |
| 42 | Hungary | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.3 | -30% |
| 43 | UAE | 6.5 | 4.3 | 2.0 | -73% |
| 44 | Qatar | 6.7 | 4.3 | 2.3 | -71% |
| 45 | Iceland | 3.2 | 2.2 | 2.0 | -45% |
| 46 | Thailand | 5.3 | 2.3 | 1.6 | -75% |
| 47 | Luxembourg | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.6 | -32% |
| 48 | Egypt | 6.2 | 4.6 | 3.2 | -50% |
| 49 | Vietnam | 6.2 | 3.6 | 1.9 | -70% |
| | Worldwide | 4.6 | 3.2 | 2.5 | -50% |

Notes: *Decade average only includes years 2010–2015. **Country data not available.

SOURCES: The World Bank, THE LICENSING LETTER

**CHILDREN AGED 0–14 YEARS-OLD,
IN TOP COUNTRIES FOR LICENSED RETAIL SALES, 2016**

| RANK, 2016 | COUNTRY | NUMBER OF CHILDREN (THOUSANDS) | CHILDREN AS SHARE OF TOTAL COUNTRY POPULATION | SHARE OF GIRLS | SHARE OF WORLD CHILD POPULATION |
|------------|------------------|--------------------------------|---|----------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | U.S. | 61,485 | 17% | 49% | 3.2% |
| 2 | Japan | 16,428 | 30% | 49% | 0.8% |
| 3 | Canada | 5,795 | 29% | 49% | 0.3% |
| 4 | U.K. | 11,564 | 21% | 49% | 0.6% |
| 5 | China (mainland) | 244,031 | 30% | 46% | 12.6% |
| 6 | France | 12,158 | 20% | 49% | 0.6% |
| 7 | Germany | 10,821 | 21% | 49% | 0.6% |
| 8 | Italy | 8,247 | 18% | 49% | 0.4% |
| 9 | Brazil | 45,967 | 29% | 49% | 2.4% |
| 10 | Australia | 4,560 | 33% | 49% | 0.2% |
| 11 | Spain | 6,863 | 15% | 49% | 0.4% |
| 12 | Mexico | 34,538 | 0% | 49% | 1.8% |
| 13 | Netherlands | 2,824 | 15% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 14 | Belgium | 1,933 | 16% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 15 | India | 373,356 | 41% | 47% | 19.3% |
| 16 | Sweden | 1,723 | 15% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 17 | Taiwan* | — | 41% | — | — |
| 18 | Turkey | 20,118 | 16% | 49% | 1.0% |
| 19 | South Africa | 16,313 | 29% | 50% | 0.8% |
| 20 | Austria | 1,233 | 18% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 21 | Switzerland | 1,241 | 0% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 22 | Denmark | 951 | 34% | 49% | 0.0% |
| 23 | South Korea | 6,995 | 36% | 48% | 0.4% |
| 24 | Finland | 900 | 18% | 49% | 0.0% |
| 25 | Hong Kong | 824 | 19% | 48% | 0.0% |
| 26 | Portugal | 1,431 | 39% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 27 | New Zealand | 930 | 0% | 49% | 0.0% |
| 28 | Norway | 933 | 42% | 49% | 0.0% |
| 29 | Greece | 1,542 | 46% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 30 | Russia | 24,960 | 42% | 49% | 1.3% |
| 31 | Saudi Arabia | 8,242 | 37% | 49% | 0.4% |
| 32 | Chile | 3,682 | 14% | 49% | 0.2% |
| 33 | Argentina | 10,988 | 26% | 49% | 0.6% |
| 34 | Ireland/Eire | 1,036 | 0% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 35 | Poland | 5,618 | 36% | 49% | 0.3% |
| 36 | Singapore | 854 | 25% | 49% | 0.0% |
| 37 | Philippines | 33,026 | 29% | 49% | 1.7% |
| 38 | Malaysia | 7,679 | 17% | 49% | 0.4% |
| 39 | Czech Republic | 1,608 | 11% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 40 | Indonesia | 72,205 | 32% | 49% | 3.7% |
| 41 | Macau | 78 | 43% | 48% | 0.0% |
| 42 | Hungary | 1,409 | 15% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 43 | UAE | 1,287 | 33% | 49% | 0.1% |
| 44 | Qatar | 357 | 14% | 49% | 0.0% |
| 45 | Iceland | 67 | 24% | 49% | 0.0% |
| 46 | Thailand | 12,156 | 28% | 49% | 0.6% |
| 47 | Luxembourg | 96 | 39% | 49% | 0.0% |
| 48 | Egypt | 32,009 | 39% | 48% | 1.7% |
| 49 | Vietnam | 21,393 | 28% | 48% | 1.1% |
| | Worldwide | 1,939,003 | 39% | 48% | 100.0% |

Note: *Country data not available.

SOURCES: The World Bank, THE LICENSING LETTER

Continued on page 23

Shifting generations, continued from page 21

Eventually, the narrative of consumer consumption in the U.S. will be a common one worldwide. But not before the lines of content production shift to one that is less driven by U.S.- and U.K.-based properties.

In Europe, the story is more nuanced. France, Germany, and Italy are actually emerging as baby powerhouses, while the Nordic countries are seeing declines—all from relatively low “starting” birthrates in the 1960s. In part, because the media market is a bit more free-flowing within the European Union, the demographic shift is being mirrored more quickly than in other territories. It will be interesting to see the impact of Brexit on this market—but any

concerns might be void, as many production houses are moving across the water from the U.K. to Ireland.

At the very least, the data suggests that the kid’s market will be increasingly diverse and demanding—even as a greater number of properties will have the opportunity to shine on the world stage.

For more data, including retail sales of licensed preschool merchandise and the top preschool properties, visit the [Licensing Data Bank](#). If you’re not subscribed to the Data Bank, you can still check out our article on the [top 20 preschool properties](#) generating over \$100 million in licensed retail sales worldwide.

TOYS/GAMES

Company Spotlight: On Scaling Niche to Mass

Since filing for an IPO last year, Funko has released some of its financial data and offered a few key insights on the fast-growing, ever-volatile market for pop culture collectible merchandise. Here are some of the top takeaways and most interesting tidbits gleaned from a licensee generating around \$800 million in licensed retail sales a year.

While the company seems to occupy the most niche of markets—namely, low-price collectibles based on nerdy, geeky, or otherwise fanatic pop culture phenomena—there is surprisingly broad appeal behind Funko’s business model that can be easily exploited, if done right. But as its financial sheets make clear, even if a company commands significant pop culture expertise, the licensing model turns out to be largely a betting game.

According to the NPD Group, the global collectibles market grew by 14% to \$3.9 billion in 2017, thanks in part to properties like L.O.L. Surprise!, Hatchimals, and LEGO Minifigures. Collectibles accounted for about 8% of the total general toy market. On the licensed side, one licensee that helped the category grow is, of course, Funko.

Please note that any calculations in this story were made in reliance on publicly-available information and guided by proprietary insights on the part of *TLL*. Numbers should not be used to benchmark brand performance, but instead, offer guidance regarding relative scale when navigating the landscape of licensed brands in the pop culture and collectibles space.

Breaking Down the Sales Figures

As of Q3 2017, Funko generated around \$350 million in net sales worldwide—while we don’t have any numbers for Q4 yet, we will update the story when they are made available. For the 2017 holiday season, the company offered around 5,000 products across product categories including vinyl figures, action toys, plush, apparel, housewares, and accessories. Figures made up around 82% of 2016 net sales, and are expected remain at around 80% for 2017. More specifically, sales of Pop!-branded products accounted for approximately 64% of net sales for 2016.

Note that for 2017, Funko’s financial sheets include sales and expenses from new acquisitions Loungefly, Underground Toys, and A Large Evil Corp.—which makes a year-to-year comparison for certain financial metrics a lost cause. Sales outside of the U.S. constituted 20% of the total in 2017, and constitute a major area of potential growth. One interesting disclosure: For the nine months ended Sept. 30, 2017, the company recorded \$2.7 million in net sales through U.K. retailer Forbidden Planet.

According to its IPO documentation, Funko did \$426.7 million in net sales in 2016—and according to its latest Q3 2017 filings, \$294.3 million in net sales for the nine months ended Sept. 30, 2016. That leaves \$132.4 million in net sales to make an impressive Q4 2016. The company has historically generated around 60% of its net sales in Q3 and Q4. Assuming that the share of sales remains the same from year-to-year (30% of 2016 sales were made in Q4), that means Funko’s sales would go up 12% in 2017.

As a bit of background, Funko claims to hold active license agreements with over 110 different licensors covering around 1,000 properties. In any given quarter, however, the company is monetizing less than half of those, with just 300–400 licenses generating sales. On average, active properties generated \$700,000 and \$900,000 in yearly net sales in 2016 and 2017, respectively, not including sales during Q4 (the top-earning holiday period). In Q3 for 2016 and 2017, the average property generated around \$400,000 in net sales. Presumably, then, the average net sales for a property would hover just over \$1 million annually—yielding an average licensor tens of thousands in royalties for one property.

This is, of course, assuming that an “average” property exists. Given the relatively short life cycles of pop culture brands, the number of licenses it has on its roster, and the comparatively low sales it gets from each average property, it makes sense that Funko has a development cost of just \$5,000–7,500 for new figurines. As discussed below, however, given its obligations as a licensee, the company expects that a set percentage of licenses will operate at a loss.

Continued on page 24

According to its filings, the company's license agreements typically have short terms (2–3 years), are not automatically renewable, and, in some cases, give the licensor the right to terminate the agreement at will. While it is a pretty precarious position to be in as a licensee, such terms would presumably help lower minimum guaranteed payments and royalty fees by providing licensors with an acceptable trade-off: greater control. Funko reserves around \$4.5 million on its balance sheet solely for ongoing and future royalty audits. And for the nine months ended Sept. 2017, it kept another \$2 million on hand to pay out minimum royalty guarantees for agreements where the company estimated it could not meet sales targets—that is, for licenses operating at a loss.

The company is overly dependent on brick-and-mortar shelf space, citing the shift towards ecommerce as a key reason that its products have been given prominent shelf space over the last couple of years. At the same time, it acknowledges that its capabilities in that space are relatively few.

Like other licensees, the company will face a reckoning as retailers such as Barnes & Noble, which had previously embraced pop culture merchandise in stores, downsize their non-book offerings. On the other hand, retailers like GameStop reported double-digit increases in collectibles sales—and the specialty retailer is the largest individual distributor for Funko (while accounting for under 12% of sales). The next-largest retailers by volume are Hot Topic, Underground Toys, Walmart, and Target.

Top Brands

Somewhat fittingly, considering its niche pop culture focus, the collectibles company had an indie video game to thank for its financial success in 2016. Products based on *Five Nights at Freddy's* generated approximately \$63.1 million (or 15% of net sales) for the year ended Dec. 31, 2016. The game's sequel was released at the end of 2016;

Funko's license for the franchise expires at the end of 2021.

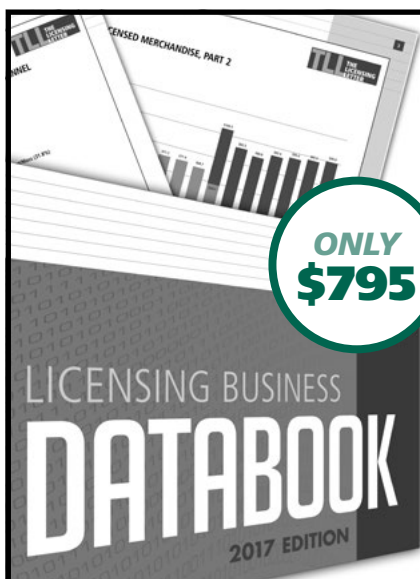
For the full year 2016, Funko's net sales came primarily from evergreen/classic (43% of net sales; incl. brands like Star Wars, Disney Princess, and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles), theatrical (24%; *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Coco*, and *Thor: Ragnarok*), video game (20%; properties like *Call of Duty* and *Overwatch* apparently contributed to only 5% of total net sales), and TV (12%; *Game of Thrones*, *Stranger Things*) brands. Note that 1% of net sales came from "other," undefined, brands.

Funko's top ten licensors collectively accounted for approximately 70% and 80% of net sales for the nine months ended Sept. 30, 2017 and 2016, respectively. While Funko didn't explicitly call out the House of Mouse as its biggest-earner, its combined licensing agreements for Disney, LucasFilm, and Marvel accounted for approximately 31% and 33% of net sales for the nine months ended Sept. 30, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

More recently, in Q3 2017, no single property made up more than 10% of sales. Of 400 active properties, the biggest-earners were evergreen/classic (44% of sales; incl. brands like Harry Potter), theatrical (27%; *Moana*), TV (14%; *Stranger Things*), and video game (14%; *World of Warcraft*) brands. Despite recent moaning and groaning over the allegedly poor performance of Star Wars-branded goods, the company reported that its figures sold more in 2017 than they had in 2015.

Demographics

The most surprising tidbit of data that Funko offered its investors was the average age of its consumer demographic: 35 years-old, or the forgotten Gen X. Its products apparently have broad appeal among men (49%) and women (51%), with 33% of consumers identifying as enthusiasts, 36% as collectors, and 31% as the occasional buyer.



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TOYS/GAMES

Amid Rocky 2017 Performance, Toycos Boosted by Licensing

The NPD Group's latest report shows the toy industry grew by 1% in 12 global markets in 2017, with global sales reaching \$20.7 billion. The top growth-drivers, according to the research group, were fidget toys, slime, dolls, and collectibles. According to NPD, 2017's top three-selling toy properties globally were Star Wars, Nerf, and Barbie. In the U.S. alone, Nerf captured the number one spot, followed by Star Wars and Barbie.

With full-year financial results available from the two biggest toycos manufacturers, all initial indicators point to overall retail sales of licensed toys and games being quite flat—with proprietary brands eating into previously strong sales. However, certain licensed brands buoyed performance and kept margins solid.

Mattel blamed its poor performance, in part, on certain underperforming brands and short-term disruption from the Toys "R" Us bankruptcy filing. Overall, Mattel reported depressed sales overall for 2017—net sales were down 11% thanks to poor performance in North America, where net sales were down 17% from 2016. That loss was partially offset with a flat net sales internationally.

According to Mattel's internal analysis, consumer take-away at retail for Barbie was up high-single digits; Hot Wheels was up mid-single digits; Fisher-Price was down low-single digits; and Thomas & Friends was down double digits. While poor performance of core merchandise (not licensed out but manufactured by the licensor directly) tends to indicate poor performance of licensed goods, this wasn't necessarily the case for Mattel in 2017.

Hasbro reported net revenues of \$5.21 billion, or an increase of 4%, in 2017. North American sales were up 5% and up 2% internationally.

Hasbro's owned-brands saw a large boost, with its franchise brands up 10% to \$2.57 billion. Revenue growth was driven by Transformers, Nerf, Monopoly, and My Little Pony. In its final accounting, Hasbro grouped all of its gaming brands together, which include Magic: The Gathering and Monopoly, to report an 8% jump in revenue to reach \$1.50 billion in 2017 from the previous year. Factoring out the franchise brands, Hasbro's gaming segment revenues (including new social games like Speak Out and Toilet Trouble) grew 10% to \$893.0 million.

While the entertainment and licensing segment was up by 8% overall, that didn't translate into an overall boost to licensed brands. Partner Brand net revenues decreased 10% to \$1.27 billion with both the U.S./Canada and international segments recording declines. Growth was observed in Beyblade, Marvel, and Sesame Street and declines in Star Wars and (to a lesser extent) Yo-Kai Watch and Frozen.

ENTERTAINMENT/CHARACTER

Franchises Drive Comic Sales in 2017

According to ICv2 and NPD BookScan, the top-selling comic book titles of 2017 hailed from the '80s—two 30-year-old volumes were the best-selling superhero titles of the year. Marvel's top new title was *Black Panther Book 1* and DC Comics' top new titles were the collections of the *Rebirth* launches of *Batman* and *The Flash*.

Twelve of the top 20 best-selling superhero titles of the year were from DC Comics, seven were from Marvel, and two hailed from Oni Press—including a collected volume of *Rick and Morty* comics.

On the kid's graphic novel side, the big winners were authors Dav Pilkey (creator of *Captain Underpants* topped the list with *Dog Man*) and Raina Telgemeier (top titles were *Ghosts*, *Drama*, *Smile*, *Sisters*, and the *Baby-Sitters Club* graphic novel adaptations).

In manga-oriented news, top titles included *Tokyo Ghoul*, *My Hero Academia*, and *The Legend of Zelda*. The end of 2017 also saw new launches from top franchises *Naruto* (with a new series unfortunately titled *Boruto*) and *Dragon Ball* (*Dragon Ball Super*).

Valiant Entertainment is acquired by Chinese company **DMG Entertainment**. According to *THR*, DMG invested heavily in Valiant in 2015, putting in at least \$10 million in a series C round of equity as well as at least \$100 million toward film and TV production based on Valiant's vast superhero catalog. CEO Dan Mintz currently holds a 57% stake in the company and chose to pursue the acquisition as a strategic move to make a concerted push into film, TV and other media. Dinesh Shamdasani, CEO & CCO, will be transitioning out of the company as part of the acquisition.

Valiant has three films in development: *Archer & Armstrong* is being developed by the Sean Daniel Co.; *Shadowman* is in development with a script by J. Michael Straczynski; and *Bloodshot* has secured Vin Diesel to star. On the small screen, *Quantum and Woody* is being developed as a TV series and the CW is working on a drama series based on *Dr. Mirage*. A live-action digital series, *Ninjak vs the Valiant Universe*, is due this winter from Valiant Digital.

Corus Entertainment's production and distribution arm, **Nelvana**, joins forces with Japanese investment company **Sumitomo** to develop and co-produce new anime properties for the global market. Tokyo-based content creation firm **Zeroichi** will support the project and produce original anime and toy concepts.

Nelvana and Sumitomo will work together with Zeroichi President Shigeki Fujiwara, who also worked on *Beyblade* and *Majinbone*, as well as Stuart Snyder through his New York-based consultancy **Snyder Media Group**, who will consult on the venture going forward.

PUBLISHING

Publishing Driven by Kids; General Market Softens

Retail sales of licensed publishing—including books, comics, and magazines—reached over \$3.7 million in the U.S./Canada for 2016. Meanwhile, the general sector has relatively soft performance that continued into 2017.

Unit sales of print books were up 1.9% in the U.S. in 2017, continuing the modest single-digit growth book sales have seen over the past few years, according to the **NPD Group**. The holiday season for book sales was late, with sales declines from Nov. 26 to Dec. 9, followed by a 7% surge in the last week before Christmas. Overall U.S. unit book sales were up 2% for the 8-week holiday season, according to NPD.

Kids graphic novels were a bright spot in the book business. Leading the growth was a 20% growth rate in kids graphic novels, driven by sales of *Captain Underpants* creator Dav Pilkey's *Dog Man* & *Cat Kid* graphic novel series.

After completing its purchase of **Rodale**, the **Hearst Corp.** quickly followed up by selling Rodale's trade book publishing assets to **Penguin Random House**. Terms of the acquisition, which involves more than 2,000 backlist titles and 100 frontlist books, were not disclosed. Adult non-fiction titles will become part of Crown Publishing Group and the Rodale children's line will become part of Random House Children's Books.

Revenue at **IDW Publishing** fell 12.1% to reach \$24.5 million in the fiscal year ended Oct. 31, 2017, compared to \$27.9 million in 2016, parentco IDW Media reported. The publishing unit includes IDW's games business. IDW attributed the decline to "a cyclically slow period in the comic book specialty market," as well as its transition to Penguin Random House for distribution. In releasing its financials, IDW said that with the distribution move to PRH completed and the scheduled release of titles such as *Star Wars Adventures* and *Star Trek: Discovery*, it expects sales in the publishing group to improve in fiscal 2018.

Barnes & Noble reported that comparable sales fell 6.3% in the quarter ended Oct. 28., the seventh straight three-month period to see sales decline. While part of that decline could be attributed to the absence of a blockbuster on the level of a *Harry Potter*, comparable sales of non-book products were down even more sharply than the company average. The bookseller plans to shrink store footprints to smaller formats and focus more on selling books.

Scholastic also cited the lack of Harry Potter as one reason for declines in the quarter ended Nov. 30, 2017. Revenue declined 4% from a year ago, to \$598.3 million, and operating profit dropped 4%, to \$107.2 million. While sales in the children's publishing and distribution group fell 5%, the decline was less than expected due to strong sales of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban: The Illustrated Edition*, Dav Pilkey's *Dog Man* series, and tie-in titles to the indie *Five Nights at Freddy's* video game series. Still, trade sales fell 18% in the quarter due to the lack of new blockbuster titles.

Across the pond, The Federation of European Publishers (**FEP**) released its latest statistical report, which covers 2016 and aggregates data from 29 national associations across Europe. According to the report, total annual sales for members was approximately €22.3 billion (\$28.21 billion), the same level it was at in 2015. Sales of ebooks now represent 6% of overall sales, though growth in ebook sales had stagnated for the second year in a row.

When the FEP accounted for total income, which includes rights sales, books to film adaptations, as well as the figure for wholesale sales to booksellers, it estimated the total market value as €36–38 billion (\$44–46 billion). Local and domestic sales represented 77.9% of all sales for reporting members, with exports representing 22.1%.

The largest markets in terms of revenue and new title production in 2016 were Germany, the U.K., France, Spain, and Italy—all reported an increase in publishers' turnover in 2016.



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Who's News

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Sanrio names **Craig Takiguchi** as its new COO. Having previously headed up new business development, Craig brings a new vision for expansion into the digital and entertainment space as well as collaborating with high profile brands to the company.

Mark Kingston is promoted to SVP Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products. Mark will be based in London, reporting to CMO **Pam Kaufman**. In addition to managing EMEA operations for the unit, his remit is expanded to include all regions outside of the U.S. across retail, operations, licensing, and promotions, and marketing.

Marvel Entertainment's **Dan Buckley** stands down as Publisher, a position he's held for the last 15 years, to become the full-time President of the company. Dan is replaced by **John Nee**, formerly DC Entertainment's SVP Business Development.

National Geographic Partners appoints **Helena Mansell-Stopher**, hailing from Bulldog Licensing, as Director Consumer Products U.K. Based in London, Helena will report to **Maria Maranesi**, VP Consumer Products & Experiences for Europe and Africa. Citing "modernization," National Geographic Partners lays off about a dozen staffers—approximately 1% of its total workforce of 900 strong.

Gary E. Knell, President & CEO of the National Geographic Society, is tapped to serve as CEO of National Geographic Partners. He replaces the exiting **Declan Moore**.

Online print-on-demand marketplace Redbubble taps **Cynthia Money** to serve as the company's Head Licensing.

After restructuring, Precious Moments has a new licensing team in the shape of **Abbie Honaker** as Director New Business Licensing; **Elisa McDermott** as VP Sales; and **Mary Theis** as Licensing Manager. This year marks the company's 40th anniversary.

Basic Fun!, the toyco formed from the merger of The Bridge Direct and Tech 4 Kids, appoints **Ashley Mady** to serve as Head Brand Development. Ashley formerly ran licensing and creative agency Brandberry; she continues to serve as President of the Women in Toys (WIT) organization.

Stephen Teglas is named SVP Global Fashion, Home & Infant for Warner Bros. Consumer Products. Teglas will be responsible for developing, managing, and executing global licensing deals across the fashion, home and infant categories as well as appropriate channels.

The Intl. Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association (LIMA) welcomes **Elias Fasja-Cohen**, CEO & Founder of Tycoon Enterprises, and **Brian Goldner**, Chairman & CEO of Hasbro, as the 2018 inductees to the LIMA Licensing Hall of Fame. This year's Hall of Fame Induction will take place May 22, at the LIMA Licensing Awards Ceremony during Licensing Expo 2018 in Las Vegas.

Sergi Reitg steps down as CEO of Spain-based global kids and family distribution company Imira Entertainment. He is replaced by former Disney and NBCUniversal senior exec **Paul Robinson**.

Sony CFO **Kenichiro Yoshida** will step into the CEO role, replacing **Kaz Hirai**. Hirai, in turn, will become chairman of the company.

Sony Pictures Entertainment Group streamlines operations under chairman and CEO **Tony Vinciguerra**. President of Distribution for Sony Pictures Television (SPT) **Keith Le Goy** now oversees Home Entertainment. All SPT networks report to new SPT head (and former Hulu CEO) **Mike Hopkins**; marketing teams will report to the business unit they support. Leaving the company are President Worldwide Networks **Andy Kaplan**; SPT President & CMO **Sheraton Kalouria**; and Sony Pictures Entertainment President of Home Entertainment **Man Jit Singh**.

Meredith appoints **Tom Harty** as the company's President & CEO and **Steve Lacy** as the executive chairman.

Barnes & Noble taps **Timothy Mantel** to serve as its Chief Merchandising Officer; he oversees categories including books, toys and games, gifts, newsstand, music, and entertainment.

WWE promotes **George Barrios** and **Michelle Wilson** to serve as Co-Presidents and has appointed both to its board of directors.

NASCAR makes key leadership appointments, including sending **Jim Cassidy** to the new leadership position of Chief Intl. Officer, reporting to **Steve O'Donnell**, EVP & Chief Racing Development Officer. Cassidy will grow the NASCAR brand internationally and oversee all international competition and commercial operations. Meanwhile, **Chad Seigler** will now serve as VP Intl. Business Development and **Ben Kennedy** as General Manager NASCAR Camping World Truck Series.

Icelandic character-based lifestyle brand Tulipop names **Björg Arnardottir** as its new Licensing Manager, with responsibility for spearheading the growth of the brand's licensing business.

Ralph Lauren hires **Alice Delahunt** as Chief Digital Officer and appoints new digital leaders worldwide: **Laura Porco** is SVP E-commerce Ralph Lauren North America, **Galen Hardy** is SVP Club Monaco E-Commerce & Business Operations, and **Valeria Juarezis** is SVP E-commerce Intl.

The licensing arm and national broadcaster of the U.S. Polo Association, USPA Global Licensing, appoints **J. Michael Prince** to serve as CEO and **W. David Cummings** as Chairman of the Board. The team has crafted a new strategic plan which envisions the brand exceeding \$2 billion in global retail sales (it's currently at \$1.5 billion), in part by transitioning USPA into a digital and media content-driven brand.

Univision Communications names **Jessica Rodriguez** to the newly created role of President & COO UCI Networks; Jessica will continue to serve in her existing role as CMO of UCI.

Who's News, Cont'd.

Jennifer Rogers Doyle is promoted to the newly created position of SVP Brand Development & Integrated Planning at Disney Channels. Jennifer will add integrated planning and the development of cross-department marketing strategies for Disney Junior, Disney Channel and Disney XD series, movies, and programming events to her remit.

The Walt Disney Co. is planning to give \$1,000 bonuses to more than 125,000 non-managerial employees, including part-timers. CEO Bob Iger additionally promised to invest \$50 million in a new education program. He didn't mention whether the bonuses were connected with the recently enacted tax overhaul; Comcast and AT&T both cited the federal reform in announcing their recent bonus programs.

Within its North American Marketing and Events team, Octagon promotes **Matt Malichio** to SVP & Creative Director; **Meredith Kinsman** to VP Digital Strategy; and **Lindsay Wynalek** to VP.

Unruly names **Norm Johnson**, most recently global CEO of Mindshare FAST and Mindshare's global chief digital officer, as its new CEO.

Longtime Diamond book executive **Kuo-Yu Liang** joins ReedPOP as Global Director of Business Development, concentrating on Asia from his base in Seattle, Washington. ReedPOP currently has nine shows in the region—in China, Singapore, Indonesia, South Korea, and India.

Alexandar Vassilev, formerly top Google brass, is appointed CEO of 7TV—Discovery Communications and ProSiebenSat.1's joint premium direct-to-consumer entertainment streaming service in Germany.

Former Visual Data execs **Anita O'Donnell** and **Yives Reed** launch a media entertainment management consultancy, Media Minds, designed to bridge the gap between technology and content, people and platforms.

Global kids content distributor Jetpack Distribution appoints **Gillian Calvert** Ridge to the newly created role of Global Head of Sales.

California-based management and prodco, The Cartel, adds **Matthew Ellis** as a manager to its animation and family division. His clients include Shea Fontana (DC Super Hero Girls, Wonder Woman, Dorothy From Oz), Amy Keating Rogers (The Powerpuff Girls, Care Bears) and Doug Wood (Tree Fu Tom, Bob the Builder, Enchantimals).

Irish prodco Sixteen South hires **Emma Fernando** as Head Production, **Andrew Rajan** as Commercial Director, and **Darin McKeown** as Controller.

The PGA TOUR unveils plans for its new global home, which will consolidate area employees under one roof in Ponte Vedra Beach. The new 187,000 square-foot headquarters is expected to be completed in 2020.

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