

TLL THE LICENSING LETTER

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Asia Drives Global Licensed Sales Up 2.4%

Global retail sales of licensed merchandise reached \$171 billion in 2017, according to *TLL's Annual Licensing Business Survey*.

Licensed sales grew 2.4% from 2016, a slightly slower rate of growth than the 2.7% observed in 2016 and 2015. Overall, growth was tempered with 59% of the top 50 countries whose licensed retail sales activity *TLL* measures observing slower licensed growth rates compared to GDP.

Leading the world in licensed retail sales are the U.S., Japan, Canada, the U.K., and mainland China. The top 5 ranking remains unchanged from 2016; indeed, the top 15 slots remain unchanged save for India displacing Belgium for the No. 14 slot.

The top 5 countries ranked by licensed retail sales contribute to 78.2% of those sales worldwide. But their rate of growth is slowing compared to previous years—in 2017, the top 5 countries grew 2.4% (matching the overall growth rate) compared to 3% in 2016 (2.9% overall growth) and 2.9% in 2015 (2.7% overall growth).

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2018 LICENSING EXPO

Expo Wrap-up: Fighting FOMO With Innovation

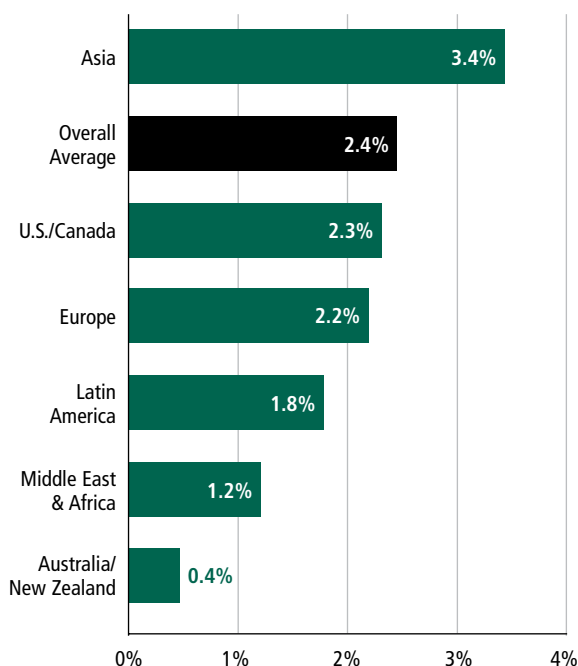
As a preface to this year's Licensing Expo wrap-up, it is important to note that entertainment/character-based brands continue to have an outsized presence on the show floor—as a category, based on licensed retail sales worldwide as well as in the U.S./Canada, entertainment/character does not rank first but third after corporate trademark/brands and fashion. These two categories were somewhat better represented compared to last year, but many new attendees expressed frustration that Expo was not as diverse as the business itself.

The floor itself at the Las Vegas venue was larger than in previous years; according to our own highly unscientific estimates, at least a several hundred square feet were added. And the number of attendees increased as well, with the bulk of new faces coming from retailers, manufacturers, and smaller licensors. International exhibitors also saw an uptick in numbers as well as booth size, but the general mood among attendees was more dismissive than welcoming.

More generally, the mood on the floor was unrelenting optimism and enthusiasm, coupled with frustration at the industry's risk-averse culture that encourages replication and discourages innovation and risk-taking. One agent aptly summed it up, stating that

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GROWTH IN RETAIL SALES OF LICENSED MERCHANDISE, BY TERRITORY, 2016–2017



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

SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

➡ Licensing Ledger

Aardman Animations is officially working on a sequel to *Chicken Run* alongside **StudioCanal**, a recent partner, and Pathe, which co-financed the original with **DreamWorks Animation** and distributed it in Europe. The *Hollywood Reporter* reports that many of the original players are attached: Sam Fell will direct, Paul Kewley will produce, Karey Kirkpatrick and John O'Farrell will pen the screenplay. Aardman co-founders Peter Lord and David Sproxton are executive producing.

Paramount Pictures is making headway on *Star Trek 4*, with *Variety* reporting that the prodcop tapped S.J. Clarkson to direct, making her the franchise's first female director. The movie stars Chris Hemsworth (James T. Kirk's father in the first film), Chris Pine (James Kirk), and Zachary Quinto (Spock). Separately, Quentin Tarantino and producer J.J. Abrams are working on an R-rated *Star Trek* film.

Striker Entertainment strikes a first-look television development deal with **Blumhouse Television**. Striker will join Blumhouse in developing franchises around existing brands, video games, and consumer products—including a potential film based on indie horror video game *Five Nights at Freddy's*.

Adaptive Studios acquires the **Zane Grey** literary estate. The media venture plans to revive the classic western novelist's works and brand by developing film, TV, and publishing projects. The Grey estate includes about 133 novels, including several books written by Grey's son and grandson. Adaptive will own and manage all rights related to Grey's name and likeness.

Octopus Publishing Group and **Tate Publishing** enter a licensing agreement in which Octopus will create a licensed publishing program focusing on Tate's practical art and photography books. Octopus will launch their Tate-branded list in Spring 2019 under the Ilex imprint, publishing approximately eight books a year.

As reported by *Promo Marketing Magazine*, the decline in sales of licensed Trump-branded merchandise has been dramatic. (Note: Most of the **Trump Organization's** gains are earned through licensing marks to residential/commercial properties outside the U.S.) In 2009, the company reported that its licensing partners had sold \$215 million worth of Trump-branded goods worldwide. In 2017, Trump's financial disclosure reported that royalties from licensed merchandise had fallen from \$2.4 million to \$370,000.

Bioworld Europe is now **Difuzed**—the newly dubbed company has moved its headquarters just outside Amsterdam, bringing with it a new senior team and approach.

The Fred Rogers Company rebrands itself as **Fred Rogers Productions** in a change designed to better reflect the company's expanding catalog of programs which now includes Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood, Peg + Cat, and Odd Squad. Along with the new name is a refreshed logo featuring an image of Daniel Tiger. The rebrand was done in partnership with The Possibility Shop and SJI Associates.

The Boy Scouts of America is becoming **Scouts BSA** in February 2019 to better reflect its inclusion of girls in its Scouts program. The organization's Cub Scouts program for younger children was the first to open up to girls, while other programs for older youth, such as Venturing, were already open to girls. By next year, older girls will be able to join Scouts BSA and try

to become Eagle Scouts, a path previously unavailable to them. Meanwhile, the Girl Scouts of the USA is promoting its partnerships with organizations like Raytheon (computer science programs) and The North Face (outdoor adventure activities).

U.S. retailers are stocking up on merchandise in advance of potential tariffs on Chinese imports, according to the **National Retail Federation's** latest monthly Global Tracker report. The number of cargo containers to be received at U.S. ports that are forecast for July and August would each set new records for the number of containers imported in a single month; the first half of 2018 is expected to total 10.4 million 20-foot containers (or equivalent), an increase of 5.8% over the first half of 2017.

According to the **NPD**, U.S. toy sales really picked up in the first 14 weeks of 2018—up 13% compared to the same time period last year. The fastest-growing categories were youth electronics (**WowWee's** Fingerlings), dolls (**MGA Entertainment's** L.O.L. Surprise!) and other toys like slow-rise squish-ables.

The firm estimates that **Toys "R" Us** liquidation sales contributed an extra \$180 million to expected toy sales, but that the ultimate net impact on holiday sales would be less than 1% of sales.

In a poll by **CivicScience** on behalf of **NPD**, 56% of Americans who purchased a gift at TRU during its liquidation sales gifted it immediately, with the rest waiting for a birthday or some other special occasion.

For your convenience, **TLL** is honoring our Licensing Expo Special Pricing with **10% OR MORE OFF** through the end of June. Contact Jen at jen@plainlanguagemedia.com or **888-729-2315** for more information!



Executive Editor

Karina Masolova
karina@plainlanguagemedia.com

Managing Editor

Barbara Manning Grimm
barb@plainlanguagemedia.com

Data & Digital Coordinator

Susan Adams
susan@plainlanguagemedia.com

Layout & Graphic Designer

David van der Gulik

Business Development

Randy Cochran
randy@plainlanguagemedia.com

Business Development Manager

Jennifer Frost
jen@plainlanguagemedia.com

Marketing Director

Michael Sherman
michaels@plainlanguagemedia.com

Customer Service

customerservice@
plainlanguagemedia.com

General Manager

Jim Pearmain

CEO

Mark Ziebarth

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Plain Language Media, LLLP 15 Shaw Street, New London, CT, 06320; Phone: 888-729-2315; Fax: 855-649-1623

Asia Drives Global Licensed Sales Up 2.4%

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Asia

The biggest driver of licensed growth, by territory, was Asia. The region added nearly \$700 million worth of licensed retail sales since 2016, growing at a steady 3.4% clip.

Japan is the largest Asian economy for licensed retail sales with just over \$10 billion; in 2017, it rebounded from years of flat or negative growth with a tepid 0.3% boost in licensed retail sales. While a positive sign, it remains to be seen if the consumer market will continue to ramp up as the economy continues to sting from inflation and low wage increases. In part because it is a particularly advanced economy for licensed goods, there is a healthy market for virtually all property types and product categories, and Japan firmly remains a favorite first destination for brands seeking to break into the Asian market.

China, on the other hand, grew 8% in 2017 after a 7% boost in 2016 and 6% growth in 2015. Although the country is struggling to crack a significant milestone in its move away from an industrial economy marked by low domestic consumption—household consumption makes up 39.1% of China's GDP, compared to 69.1% in the U.S.—retail sales continue to grow approximately 10% every year. Certain brands have done extraordinarily well in capturing a rising middle class through mediums like digital entertainment and social commerce. Entertainment/character, fashion, and corporate/trademark brands are the most established property types on the mainland, but there is opportunity for growth for other brands like sports and art.

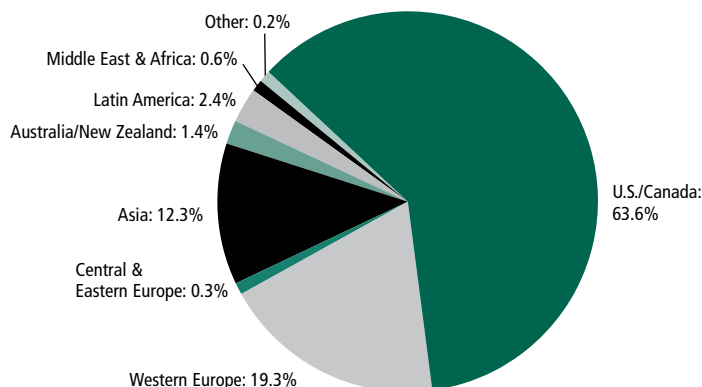
India saw disappointing 6.5% growth in 2017 after a 9.5% jump in 2016 and 9.2% in 2015. While there is significant demand among consumers for branded, quality goods, there is not enough infrastructure in the country to support a robust consumer market. Outside of entertainment/character-based licensing for children's goods, there is no sustained "licensing business" in the country that you might find in the rest of the top 15 countries by licensed retail sales. Bright spots include sports, housewares, and fashion brands. India is more or less in the position that China was in three years ago: we are just waiting for it to "break out."

U.S./Canada

The U.S./Canada has been growing for seven straight years, but this year, it was just a little slower than usual at 2.3% growth. This marks the first year in a while that the U.S./Canada under-performed worldwide average growth; in 2016, the region grew 3.2% (compared to 2.7% worldwide) and in 2015, it grew 3.4% (compared to 2.7%, again). Refer to *TLL's* previous reporting on the territory's licensed retail sales broken out by property type and product category online and in the May 2018 issue.

The American market for licensed goods grew just 2.2% in 2017, an even match with GDP. Meanwhile, Canadian

SHARE OF RETAIL SALES OF LICENSED MERCHANDISE, WORLDWIDE, 2017



SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

RETAIL SALES OF LICENSED MERCHANDISE, WORLDWIDE, BY TERRITORY, 2016–2017 (Figures in Millions)

TERRITORY	RETAIL SALES, 2017	RETAIL SALES, 2016	CHANGE, 2016–2017	MARKET SHARE, 2017
U.S./Canada	\$109,010	\$106,538	2.3%	53.2%
Europe	\$33,596	\$32,881	2.2%	16.4%
Western Europe	\$33,033	\$32,335	2.2%	16.1%
Central & Eastern Europe	\$563	\$546	3.1%	0.3%
Asia	\$21,032	\$20,335	3.4%	10.3%
Australia/New Zealand	\$2,330	\$2,319	0.4%	1.1%
Latin America	\$4,149	\$4,075	1.8%	2.0%
Middle East & Africa	\$970	\$958	1.2%	0.5%
Other	\$391	\$389	0.5%	0.2%
TOTAL	\$205,074	\$200,377	2.3%	100.0%

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

SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

licensed retail sales grew a whopping 3.9% in 2017 after tepid 0.6% growth in 2016 and a -1.4% drop in 2015. Statistics Canada reported a stunning 6.7% boost in overall retail sales, a solid comeback for the economy following the 2008 recession.

Europe

European countries as a whole saw 2.2% growth in licensed retail sales in 2017, just below overall EU retail trade growth of 2.4% (excluding motor vehicles, motor-cycles, and fuel).

Thanks in part to Brexit, the U.K. business for licensed goods was sluggish at 1.9% growth in 2017. The second- and third-largest countries by licensed sales, France (3.5%) and Germany (2.7%), saw an increase in growth compared to flatter levels last year.

Most of the rest of Western Europe recorded surprisingly strong growth with 37% of countries tracked outperforming both the worldwide and European average growth rate. As a whole, the region fared particularly well compared to years prior—after three years of dropping sales, Western Europe “recovered” with 0.5% growth in 2014, 1.5% growth in 2015, and 1.9% growth in 2016.

Portugal (4%), Ireland/Eire (3.8%), France (3.5%), and the Netherlands (also 3.5%) recorded the highest growth rates in Western Europe. After years of little to no growth, the economies of Turkey (2.6%), Italy (1%), and Greece (0.2%) are showing hints of bouncing back with buoyed licensed sales.

The tiny CEE region slightly outperformed the combined growth rate of the Western European countries (3.1% compared to 2.2% growth) in 2017, following years of falling licensed retail sales. Russian retail sales rebounded with moderate 1.4% growth in 2017 followed by a -5.6% dip in 2016 and -18.9% plunge in 2015. The business lost more than 20% in value since 2014, but is coming back thanks in part to a strong domestic market.

Other CEE countries, which make up 62% of sales in the region, saw strong growth. These include Poland (3.6%), the Czech Republic (4.5%), and Hungary (4.1%).

Latin America

The licensing picture in Latin America was a mixed, and sometimes troubled, troubled bag. Countries like Mexico (2.2%) and Chile (2.6%) saw moderately healthy growth, while others like Argentina dipped -1% compared to 2016.

There was, however, some good news for the largest LATAM economy for licensed sales. After falling -3.1% in 2016 and -3.8% in 2015, Brazil came back with a 1.9% increase in licensed sales to reach \$2.1 billion. Overall retail sales in the country were estimates to grow over 5% in 2017.

Most licensed spend in the region is associated with foreign entertainment and fashion brands, although domestic properties in entertainment and sports tend to do well.

Middle East & Africa

Licensed retail sales in the Middle/East Africa grew 1.8% in 2017 after dipping -0.2% in 2016 and -0.9% in 2015.

Saudi Arabia is the largest Middle Eastern country we track based on licensed sales, and despite a decline in the oil sector, spending power remained up thanks to government expenditures. Spending based on entertainment-based brands is expected to increase after Saudi Arabia opened its first movie theater in 35 years in 2018.

The UAE, Qatar, and Egypt all outperformed the worldwide growth rate of 2.4% in 2017.

So why the drop overall? The reason is South Africa, which dipped -0.3% after strong growth of 3.2% in 2016 and 3.4% in 2015. While investors continue to remain optimistic about the country’s economic prospects, there are no clear signs of significant rebounds in growth.

Australia/New Zealand

Australia/New Zealand licensed retail sales grew just 4.3% in five years, one of the slowest growth rates for the territories we track and behind only Latin America (4% growth from 2012-2017) and Central & Eastern Europe (-7.1%).

For the second year in a row, Australia observed 0.3% growth in licensed sales after a -1.0% decline in 2015. The country’s greatest bottleneck to growth is its stable economy, low unemployment, and slowing inflation. Overall retail sales grew just 2.1% in 2017.

Island neighbor New Zealand continued to fare well (1.5% growth in 2017 versus 1.9% in 2016) but is beginning to contract as inflation and stagnating wages are dampening consumer spending.

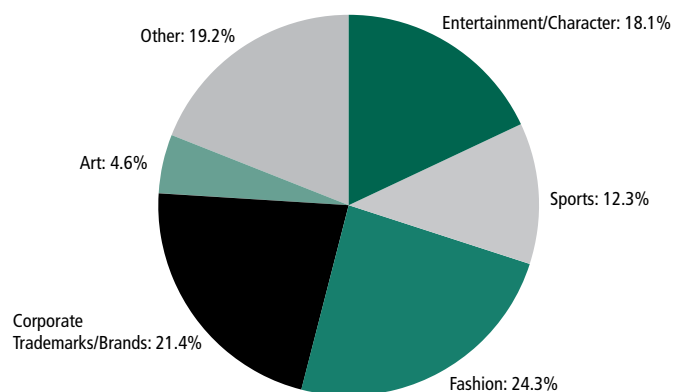
Fashion, Entertainment & Corporate Brands Lead Global Growth

Territories outside the U.S./Canada saw greater growth as a whole; international licensed retail sales grew 2.5% to reach \$62 billion in 2017.

With the U.S./Canada generating \$109 million in licensed sales, that means that internationally-based sales were just 36% of the global total. But that is set to change; over the next 10 years, U.S./Canada market share is expected to drop to just over 60%.

Entertainment/character-based licensed goods continue to grow at a faster rate than the other five major property types *TLL* tracks globally. But that growth is largely

SHARE OF GLOBAL RETAIL SALES OF LICENSED MERCHANDISE, BY PROPERTY TYPE, 2017



SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

**RETAIL SALES OF LICENSED MERCHANDISE,
U.S./CANADA VS. INTERNATIONAL, BY PROPERTY TYPE, 2017**
(Figures in Millions)

PROPERTY TYPE	RETAIL SALES, 2017		CHANGE, 2016-2017	
	U.S./CANADA	INTERNATIONAL	U.S./CANADA	INTERNATIONAL
Entertainment/Character	\$13,215	\$17,906	3.4%	3.1%
Sports	\$15,915	\$5,245	3.2%	1.3%
Fashion	\$21,776	\$19,808	1.5%	4.7%
Corporate Trademarks/Brands	\$29,155	\$7,610	2.5%	2.8%
Art	\$5,858	\$2,072	1.8%	1.8%
Other	\$23,091	\$9,826	1.8%	-2.3%
Total	\$109,010	\$62,468	2.3%	2.5%

Note: Figures may not add up exactly due to rounding.
SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

being driven by demand in the U.S./Canada—fashion-based brands are the fastest-growing property type internationally at 4.7% growth. Corporate trademarks/brands round out the top three property types for both domestic and international markets.

Retail sales and, more importantly, demand for movie and TV-based properties are on the rise in every territory we track. Superheroes retain a supersized influence, with many *Survey* respondents still reporting double-digit sales growth for A-list properties like Marvel and DC Comics. Retro visualizations remain sought-after for merchandising.

Most international respondents report that retailers are snubbing other types of brands in favor of Disney licenses and movie-tie ins, with the result that the licensing market is becoming incredibly oversaturated and consumers are starting to feel the fatigue of seeing the same handful of brands.

But while the entertainment/character sector dominates pop culture, other property types are starting to seize the day. Social media is now a dominant means of fan engagement and marketing. Some *Survey* respondents are reporting that their largest retail sales gains have been from ecommerce rather than retail, where buy-ins are lower and margins are tighter.

Under the music umbrella, classic rock remains strong, but pop groups have also managed to make a comeback.

Estates of deceased popular idols, actors, musicians, and other public figures likewise have seen a resurgence in the last couple of years, especially with the rise of technology that allows such figures to come to life in concerts, stage shows, and other live events.

Growth of licensed fashion brands is largely being driven by Asia, with reasonably healthy growth in the rest of

the world. While many major fashion houses are taking their licensing enterprises in-house in the U.S./Canada and Europe, they may be more willing to license in territories where their distribution networks are not as robust. For the deals that remain, there is a larger demand from a growing upper and middle class.

Sports brands continue to grow at a faster pace in the U.S./Canada than they do internationally. In part, this is because the major five American sports leagues have not seen their merchandising efforts overseas take off just yet, and in part because European soccer teams have started to cash in stateside.

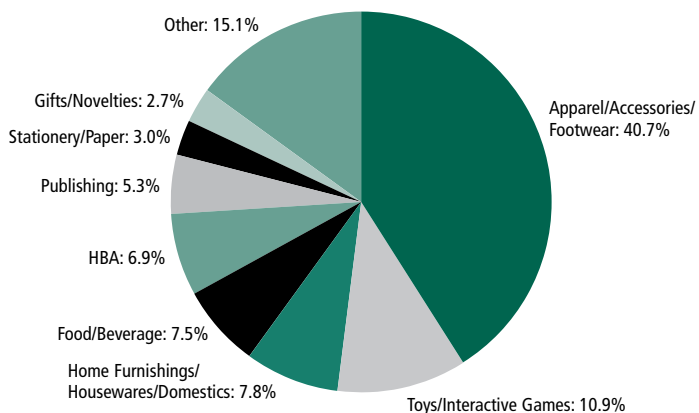
Growth in retail sales of artist- and museum-based consumer goods were largely flat in 2017, thanks to depressed performance in licensed stationery/paper goods and a boost in sales of domestics and housewares.

Growth in international licensed retail sales outpaced that observed in the U.S./Canada for six out of eight product categories TLL tracks globally.

Licensed food/beverage goods jumped 5.8% in retail sales, while the home furnishings/housewares/domestics category grew 5.4% globally in 2017. But the two categories combined generated less dollar growth than apparel/accessories/footwear in 2017, which grew 2.8% to add \$1.9 billion in value to reach almost \$70 billion in retail sales.

Thanks in part to entertainment and fashion brands, apparel/accessories/footwear grew 3.3% internationally. The fastest-growing price point in this category was

**SHARE OF GLOBAL RETAIL SALES OF LICENSED MERCHANDISE,
BY PRODUCT CATEGORY, 2017**



SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

**RETAIL SALES OF LICENSED MERCHANDISE, U.S./CANADA VS. INTERNATIONAL,
BY PROPERTY TYPE, 2017**
(Figures in Millions)

PROPERTY TYPE	RETAIL SALES, 2017		CHANGE, 2016–2017	
	U.S./CANADA	INTERNATIONAL	U.S./CANADA	INTERNATIONAL
Apparel/Accessories/Footwear	\$42,843	\$26,897	2.5%	3.3%
Toys/Interactive Games	\$7,703	\$11,057	-4.4%	2.5%
Home Furnishings/Housewares/Domestics	\$10,241	\$3,065	6.2%	2.7%
Food/Beverage	\$12,116	\$822	6.0%	3.1%
HBA	\$7,937	\$3,929	2.3%	2.6%
Publishing	\$3,844	\$5,279	2.2%	2.5%
Stationery/Paper	\$2,351	\$2,810	-1.5%	0.2%
Gifts/Novelties	\$2,556	\$2,151	-2.2%	3.6%
Other	\$19,418	\$6,458	1.7%	-0.5%
Total	\$109,010	\$62,468	2.3%	2.5%

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

SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

discount and low-priced wearables; in part because department and other high-priced retailers grew more discerning over which products they would accept on shelves.

Most notably, there was a 6.9 percentage point difference in growth rates for toys/games in 2017. Thanks in part to that divergence, the international market for licensed toys/games is worth approximately \$3 billion more than the domestic U.S./Canadian market. Although the Toys 'R' Us bankruptcy softened the U.S. and U.K. toy markets in particular (the latter also had the double-blow of Brexit), most of the rest of the world recorded healthy sales.

EDITORIAL BY KARINA MASOLOVA, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Does Licensing Have a Diversity Problem?

In this issue, *TLL* is reporting on 2017 compensation trends based on results from the 2018 *Salary Survey* and analysis based on *TLL's 2018 Compensation Report*. The average salary was \$112,000 worldwide, plus a \$60,000 bonus (67% of respondents reported that they expect to receive a bonus in the next 12 months).

It turns out that the licensing business is filled with mostly old (35% of respondents are 45–53 years-old), white (over 90%), ladies (55%). And the *Survey* also reveals something else—there may be costs associated with being non-white and non-male for licensing executives that have nothing to do with years of experience, hours worked, or job title.

The 2018 report includes breakdowns for the U.S. and EU as well as new demographic data such as age range and race/ethnicity as well as more detailed responses about employees (full- vs. part-time), hours worked (normal vs. busy periods), and about change in salary brought about by a new job (in addition changes in title).

To view the full list of 34 questions (estimated 15 minutes completion time)—and to fill out your own response to *TLL's Salary Survey*, if you have not already—visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VNLJJN6>. Later in the year, we will follow up with another, fuller analysis informed by any new responses. (If that's not possible, we will include them in the 2019 *Salary Survey* results.) Are there any questions you think are unclear, or any new questions you would like to ask your peers? Please let me know at karina@plainlanguage.com!

**THIS YEAR, WE HAD ENOUGH RESPONSES FROM
OUTSIDE THE U.S. TO GENERATE BREAKDOWNS FOR
EU-BASED EXECUTIVES—A FIRST IN *TLL* HISTORY**

To start, *TLL's Salary Survey* is our favorite survey to run and crunch. As in previous years, respondents could skip any question they wished—technically, you can submit the *Survey* without filling anything in. All in all, over 98% of solicited questions were answered with most respondents answering every single question.

This year we worked on clarifying the answer keys, allowing for multiple selection tick boxes, and providing more open-ended answer choices to allow respondents to expand upon their answers, e.g. the gender question had an “other” option. Since no one put “potato,” we’ll count that as a win.

First, we didn’t expect to get so many respondents outside of the U.S. (mostly Europeans) answering this year’s *Survey*. Last year, there were too few responses to make any kind of statistically significant conclusions about salary, bonus, and demographic data outside of the U.S. This year, we had enough responses from outside the U.S. to generate breakdowns for EU-based executives—a first in *TLL* history.

This year, we also added looser categories for executive titles to better understand differences in salary, bonus,

and demographic data: executive-level (VP and up), mid-level (director, manager, etc.), and lower-level (assistant, coordinator, etc.).

We'd like to thank the international respondents for humoring us with the "diversity" questions—after all, America has a unique emphasis on racial (versus cultural, economic, or gender) diversity. The race/ethnicity question was written with an incredibly American slant: We used the U.S. Census' racial categories. Surprisingly, just one respondent declined to answer (you know who you are). Respondents were allowed to check more than one option, including an "other" field, and a significant minority did so.

Diversity is an odd thing to focus on when it comes to licensing executives, because the nature of the business is so inter-sectional across many different industries and businesses—you can find leaders everywhere, from toy manufacturers, to fabric designers, to agents representing celebrities. And thanks to the number and variety of respondents to this year's Salary Survey, that means most of these are represented. At least some of them have to be diverse, right? It's not like licensing executives are all lawyers!

But, apparently, this business is less diverse than *that* field.

Worldwide, 90% of respondent licensing executives are white, 8% Hispanic/Latinx, 3% Asian, and 2% some other race/ethnicity (multiple responses allowed). In the U.S. and EU, the percentage of whites jumps up to 92% and 95%, respectively. The 5% of non-white, non-Hispanic/Latinx executives turned out to be internationally-based respondents working in their native state and/or territory.

The biggest differentiator in this year's batch of results was the amount of bonus received. Last year, we wrote that "all is well for gender parity in licensing". This year, we can't really say that.

COMPARING MID-LEVEL EMPLOYEES, WOMEN MADE \$3,000 LESS IN BASE SALARY AND ALMOST \$13,000 LESS IN BONUS—DESPITE THE FACT THAT, AS A GROUP, WOMEN ARE MORE EXPERIENCED.

Roughly the same amount of men versus women (67% and 66%, respectively) expect to receive a bonus. But the difference in average bonus received in 2017 was staggering in the U.S.—men expect to receive \$145,000 more in bonus than their female counterparts. Large variances in the upper-most executive positions are to be expected, however: The CEO of a one-man shop may draw a smaller salary than a VP at a multi-national company with hundreds of licensing-focused employees. Vast differences in compensation, even for the same title, may simply be a result of respondent makeup.

But even comparing mid-level employees, women made \$3,000 less in base salary and almost \$13,000 less in bonus—despite the fact that, as a group, women are more experienced. The same kind of disparity can be seen when comparing white and Hispanic/Latinx respondents, none of whom have an executive-level position. But even comparing mid-level employees, although Hispanic/Latinx executives took home more in base salary (again, probably because they are more experienced as a group), they still lost out on bonus payments.

Is this year's *Survey* truly reflective of the state of the licensing industry? We'd like to find out. Sound off confidentially in Round 2 of the 2018 *Survey* or contact me directly at karina@plainlanguagemedia.com.



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Licensing News

Properties Available Or Recently Assigned, U.S.

PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORIES AVAILABLE	LICENSING CONTACT
Cleo & Cuquin	Preschool brand featuring a lovable sister and brother who solve everyday problems through play solutions. Aired on Nick Jr. Other territories available for consideration.	All excl. publishing & toys	Monique Soares Kraft, Televisa Internacional Licensing
Deer Little Forest	High-end arts & lifestyle brand blooming with characters. Unique animal and nature designs by U.K. artist Jo Rose.	All	Jonathan Symington, Lantic Group (The)
Ricardo Liniers	Argentinian cartoonist's work has appeared in several South-American and U.S. publications; best known for the playful experimental comic strip Macanudo.	All	Carla Silva, King Features Syndicate
Royal Touch (The)	Culinary lifestyle brand by Carolyn Robb; inspired by her experiences as a royal chef as well as her love of the British countryside and produce.	All	Kerry Glasser, Concept Marketing Group
Spirit of Concorde (The)	Based on a short documentary film; heartfelt tribute and appreciation of the legendary Concorde aircraft. 2019 marks the 50th anniversary of its maiden flight.	All	Ian Downes, Start Licensing
University of Wyoming	University is the only accredited four year school in the state; dedicated to quality instruction and research programs. Includes Wyoming Bucking Horse and Rider trademarks.	All	Rick Merriam, Exemplar Associates
Zane Grey Literary Estate	Classic author credited by some with establishing the American western genre. Best known for Riders of the Purple Sage, which was first published in 1912.	All	Grady Gramble, Adaptive Studios

Licenses Recently Granted, U.S.

PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
Amylee Weeks	Downeast Concepts	Christmas cards	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Betty Boop	H3 Sportgear	Sportswear	King Features Syndicate
	Harland Clarke	Address labels, checkbook covers, checks	
	Innovent Brands/Limited Gifts & Collectibles LLC	Home decor	
	Rockin Pins	Limited edition pins	
	Zazoo Fine Art Gallery	Fine art	
Bouffants & Broken Hearts	Ivory Ella	Limited edition t-shirts	Jewel Branding & Licensing
Chris Stamp	IKEA North America Services	Apparel, skateboards, storage	Stampd
Chummy Chum Chums	Viz Media	Consumer merchandise, digital content, publishing	Ghostbot
Coastal Living	Universal Furniture	Case goods (for the home), upholstery	Meredith
Goodyear	Rally Manufacturing	Floor mats	WME/IMG Worldwide Licensing d.b.a. Endeavor Goodyear Tires & Rubber Co., Perpetual Licensing
Incredibles 2 (The)	Trina Turk	Swimwear	Disney Consumer Products
Jake Paul	BrownTrout Publishers	Calendars	Brand Central
	Kalan Specialties	Buttons, key rings, lanyards, magnets, metal signs	
Jurassic Park franchise	Fandango/Fandango FanShop	Prop replicas	Universal Brand Development
Jurassic World	Fandango/Fandango FanShop	Prop replicas	Universal Brand Development
Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom	Sunstaches/H2W	Novelty sunglasses	Universal Brand Development
Laura Ashley	Tile Shop (The)	Splashbacks, tiles	Laura Ashley
LaurDIY	Jay Franco & Sons	Bedding, home goods	Brand Liaison (The)
Lionel Richie	Baltic Linen	Bath, bedding	CAA-GBG Global Brand Management Group
Manhattan	Rosega S.A.	Dress shirts	Perry Ellis Intl./PEI Licensing
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	American Classics	Loungewear, t-shirts	Brand Central
	Aquarius Entertainment Merchandising	Calendars, games, novelties, playing cards, puzzles	
	Trau & Loevner Imprinted Apparel	Fashion tops, fleece, t-shirts	
	Trevco	Accessories, apparel	
National Geographic	Eagle Creek div. VF*	Travel bags	National Geographic Partners
Peanuts	Gibson Overseas	Hydration bottles, lunch backpack	Peanuts Worldwide div. DHX Media
pocket.watch	Buffalo Games	Games, puzzles	pocket.watch
	Franco Manufacturing/Franco MFG	Bath, bedding, home decor	

*Extension or renewal.

Continued on page 9

Licensing News *Continued from page 8*

Licenses Recently Granted, U.S.

PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
pocket.watch	Hood By Air (HBA)	Bath products	pocket.watch
	KIDdesigns/eKids div. SGI Technologies	Electronic toys	
	Orb Factory (The)	Activity sets, craft kits, toys	
Popeye	Freeze*	Hoodies, t-shirts	King Features Syndicate
	H3 Sportgear	Sportswear	
	Nowhere Co. Ltd./A Bathing Ape (BAPE)	Apparel	
	Zazoo Fine Art Gallery	Fine art	
Rainbow Rangers	Berkshire Fashions	Outerwear	Genius Brands Intl.
	Ceaco	Puzzles	
	Disguise div. Jakks Pacific	Halloween costumes	
Ray Charles	Active Brand Commerce	Apparel, mugs, tote bags, wall decor	Act III Licensing
Royal Touch Culinary Collection	Harry & David LLC	Breads, cakes, food	Royal Touch (The)
	QVC	Cakes	
Smoochy Mushy	Fast Forward	Backpacks, bags, lunch kits	Evolution USA
	Inkology	Back-to-school	
Solo: A Star Wars Story	Her Universe	Apparel	Disney Consumer Products
	New Era Cap	Headwear	
Star Wars	JRSK, Inc. dba Away	Luggage & bags	
Wish Me Zoonicorns	Jay at Play Intl.	Digital content, interactive plush	All Art Licensing div. J'net Smith
World of Eric Carle (The)	R.W. Knudsen/J.M. Smucker	Beverages, juice	Joester Loria Group (JLG)
WWE	PSD Underwear	Underwear	World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE)
Zoonicorns	Jay at Play Intl.	Digital content, plush	All Art Licensing div. J'net Smith

International Properties Available or Recently Assigned

PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORIES AVAILABLE	LICENSING CONTACT
Angry Birds	Mobile game brand and global phenomenon with 3.7B downloads. All franchise titles including latest Angry Birds March.	All (U.K.)	Rob Corney, Bulldog Licensing
Art of Marbling (The)	Art brand uses ancient art form dating back to 11th century. Handcrafted, proprietary marbling patterns from organic 'stone' patterns to intricate feather-like designs.	All (Worldwide)	Marty Segelbaum, MHS Licensing + Consulting
Barbarian	Art brand from millennial designer Barbra Ignatiev. Features colorful bohemian patterns, florals, and watercolors that inspire creativity.	All (Worldwide)	Steven Heller, Brand Liaison (The)
Baruto: Naruto Next Generations	Action-packed sequel to Naruto is one of Hulu's top titles in the anime category.	All (Worldwide)	Naruo Uchida, Viz Media
Bowmasters	Multi-player aim 'n shoot mobile game app stars a bowman; from developer Playgendary. Over 60 hilarious and insane characters.	All (Worldwide)	Todd Lustgarten, Perpetual Licensing
Britney Spears	Multi-platinum, Grammy Award-winning pop artist with nearly 150 million records worldwide; more than 70 million sold in U.S. alone.	Accessories, apparel, electronics, health & beauty (Worldwide)	Lisa Streff, Epic Rights
Care Bears	Fun, lovable characters with one special mission: to teach caring and sharing and show others how to express their feelings.	All (U.K.)	Rob Corney, Bulldog Licensing
Christina Grimmie	Singer, songwriter, and fan favorite from NBC's The Voice. YouTube star with online footprint of over 11 million.	All (Worldwide)	Sue Procko, Procko Group (The)
Chummy Chum Chums	Lifestyle brand with millions of active global fans features adorable canine animated stickers.	All (Worldwide)	Kensuke Mase, Viz Media
Deer Little Forest	High-end arts & lifestyle brand blooming with characters! Unique animal and nature designs by Jo Rose brings a touch of class and a lot of whimsy to products.	All (Worldwide)	Lisa Hryniewicz, Koko Rose Media
Deer Little Forest	High-end arts & lifestyle brand blooming with characters! Unique animal and nature designs by Jo Rose brings a touch of class and a lot of whimsy to products.	All (U.K.)	Sarah Lawrence, This is Iris
DeLorean Motor Co.	Iconic automotive brand since 1976 with new DeLoreans on the market soon for the first time in 30 yrs.	All (Worldwide)	Sarah Benson, Brand and Blend
Doc Popcorn	Largest specialty popcorn retailer in the U.S.	All (Worldwide)	Heather Rosenthal, Brand Squared Licensing

*Extension or renewal.

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Licensing News *Continued from page 9*

PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORIES AVAILABLE	LICENSING CONTACT
Eddie Van Halen Frankenstein Pattern	Described as the most recognizable guitar in the world; iconic red, white, and black pattern seeks to bring signature look into homes worldwide.	Bedding, home decor, housewares (Worldwide)	Margo Ebs, Killer Merch
Forks Over Knives	Whole-food, plant based, nutrition, multimedia lifestyle brand.	Food, frozen foods, meal kits, nutritional products, snacks (North America)	Todd Lustgarten, Perpetual Licensing
Go Away, Unicorn!	Animated series based on the book by Emily Mullock. Features Alice a unicorn exploring their differences and developing their friendship.	All (Worldwide)	Gail Mitchell, Centa IP
Gold's Gym	Fitness brand est. 1965, considered a landmark in bodybuilding culture. Over 700 North American and 350+ international locations.	All (Worldwide)	Bob Bernard, Learfield Licensing Partners
Homestruck	Pop-culture comic launched 2009 encompasses diverse genres such as action/adventure, sci-fi and fantasy, comedy, romance, and drama.	All (Worldwide)	Kensuke Mase, Viz Media
I Like Birds	Scottish publisher of bird-themed greeting cards; love of nature crosses both language and cultural boundaries with global appeal.	All (France, Benelux)	Aline Gondoin, Home Made Licensing
IRONSPORT	Lifestyle brand for those passionate about living a fun, active, fitness-fueled life.	All (North America)	Scott Todd, Graj + Gustavsen (G+G)
Jen Montgomery	Art brand inspired by kitsch, botanicals, and happy mid-century color palettes. Thoughtful artwork that sparks joy or delight; features hand-lettered upbeat sentiments.	All (Worldwide)	Marty Segelbaum, MHS Licensing + Consulting
Jetty Home	Art brand by Emily Wood; light and fresh with elements inspired by nature and botanical, coastal, and woodland icons.		
Kally's Mashup	Musical telenovela about a 13 year-old musical prodigy who tries to balance life as a virtuoso pianist and a normal teenage girl.	All (Worldwide, non-English speaking terr.)	Gail Mitchell, Centa IP
La Rosa de Guadalupe	Spanish language program with consistently high viewership (U.S., Mexico and LATAM) features inspirational real life stories and real life solutions.	All w/ focus on fashion apparel (Worldwide)	Monique Soares Kraft, Televisa Internacional Licensing
Lovitude	Art by Anne Pryor uses alcohol ink, her breath, and essential oils to create visual blessing said to elucidate, awaken, and activate souls.	All (Worldwide)	Marty Segelbaum, MHS Licensing + Consulting
MasterChef	American competitive cooking reality show based on the original British series of the same name.	Beverages, food (North America)	Stu Seltzer, Seltzer Licensing Group
MasterChef Junior	Cooking reality show featuring children and teenagers ages 8-13; based on the format of the original British series.		
Match Attax	Popular football trading card game. New cards released throughout the football season.	All (U.K.)	Rob Corney, Bulldog Licensing
Monster Teddies	Animated series stars a band of fierce superheroes fighting their arch enemy, the Mad Collector, before he finds the secrets of Stone Mountain.	All (Worldwide)	Gail Mitchell, Centa IP
My Singing Monsters	Family game app where players explore worlds and take care of singing monsters to build unique melodies. Over 70 million players worldwide .	All (Worldwide)	Alita Friedman, Alita's Brand Bar
Nate is Late	Animated series follows 10 year-old Nate and his neighbor Malika as they walk to school every morning.	All (Worldwide)	Gail Mitchell, Centa IP
National Gallery	British museum with 6+ million visitors a year houses some of world's most recognisable paintings incl. Van Gogh's Sunflowers and Monet's The Water-Lily Pond.	All (Japan)	David Buckley, Copyrights Asia Ltd.
One Punch Man	Anime series about an unlikely hero with a knockout punch.	All (Worldwide)	Kensuke Mase, Viz Media
Pirata & Capitano	Preschool animated series follows two friends searching the seas for treasure while teaching the importance of teamwork and friendship.	All (U.K.)	Ian Wickham, Licensing Link Europe Ltd.
Poketo	Highly sought-after leader in the art lifestyle space known for its design-savvy home products and 4 tourist worthy retail destinations.	All (Worldwide)	Maria Alcaide, Brand and Blend
Robot Trains	3D CGI animated action -adventure series set in Train World where all citizens are trains and some have the ability to transform into robots.	All (Middle East, Europe, Italy, Spain, Portugal)	Micheline Azoury, Mondo TV S.p.a.
Royal Touch (The)	Culinary lifestyle brand by former royal chef Carolyn Robb. Inspiration from her love of the British countryside and British produce.	All (Great Britain)	Lori Heiss, Lori Heiss & Associates
Ryan's Toy Review	YouTube channel releases a new toy review video every day. 13MM subscribers in the U.S., 17MM in Australia, and 19B lifetime views.	All (Asia Pacific)	Vincent Jones, Centa IP
Seis Manos	Mexican based animation features 3 orphaned martial arts warriors who join forces with a DEA agent and a Mexican Federale for justice.	All (Worldwide)	Kensuke Mase, Viz Media
Shopkins	Tiny collectible toys based on grocery store items, now on series 9, over 1,000 characters to collect including special limited editions.	All (U.K.)	Rob Corney, Bulldog Licensing
Sophie la Girafe	57 year-old infant toy brand; its size and shape are ideal for a baby's small hand to grasp. Webseries launch 2018.	Accessories, fragrance, stationery (Worldwide)	Maude-Sophie Guerret, DeLiSo S.A.S. div. Vulli S.A.S.
Steve Kaufman	Art brand from Andy Warhol's assistant featuring vivid colors, well-known characters, and iconic pop culture.	Children's products, toys (Worldwide)	Patti Becker, Becker Associates
Striker Entertainment	Representation for Los Angeles-based agency whose brands include The Walking Dead, Five Night's at Freddy's, Fingerlings, We Happy Few, and more.	All (U.K., EMEA)	Tina Louise Foster, Nimbus Nine Consulting

*Extension or renewal.

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Licensing News *Continued from page 10*

PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORIES AVAILABLE	LICENSING CONTACT
SUPRA	Southern Californian lifestyle brand founded in 2006. Inspired by passion and fusing skateboarding, fashion, music, art, and street to bring classic silhouettes.	Accessories, apparel, footwear (Worldwide)	Jaso Kletzky, Collaborations Licensing
Taste of Home	American magazine and online resource for food, cooking, and entertaining. Pioneer in user-generated content; publishes 3,000 recipes submitted by home cooks annually.	Food, housewares (U.S., Canada)	Sarah Benson, Brand and Blend
Tiny Tusks	Edutainment brand featuring 7 magical elephants; teachers, entertainers and storytellers, engaging children in ecology and conservation curriculum topics in a fun and vibrant way.	All (Worldwide)	Denise Deane, Edutainment Licensing
UTURN Studios	Art brand capturing the pure joy pets bring, delivering it in colorful, cheerful, imagery sure to put a smile on your face. Subjects are from local shelters.	All (Worldwide)	Marty Segelbaum, MHS Licensing + Consulting
Wild Wings	A leading publisher, producer, and distributor of wildlife, sporting, and nostalgic/ Americana art prints and art-related products. Founded in 1968.	All (Worldwide)	Kristen Barthelman, Art Brand Studios
Zak Storm	Action comedy adventure series features a fearless teen surfer who find himself sucked into the Bermuda Triangle.	All (U.K.)	Rob Corney, Bulldog Licensing

International Licenses Recently Granted

PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
Animal Crossing	Penguin Young Readers Group div. Penguin Random House	Activity books, coloring books (U.S., U.K.)	Nintendo of America
Barbarian	Anthropologie Group	Desk accessories, dinnerware, home goods (Worldwide)	Brand Liaison (The)
	Cranston Print Works	Fabrics (Worldwide)	
	LANG Companies (The)	Calendars, gift items, journals, stationery (Worldwide)	
	Sak Brand Group (The Sak/Sakroots/Elliott Lucca)	Accessories, backpacks, bags, wallets (Worldwide)	
Betty Boop	Bradford Exchange	Home decor (US, Canada, Europe, ANZ)	King Features Syndicate
	Funko	Pop vinyl figures (U.S., Canada, Europe, ANZ)	
	Loungerie	Cases, key chains, lingerie, socks (Brazil)	
	MBI/Danbury Mint U.K.	Figurines (U.S., U.K., Ireland)	
	Roy Lowe & Sons Ltd.	Slipper socks, socks (U.K., Ireland)	
Billboard Magazine	Saborn Trading B.V.	Apparel (Benelux)	Hollywood Reporter (The) - Billboard Media Group
	Parcle Group SRL	Digital content, publishing (Italy)	
	Purpose Group (The)	Digital content, publishing (Vietnam)	
	Yellow Tie Hospitality Management	Branded restaurants (India)	
Call of Duty	Poetic Brands Ltd./PoeticGem	Apparel (U.K., Ireland)	Activision
Cuphead	HYP/Hypnotic Hats	Hosiery, socks (U.S., Canada)	King Features Syndicate
Dennis Walters Golf Show (The)	Creative Covers for Golf	Golf club covers (Worldwide)	Dennis Walters Golf Show (The)
DOTS	Hog Wild Toys	Stikballs (Worldwide)	Synchronicity
Farah	Arnold Wills and Co., Ltd.	Accessories (men's), mugs, stationery, water bottles (U.K.)	Perry Ellis Intl./PEI Licensing
Fingerlings	DK Publishing	Books, picture books, sticker books (Worldwide)	Striker Entertainment
	Penguin Young Readers Group	Books (Worldwide)	
	TCG (form. The Canadian Group)	Board games, puzzles (U.S., Canada)	
			WowWee USA
Flash Gordon	Dolmen Editorial/Tebeos Dolmen	Comics (Spain)	King Features Syndicate
FlipaZoo	Ethical Products Inc.	Dog accessories, dog toys (U.S. and its territories, Canada)	Synchronicity
	Global One Accessories div. Weihai Luda Ltd.	Bags, cold weather gear, headwear, key chains, lanyards (U.S., Canada)	
Food Network	Kraft Heinz	Meal kits, salad dressings, sauces (U.S., Canada)	Scripps Networks Interactive
Garfield	Golden Bell Studios	Board games, card games, role playing games (U.S., Canada)	Paws, Inc.
	Hundreds (The)	Apparel (U.S., U.K.)	
Gotcha	Kennek FZE	Apparel, footwear, sporting goods (North Africa)	Perry Ellis Intl. Europe Ltd./PEI Licensing
Heidi Bienvenida	Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial	Books (children's) (Colombia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay)	Mondo TV S.p.a.
	Play Press	Activity books, coloring books, sticker albums (Italy)	
	Wal-Cor Corsanini S.n.c.	Epiphany stockings (Italy)	
Hollywood Reporter (The)	Kalco Lighting & Allegri Crystal by Kalco	Decoration mirrors, lighting (North America)	Hollywood Reporter (The) - Billboard Media Group
I Like Birds	Art File (The)	Gift bags, gift wrap, greeting cards (U.S., U.K., Europe)	JELC Ltd.

*Extension or renewal.

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Licensing News *Continued from page 11*

PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
I Like Birds	BrownTrout Publishers	Calendars, diaries (U.K.)	JELC Ltd.
	My Gifts Trade	Ceramics, coasters, doormats, textiles (U.K.)	
	Quadrille Publishing div. Hardie Grant	Address books, diaries, note cards, notebooks, stationery (Worldwide)	
Jake Paul	Bioworld Merchandising	Accessories, novelties (North America)	Brand Central
	Brandable	Games, toys (U.S., Canada)	
	Just Funky	Blankets, drinkware (U.S., Canada)	
	Just Toys Intl. (North America)	Blind packs, collectible figures (North America)	
	Sprayground	Backpacks (Worldwide)	
	Trends International	Bookmarks, journals, notebooks, posters, stickers, writing instruments (U.S., Canada)	
Jetty Home	Crystal Art Gallery	Wall decor (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Johnny Hazard	Dolmen Editorial/Tebeos Dolmen	Comics (Spain)	King Features Syndicate
Junior Mints	Hog Wild Toys	Stikballs (Worldwide)	Synchronicity
Jurassic World	Frontier Developments plc	Video games (Worldwide)	Universal Brand Development
Legend of Zelda	Penguin Young Readers Group div. Penguin Random House	Activity books, coloring books (U.S., U.K.)	Nintendo of America
Legends of Lucha Libre	Super7	Toys (Worldwide)	Masked Republic
Lovitude	Manual Woodworkers & Weavers (MWW)	Pillows, throws (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Masked Republic	Asteri Networks	Digital apps, gaming, online (Worldwide)	Playlife Co.
Miraculous: Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir	Rainbow Productions	Character costumes (U.K.)	Bulldog Licensing
	Smith & Brooks Ltd.	Apparel, swimwear (U.K.)	
	William Lamb Footwear	Bags, purses (U.K.)	
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	Funko	Pop vinyl figures (North America)	Brand Central
Museum of Bad Art (MOBA)	Sellers Publishing	Calendars (Worldwide)	Synchronicity
National Gallery	Alfilo Brands	Apparel, novelties (China)	JELC Ltd.
	Boots U.K.	Food gift collections (U.K.)	
	Hachette Children's Books	Books (Worldwide)	
Natural History Museum (London)	M&Co.	Apparel (children's) (U.K.)	Natural History Museum (London)
Oddbods	American Marketing Enterprises (AME)/ Briefly Stated, Inc. (BSI), subsidiaries of Global Brands Group USA (GBG)	Sleepwear (North America)	Brandgenuity
	Concept One Accessories	Accessories (North America)	
Pepsi	Anteater	Backpacks, hats, iPhone cases, t-shirts (Worldwide)	PepsiCo
	Boohoo	Hoodies, jackets, t-shirts, track sets (Worldwide)	
	Iconix Brand Group	Soccer balls, soccer shorts, soccer t-shirts (Worldwide)	
	New Era Cap	Headwear, t-shirts (Worldwide)	
Poketo	Beyond Yoga	Athletic apparel (women's) (North America)	Brand and Blend
	Chronicle Books	Publishing (Worldwide)	
	Corkcicle	Drinkware (North America)	
Popeye	Mad Engine	Apparel, loungewear, sleepwear (U.S., Canada)	King Features Syndicate
Prince Valiant	Dolmen Editorial/Tebeos Dolmen	Comics (Spain)	King Features Syndicate
Ranger Rob	Black & White Merchandising	Footwear (Canada)	Corus Entertainment/Nelvana Enterprises
	JCorp	Apparel (Canada)	
	Jelli Fish Kids/Kersheh Group (The)	Sleepwear (Canada)	
Roadl Dahl	Culturenik	Giftware, prints (U.S., Canada)	Brand Activation Consulting (BAC)
	Litographs	Accessories, apparel, posters (U.S., Canada)	
	Out of Print Clothing	Accessories, apparel, gifts (U.S., Canada)	
	Riley Blake Designs	Fabric, fabric kits (U.S., Canada)	
	Rococo Chocolates	Confectionery (U.S., Canada)	
	Storiarts	Accessories, blankets (infants'), caps (infants'), scarves (U.S., Canada)	
	Storybook Cosmetics	Cosmetics (U.S., Canada)	
	Winning Moves U.S.A.	Card games (U.S., Canada)	

*Extension or renewal.

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Licensing News *Continued from page 12*

PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
Sesame Street	B.Duck div. Semk Products Ltd./ëns Global Marketing Ltd.	Apparel (adults'), apparel (children's) (Hong Kong)	Sesame Workshop
	:CHOCOOLATE Ltd. div. I.T. Apparels Ltd.	Hoodies, t-shirts, tote bags (Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, China, Singapore, Canada)	
	Labalobo div. Beijing Shaike Tiandi Technology Co., Ltd.	Apparel (children's), apparel (women's) (China)	
Smoochy Mushy	Bentex Group	Apparel (North America)	Evolution USA
	Concept One Accessories	Cold weather accessories, headwear (North America)	
	DJ Murphy	Magazines (U.K., Ireland)	
	DreamWave div. Bentex Group	Swimwear (North America)	
	H.I.S. Intl.	Sportswear (North America)	
Solo: A Star Wars Story	Ugg Since 1974/Burlee Australia	Boots, footwear (Worldwide)	Disney Consumer Products
Splattoon	Penguin Young Readers Group div. Penguin Random House	Activity books, coloring books (U.S., U.K.)	Nintendo of America
Sugar Daddy	H3 Sportgear	Accessories, apparel, bags, hats (U.S. and its territories, Canada)	Synchronicity
Super Mario	Penguin Young Readers Group div. Penguin Random House	Activity books, coloring books (U.S., U.K.)	Nintendo of America
Tootsie Pop	H3 Sportgear	Accessories, apparel, bags, hats (U.S. and its territories, Canada)	Synchronicity
	Hog Wild Toys	Stikballs (Worldwide)	
Tootsie Roll			
WWE	Rock 'Em Apparel	Socks (North America)	World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE)
Yellow Submarine	Titan Comics/Titan Entertainment	Graphic novels (U.K.)	Caroline Mickler
		Graphic novels (Worldwide (excl. U.K.))	Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group
ZAFARI	Hachette Livre	Books (French language) (Worldwide)	INK Global/Ink Group A/S (Denmark)

*Extension or renewal.



contacts & connections

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

Act III Licensing, Julie Dyer, Partner, 310-385-4087, jdyeer@actiii.com, P. 12.

Active Brand Commerce, Stephanie Gonzalez, Director Licensing, 747-226-5212, stephg@activebrandcommerce.com, P. 12.

Activision, Rob Kostich, EVP & GM Call of Duty, 310-255-2570, rkostich@activision.com, P. 11.

Adaptive Studios, Grady Gramble, COO & CFO, info@adaptivestudios.com, P. 8.

Alita's Brand Bar, Alita Friedman, CEO, 732-319-0502, alita@alitasbrandbar.com, P. 10.

All Art Licensing div. J'net Smith, Jeanette Smith, President, 206-719-1905, jnet@allartlicensing.com, P. 9.

American Classics, David Brown, President, 256-737-9995, [david@americanclassics.biz](http://americanclassics.biz), P. 8.

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. 12.

Anthropologie Group, Missy Peltz, Chief Creative Officer, 800-309-2500, mpeltz@anthropologie.com, P. 11.

Aquarius Entertainment Merchandising, Linda Judy, VP Licensing & Business Development, 559-561-4577, linda@aquariusimages.com, P. 8.

Art Brand Studios, Kristen Barthelman, VP Licensing, 408-201-5273, k.barthelman@artbrandstudios.com, P. 11.

Asteri Networks, Steve Gray, CEO, 318-216-5709, info@asteri-networks.com, P. 12.

Baltic Linen, Frank Greenberg, CEO, 516-791-4500, fgreenberg@balticlinen.com, P. 12.

Becker Associates, Patti Becker, President & Founder, 203-322-7396, pbecker@beckerassoc.com, P. 10.

Bentex Group, Susan Peia, EVP Licensing, 212-594-4250 x2825, susan@bentex.com, P. 13.

Berkshire Fashions, Layna Patel, Director Licensing, 212-221-1542 x554, laynap@berkshireinc.com, P. 9.

Beyond Yoga, Michelle Wahler, Co-founder & CEO, 310-665-9773, michelle@beyondyoga.com, P. 12.

Bioworld Merchandising, Jennifer Staley, VP Licensing, 972-488-0655, jennifers@bioworldmerch.com, P. 12.

Boohoo, Kayla Goddard, Press & Influencer Executive, 917-891-7006, kayla.goddard@boohoo.com, P. 12.

Bradford Exchange, Maura Kelly, VP Licensing & Art Acquisition, 847-581-8200, maura.kelly@bgeltd.com, P. 11.

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Licensing News *Continued from page 13*

Brand Activation Consulting (BAC), Bob Traub, Principal, 973-607-1660, btraub@bac-usa.com, P. 12.

Brand and Blend, Maria Alcaide, Partner, 310-953-9655, maria@brandandblend.com, P. 10,12.

Brand and Blend, Sarah Benson, Partner, 310-953-9647, sarah@brandandblend.com, P. 9,11.

Brand Central, Ross Misher, CEO, 310-268-1231, ross@brandcentralgroup.com, P. 8,12.

Brand Liaison (The), Steven Heller, Founder, 855-843-5424, steven@thebrandliaison.com, P. 8,9,11.

Brand Squared Licensing, Heather Rosenthal, Partner, 917-748-8836, hrosenthal@bsquaredlicensing.com, P. 9.

Brandable, Oliver Bogner, Founder & CEO, 310-765-4300, oliver@brandablela.com, P. 12.

Brandgenuity, Jay Asher, Partner, 212-925-0730, jay@brandgenuity.com, P. 12.

Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group, Joe Marziotto, VP Brand Marketing The Beatles, 212-445-3432, joe.marziotto@bravado.com, P. 13.

BrownTrout Publishers, Joseph Angard, Licensing Consultant, 800-777-7812 x195, jangard@browntrout.com, P. 8,12.

Buffalo Games, Mark Predko, Director Operations & Product Management, 716-827-8393, mpredko@buffalogames.com, P. 8.

CAA-GBG Global Brand Management Group, Perry Wolfman, CEO, 212-277-9000, perrywolfman@caaglobalbrands.com, P. 12.

Ceaco, Jane Taylor, Director Licensing, 617-926-8080 x224, jtaylor@ceaco.com, P. 9.

Chronicle Books, Sarah Malarkey, Executive Editorial Director, 415-537-4200, sarah_malarkey@chroniclebooks.com, P. 12.

Collaborations Licensing, Jason Kletzky, Founder & President, 818-629-2912, jason.kletzky@collaborationslicensing.com, P. 11.

Concept Marketing Group, Kerry Glasser, President & CEO, 212-308-0157, kg@conceptmarketinggroupinc.com, P. 8.

Concept One Accessories, Bernie Hafif, VP Licensing & Acquisitions, 212-868-2590, bernie@concept1.com, P. 12.

Concept One Accessories, Freda Anzaroot-Louzon, Licensing Manager, 212-868-2590 x196, fanzaroot@concept1.com, P. 13.

Corkcicle, Brett Weiner, Director Product, 866-780-0007, bweiner@corkcicle.com, P. 12.

Cranston Print Works, Fred Rockefeller, President & CEO, 401-275-9300, frockefeller@cpw.com, P. 11.

Creative Covers for Golf, Stan Denenberg, Director Business Development & Licensing, 508-429-1509, stan@creativecoversforgolf.com, P. 11.

Crystal Art Gallery, Mark Roginson, President, 323-581-6617, markr@crystalartgallery.com, P. 12.

Culturenik, 877-687-2579, licensenik@culturenik.com, P. 12.

Dennis Walters Golf Show (The), Dennis Walters, 954-232-5410, dennis@denniswalters.com, P. 11.

Disguise div. Jakks Pacific, Tara Heftner, VP Global Licensing, 424-268-9549, thefter@jakks.net, P. 9.

Disney Consumer Products, Josh Silverman, EVP Global Licensing, 818-544-0567, josh.silverman@disney.com, P. 8.

Disney Consumer Products, Paul Southern, SVP Licensing Star Wars, 415-623-1928, paul.southern@lucasfilm.com, P. 9,13.

Downeast Concepts, Betsy Abbott, Controller, 207-846-3726 x256, betsy@downeastconcepts.com, P. 8.

DreamWave div. Bentex Group, Susan Peia, EVP Licensing, 212-594-4250, susan@bentex.com, P. 13.

Eagle Creek div. VF, Monica Rigali, Director Marketing, 800-874-1048, monica_rigali@vfc.com, P. 8.

Epic Rights, Lisa Streff, EVP Global Licensing, 310-424-1908, lisa@epicrights.com, P. 9.

Ethical Products Inc., Jonathan Zelinger, President, 800-223-7768, jonathanz@ethicalpet.com, P. 11.

Evolution USA, Travis J. Rutherford, President Licensing & Retail, 818-501-3186, travis@evomgt.com, P. 9,13.

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

Fandango/Fandango FanShop, Adam Rockmore, Director Promotional Sales & Integrated Marketing, 310-954-0278, adam.rockmore@fandango.com, P. 8.

Fast Forward, Evan Hedaya, President, 212-244-4400, evan@fastforwardny.com, P. 9.

Franco Manufacturing/Franco MFG, Stacey Sobin, VP Licensing, 732-494-0500, stacey.sobin@franco-mfg.com, P. 8.

Freeze, Kim Cauley, VP Licensing & Marketing, 212-764-9011 x220, kim@freezecmi.com, P. 9.

Funko, Lauren Winarski, Licensing & Brand Manager, 425-783-3616 x173, lauren@funko.com, P. 11,12.

Genius Brands Intl., Lloyd Mintz, SVP, Head Worldwide Consumer Products, 310-273-4222, lmintz@gnusbrands.com, P. 9.

Ghostbot, David Yeary, Co-founder, 415-307-4414, david@ghostbot.com, P. 8.

Gibson Overseas, David Nicklin, VP Marketing & Licensing, 323-832-8900, davidn@gibsonusa.com, P. 8.

Global One Accessories div. Weihai Luda Ltd., Brandon Michael, VP Sales, 646-649-3092, brandon.michaels@whluda.com, P. 11.

Golden Bell Studios, Marc Goldner, Founder & CEO, 855-271-6621, marc@goldenbell.tv, P. 11.

Goodyear Tires & Rubber Co., Nancy Ray, Director Licensed Products, 330-796-7972, nancy_ray@goodyear.com, P. 8.

Graj + Gustavsen (G+G), Scott Todd, SVP Licensing & Strategic Partnerships, 212-387-0070, scott@ggny.com, P. 10.

H.I.S. Intl., Steve Rahmey, President, 212-967-3990 x6680, srahmey@nokidding-his.com, P. 13.

H3 Sportgear, Janet Sarchett, Director Licensing & Business Development, 704-921-4785 x102, jsarchett@h3sportgear.com, P. 8,9,13.

Harland Clarke, Cindi Champion, Marketing Product & Licensing Manager, 830-609-5500, cindi.champion@harlandclarke.com, P. 8.

Harry & David LLC, Toby Dixon, Merchandise Manager Wolferman's Bakery, 541-864-2348, tdixon@harryanddavid.com, P. 9.

Her Universe, Ashley Eckstein, Founder, 212-869-0070, aeckstein@heruniverse.com, P. 9.

Hog Wild Toys, Jeff Mumford, President & CEO, 503-231-6465, jeff@hogwildtoys.com, P. 11-13.

Continued on page 15

contacts & connections *Continued from page 14*

Hollywood Reporter (The) - Billboard Media Group, Amy Steinfeldt Ulmann, Director Licensing & Marketing, 212-493-4190, amy.ulmann@billboard.com, P. 11.

Hood By Air (HBA), Shayne Oliver, Founder & Creative Director, 646-519-1465, shayne@hoodbyair.com, P. 9.

Hundreds (The), Ben Shenassafar, Co-founder & President, 213-663-1113, ben@thehundreds.com, P. 11.

HYP/Hypnotic Hats, Howard Levy, President, 212-684-7717 x125, howard@hynyc.com, P. 11.

Iconix Brand Group, Jeffrey Goldstein, VP Business Development & Brand Management, 212-597-4762, jgoldstein@iconixbrand.com, P. 12.

IKEA North America Services, Mike Ward, President, 610-834-0180, mike.ward@ikea.com, P. 8.

Inkology, Leslie Kraus, VP, 561-826-3492, lkraus@inkologyinc.com, P. 9.

Innovent Brands/Limited Gifts & Collectibles LLC, Daniel Atkins, VP New Product Development, 888-418-6310, sales@innoventbrands.com, P. 8.

Ivory Ella, Jill Doster, VP Merchandising, jill@ivoryella.com, P. 8.

Jay at Play Intl., Joseph Sutton, Owner & MD, sales@jayatplay.com, P. 9.

Jay Franco & Sons, Elisha Gordon, VP Licensing, 212-679-3022, elisha@jfranco.com, P. 8.

Jewel Branding & Licensing, Samira Ali, Director Brand & Retail Development, 317-460-0323, samira@jewelbranding.com, P. 8.

Joester Loria Group (JLG), James Slifer, SVP Business Development, 212-683-8548, jslifer@tjlggroup.com, P. 9.

JRSK, Inc. dba Away, Justin Reis, Head Partnerships & Experiential Marketing, 888-428-2118, help@awaytravel.com, P. 9.

Just Funky, Angela Hoyer, Licensing Department Manager, 234-249-0145 x212, angela@justfunky.com, P. 12.

Just Toys Intl. (North America), Alan Nowers, GM North America, 213-94-0917, alan.nowers@justtoysintl.com, P. 12.

Kalan Specialties, Karina Reeves, Director Licensing & Promotions, 610-623-1900, kreeves@kalanlp.com, P. 8.

Kalco Lighting & Allegri Crystal by Kalco, Wayne Falk, VP Sales, 800-525-2655, waynef@kalco.com, P. 11.

KIDdesigns/eKids div. SGI Technologies, Marcos Zalta, EVP & General Counsel, 732-574-9000, mzalta@sditech.com, P. 9.

Killer Merch, Margo Ebs, Licensing & Strategic Partnerships, 310-823-6666, margo@killermerch.com, P. 10.

King Features Syndicate, Carla Silva, VP, GM & Global Head Licensing, 212-969-7582, csilva@hearst.com, P. 8,9,11,12.

Kraft Heinz, David Knopf, CFO, 847-646-2000, david.knopf@kraftheinzcompany.com, P. 11.

LANG Companies (The), Julie Hermes Smith, Chief Marketing Officer, 262-523-9288, jsmith@perfecttimingbrands.com, P. 11.

Lantic Group (The), Jonathan Symington, Founder & CEO, 646-283-2579, jonathan@thelanticgroup.com, P. 8.

Laura Ashley, Katrina Moffett, Senior Licensing & Creative Manager, 803-396-7700, klinda@lauraashleyusa.com, P. 8.

Learfield Licensing Partners, Bob Bernard, President & CEO, 317-669-0808, bbernard@learfieldlicensing.com, P. 10.

Litographs, Danny Fein, Founder & CEO, danny@litographs.com, P. 12.

Lori Heiss & Associates, Lori Heiss, President, 310-266-7804, loriheiss@gmail.com, P. 10.

Mad Engine, Jason Stevens, VP Sales, 858-558-5270, jason@madengine.com, P. 12.

Manual Woodworkers & Weavers (MWW), Jim Clarke, VP & CFO, 828-692-7333, jimc@manualww.com, P. 12.

Masked Republic, Kevin Kleinrock, President, COO & Executive Producer, 619-277-4606, licensing@maskedrepublic.com, P. 12.

Meredith, Kristen Payne, VP Licensing, 515-284-3000, kristen.payne@meredith.com, P. 8.

MHS Licensing + Consulting, Marty Segelbaum, President, 952-544-1377 x202, marty@mhslicensing.com, P. 8-12.

National Geographic Partners, Juan Gutierrez, SVP Licensing, 202-791-2299, juan.gutierrez@natgeo.com, P. 8.

New Era Cap, Christopher Koch, CEO, 716-549-0445, chris.koch@neweracap.com, P. 12.

New Era Cap, Christopher Koch, CEO, 716-549-0445, chrisk@neweracap.com, P. 9.

Nintendo of America, Tom Prata, SVP Strategic Initiatives, 425-882-2040, tom.prata@noa.nintendo.com, P. 11-13.

Out of Print Clothing, Todd Lawton, MD, 646-389-1756, help@outofprintclothing.com, P. 12.

Paws, Inc., Sherri Greer, Director Intl. Licensing, 765-287-2222, sherri@pawsinc.com, P. 11.

Peanuts Worldwide div. DHX Media, Roz Nowicki, EVP Peanuts Worldwide, 212-293-8555, roz.nowicki@peanuts.com, P. 8.

Penguin Young Readers Group, Francesco Sedita, President & Publisher, 212-414-3490, francesco.sedita@penguinrandomhouse.com, P. 11.

Penguin Young Readers Group div. Penguin Random House, Lori Burke, Director Licensing Aquisitions & Media, 212-414-3469, lburke@penguinrandomhouse.com, P. 11-13.

PepsiCo, Leslie Nagy, Senior Director Marketing Services & Licensing, 914-253-2000, leslie.nagy@pepsi.com, P. 12.

Perpetual Licensing, Todd Lustgarten, Partner, 323-284-5100, tlustgarten@perpetuallicensing.com, P. 8-10.

Perry Ellis Intl./PEI Licensing, Maria Folyk-Kushneir, SVP Licensing, 212-536-5718, maria.folyk-kushneir@pery.com, P. 11.

Perry Ellis Intl./PEI Licensing, Pamela Fields, VP Intl. Development & Licensing, 212-536-5602, pamelafields@pery.com, P. 8.

Playlife Co., Germaine Gioia, President, 818-585-7086, germaine@playlifeco.com, P. 12.

pocket.watch, Stone Newman, Chief Revenue Officer, hq@pocket.watch, P. 8,9.

Procko Group (The), Sue Procko, Founder, 323-719-8141, sue@theprockogroup.com, P. 9.

PSD Underwear, Sean Long, VP Sales, 323-685-2119, slong@psdunderwear.com, P. 9.

QVC, Ken O'Brien, SVP Merchandising, 484-701-1000, kobrien@qvc.com, P. 9.

R.W. Knudsen/J.M. Smucker, Geoff Tanner, SVP Growth & Innovation, 330-682-3000, geoff.tanner@jmsmucker.com, P. 9.

Rally Manufacturing, Christian Iacovelli, President, 305-628-2886, christian.iacovelli@rallymfg.com, P. 8.

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contacts & connections *Continued from page 15*

Riley Blake Designs, Cindy Cloward, Owner, President & Creative Director , 801-816-0540, cindy@rileyblakedesigns.com, P. 12.

Rock 'Em Apparel, Rob Starkman, Founder & President, info@rockemapparel.com, P. 13.

Rockin Pins, 562-639-0973 , rockinpins@gmail.com, P. 8.

Royal Touch (The), Bill Schwartz, CEO, 310-394-8227, bill@schwartzcompany.com, P. 9.

Sak Brand Group (The Sak/Sakroots/ Elliott Lucca) , Andrea Coppola, Brand Marketing Manager, 888-800-5899, press@sakroots.com, P. 11.

Scripps Networks Interactive, Ron Feinbaum, SVP & GM Consumer Products HGTV, DIY, Food Network, 865-560-4804, rfeinbaum@scrippsnetworks.com, P. 11.

Sellers Publishing, Jennifer Stockless, Licensing & Production Manager, 207-772-6833, jstockless@rsvp.com, P. 12.

Seltzer Licensing Group, Stu Seltzer, Partner, 212-244-5548, stu@seltzerlicensing.com, P. 10.

Sesame Workshop, Ed Wells, Head Intl. Media & Education, 212-595-3456, ed.wells@sesame.org, P. 13.

Sprayground, Eddie Shabot, Founder, 844-777-2947, info@sprayground.com, P. 12.

Stampd, Chris Stamp, Owner & Creative Director, 323-525-1443, info@stampdla.com, P. 8.

Storiarts, Eli Saleh, Marketing Manager, 864-275-8656, eli@storiarts.com, P. 12.

Storybook Cosmetics, Erin Maynard, Owner, contact@storybookcosmetics.com, P. 12.

Striker Entertainment, Marc Mostman, Partner, 818-225-9355, marc@strikerent.com, P. 11.

Sunstaches/H2W, Dan Gershon, President, 800-578-3088, dan@sunstaches.com, P. 8.

Super7, Brian Flynn, President, 415-553-6155, brian@super7store.com, P. 12.

Synchronicity, Cynthia Hall Domine, President, 207-985-8815, cynthia@synclicensing.com, P. 11-13.

Televisa Internacional Licensing, Monique Soares Kraft, Director Business Development, Licensing & Merchandising, 773-398-7655, msoares@televisa.com.mx, P. 8,10.

Tile Shop (The), Kevin McDaniel, VP Merchandising, 763-541-9720, kmcdaniel@tileshop.com, P. 8.

Trau & Loevner Imprinted Apparel, Sam Loevner, VP & Licensing Director , 412-361-7700, samloevner@trau-loevner.com, P. 8.

Trends International, Jeff Loeser, SVP Licensing, 317-388-4068, jloeser@trendsinternational.com, P. 12.

Trevco, Denise Carranza, Director Licensing, 248-526-1400, dcarranza@trevcoinc.com, P. 8.

Trina Turk, Rebecca Washo, Director Marketing & Licensing, 626-458-7768, rwasho@trinatürk.com, P. 8.

Universal Brand Development, Cindy Chang, SVP Consumer Products, Partnerships & Licensing, 818-777-2067, cindy.chang@nbcuni.com, P. 8,12.

Universal Furniture, Jeff Schefer, President & CEO, 336-822-8888, jscheffer@universalfurniture.com, P. 8.

Viz Media, Brad Woods, Chief Marketing Officer, 415-546-7073 x235, bradwoods@viz.com, P. 8.

Viz Media, Naruo Uchida, Senior Director Animation & CPG Licensing, 415-546-7073 x247, naruouchida@viz.com, P. 9,10.

Winning Moves U.S.A., David Price, VP Operations, 800-664-7788, david.price@winning-moves.com, P. 12.

WME/IMG Worldwide Licensing d.b.a. Endeavor, Gary Krakower, VP Worldwide Licensing, 424-653-1900, gary.krakower@img.com, P. 8.

World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE), Scott Halpern, Director Licensing North America, 203-353-5062, scott.halpern@wwecorp.com, P. 9,13.

Zazoo Fine Art Gallery, Jason Cornely, Gallery Director, 305-294-8925, jason@zazooartgallery.com, P. 8,9.

**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.

Alfilo Brands, Yizan He, Co-founder & Managing Partner, 86 21 60 400 968 x804, yzh@alfilo.com, P. 12.

Anteater, 7 8 812 601-0710, tocream@gmail.com, P. 12.

Arnold Wills and Co.,Ltd., Phil Ash, Sales Director, 44 1527 282 4375, phil.ash@arnoldwills.net, P. 11.

Art File (The), Ged Mace, MD, 44 115 850 7490, sales@theartfile.com, P. 11.

B.Duck div. Semk Products Ltd./ëns Global Marketing Ltd., 852 3427 3886, bduckonlineshop@ens-biz.com, P. 13.

Black & White Merchandising, Barry Schwartz, President, 514-737-7271, info@bwshoes.com, P. 12.

Boots U.K., Elizabeth Fagan, SVP, MD Intl. Retail, 44 345 070 8090, elizabeth.fagan@wba.com, P. 12.

Bulldog Licensing, Rob Corney, Group MD, 44 20 8325 5455, robc@bulldog-licensing.com, P. 9-12.

Caroline Mickler, Caroline Mickler, Licensing Agent & Consultant, 44 208 392 2439, caroline@carolinemicklerltd.co.uk, P. 13.

Centa IP, Gail Mitchell, CEO Global, gail.mitchell@centaip.com, P. 10.

Centa IP, Vincent Jones, Licensing Director Asia Pacific, vincent.jones@centaip.com, P. 10.

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contacts & connections *Continued from page 16*

:CHOCOLATE Ltd. div. I.T. Apparels Ltd., Kar Wai Sham, Executive Director, 852 31991991, service.hk@iteshop.com, P. 13.

Copyrights Asia Ltd., David Buckley, President, 81 3 3377 8300, buckley@copyrights.co.jp, P. 10.

Corus Entertainment/Nelvana Enterprises, Pam Westman, Head Nelvana Enterprises, 416-479-6094, pam.westman@corusent.com, P. 12.

DeLiSo S.A.S. div. Vulli S.A.S., Maude-Sophie Guerret, Licensing Coordinator, 33 4 50 01 06 20, maudesophie.guerret@vulli.fr, P. 10.

DJ Murphy, Andrea Moffat, Deputy MD, 44 1428 601020, djm@djmurphy.co.uk, P. 13.

DK Publishing, Simon Beecroft, Publishing Director Licensing, 44 20 7010 3053, simon.beecroft@uk.dk.com, P. 11.

Dolmen Editorial/Tebeos Dolmen, 971 221575, info@dolmeneditorial.com, P. 11,12.

Edutainment Licensing, Denise Deane, Founder, denise@edutainmentlicensing.com, P. 11.

Frontier Developments plc, 44 1223 394300, press@frontier.co.uk, P. 12.

Hachette Children's Books, Karen Lawler, Executive Manager Licensing, 44 20 3122 6000, karen.lawler@hachettechildrens.co.uk, P. 12.

Hachette Livre, Myriam Hericier-Vurpillot, Director Licensing, 33 1 43 92 33 40, mhericier@hachette-livre.fr, P. 13.

Home Made Licensing, Aline Gondoin, Founder, 33 6 78 05 14 24, homemadelicensing@gmail.com, P. 10.

INK Global/Ink Group A/S (Denmark), Annalisa Woods, Commercial Director, 45 3355 6100, aw@ink-brands.com, P. 13.

JCorp, Chelsea Leet, Licensing Coordinator, 514-384-3872, cleet@jcorp.ca, P. 12.

JELC Ltd., Jane Evans, MD, 44 1225 819 030, jane@jelc.co.uk, P. 11,12.

Jelli Fish Kids/Kersheh Group (The), Allison Jurow, Senior Merchandising & Creative Director, Licensed & Children's Sleepwear, 514-337-4175 x118, ajurow@thekershehgroup.com, P. 12.

Kennek FZE, Mamoun Tadili, CEO, m.tadili@kennekfze.com, P. 11.

Koko Rose Media, Lisa Hryniewicz, Founder & MD, 44 203 652 5629, lisa@koko-media.com, P. 9.

Lalabobo div. Beijing Shaikhe Tiandi Technology Co., Ltd., 86 15810813331, lalabobo@lalabobo.com, P. 13.

Licensing Link Europe Ltd., Ian Wickham, Director & Co-founder, 44 7540 122 077, ian@licensinglink.net, P. 10.

Lisle Licensing, Francesca Lisle, Licensing Partner, 44 19 3758 6237 x223, francesca@lislelicensing.com, P. 13.

Loungerie, 55 11 3059 4040, sac@loungerie.com.br, P. 11.

M&Co., Julia Redman, Head Buying Kids, Men, Kylie & Home, 44 800 031 7200, julia_redman@mandco.com, P. 12.

MBI/Danbury Mint U.K., Michael O'Donnell, Director, 44 870 112 3701, modonnell@mbi-inc.co.uk, P. 11.

Mondo TV S.p.a., Micheline Azoury, Brand Manager, Head Acquisitions & TV Sales, 39 6 86323293, micheline.azoury@mondotvgroup.com, P. 10.

Mondo TV S.p.a., Valentina La Macchia, Director Consumer Products & Global Licensing, 39 2 4952 6694, valentina.lamacchia@mondotvgroup.com, P. 11.

My Gifts Trade, Nikki Courtney, Director Business Development, 44 161 946 1234, sales@mygiftstrade.co.uk, P. 10,12.

Natural History Museum (London), Maxine Lister, Senior Licensing Manager, 44 20 7942 5652, m.lister@nhm.ac.uk, P. 12.

Nimbus Nine Consulting, Tina Louise Foster, Brand Consultant, tina@nimbusnineconsulting.co.uk, P. 10.

Nowhere Co. Ltd./A Bathing Ape (BAPE), Matt Takei, Senior Manager Marketing, 81 3 5772 2524, matt.takei@bape.com, P. 9.

Orb Factory (The), Stephanie Carver, Marketing Manager, 902-477-9570, stephanie@orbfactory.com, P. 9.

Parcle Group SRL, 39 02 8718 90 12, info@parcle.com, P. 11.

Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial, Carlota De Lamo, Director Communications, 34 91 535 8190, carlota.delamo@penguinrandomhouse.com, P. 11.

Perry Ellis Intl. Europe Ltd./PEI Licensing, Anthony Pessok, MD Licensing & Intl. Business Development, 353 1 405 38 40, anthony.pessok@perry.com, P. 11.

Play Press, Sarah Polito, Licensing, 39 761 52 70 03, sarah.p@edizioniplaypress.com, P. 11.

Poetic Brands Ltd./PoeticGem, Elliott Matthews, Executive Director, 44 19 2324 9497, elliottpoeticgem.com, P. 11.

Purpose Group (The), 84 8 39 11 04 31, hello@thepurposegroup.vn, P. 11.

Quadrille Publishing div. Hardie Grant, Melanie Gray, Business Development Director, 44 20 7601 7500, info@hardiegrant.co.uk, P. 12.

Rainbow Productions, David Scott, MD, 44 208 254 5301, david@rainbowproductions.co.uk, P. 12.

Rococo Chocolates, 44 0800-054-2133, marketing@rococochocolates.com, P. 12.

Rosega S.A., Carlos Fabian Legnini, Founder & Owner, 54 11 4901 7755, camisasmonaco@camisasmonaco.com.ar, P. 8.

Roy Lowe & Sons Ltd., Martin Lowe, MD, 44 1623 441144, martin@roylowe.co.uk, P. 11.

Saborn Trading B.V., Wil Kerkhof, CEO, 31 46 459 8186, w.kerkhof@saborn.nl, P. 11.

Smith & Brooks Ltd., Hannah Miles, MD, 44 845 129 9216, hannah.miles@smithbrooks.co.uk, P. 12.

Start Licensing, Ian Downes, Director, 44 208 337 7958, ian@startlicensing.co.uk, P. 8.

TCG (form. The Canadian Group), Jessica Gavin, VP Marketing & Licensing, 877-212-3388, jgavin@tcgtoys.com, P. 11.

This is Iris, Sarah Lawrence, Licensing, 44 7816 970 696, hello@thisisiris.co.uk, P. 9.

Titan Comics/Titan Entertainment, Nick Landau, Owner, 44 20 7620 0200, nick.landau@titanemail.com, P. 13.

Ugg Since 1974/Burlee Australia, Richard Friedrichs, CEO & Owner, 61 7 5520 4066, info@uggaustralianmade.com.au, P. 13.

Wal-Cor Corsanini S.n.c., 39 0372 555511, info@wal-cor.it, P. 11.

William Lamb Footwear, Charlotte Lamb, Director Accessories & Brands, 44 192 482 0282, charlotte@wlamb.co.uk, P. 12.

WowWee USA, Sydney Wiseman, Brand Manager, 514-738-2057, sydney@wowwee.com, P. 11.

Yellow Tie Hospitality Management, Karan Tanna, CEO, P. 11.

Expo Wrap-up

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“the licensing business is full of lemmings.” A more modern diagnosis would be FOMO—licensing executives have a “fear of missing out,” so they hop onto the “next big thing” instead of developing new trends themselves.

There is hope that the business is shaking off its complacency, given the massive upheavals in content and consumer products distribution—virtually everyone we spoke to complained of stagnancy, lack of innovation, and long lead times. But some remain unaffected by industry norms: In response to a question about product development timelines, Millennial digital media powerhouse BuzzFeed (exhibiting its Goodful and Tasty brands but home to dozens more) commented that it looks at 100-day turnaround periods. Other larger players described periods as short as 11 weeks from idea inception to placement in stores.

Increasingly stale buzzwords heard on the floor this year include evergreen and lifestyle: the former used incorrectly three-quarters of the time, and the latter an increasingly commonplace and unoriginal descriptor.

The State of Retail: Shifting Towards 360 Degree Distribution

Amazon is demanding an outsized role in the licensing business. Its VP Nicholas Denissen, this year’s Licensing Expo keynote speaker, opened the show with the claim that the ecommerce giant will balloon licensed retail sales to \$1 trillion over the next 10 years.

The online retail giant is pushing its Merch Collab service to licensors, licensees, and others in a bid to make the business more accessible and transparent for both producers of licensed merchandise as well as consumers seeking to support their favorite brands and manufacturers.

And while many on the floor cited Amazon as a valuable partner that has helped them achieve high double-digit growth in ecommerce sales, clearer heads warned against putting all of one’s eggs in the digital basket. Now more than ever, it is critical for brands to have a presence both online in ecommerce as well as offline in brick-and-mortar stores.

The same wisdom applies to streaming versus traditional linear content distribution, ebook versus physical publishing, mobile game apps versus traditional board games. Even the biggest steaming players like Netflix and Amazon, certain producers warned, are too small to support a broad consumer products franchise.

Mass retailers like Walmart, Target, and even Kohl’s are expected to fill the gap left by Toys ‘R’ Us. To a lesser extent, off-price retailers like Kmart, Ross, TJ Maxx, and Marshalls will also get some play with exclusive lines. Specialty retailers, such as book, video game, and infant goods stores are seeing higher returns, but are necessarily limited by lower sell-ins. Certain smaller evergreen, high-end properties are looking to department stores and eschewing mass, drug

VERY FEW LICENSING EXECUTIVES WE INTERVIEWED SAID THAT THEY ARE CONSIDERING LOOKING AT DISCOUNT OR OFF-PRICE DISTRIBUTION.

store, and even certain ecommerce channels (e.g., electing to sell only through one official website).

Wild cards in the toys/games space include previously defunct brands like FAO Schwartz and KB Toys, which are relaunching as store-in-store and mall-based pop-up activations throughout the U.S. this holiday season and into 2018. FAO Schwartz is additionally re-opening a flagship location at Rockefeller Center in New York as well as branded airport shops nationwide. Any comeback from these two players, however, is not large enough to support the scale demanded by major toycos like Hasbro, Mattel, and Jakks Pacific.

Very few licensing executives we interviewed said that they are considering looking at discount or off-price distribution, despite the fact that those retailers are the fastest-growing segment for brick-and-mortar distribution in the U.S./Canada—the most common concerns were a reduced number of SKUs, physically smaller and lower quality goods, and decreased margins. As these stores continue to crowd out and bankrupt specialty shops; however, we predict that they will begin looking towards licensed products in part as an effort to raise prices.

TV, Film, and Otherwise New Media

If at first you don’t succeed, reboot. That’s the plan for properties such as Yo-Kai Watch and YooHoo & Friends, whose licensors are not backing down from the U.S./Canadian market thanks in part to rousing success in other territories. Other entertainment properties that are looking to nurture the U.S. market after success elsewhere include *Miraculous: Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir* and *Masha and the Bear*.

It might be faster to list who isn’t getting a new TV series, film, documentary, Netflix/Hulu/Amazon streaming deal, or some combination of the above, than who is. Here is just a sampling of some interesting properties to announce content deals:

- ▶ Scholastic’s Clifford the Big Red Dog is coming back with a new TV series airing fall 2019 (with partners 9 Story and 100 Chickens) and a live-action film in the works with Paramount. The company is looking to launch a robust consumer products program globally in territories including the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Australia, China, and India.
- ▶ Care Bears is aging up into the 5–8 year-old range with a new retro 2D animation.
- ▶ Aptly named Zoonicorn, which has a presence on YouTube and in plush with Jay@Play, is breaking out with a TV pilot.

- ▶ Plush-based classic Monchhichi is getting a CG-animated TV series thanks to Technicolor, TF1, and Sekiguchi. Technicolor is also working on a drones-based series, Team DroniX, and underwater-based series, The Deep.
- ▶ 9 Story Brands' Colorforms is getting a Netflix series in 2019. The prodco is additionally developing a Chinese/Welsh co-production, Luo Bao Bei.
- ▶ The Fred Rogers Co. is juggling multiple new film and TV projects, including a new Mister Rogers film starring Tom Hanks and unrelated to this summer's documentary project.
- ▶ Leading Endemol Shine's adult-oriented roster are the stylish sci-fi series Black Mirror (looking at consumer tech and apparel extensions) and period series Peaky Blinders (gaming and gambling). Other TV series include a reboot of Deal or No Deal (Howie's back) and Page Six TV (New York Post).
- ▶ Only the second kids show to be made in partnership with the Paris Opera Ballet in its 200-year history, time-travelling tween drama Find Me in Paris is getting a second season. The show is produced by Cottonwood Media, ZDF, and ZDF Enterprises.
- ▶ Following its success with Masha and the Bear, Ink Group continues to explore underrepresented cultures and original stories with Zafari, a CG-animated show celebrating diversity and conservationism, as well as Anansi, a show based on the titular character from African folklore.
- ▶ LEVEL-5 abby's collectability-driven The Snack World is launching in North America in later 2019 to join other cross-media projects (video games, digital/linear content, and toys) like an Inazuma Eleven reboot (2019), Yo-Kai Watch sequel, and Professor Layton sequel.

Kidult & Other Trends Heard 'Round the Floor

After a steep drop in retail sales of licensed traditional toy/game-based brands for the U.S./Canada in 2017, collectibles brands are promising to boost the category in a big way through their own licensed extensions.

For example, the hottest breakout brand from holiday 2017 that ate into licensed sales, Fingerlings, has signed on over 40 licensees so far.

In part because Millennials are much less concerned with labels—it's good to be a nerd and a geek and to express your identity through brands and pop culture—'90s brands are seeing a resurgence as nostalgic properties with consumer goods lines for children's properties aimed at older teens and adults.

On the other hand, many entertainment properties are also "aging down" after years of establishing their presence in the adult collector's space—such as Jurassic World, Godzilla, and Men in Black. These properties

FOR THOSE WHO ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THE SPACE OUTSIDE OF THEME PARKS, THERE IS A DEFINITE SHIFT TOWARDS TRANSIENT, POP-UP EVENTS.

are largely banking on the success of new films and other content with more family-friendly themes.

Perhaps because the 50th anniversary of the moon walk is next year, many properties are taking a look at space themes or lunar exploration within their franchises. As a trend, this is expected to take off in the toys and games space specifically.

Fashion Forward

This year, everyone is taking fashion seriously. There was an increased focus among major entertainment-, character-, and toy-based brands on the floor that were promoting fashion initiatives including high end, adult-oriented apparel, accessories, and footwear.

And fashion goods programs are, rightfully, acting more as marketing initiatives than as revenue generating streams. Most licensors admitted that royalty income from these types of deals was relatively insignificant compared to core licensed category sales (usually, toys/games and publishing). But branded collaborations have a butterfly effect on an entire brand, elevating its status among consumers and retailers alike as an aspirational lifestyle brand. And these same licensors are looking ahead, expecting to meaningfully diversify revenue streams within the next five or so years. Examples of licensors with extensive fashion-oriented programs featured at Expo include Hasbro, Cartoon Network, Peanuts Worldwide, Twentieth Century Fox, the Smiley Co., Sesame Workshop, and Sanrio.

Experiential Hubs

In contrast, interest is chilled for experiential extensions such as live events, stage shows, camps, theme parks, etc.—in the U.S./Canada, at least. It should be noted that major domestic parks like Disney, Universal, and Six Flags are not necessarily part of this shift, with the number of licensed or branded attractions expected to grow over the next five years. One additional exception is eOne's Peppa Pig, for which three parks/attractions are expected to be developed in the U.S. by 2019.

For those who are actively engaged in the space outside of theme parks, there is a definite shift towards transient, pop-up events. In addition to saving money on extended leases, portable extensions allow brands to hit an area exactly when it is the most profitable and move out in off-seasons. Roving locations also create a thrill of exclusivity and urgency among fans to visit. Those who have pulled back from experiential events and activations cited high costs, e.g., mall operators demanding six-figure fees for renting out space. In that sense, it is easier for retail

brands like Build-A-Bear to launch pop-up concept stores because they can negotiate for better deals as well as temper expectations.

Costs are lower, and consumer shopping trends are different, in most other territories. Territories seeing massive increases in location-based entertainment include Asia (Southeast Asian countries in particular such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand), Latin America (countries such as Mexico and Brazil are still building malls), certain Central Eastern European territories, and even countries in the Middle East and Africa.

In addition to character meet-and-greets, live shows and performances, and theme park attractions, activations can

include themed hotels and cruise lines, cafés and restaurants, and even branded nurseries and educational courses. Internationally, mall operators are looking at the U.S. as an example of what not to do and are embracing pop culture brand activations in their spaces. And it's worth it; one mall show can draw approximately 5,000 children and their families in the span of a couple of hours.

These most common themes surrounding these areas are that they are highly under-served, with a growing middle class living in densely-populated and increasingly interconnected economic zones thanks to new roads, bridges, rail, and sea ports. They are much more likely to be mobile-first, with their first experience on the internet more likely to be through a smartphone than a desktop computer.

THE ART OF THE DEAL

Ask Us About Guarantees

This year at Licensing Expo Las Vegas and earlier in the year in connection with *TLL's Annual Licensing Business Survey*, we had a lot of people asking us about the \$1 million guarantee—by most measures, an astronomical and abnormal amount to be demanded in consumer products licensing agreements.

Even some major licensees that are paying out multi-million dollar royalties eschew this kind of agreement, instead agreeing to a variety of alternatives such as a stepped or graduated royalty payout schedule (with royalty rates increasing as certain benchmarks, like retail sales or unit sales, are met) or to spread out the guarantee among multiple brands (if one licensed line does not perform well, payments can be made from another, more successful, line).

Nevertheless, instances of a licensor demanding a \$1 million guarantee or higher are on the rise, in part thanks to powerhouses like Disney and the NFL. Several licensees and other insiders we met with on the Expo floor reported annual increases to a 21–23% royalty rate for certain A-list brands, with a handful of manufacturers bemoaning a 25% royalty on wholesale sales. In some cases, top licensors are demanding as minimum payment a sum close to what the manufacturer delivered in total royalties the year before—one amount we heard cited was just north of \$20 million.

But this is nowhere near the norm. To get a sense of scale, *TLL* estimates that 80% of licensing companies worldwide generate under \$10 million in licensed retail sales annually. One agent we spoke to representing a brand generating approximately \$100 million in retail sales said that just under 80% of licensees earned out their guarantees last year. This is somewhat on the high end, although figures vary widely depending on a brand's licensee makeup and product diversity—newer manufacturers and expansions will see greater risk. On average, an ambitious (i.e., slightly overvalued) program spanning toys/games, publishing, apparel and accessories, food/beverages, and soft home goods might see a 50–70% rate in a good year.

For those licensees that don't generate enough sales to earn their minimum guarantee (and start making royalty payments), there are several options available for manufacturers and the industry norms are incredibly varied depending on the brand and product category: Either the difference is negligible (and paid out, carried over into the next year, or forgiven entirely) or the licensor agrees to carry over or forgive deficient payments in return for a higher royalty rate, more SKUs, or greater marketing contributions in the next term. Alternatively, the licensor may demand full payment and, in its absence, terminate the licensing agreement.

A more experienced licensor and/or agent might aim to have all or most of their licensees earn out their guarantees in order to keep good working relationships with manufacturers and maintain a steady flow of products into stores. In this case, risk is dispersed more evenly among partners and licensors are more invested in the success of a program than not.

A high guarantee is generally better for a licensor and agent because these companies can plan out expected earnings in advance and shift risk to manufacturers and, in some cases, to retailers as well. Licensees may also appreciate the convenience of paying a flat fee, rather than calculating sales and generating a detailed report each quarter (although they will have to do so, eventually, when they are audited). If there is a bad year, however, it may become difficult to collect royalties from a struggling licensee. In addition, the costs associated with a potential legal action and a subsequent loss of goodwill may outweigh any potential gains.

Experienced licensing executives will do their best to strike a comfortable balance in between these two extremes and ask serious hard-hitting questions about the value of their own brand as well as their licensees' track records.

SALARY SURVEY

Average Pay for Licensing Execs Down by \$9K

Licensing professionals are experienced, happy with their jobs, and prepared to put in the hours, according to *The Licensing Letter's 2018 Salary Survey*. For more in-depth breakdowns, including comparisons between U.S.- and EU-based licensing executives, please refer to the newly published *TLL's 2018 Compensation Report*.

Over half of respondents (61%) have been involved in the licensing business for 10 years or more and another 26% for five to 10 years. Almost half of executives (45%) have been in their current role for five years or more. But 25% have only been in their current position for 1–2 years, with most of them (13% of the total) having worked in licensing for over 10 years.

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is not satisfied and 10 extremely, a whopping 71% of respondents rated their job satisfaction at 7 or higher—the highest rate TLL has recorded in recent years. Of those who indicate low job satisfaction (just 8% rate satisfaction at 5 or lower) the most common refrain is the perception that salary is not in line with industry standards, a lack of benefits, and limited advancement opportunities. These concerns are still very tangible, however.

Licensing professionals put in an average of 46 hours at work in a normal week, with 11% dedicating 60 or more hours a week to their craft. For the first time, we also asked respondents about how many hours they typically work in a “busy period”—and just over half answered, citing an average of 54 hours a week, or 8 more hours. Forty-two percent of this group work 60 or more hours a week in “busy” times. As it turns out, this work is largely unpaid with a whopping 95% of respondents clocking overtime hours not compensated beyond their annual salary and bonus.

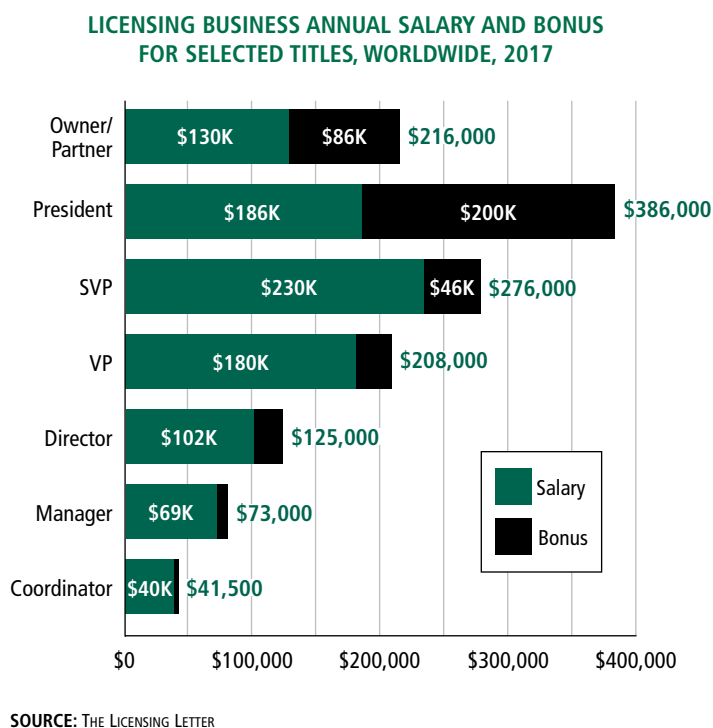
The titles with the greatest amount of responses were director (24%), manager (20%), coordinator (12%), VP (11%), owner/partner (7%), SVP (5%), and president (4%). These are the only job titles for which the number of responses is sufficient to generate salary and bonus data. Over 70% of responses were from the U.S., with 24% from Western Europe. Response data from other territories, such as South East Asia and the Middle East, was insufficient to generate salary trends.

Even limited to these categories, however, titles are not used consistently in licensing. For example, a director in a very large company could be equivalent to a VP at a smaller one (and size isn't the only differentiator). Unlike in other industries, titles don't always correlate with responsibilities. The range of responses in compensation is one indicator—e.g., \$12,000–275,000 for owners/partners and \$10,000–150,000 for managers.

In the case of managers, the low end of that range would likely be a coordinator or assistant at some companies, yet a junior director at others. The extreme range seen with owners and partners is largely a function of respondent

LICENSING BUSINESS ANNUAL SALARY AND BONUS FOR SELECTED TITLES, WORLDWIDE, 2017			
TITLE	SALARY	BONUS*	RANGE IN SALARY
Owner/Partner	\$130,000	\$86,000	\$12,000–275,000
President	\$186,000	\$200,000	\$58,000–500,000
SVP	\$230,000	\$46,000	\$123,000–350,000
VP	\$180,000	\$28,000	\$110,000–250,000
Director	\$102,000	\$23,000	\$60,000–170,000
Manager	\$69,000	\$4,000	\$10,000–130,000
Coordinator	\$40,000	\$1,500	\$25,000–54,000
Total Average†	\$112,000	\$60,000	\$8,000–600,000

Notes: *Among those who received bonuses; some respondents specified that they were not paid bonuses. †Total average calculated across all titles.
SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER



makeup—most run smaller shops, draw lower salaries, and pay out large bonuses when business is good (several respondents indicated that they gave themselves a bonus of \$1 million or more in 2017). On the other hand, presidents (who, as seen below, appear to have more generous compensation) tended to hail from larger companies.

Average salary has gone down since last year's Survey, with the total average salary down 7% from 2016 to 2017. The range of salaries we see has stretched out, however, from \$22,000–500,000 in 2016 to \$8,000–600,000 in 2017. Compared to 2015 calculations, most job titles have

enjoyed steady growth (2% growth in salary overall), with most growth focused on VPs (18%) and some declines in the salaries of SVPs (-11%).

Raise & Bonus

Only 46% of respondents reported that they had received a raise within the last year, down from 59% last year. Just under 20% indicated that they had never received a raise. Of those who did receive one, however, the average raise was 5.8% with approximately 20% receiving a bump of 10% or more. Only 13% of raises in the last year were connected with a change in job title.

Sixty-seven percent of respondents indicate that they expect to receive a bonus within the next 12 months.

The most important factors in calculating bonus are company performance, followed in roughly equal importance by new business generated, licensed sales, and overall personal performance. A minority indicated that they receive a predetermined bonus not related to performance.

Other Forms of Compensation

A majority of respondents (68%) indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their soft compensation schemes in 2017, with most noting that their benefits had not changed from the year before. Approximately 13% expressed “mixed” sentiment towards benefits packages, citing satisfaction with paid time off but frustration with medical (including higher deductibles, less paternity time, or less coverage). Those who were not satisfied (20%) cited no, poor, or minimal benefits as their reason.

Of the companies that do offer benefits, the most common are shorter or more flexible working hours (including flexibility to work from home, parental leave, paid time off, and more days off), company lunches, or health insurance. Other soft benefits include equity, 401K plans, commissions, and travel.

About The Licensing Letter’s 2018 Salary Survey

Respondents to *TLL’s 2018 Salary Survey* were evenly distributed among licensors, licensees, agents and consultants, with a smaller percentage of respondents making up the last cohort. The Survey was conducted in early-to-mid 2018 and responses are for 2017.

As a group, the licensors and agents responding work with every property type *TLL* tracks, but there is a slightly larger involvement in trademark-and entertainment/character-based brands whose activity takes up a larger share of the licensing industry. Similarly, manufacturers are slightly more involved in the product categories of toys/games, gifts/novelties, apparel, and accessories.

The titles tracked in this survey are owner/partner, president, CEO, EVP, SVP, AVP, VP, general manager, director, head licensing, manager, specialist, coordinator, and assistant.

Every respondent outside the U.S. reported satisfaction with their soft compensation schemes, boosting satisfaction levels overall. Excluding international respondents, 48% cited mixed or negative feelings about their soft benefits.

Demographics

Sixty-two percent of respondents state that their primary responsibility is licensing, followed by business development (11%), sales and marketing (8% each), and product development (6%; multiple responses allowed). Roughly 5% cited other functions, such as human resources and other administrative tasks.

Most respondents (60%) work at smaller outfits with 1–5 people involved in licensing, followed by those who work with 6–20 other licensing professionals (20%) and 101 or more (7%). Of companies with part-time employees, most count 1–5 such employees (86%) followed by 6–20 (12%) and 101 or more (2%).

The head count of people directly involved at companies has remained the same since last year for most respondents (63%), with a quarter (25%) indicating that the number has grown. Of those who reported growth, the number of employees grew by roughly 50% with most new additions being full-time workers.

Respondents were evenly split by gender, with 55% identifying as female and 45% as male. For the first time, *TLL* also asked about age and ethnicity/race—approximately 30% are aged 45–53 years-old and over 80% are white.

Respondents are also well-educated: Most hold a Bachelor’s degree (56%) and 27% have a master’s degree (MBA or other) as their highest level of academic achievement. Read more in an exclusive excerpt from *TLL’s 2018 Compensation Report* on page 23.

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SALARY SURVEY

Licensing Execs Are Educated: 89% Hold at Least Bachelor Degree

Note: The following is based on an excerpt of TLL's 2018 Compensation Report, released in digital PDF and print in May 2018. Note that three charts and tables have been excluded from this excerpt.

Licensing executives are more educated than ever before, according to the 2018 *Salary Survey*. Over half of respondents hold a bachelor degree (56%) and 27% a master degree—11% hold a master of business administration (MBA) and 15% some other master degree.

Most respondents to last year's *Survey* held a bachelor degree (59%), with 31% holding a master degree (MBA or other) as their highest level of academic achievement. In 2016, 56% held a bachelor degree, 18% an MBA, and 13% some other master degrees. Just 4% held an associate degree and 3% a high school diploma/GED as their highest degree. In 2013, 55% held a bachelor degree, 23% an MBA, and 6% another master degree.

Americans prefer the MBA, while Europeans tend to get some other kind of master degree. Virtually no EU respondents indicated that they received a juris doctorate (JD), either because the European system prefers a master of laws degree (or an LLM, explaining the higher rate of other master's degree attainment) or because a legal background is not considered essential for a licensing professional.

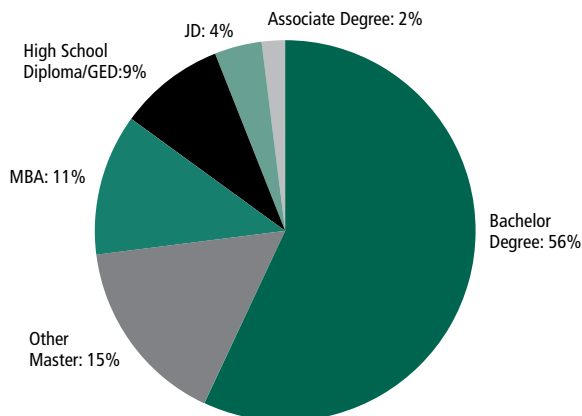
Almost half of Americans with a high school diploma/GED stated, unsolicited, that they had a couple of years of college education. For the first time, the share of those without an undergraduate degree rose to surpass those with an associate degree. It is unlikely that professionals are pursuing four-year degrees while working (rather than pausing to cash in on an associate degree) because half have been involved in licensing for 10 years or more, and over three-quarters for over five years.

Surprisingly, respondents outside the U.S. and EU were the most highly educated, boosting the total average for PhD and bachelor degree attainment worldwide in 2017.

Comparing the average salary and raise, by degree, for years 2015 and 2017, it seems that attaining a degree still pays off. While the difference in salary for an MBA holder in the span of two years, a whopping \$92,000 (60% growth), is skewed because of respondent makeup (MBA holders were exclusively executives), this trend holds true even for other master and bachelor degree owners.

While data was insufficient to present statistically significant salary ranges for other degree holders, it should be noted that Survey respondents are almost exclusively from the upper echelons of the business. A surprising number of executive-level executives only have a high school diploma/GED—granted, this cohort has been in licensing for at least five years (and half of them, for over 10 years).

LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR LICENSING EXECUTIVES, WORLDWIDE, 2017



SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR LICENSING EXECUTIVES, BY REGION, 2017

DEGREE	U.S.	EU	WORLDWIDE
PhD	1%	0%	2%
JD	6%	0%	4%
MBA	12%	9%	11%
Other Master	13%	27%	15%
Bachelor Degree	55%	55%	56%
Associate Degree	3%	0%	2%
High School Diploma/GED	10%	9%	9%

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

SOURCE: THE LICENSING LETTER

Unsurprisingly, the most well-educated executives are the youngest, explaining why every PhD holder is only a mid-level executive. The biggest indicator of success was not necessarily educational attainment, but age.

Across gender lines, educational attainment is roughly equal, with 91% of men and 87% of women holding a four-year undergraduate degree or higher. Rates of attainment are equal for higher degrees such as the PhD, JD, and master (excluding the MBA).

Men are much more likely to get a master degree, with 19% of all men holding an MBA and 16% some other master degree. They actually hold 73% of all MBA and 47% of other master degrees.

Women, on the other hand, hold 60% of all bachelor degrees. As a group, 60% of all female respondents have this four-year degree. Roughly one-in-10 (11%) female executives have reached their current level with just a high school diploma/GED under their belt.

Legal Tracker: Counterfeits & Other Suits

Burberry is taking on **Target** in an \$8 million-plus trademark infringement and counterfeiting lawsuit filed in a New York federal court. According to the suit, Target has been selling products bearing “blatant reproductions” of Burberry’s world famous check trademark including scarves, eyewear, luggage, and water bottles.

Interestingly, Burberry is arguing that Target’s history of collaborations with collaborations with high fashion brands such as Victoria Beckham and Missoni make it more likely that its alleged infringement would result in “consumer confusion” (a key element in trademark infringement analysis) because Target customers would be more likely to think that Burberry approved the goods.

Stan Lee files suit against **Pow! Entertainment**, a company with which he’s been associated since the early 2000’s, as well as executives Gill Champion and Shane Duffy. He is alleging that the company forged or otherwise fraudulently obtained exclusive rights to Lee’s name, image, and likeness and is seeking \$1 billion in damages.

The suit details Lee’s long history of granting non-exclusive rights to his name and argues that he never would have signed away exclusive rights if he knew what he was signing. Lee, who is legally blind from advanced macular degeneration, normally has documents read to him before signing and was never read any exclusive rights agreement to his name and likeness, the suit alleges. Pow! also took control of Lee’s Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts without his permission, according to the suit. Lee’s suit also alleges that he never approved of the sale of Pow! assets to Camsing Intl. Holding last year; Lee is currently being sued by Pow! shareholders over the deal.

China’s top court rules in favor of **Christian Dior**, overturning two rulings by lower courts and admonishing the local trademark office for rejecting an application by the French fashion house to register a perfume bottle trademark. The Trademark Review and Adjudication Board wrongly rejected a 2015 application by Dior to register a trademark of its teardrop-shaped J’adore perfume bottle.

MGA Entertainment (**MGAE**) is awarded \$1.1 million against 81 counterfeiters sued by the toyco for fake L.O.L. Surprise! goods. The infringers had been selling fakes as recently as late last year on digital marketplaces **Alibaba.com**, **Aliexpress.com**, and **DHGate.com**. After its win, MGAE additionally brings a new suit against **TomTop.com**, an e-commerce marketplace allegedly selling counterfeit L.O.L. Surprise! listings on its own website as well as via stores on eBay, Alibaba.com and Amazon.com. Separately, MGAE is issued a patent covering the unique and original attributes of its L.O.L. Surprise! product, including the ball itself.

After nine long years, **Gucci** and **Guess** have settled their legal battle over the Guess logo and diamond pattern, putting an end to litigations pending in Italy, France,

OVER 60% OF COUNTERFEIT GOODS IN
GLOBAL TRADE ORIGINATE FROM CHINA,
ACCORDING TO A 2016 REPORT

Australia, and China. Stateside, the matter had already been decided: In 2009, Gucci took Guess to a New York federal court, accusing the brand of counterfeiting, unfair competition, and trademark infringement. In 2012, the fashion company was awarded \$4.7 million in damages for Guess’ breach. On the other hand, the EU general court and judgements in Italy and France ruled in favor of Guess on the same claims.

Dependable Solutions (**DSI**) secures a new partnership with **Authentic Vision** to extend protection services for clients. Licensing, creative and royalty services from DSI give brands, agents, and licenses automation solutions for their business processes while Authentic Vision utilizes authentication and tracking technology to secure IP and licensed goods.

Understanding Counterfeit Consumers

Over 60% of counterfeit goods in global trade originate from China, according to a 2016 report from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and the EU’s Intellectual Property Office.

For some consumers, buying counterfeit products can be a way to express anti-corporate ideology, according to a new study from the **University of British Columbia**’s Okanagan campus conducted with researchers from the **Hong Kong Polytechnic University** and the **Hong Kong Design Institute**.

In a series of interviews, young Chinese consumers considered a rejection of “hedonic consumption” as more ethical than purchasing real luxury goods. Buying fakes means spending less money on products, which, in turn, is the right thing to do. Researchers classified those who buy counterfeits into four types:

1. *Victim brand illiterates* lack knowledge simply do not realize that their purchases are counterfeit.
2. The *larkers* view counterfeit consumption as innocent enjoyment, and emphasize product quality and ability to fool others.
3. *Anti-corporate activists*, on the other hand, see counterfeit consumption as a rebellious activity against large capitalist corporations.
4. Finally, the *status matchers* believe that consuming counterfeit goods allows them to fulfill a sense of prestige, meet social standards, and increase self-confidence.

TOYS & GAMES

Hasbro Powers Up as Toyco's Face the Music

Hasbro snaps up all intellectual property, category rights, and content libraries owned by **Saban Properties** and its affiliates for \$522 million—including entertainment brands Power Rangers, My Pet Monster, Popples, Julius Jr., Luna Petunia, Treehouse Detectives, and certain others. The offer is subject to a number of closing conditions, including obtaining required regulatory approvals, and is expected to close during Q2 2018.

According to *TLL's \$100 Million Entertainment/Character list*, Saban's Power Rangers generated over \$360 million in licensed retail sales worldwide in 2016. Earlier this year, Saban stated that its Power Rangers franchise boasted more than 150 licensees globally. The first set of product from Hasbro will be available in North America spring 2019; international markets will be aligned to television programming launches, rolling out throughout 2019.

Hasbro is paying up \$229.75 million in cash, crediting another \$22.25 million previously paid pursuant to the Power Rangers master toy license agreement set to begin in 2019, and will issue \$270 million worth of Hasbro common stock.

It is unclear how talent will be distributed in the aftermath of the deal. Haim Saban, founder of Saban Brands and creator of Power Rangers, will provide transitional and consulting services to Hasbro with his company.

First Quarter Returns Disappoint

Hasbro sales declined over \$133 million in Q1 2018 from the same period a year ago, writing off \$59 million in bad debt from Toys 'R' Us. Troubled sales in the U.K. were in part compounded by Brexit. On the plus side, Hasbro believes it has fully accounted for the bad debt, although it expects to see sales impacts into 2019. And the toyco's entertainment and licensing segment net revenues increased 21% to \$64.0 million, thanks in part to gains from Monopoly, Marvel, Beyblade, Dungeons and Dragons, and Littlest Pet Shop.

For the same period, **Mattel** saw worldwide gross sales decline 15%, with declines in North America and Europe partially offset by a 17% gain in Asia Pacific and 4% bump in Latin America. In particular, its core brands Barbie, Hot Wheels, and Fisher-Price did reasonably well, although the broader entertainment business was down 27% as reported and in constant currency compared to Q1 2017.

Jaks Pacific reported a net loss of \$36.2 million for Q1, also citing TRU for losses and sales disruption. Nevertheless, the toyco reported strong growth in sales for Incredibles 2, Tangled, Disguise Costumes (Halloween sales were up by 20%), Squish-Dee-Lish, DC toddler dolls, and tween cosmetic brand C'est Moi. Its sales declined just 2% from the previous year, and actually are up 3% in the U.S. Poor sellers included Beauty and the Beast, Moana, Smurfs, and Tsum Tsum.

PARTNERSHIPS

Royal Weddings: Marvel/Epic & Nestle/Starbucks

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle are not the only royals whose union we are celebrating.

Nestle strikes a \$7.5 billion cash deal with **Starbucks** for the exclusive right to sell the chain's packaged coffees and teas around the world—not including future revenues from product sales and royalties. Starbucks' current packaged business is worth approximately \$2 billion; the alliance is expected to boost Nestle in North America (where it holds under 5% of the market) and benefit Starbucks in China, which is Nestle's second largest market. The deal includes Starbucks-branded capsules for Nestle's Nespresso and Dolce Gusto single-serve brewers.

Nestle will take on 500 Starbucks employees as part of the deal, which does not include industrial assets. Starbucks will use proceeds to increase planned stock buybacks to \$20 billion from \$15 billion through fiscal 2020; it said the deal would add to earnings per share by 2021. Nestle expects the alliance to add to its earnings by 2019.

Disney's newest **Marvel** film, *Avengers: Infinity War*, kicks off a huge crossover with **Epic Games'** Fortnite

(which is being represented by **IMG**). Although retail sales of licensed video games/software have not been keeping pace with average industry growth (up 1.7% in the U.S./Canada for 2017), the instances of this type of marketing collaboration has been on the uptick. The reason that these collaborations haven't resulting in big bucks is that most are pure exposure marketing deals that do not pay out flat fees or royalties, but instead are meant to boost each partner's fan engagement by introducing them to a new audience in a meaningful way.

It remains unknown, however, if Marvel and Epic Games have negotiated some kind of revenue split in this case. But it wouldn't be surprising if they did—the free-to-play game raked in \$223 million in revenue across all platforms in March *alone*, according to research firm Superdata.

According to Dubit Trends, 25% of American children aged 5-15 have played Fortnite in the last week; with the highest share of players (30%) in the U.K. In comparison, 51% have played Minecraft, 39% Candy Crush, and 38% Angry Birds in the U.S.

BUSINESS

M&A & Restructuring

DHX Media and **Sony Music Entertainment Japan** (SMEJ) enter into a definitive agreement whereby SMEJ will indirectly purchase 49% of DHX Media's 80% interest in Peanuts for C\$237 million (\$185 million) in cash. At the transaction's close on or about June 30, 2018, DHX Media will own 41% of Peanuts, SMEJ will own 39%, and the members of the family of **Charles M. Schulz** will continue to own 20%.

In addition, the two companies agree to extend their current licensing and syndication agreement in Japan with SMEJ's consumer products division, Sony Creative Products. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Peanuts' launch in Japan; the business has grown over 200% since Sony became Peanuts' Japanese agent in 2010.

DHX Media intends to use the net proceeds from the transaction after the payment of transaction costs to reduce its indebtedness under its term credit facility

Newell Brands continues its restructuring efforts under an expanded accelerated transformation plan, which includes the divesting of two more brands and applying all after-tax proceeds (an estimated \$10 billion) from its divestitures to debt. Jostens and Pure Fishing are added to the chopping block along with non-core businesses Rubbermaid Commercial Products, Rubbermaid Outdoor/Closet/Refuge and Garage, Process Solutions, Rawlings, Goody, U.S. Playing Cards, and Mapa/Spontex/Quickie. Newell expects to complete all transactions by the end of 2019.

Newell Brands will emerge a slimmer global consumer goods company with net sales of over \$9 billion for housewares brands including Oster, Sunbeam, Calphalon, Crock-Pot, Mr. Coffee, Sistema, Ball, Rubbermaid, Food Saver, Coleman, and Contigo. Other remaining divisions cover home fragrance, writing, baby, and security.

NASCAR may be up for sale, according to reports from both *Reuters* and *NBC* claiming that the majority owners of NASCAR are "exploring options" for the future of the organization, including the sale of their entire stake. The France family, which controls NASCAR, is working with investment

bank Goldman Sachs Group to identify a potential buyer. The reports state that any plans are only at the exploratory stage and no agreement of any kind is certain.

Eurazeo, the private equity firm that owns **Asmodee Group**, is exploring a sale of Asmodee at a price that could reach over €1.5 billion (\$1.79 billion), Reuters reports.

Nashville-based guitar maker **Gibson** files for bankruptcy, citing \$500 million in debt linked to the acquisition of its overseas consumer electronics business. Gibson plans to exit Chapter 11 in September after liquidating its headphones, speakers, and accessories businesses in addition to reorganizing its musical instruments and professional audio business. Gibson's brands include Les Paul, Baldwin, and Wurlitzer.

Fairfax Financial Holdings gets the go-ahead from the American and Canadian courts to purchase the Canadian arm of **Toys "R" Us** and Babies "R" Us in a transaction expected to close this quarter, pending applicable regulatory approvals. Unlike its counterpart below the border, TRU Canada has enjoyed strong standalone profitability, earning over \$1 billion annually over the last three years.

Bon-Ton is being liquidated following a successful bid by a joint venture composed of the holders of the company's lien notes, Great American Group, and Tiger Capital Group. The retailer filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy this February and was hopeful to emerge under a financial restructuring plan. Bon-Ton operates approximately 260 stores in 24 states in the Northeast and Midwest. Its stores, ecommerce and mobile platforms under the Bon-Ton, Bergner's, Boston Store, Carson's, Elder-Beerman, Herberger's, and Younger names will remain open throughout the store closing sales.

Cookware manufacturer **Regal Ware** acquires **Espro**, a company known for its premium coffee and tea presses. The Espro coffee line will become a new division of Regal Ware and join the Saladmaster, Kitchen Fair, and Lifetime cookware brands.

EXPERIENTIAL

Pop-ups, Live Events & Documentaries

Epic Rights launches a nostalgic and immersive *NSYNC-centric pop-up experience in Los Angeles to celebrate the 20 year history of the group as well as its new star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In addition to official merchandise, the location also boasts photo activations and a display of props, wardrobe, and photography. The capsule collection's line of apparel and accessories will also be available for sale online before the pop-up launches.

This fall, **Feld Entertainment** and **Universal Brand Development** bring *DreamWorks Trolls The Experience*, a 12,000-square-foot 90-minute immersive walkthrough

adventure, to New York. The live location-based experience marks the first collaboration in a multi-property relationship that will develop and create other large-scale and mobile pop-up immersive experiences. *DreamWorks Trolls* will be supported through a continuous stream of new content on YouTube and an all-new Netflix original series. The multi-sensory experience takes visitors through Troll Village with augmented reality and 3D technology as well as designed sets.

New theatrical production **Wild Kratts LIVE 2.0 – Activate Creature Power!** is also launching this fall on the west coast; the show will tour in more than 135 cities across

North America through 2019. The production stars Martin and Chris Kratt and is a mix of live-action and animation.

Several experiential projects are vying for top artistic marks: *Frozen*, *Mean Girls*, and *SpongeBob SquarePants* top nominations for the 72nd annual **Tony Awards** for best musical. Additionally, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, Parts One and Two* is also in the running for best play.

Funko is honored with the Best Documentary Feature Film award during the fifth annual San Diego Film Awards for “Making Fun – The Story of Funko”. The documentary, created by **Eddie Grace Arts & Film**, takes a closer look at Funko’s fandom as well as its approach to creating highly coveted collectibles. The film explores how pop culture has permeated all aspects of life on a global scale and will be made available to more than 125 million **Netflix** subscribers globally in over 190 countries worldwide this May.

Tech Innovations

Kraft Heinz’s Oscar Mayer unveils Bacoin (BACN), “the first-ever cryptocurrency backed by the gold standard of Oscar Mayer Bacon.” The American meat producer is giving out a limited amount of Bacoin for those who register online; owners can drive up the cryptocurrency’s value by sharing and using #OscarmayerBacoin on social media. The currency can be cashed out by customers for real packs of bacon—as of press time, the value of a single Bacoin is worth 14 slices of the company’s bacon.

A new research project from **Disney** and researchers from **MIT** and **Carnegie Mellon University** has resulted in a wearable Force Jacket, designed to let someone experience physical sensations in conjunction with VR or AR experiences. Users can feel pinches, hugs, and punches through an array of 26 pneumatically-actuated airbags and force sensors that provide precisely directed force and high-frequency vibrations to the wearer’s upper body.

Endeavor’s premier mixed martial arts organization celebrates its 25th anniversary with its ‘Faces of UFC’ campaign. UFC is soliciting personal fan stories through social media with a sweepstakes in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, U.K., and Ireland as well as separate fan activations worldwide.

Epic Meal Time, an early viral YouTube food channel which is known for videos featuring wildly caloric burgers and inventions like candy pizza, launches a line of foods at **Walmart** stores nationwide dubbed Super Snack Time. The first treat, ‘Pizza In A Bag’, is a pepperoni jerky that retails for \$4 in checkout lines.

Cause-based Marketing

Warner Bros. Consumer Products teams up with U.S. youth organization generationON to launch Scooby-Doo “Doo Good,” a social campaign designed to help the environment, fight hunger, and improve animal welfare. The pro-social initiative will launch 35 new Kids Care Clubs in the US, as well as fund \$500 grants to support kids and adult mentors in helping their communities.

Hasbro launches a pilot program that will allow consumers to send their unwanted toys to recycling company **TerraCycle**, which will then transform them into materials that can be used in a number of projects including play spaces, flower pots, and park benches. This is the first such brand-sponsored program; Hasbro will send prepaid shipping labels to all consumer that sign up online in the contiguous U.S.

The Royal Horticulture Society (**RHS**) and its licensees bring a new state-of-the-art gardening education and community outreach resource to life in Surrey, U.K. Licensees included **Gabriel Ash** (greenhouse designer/manufacturer), **Mr Fothergill’s Seeds Ltd.** (seeds and seed gifting), and **Burgon & Ball** (garden and agricultural tools).

Who’s News

Are you hiring—or being promoted, changing jobs, retiring, launching a new company, or otherwise changing your employment? Email Jen at jen@plainlanguagemedia.com and we’ll announce the news in our next issue of Who’s News.

Kathy Ireland Worldwide names healthcare entrepreneur **Bialik Benjamin** as its VP Business Development as well as its ambassador for international and Israeli affairs. In this role, under the terms of the advisory agreement between KIIWW and Level Brands Inc., Benjamin will also provide client relations support for Level Brands’s subsidiaries Encore Endeavor One, Ireland Men One, and Kathy Ireland Health & Wellness.

Turner Asia Pacific appoints **Jia Salindong-Du** as Country Manager for the Philippines. Salindong-Du will scaling Turner’s Kids & Entertainment business in the Philippines, which includes developing local content opportunities, creating greater consumer experiences and expanding the brands’ fanbase. She will also support ad sales, and operate in tandem with the consumer products and licensing team for Cartoon Network. She will be additionally responsible for the channel distribution of Turner brands locally, including CNN International, Cartoon Network, Boomerang, and Warner TV.

Centa IP hires **Gail Mitchell** as CEO and **Val Fry** as VP Licensing. Mitchell is based in Australia; she formerly worked at Hasbro and The Fusion Agency. Fry will be based in London and oversee Centa’s IP in the U.K. and EMEA.

Global stationery and lifestyle brand, Rifle Paper Co., appoints **Trish Whalen** in the newly created role of Brand President role. She was most recently VP Business & Brand Development at Draper James, the retail brand founded by Reese Witherspoon, and had spent 10 years at Kate Spade.

Max Arguile, formerly of GB Eye, launches new specialist licensing consultancy Reemsborko Ltd. The company will fill gaps in the market for emerging areas scubas anime, video and mobile gaming, and specialized art and design brands.

Continued on page 28

Who's News, Cont'd.

Caryl Liebmann is now Director Business Development at Gemr, a social network platform for showcasing pop-culture collecting.

The Royal Horticulture Society (RHS) appoints **Liz Judson** as Licensing Assistant. She will help the charity in its work with both its 60 existing and more potential licensees across an expanding list of categories.

Vicki Marler-Hausen launches her own new toy industry marketing agency, Elmer Marketing, that will offer services to toy companies as they launch products, plan trade shows, and construct media campaigns. Vedia Ayvaz is named SVP Brand Creative at Comedy Central.

Ingenious Media hires **Will Harrison** as Managing Director. He was previously COO for the Harry Potter franchise at Warner Bros.

Vivid appoints a new Intl. Sales Director in the form of **Carl Raven**, who moves in to replace **Jonathan Busher**. Busher has stepped down from his position with Vivid to launch his own consulting business.

Gaming Arts names **Jean Venneman** its new CCO to lead sales, marketing, and product management.

Suzanne Nossel is promoted to CEO at PEN America following its merger with sister organization PEN Center USA.

Posh Paws Intl. welcomes **Alan Smith** to the role of managing director.

IDW Publishing names **John Barber** Editor-in-Chief and hires **Anita Frazier** as SVP Sales & Marketing.

Ralph Lauren plans to add **Angela Ahrendts** (SVP Retail at Apple) and has appointed **Michael George** (President & CEO of Qurate Retail) to its board of directors.

Bandai UK bolsters its sales team, appointing **John Carlaw** as National Account Manager and **Joanne Airey** as Key Account Manager.

Kelly Lynch, formerly at Eileen Fisher, is joining Workman Publishing as Associate Creative Director Calendars & Stationery.

Franco Penè is retiring from Onward Luxury Group (OLG), the European subsidiary of the eponymous Japanese group, after for 24 years. Penè will be succeeded by **Takehiro Shiraishi**, who will take charge of OLG's three divisions: the Jil Sander brand, led by **Alessandra Bettari**; the footwear division, headed by **Fabio Duci**; and the apparel division, piloted by **Carlo Taddei**.

Doug Howe is named Chief Merchandising Officer at Kohl's.

Fred's Inc. CEO **Michael Bloom** exited the company after failing to fulfill its expectations within two years. Upon Bloom's resignation, current CFO & Secretary **Joseph Anto** is named interim CEO. Bloom also left Fred's Inc.'s board of directors.

Skybound Entertainment hires Druid City Games creator **James Hudson** as Senior Director Tabletop Games.

Marni names **Stefano Biondo** as CEO, succeeding **Ubaldo Minelli**, who was appointed Group CEO last January. Biondo joins Italian fashion label after 15 years at Safilo, where he most recently held the position of Chief Brand Officer.

Olivier Schaeffer is appointed Global COO for the Yoox Net-a-Porter Group.

SaaS omnichannel marketing platform Splio appoints **Antoine Scialom** as its first General Manager for Europe.



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