

# TLL THE LICENSING LETTER

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

## What's the [Toy] Story? Same as Last Year, Just Better!

Straight from the floor of New York Toy Fair, *TLL* brings you the latest and greatest in toy trends. They just happen to be the same as last year's—only more nuanced, thoughtful, and developed. The good news this year: No one's freaking out about the ability of America's largest toy retailer to actually pay its vendors.

More good news: The hype over **STEM** and **robotics** is much less hysterical. In fact, all the trends are much less hyped up.

There are two factors behind this shift: (1) TRU's demise sent parents and their kids to smaller chains and/or **independent toy stores**; and (2) retail sales through **ecommerce** grew as part of overall shifting consumer habits.

Although most toy/game sales are still completed in-store (turns out, kids like being able to touch them), on the internet parents are more goal-oriented (looking for birthday or holiday presents rather than a treat), more likely to consider educational value (and read reviews), and less susceptible to impulse purchases (that \$5.99 or \$9.99 blind box doesn't look that great in a thumbnail—plus, your kid isn't crying hysterically next to you—you're doing this at work, right?).

Meanwhile, other dedicated toy stores have spent years differentiating themselves from TRU—only now are they stocking up on more faddish offerings to help compete with big-box chains like **Walmart** or **Target** and specialty stores like apparel (**Kohl's**), book (**Barnes & Noble**), and grocery (**Kroger**) retailers.

The negative side to this shift in toy/game consumption is that because kids and their parents are being more considerate in what they want to buy and planning much further in advance, it will be more difficult for new brands and products to find support without a sponsor to back them up. It used to be that TRU functioned as the brand incubator; today, that's social media (for the kids) and published toy lists (for the adults).

One interesting example of influencer-driven sales: A sales exec at **Far Out Toys** told us that “with Ryan[’s World, repped by **pocket.watch**] our product was a shoo-in; without it buyers wouldn't consider it.” Another part of the equation: digital content. Several respondents to *TLL's Annual Licensing Business Survey* noted that they were required to contribute some monies towards funding a YouTube short series or mobile game app—even for properties that had a TV series currently airing.

**Wicked Cool Toys** is an example of a company doing both: working with influencers and creating new content to sell under-appreciated product innovations. Fortnite streamers **Ninja**, **DrDisRespect**, and **Summit1G** signed on to produce Twitch-inspired toys where a figure in the line, for example, unlocks AR content (by scanning the toy) as well as digital assets in a free-to-play mobile game (by scanning a fun-shaped QR

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### SPORTS

## Tom Brady Leads Licensed NFL Player Sales in 2018-19

No matter what happens out in the field, the real MVP of the 2018-19 NFL season is—quite literally—Tom Brady, according to both the NFLPA's top 50 players list and NFLshop.com's list of top-selling jerseys.

Speaking of the Superbowl, the New England Patriots and the Los Angeles Rams contributed three players each to the NFLPA's list this year as they head off to big championship. See the top 25 below.

Retail sales of NFL licensed merchandise in the U.S./Canada jumped 3.2% in 2017 to reach an estimated \$3.64 billion. Not that bad, compared to 3.7% growth in 2016 and 3.4% in 2015—but

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# ➡ Licensing Ledger

Penske Media Corp. (PMC) purchases the last remaining 49% stake in **Rolling Stone** from BandLab Technologies, giving it full ownership over the magazine brand, including all event and licensing rights, as well as the parallel entity Rolling Stone Intl. Other PMC properties available for licensing include *Variety*, *Deadline Hollywood*, *WWD*, *Robb Report*, *IndieWire*, *Hollywood Life*, *Spy*, *Gold Derby*, and *TVLine*.

**Hearst's King Features Syndicate** is expanding its global licensing reach this year and actively looking for new IP.

The **Oneida Group** sells most of its tabletop foodservice division, which markets flatware, dinnerware, and barware, to **Crown Brands**. The company recently brought the Oneida retail flatware business back into the fold, ending a licensing arrangement with **Robinson Home Products** that existed since 2009.

The **Zippo Manufacturing Co.** acquires substantially all of the assets of **Northern Lights Enterprises**, a designer of luxury candles and artisan-made accessories sold across the U.S.

**Walmart** signs a deal with **Fanatics** to bring licensed sports apparel and merchandise to the chain's online platform. Fan Shop by Fanatics will sell hundreds of thousands of items featuring professional sports leagues such as the **NFL**, **NBA**, and **MLB**.

United Talent Agency (UTA) acquires influencer firm Digital Brand Architects (DBA), bringing DBA's roster of fashion, beauty, and lifestyle clients into its fold. Included in the deal are DBA's subsidiary Digital Brand Products, which makes and markets licensed products for DBA's clients, and Dear Media, DBA's female-forward podcast studio. DBA will continue to operate as an independent company under CEO Raina Penchansky, Partner & EVP Brand Partnerships Reesa Lake, and Partner & EVP Talent Management

Vanessa Flaherty who lead a team of more than 50 employees.

**Ithaca Holdings**, a media holding company led by SB Projects founder Scooter Braun who counts Justin Bieber, Ariana Grande, Zac Brown Band, Dan & Shay and Tori Kelly as clients, acquires Richard Stumpf's **Atlas Music Publishing**, home to songs by artists Ed Sheeran, Drake, Nicki Minaj, John Legend, and Van Halen, among others.

Former **Sears Holdings** Chairman Eddie Lampert emerges as the final owner of the embattled retailer. An affiliate of his hedge fund, ESL Investments, acquired for \$5.2 billion substantially all go-forward assets including 223 Sears and 202 Kmart stores along with the **Kenmore**, **DieHard**, and **Craftsman** brands and the Sears Home Services, Sears Auto Centers, and Innoval businesses. The new Sears has roughly \$400 million in excess funds that it will use to pay off liabilities, invest in small store formats, and foster new partnerships among other things. The company is looking for a CEO; in the meantime, the operation is being led by a management team that includes CFO Robert Riecker, Chief Digital Officer Leena Munjal, and President Softlines Greg Ladley.

**Viacom** strikes a deal to acquire free streaming TV service **Pluto TV** for \$340 million in cash. President & CEO Bob Bakish identified the "significant white space in the ad-supported streaming market" as a growth opportunity for the company. Pluto TV streams over 100 channels and has more than 12 million monthly active users.

Universal Music Group's **Bravado** acquires **Epic Rights**. Under the deal, the boutique merchandise and branding company will retain its executive team, including CEO & Founder Dell Furano, as they continue to find branding and merchandising opportunities for the artists they represent. Epic Rights' clients include: KISS, Billy Joel, Aerosmith, Def Leppard, AC/DC, Eric Clapton, Kevin Hart, 21 Savage, Madonna, and Celine Dion.

Esports retail and merchandise company **We Are Nations** acquires **Sector Six Apparel**, an esports apparel brand specializing in jerseys and custom team wear.

Shoppers no longer have the patience for unsatisfactory shopping experiences—one-third of shoppers admitted to being less loyal to retail brands compared to a year ago, per new research from retail operations platform provider **Brightpearl**. That share rises to 41% of U.S. millennials. What's more, 71% of all respondents in the U.S. and U.K. said that, if a shopping experience was poor, "they would never shop with the same online store again."

**Fred Rogers Productions** and **529 College Savings Plans** team up in an 18-month sponsorship that will include recognition spots during Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood and digital content to inform families about the tax advantages of 529 plans and the importance of saving as early as possible for children's higher education.

You're a licensing executive: Negotiate like one. *TLL* is currently updating the only industry-specific source of salary, bonus, and data. Reserve your *TLL* 2019 Compensation Report today and get last year's report for an additional \$47—email Jen at [jen@plainlanguagemedia.com](mailto:jen@plainlanguagemedia.com) or call 888-729-2315. The *2019 Report* will be available June in time for Licensing Expo Las Vegas.



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code). **Rovio's** Angry Birds is another example of a brand actively engaging in added-value, code-scanning toys with **Jazwares**. The technology itself has been around for years, but never become ubiquitous despite a false start with brands like Skylanders.

## The Biggest, Baddest Brands

Based on our observations, the best-selling licensed properties on the floor were, in no particular order: **Disney's** Mickey & Minnie Mouse and Star Wars (we almost forgot about Frozen, which is under lock-and-key until October), **Warner Bros.' Wizarding World/Harry Potter**, **Nickelodeon's** Paw Patrol, and **eOne's** Peppa Pig.

To a lesser extent, the list was topped off by **Epic Games' Fortnite**, **DreamWorks' How to Train Your Dragon**, **Nickelodeon's Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles** and **SpongeBob SquarePants**, **WWE**, and **Pokémon**.

**Ugly Doll (Hasbro and Sakar** are leading licensees), **Line Friends (Gund** is the first-ever licensee trusted with the brand), and **My Singing Monsters** (we loved **Play Monster's** singing collectibles) are new faces generating excitement.

And then there are the toy/game brands that aren't licensed in their core toy/game offerings but are supported by a broad licensing initiative: **MGAE's** LOL Surprise, **Spin Master's** Hatchimals, and **Hasbro's** Transformers are just three examples.

Brands to watch include video games like **Microsoft's** Minecraft as well as digital influencers on **YouTube**, **Twitch**, and other channels—which *heavily* influence pop culture trends.

Despite its relatively low volume in comparison to the perennial power brands, Fortnite's selling power can't be underestimated. Despite being released in the last weeks of the year, NPD named **Jazwares' Llama Drama Loot Piñata** the best-selling toy of 2018. The brand is breaking out in everything from tiny speakers (**Bitty Boomers**) to action figures (also Jazwares).

## Horns, Hooves & Hybrids

Take a moment to recall last year's feature headline for New York Toy Fair: Blind Bags, Glitter & Poop. This year, we can safely replace the last one with: Unicorns.

The **unicorn** motif dominated the show floor across practically every animal and creature—everything from the household **cat** and **dog** (and hamster), to the familiar **llama/alpaca** (sometimes we weren't sure what a given toy was), **panda**, and **flamingo**, to the more exotic **narwhal** (still here from three years ago) and **sloth** (last year), and finally the magical creature itself.

The western market doesn't seem to have much enthusiasm for the star of the Chinese Lunar New Year—the

pig—outside of the “**farm animal**” trend. Horses, cows, and pigs are having a heyday alongside barnyard playsets and tractor vehicles (which are perennial sellers, just like the dinosaur, but received a bigger stage this year). Boasting pigs, cows, and dung, Chickapig is along for the ride from **Buffalo Games**—co-invented by Dave Matthew, the “farm to table” board game will enjoy a separate plush and apparel line.

Interestingly, based on our visit just two weeks ago to the combined NSS, NY NOW, and Surtax shows in New York, home decor/housewares surface and fabric patterns are trending away from the farm and moving a bit further out into the woods to favor creatures like deer and raccoons. Apparently, the kids haven't caught on yet.

While cats are having a moment, dogs aren't to be left out. Pugs were the most prominently featured creature on the floor, but as a rep for **KD Group's** Rescue Runtz shared, the most popular breeds for its toy lines were the German shepherd and the husky (the company is also releasing a limited-edition unicorn for kids to adopt and heal).

Despite his tragic passing at the young age of twelve, **Boo — The World's Cutest Dog** will continue to grace a strong product line to help support his legacy with licensees like **Gund**, which made a donation in his name to the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital. And the world's most followed dog on social media, **JiffPom Cutelife**, just launched a collectible plush line with **Brandable**.

While we didn't *actually* witness a tremendous number of flamingos, we were assured that they're all the rage among tween girls.

In addition to the classic cute character design, we picked out some notable trend-setters:

- **Horror** is trending more generally. Specifically, that translates into brands like **Fiesty Pets** (the **Jazwares** collectibles *snap* at you).
- But characters can also be **punk**. A star is born with **Aggretsuko**, a corporate satire/musical comedy from Sanrio boasting a Netflix show. The red panda character is getting the star treatment with a soft collectibles line from **AQI Intl.** and hard collectibles from **The Loyal Subjects**.
- **Aurora World** debuts a sea punk-themed line of plush for **Tokidoki**.

## Classic Re-Issue

Retro isn't gone as a trend, but it's evolved into literally re-issuing old toys again:

- **The Wiggles** never left Australia, but it's been a while since the children's musical group came to tour the U.S. and Canada in person—this year, they're making up for that. As for the consumer products, “it all starts

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## What's the [Toy] Story? Same as Last Year, Just Better!, *Continued from page 3*

with a song”—the group has partnered on everything from diapers to professional ballet troupes.

- **Hasbro** is bringing back the original **Kenner** Star Wars dolls (the ones we've read about in the history books!). Not to be outdone, **Marvel** fans are going to see the Uncanny X-Men figures from **Toybiz** again. (Hasbro bought both toycos over the years.)
- **Bandai America** is re-issuing the original handheld **Gudetama** and **Tamagotchi** egg-shaped pet-raiser units as well as the original **Digimon** device.
- From **California Creations** comes the biggest action toy of the '70s from **Ideal Toys**, the **Evel Knievel** Stunt Cycle.
- **Super Impulse** is expanding its collectibles line of mini-sized figures and normal-sized pens to span the history of **Mattel** Barbie figures over the decades.
- Remember the cat in the sack toy? **Leading Edge** has a version with a cat in a paper bag.
- **Spin Master** is re-launching '90s skate toy **Tech Deck** with licensed images of actual '90s skating brands.
- Also from **Spin Master**, Bakugan is getting play again with slightly-updated technology based on classic play patterns.
- We predict a shortage of canisters of **Silly String** this year, thanks to everyone from **Alpha Group** (in a SpongeBob blaster complete with telescoping lens) to **Hasbro** (specifically, we were impressed by a Spider-Man blaster that shot out perfect circles) using the material.

### Compounding Interest

Slime, putty and other assorted goopy compounds remain popular throughout 2019. This year, they're not just gross: They're glittery, shiny/matte (take your pick), deliciously/disgustingly scented (again), and even easy to clean up (or not).

That's not to say that gross slime isn't still in fashion. Multiple “mad scientists” put their mark on slime, such as Crazy Aaron or Steve Spangler Science. Other slime companies included Zuru, Relevant Play, and Kangaroo. There were more companies than we care to list that offered unicorn slime. Somewhat uniquely, FCTRY is pushing its somewhat useful unicorn snot (a 40 SPF, glittery sunscreen).

- **Cra-Z-Art** is taking the art to the extreme with its newest lines of **Nickelodeon** Slime Treats (that look and smell like real ice cream, among other things).
- **Alpha Toys** brings Nick's classic slime to blind boxes with collectible SpongeBob-shaped figures that ooze with green goop, at under 10 bucks a pop. Its collector's figures are more sophisticated, with black-and-white, horror B-movie, and internet meme-themed offerings.
- **Brandable** carries two influencer-branded lines of

slime products—Guava Toys, with the mad scientist of YouTube, **Guava Juice** (buckets of activity slime), and Craft City, with **Karina Garcia**, who spearheaded the DIY slime movement (scented—the peanut butter is incredible—, glittery, and customizable goop).

- Barbie is the latest influencer to get into the slime game; **Mattel** debuts a new doll which double-dips into the mermaid theme with a tail and related aquatic accessories.

A note on the **glitter**: It's everywhere. You can't wash it out. Patterned sparkles, reversible sequins, and metallic prints adorn every surface scientifically possible. (And it's not *just* a girl thing.)

Lastly, in compound-related news: Slow-rise foam remains a hit this year, and the material ties in to literally every other trend you can find.

### Play with Your Food

Move over, Tide Pods. The kids are ready to get confused by products that look and smell a little closer to the real deal.

- While many toycos featured variants of tiny food collectible lines, **Smart Lab** gives kids the tools to make their own (real) food with its Tiny Baking! cooking kit. Other tiny STEM offerings from the company include a robotics kit.
- Another edible offering from **Sticky Lickits** features **Nickelodeon**'s SpongeBob and Paw Patrol on stickers you can eat (add to healthy fruits and veggies, they're tasteless).
- Other ways to play with your food? **Hasbro**'s Transformers-based Botbots line stars tiny fast food- and restaurant-inspired collectibles that can transform into, you guessed it, robots. (The Botbots line includes more characters from stores you would find in a mall.)
- It's not just hardlines. The **Beverly Hills Bear Co.** is snacking not only on super-soft, super-slow rise, and super-small plush, but also soft scented food items packed sweetly into a picnic basket.

### Hug Me Softly

Also known as “mochi” plush for their soft, squishy texture, these plush can be big or small but are usually just the right size to hug.

- **Maxx Marketing**'s consumer brand **YuMe** is using its worldwide **Warner Bros.** softlines license to bring horror properties to life with huggable villains in particular a big hit. As in, “while you're re-watching *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, you can hug your Freddy Kruger plush” (“The guy who's killing everyone on screen?”). YuMe has a similar collector's line for Batman.

- Related to the horror theme, **Golden Bell Studios** is doing quite well with a smoke monster plush from the TV show **LOST**.
- AQI Intl. has not only the original moshi plush imported from Japan for **Sanrio** characters like Rilakummma and Sumiikko Gurashi, but is also working on its own.
- All the plush at **Gund** is soft, but the company is going all out for an expanded **Pusheen** line that includes bigger and squishier plush.

## Going Corporate

Lest *TLL* neglects to honor those corporate trademarks/brands with influence in the toys and games space, here are some of the top highlights among those branded offerings we spotted on the floor:

- The **Smithsonian** expands its a widening line of STEM toys aimed at older kids from **Sakar**. The line includes a Mars rover RC as well as figures directly from the museum.
- Speaking of space, **NASA** is another pop culture icon for the older kids—its Mars rover Opportunity

begins its 16th year on the Red Planet in 2019. **The Coop** featured stylish accessories for the brand.

- Also from **Sakar**, **Polaroid** boasts an innovative optics line.
- **National Geographic** continues to impress with a partnership with **Mattel's** Barbie (her choice of careers keeps growing).
- **John Deere's** line of licensed tractor toys and RC vehicles had a boosted presence at **Tomy**; that is, more floor space than usual.
- **Crayola** continues to impress with unique licensed offerings, including decomposable planters in a distinctive crayon shape as well as branded gift wrap that grows from **EnRoot/Fibre Dust**. We also saw crafting and activity kits from **Fashion Angels**.
- **Cryptozonic** was showing off a **Pantone**-branded matching card game that paired well with **Adult Swim's** Rick & Morty (although any pop culture characters would work).

## DOMESTICS & STATIONERY

# Living Coral: 2019 NSS, NY Now & Surtex Edition

CORAL, as in: Conscientious, Organized, Retro, and Animated Living. From the floor of the 2019 National Stationery Show (NSS), Retail Renaissance NY Now, and Surtex, *TLL* brings you the latest in home, stationery, and surface design trends.

This year, all three shows were held simultaneously in New York City's Jacob Javits Center. And despite a date move (about a month earlier than usual), exhibitors reported healthy crowds.

## Living Conscientiously

To start, as a general trend covering all consumer goods—shoppers aren't just looking at product quality and cost, but also are considering whether a product is manufactured in an environmentally conscious and/or socially responsible manner. In the past, it was enough for a product to be cause-driven (e.g., donate a certain percentage of profits to charity).

Today, an increasingly-connected consumer is demanding greater supply chain transparency. It's not enough that a nail polish (*TLL* counted three separate water-based, ethically-sourced nail polish brands on the

floor), for example, is made out of all-natural ingredients—are those ingredients not procured through slave or child labor? Sustainable? Non-toxic? What about the packaging—is that recycled, too?

## Living Organized

Despite this trend towards sustainability, that doesn't mean paper products like greeting cards, calendars, and stationery are out entirely. (Just that manufacturing is getting better about it.)

There are roughly two groups of consumers pushing paper—the core or traditional base of Boomers aged 55-plus, and Millennials in their 20s and 30s who are, as first-time exhibitor MAILennia self-defines, “a person who was raised in the digital era, but has a shameless love for paper products.” (*Ed. note:* Don't use your trademark as a noun. Or a verb. Use it as an adjective. If you want it to stay as a mark, anyway.)

This new, younger base is seeking out brand new formats for the journal and personal planner to help organize its goals and optimize its time (versus the traditional annual, which still sells well among the soccer mom crowd). A

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Living Coral: 2019 NSS, NY Now & Surtex Edition, *Continued from page 5*

defining key point of these products is that they require some time-intensive personalization: The author typically spends a good amount of time contemplating, drawing, and lettering.

For licensees like **The LANG Companies**, one way to capture the younger base is by working with up-and-coming artists from social media, who come with a built-in fan base and actively help to promote their lines.

On the other hand, **Kineticards** is infusing tech elements into the traditional greeting card, without losing the paper touch, by adding augmented reality (AR) elements.

In home decor, small appliances, and accessories, this trend takes its form in products that are multi-functional, compact, and—rather than being easily storable—look good out on display (who has the time or space to store things, anyway?).

### Living Retro

Far from being on the outs, retro subjects and themes remain firmly in demand. Everything from classic prints to furniture designs is getting traction. We cover some erstwhile personalities Americans seem to be eager to take their cue from [here](#).

Classic workmanship is also an aspect of this trend, with handmade (or as close enough as you can get it) becoming increasingly popular. In keeping with this trend, asymmetrical or otherwise slightly imperfect designs were preferred. In surface design, woodland and nature themes have replaced the classic farmhouse. But don't worry—it's still retro.

In kitchen and dining, stainless steel and plastic are

out in favor of materials with an Old World flavor but a modern twist: ceramics, wood, and cast iron. Think analogue design, but upgraded to electric instead of being hand-powered. Despite the trend towards bright colors described below, the trend in home furnishings and decor was towards more muted tones such as burnished and matte metallics like bronze or steel, rich creams, faded greys, and soft primary tones.

While handkerchiefs aren't going to be making a comeback (beyond the bachelorette party crowd, per one exhibitor with a bold selection), **Fydelity** is serving up fanny packs in dozens of colors and prints as well as cassette tape-inspired wallets.

### Living Animated

When it comes to color schemes, everyone's taking their cue from **Pantone's** color of the year, Living Coral—a bright, upbeat tone that shows up everywhere from makeup to notebooks to cutlery. In home, the color is used as an accent in a muted, sophisticated setting to show some personality. Note that the only officially licensed product we saw on the show floor was from the delightful **Brown Trout Publishers**.

The pink-orange tone isn't the only one being used—any variant on the color spectrum will do. Vivid surface designs that use bold colors are popular in printed textiles and paper goods.

But the biggest entry in our animated living trend is metallics—gold, and to a lesser extent silver and bronze, is playing a role not only as an accent, but as the main attraction in everything from purses to pillows.

## ESTATES

# Ruth, Ross & Rogers: America's Top Personalities

Americans can't seem to get enough of the three R's—Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG), The *Joy of Painting's* Bob Ross, and the host of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, Fred Rogers. They're calm, they're kind, and they're what we need right now.

First things first, let's not take this out of proportion. Altogether, RBG, Bob Ross, and Mister Rogers are responsible for roughly under \$100 million in retail sales of merchandise a year, both officially licensed and otherwise. Meanwhile, retail sales of licensed goods based on estate properties grew 1.6% in 2017 to reach \$2.33 billion, according to *The Licensing Letter*.

The biggest driver behind the growth of the three R's is young 20- and 30-somethings, who are "rediscovering" the classic, collected composure of another generation of public figures. To an extent, the Boomers who grew up

with Bob Ross and Fred Rogers are helping drive sales, but they are primarily contributing to driving awareness of their legacies.

Incidentally, all three regularly feature(d) on public access television: Bob Ross and Fred Rogers have enjoyed record-setting runs on PBS (as well as Twitch marathons), and RBG shows up on C-SPAN in her capacity as a government figure. Perhaps this is a sign that "The Most Patient Man on Television," Steve Scully, will be the next big breakout celebrity.

**"We don't make mistakes, just happy little accidents."**

The **Bob Ross** estate owns and manages his intellectual property and directly handles merchandising of branded oil paint and related painting supplies as well as a certified

painting instructor program. (Ross never made money directly from his PBS show; instead, he made a living giving lessons and vending the aforementioned supplies.) For other merchandise, the brand is represented by **Firefly Brand Management**.

The Bob Ross program currently counts 50 licensees. Most reported brisk sales in the last fiscal quarter of 2018, following a strong year boosted by cross-collaborations with *Deadpool 2* (starring fan Ryan Reynolds). Of the three celebrities featured in this story, *TLL* expects the Bob Ross to have the least dramatic jump in licensed retail sales in 2018—of course, its starting point is also higher.

### “You’ve made this day a special day, by just your being you.”

**Fred Rogers Productions** handles the legacy of **Mister Rogers**, including the development of new properties like Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood for the newest generation. **Brand Central** represents the brand in a separate, adult-oriented program counting 30 licensees, with four recently signed (stay tuned for a separate announcement in *TLL’s Deal Sheet*). Last year marked the 50th anniversary of his PBS show *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* and saw a Netflix documentary that boosted listed sales in 2018.

This year, Mister Rogers is getting a Hollywood treatment from America’s dad, Tom Hanks, who portrays him in *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, to be released in theaters in November. Note that the production company wasn’t granted any merchandising rights (only promotional), but that current and new licensees (including for publishing) are planning on releasing new lines based on classic assets and timed to the release.

### “So that’s the dissenter’s hope: that they are writing not for today but for tomorrow.”

On the other hand, **Justice Ginsburg** has no official licensing program but has decided not to enforce her right of publicity—that is, she is happy to allow merchandise bearing her likeness or name to be sold without any restrictions.

RBG-themed merchandise is out-selling similar politically-themed goods featuring Donald Trump and other public figures. *TLL* estimates that such RBG-themed goods generated approximately \$20-50 million in retail sales in the U.S. in 2018. But she is also incredibly polarizing—a Washington DC-based artist noted that her RBG-themed greeting card, pin, and sticker collection sells well in more politically-charged cities like DC and Portland, but doesn’t have immediate traction elsewhere.

One company’s experience merchandising RBG-themed goods was described to us by Jethro Heiko, Co-founder & CEO of **Common Practice**. Of the company’s pins featuring RBG’s Banana Republic bib necklace, affectionately known as her “dissent collar”: “Justice Ginsburg received one of the first Dissent Collar pins we made, and she sent us a lovely note in return.” The company donates 50%

of profits; Heiko adds, “while we would love to have an official arrangement with Justice Ginsburg, as a justice on the Supreme Court, she is not allowed to endorse any product that raises money for charitable organizations. We do our best to choose the organizations that we support in the spirit of RBG’s life-long commitment to equality and justice.”

As for the original bib: **Banana Republic** reissued the necklace at the beginning of this year (it was discontinued sometime after 2012 and this is the second time it’s been reissued), and is donating 50% of the proceeds to the ACLU Women’s Rights Project. Note that since the U.S. doesn’t recognize broad intellectual property rights in fashion designs, the garment itself is not protectable.

### “You’re fired.”

Incidentally, *TLL* estimates that the three Trump brands—the **Donald J. Trump** Signature Collection, Trump Home, and Trump Select—cleared around \$5-10 million in licensed retail sales in the U.S./Canada in 2016. Today, that figure is less than \$5 million.

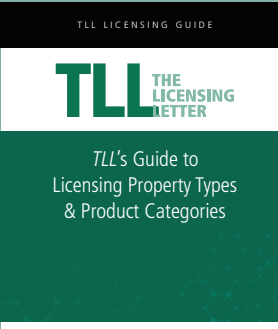
In its heyday (that is, before Trump-branded goods were pulled from the shelves of biggies like Macy’s), the brand made a bit more—anywhere from \$10-20 million in licensed retail sales. The **Ivanka Trump** brand did quite a bit better.

### “I paint my own reality.”

To be clear, RBG is far from the only woman for whom merchandise is demanded. On top of a broader, generic demand for science and engineering-themed merchandise is layered a growing awareness of the role of previously overlooked women and a need to celebrate them.

An incomplete list of the women whom we have witnessed grazing merchandise such as stationery, pins, decals, and stickers (not books): Jane Austen, Susan B. Anthony, Marie Curie, Alice Ball, Grace Hopper—and, of course, artist and activist **Frida Kahlo**. Interestingly, while Frida imagery abounds on art and stationery, other broader categories of merchandise are slow to follow (but we’re keeping an eye out!).

TLL’s Guide to Licensing Property Types & Product Categories



TLL LICENSING GUIDE

TLL

THE LICENSING LETTER

TLL’s Guide to Licensing Property Types & Product Categories

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Established in 1977, these are the classifications that most of the licensing industry uses when doing business.

Tom Brady Leads Licensed NFL Player Sales in 2018-19 *Continued from page 1*

considerably lower than the 5.2% rate observed in 2014. Note that sales of products based on licensed player properties (under the purview of the NFLPA) account for roughly one-third of total NFL-based sales as calculated by *TLL*.

The NFL also tracks the best-selling NFL jerseys, by player, through NFLshop.com. Approximately half of the retail sales of licensed NFL merchandise can be attributed to jerseys (which ring up at \$99.99 apiece).

For the second year ever, Tom Brady tops the list of NFL players with the most licensed retail sales (the last time was in the 2015-16 season). This year marks Brady's 14th appearance among the top three (counting quarterly reports); the quarterback has never ranked outside the top nine.

Such staying power is unique—roughly 113 players have appeared on the annual list over the years. The largest share (35%) of players showed up just once, 19% twice, 16% three times, 12% five times, and 10% four times.

Just eight players (or 7%) have landed on the top 50 list every year since the NFLPA first began tracking such data for the 2013-14 season:

- Tom Brady (No. 1 for the 2018-19 season, QB, New England Patriots),
- Aaron Rodgers (No. 5, QB, Green Bay Packers),
- Russell Wilson (No. 11, QB, Seattle Seahawks),
- Rob Gronkowski (No. 15, TE, New England Patriots),
- Drew Brees (No. 16, QB, New Orleans Saints),
- J.J. Watt (No. 22, DE, Houston Texans),
- Cam Newton (No. 37, QB, Carolina Panthers), and
- Ben Roethlisberger (No. 43, QB, Pittsburgh Steelers).

The top-5 club is similarly small, with 11 players dominating the last six seasons. Tom Brady appears in the upper echelons of the annual ranking 5 times, followed by Aaron Rodgers and Russell Wilson with 4 appearances each.

The fastest-growing player this year was Patrick Mahomes (QB, Kansas City Chiefs) who made a historic climb to No. 7 from No. 42 on the Q2 2018-19 list, a jump of 35 spots. This marks the first time he has appeared in the top 10.

Five rookies appeared in the top 50 this season, led by:

- Saquon Barkley (No. 3, RB, New York Giants),
- Baker Mayfield (No. 26, QB, Cleveland Browns),
- Sam Darnold (No. 40, QB, New York Jets),
- Josh Allen (No. 46, QB, Buffalo Bills), and
- Leighton Vander Esch (No. 47, LB, Dallas Cowboys).

Among the sales highlights provided by the NFLPA for the 2018-19 season:

- Female fans helped propel young stars Mayfield and Patrick Mahomes to the top ranks; the two players led sales of all women's apparel from **G-III Apparel Group**.
- Brady, Carson Wentz (QB, Philadelphia Eagles), Barkley, Odell Beckham, Jr. (WR, New York Giants), and Aaron Rodgers (QB, Green Bay Packers) ranked as the top five in youth apparel from **Outerstuff**. Mack ranked No. 9, the highest of any defensive player.
- Penn State fans again powered the former-Nittany Lion star Barkley to the top of collegiate co-branded wall decal sales by **Fathead**.
- Among sales of collegiate co-branded jerseys from **Under Armour**, Mahomes' Texas Tech jersey led all players.
- Brady, Mahomes, Dak Prescott (QB, Dallas Cowboys), and Adam Thielen (WR, Minnesota Vikings) sold the most big head cutouts from **Build-A-Head**.
- Three quarterbacks ranked among the top 10 in headwear from **New Era**—and among them, Prescott sold twice as much as Brady and Brees.
- Mahomes unseated Russell Wilson (QB, Seattle Seahawks) as the best-seller of licensed novelty products from **Wincraft**.
- Brady and Rodgers sold the most player jigsaw puzzles by **MasterPieces**.
- Beckham, Jr. led sales of cake toppers from **DecoPac** for a second straight quarter, followed by Brady and Antonio Brown (WR, Pittsburgh Steelers).
- Matt Ryan (QB, Atlanta Falcons) was the leader of player ornament sales this holiday season by **Hallmark**.

### Top 10 NFL Players, by Retail Sales of Licensed Jerseys, 2018

Rank	Player	Position	Team
1	Tom Brady	QB	New England Patriots
2	Khalil Mack	LB	Chicago Bears
3	Patrick Mahomes	QB	Kansas City Chiefs
4	Ezekiel Elliott	RB	Dallas Cowboys
5	Saquon Barkley	RB	New York Giants
6	Drew Brees	QB	New Orleans Saints
7	Baker Mayfield	QB	Cleveland Browns
8	Carson Wentz	QB	Philadelphia Eagles
9	Dak Prescott	QB	Dallas Cowboys
10	JuJu Smith-Schuster	WR	Pittsburgh Steelers

Source: NFLShop.com, The Licensing Letter



### Top NFL Players, by Licensed Retail Sales For 2013-14 through 2018-19 NFL Seasons

Rank	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
1	Russell Wilson	Russell Wilson	Tom Brady	Ezekiel Elliott	Dak Prescott	Tom Brady
2	Peyton Manning	Peyton Manning	Peyton Manning	Dak Prescott	Ezekiel Elliott	Dak Prescott
3	Colin Kaepernick	Tom Brady	Russell Wilson	Tom Brady	Tom Brady	Saquon Barkley
4	Robert Griffin III	Colin Kaepernick	Aaron Rodgers	Dez Bryant	Russell Wilson	Ezekiel Elliott
5	Aaron Rodgers	Aaron Rodgers	Dez Bryant	Odell Beckham Jr.	Odell Beckham Jr.	Aaron Rodgers

Source: NFLPA, The Licensing Letter

### Top 25 NFL Players, by Retail Sales of Licensed Products YTD 2018-19 Season (Mar. 1, 2018-Nov. 30, 2018)

Rank	Player	Position	Team
1	Tom Brady	QB	New England Patriots
2	Dak Prescott	QB	Dallas Cowboys
3	Saquon Barkley	RB	New York Giants
4	Ezekiel Elliott	RB	Dallas Cowboys
5	Aaron Rodgers	QB	Green Bay Packers
6	Carson Wentz	QB	Philadelphia Eagles
7	Patrick Mahomes	QB	Kansas City Chiefs
8	Antonio Brown	WR	Pittsburgh Steelers
9	Deshaun Watson	QB	Houston Texans
10	Khalil Mack	LB	Chicago Bears
11	Russell Wilson	QB	Seattle Seahawks
12	Odell Beckham Jr.	WR	New York Giants
13	Adam Thielen	WR	Minnesota Vikings
14	Mitchell Trubisky	QB	Chicago Bears

Note: As reported by over 70 NFLPA licensees such as Nike, Fanatics, Outerstuff, Fathead, McFarlane Toys, FOCO, Wincraft, and Funko. Licensed product categories include men's, women's, and youth game jerseys and t-shirts; player murals; collectible figures; matted and framed photos; bobbleheads; drinkware; calendars puzzles; and holiday ornaments.

Source: NFLPA, The Licensing Letter

### Top 25 NFL Players, by Retail Sales of Licensed Products YTD 2018-19 Season (Mar. 1, 2018-Nov. 30, 2018)

Rank	Player	Position	Team
15	Rob Gronkowski	TE	New England Patriots
16	Drew Brees	QB	New Orleans Saints
17	Jimmy Garoppolo	QB	San Francisco 49ers
18	Zach Ertz	TE	Philadelphia Eagles

Note: As reported by over 70 NFLPA licensees such as Nike, Fanatics, Outerstuff, Fathead, McFarlane Toys, FOCO, Wincraft, and Funko. Licensed product categories include men's, women's, and youth game jerseys and t-shirts; player murals; collectible figures; matted and framed photos; bobbleheads; drinkware; calendars puzzles; and holiday ornaments.

Source: NFLPA, The Licensing Letter

Here's a key to every position referenced in this story. As a quick rule of thumb, the offensive players usually stand out the most, and therefore generate more sales.

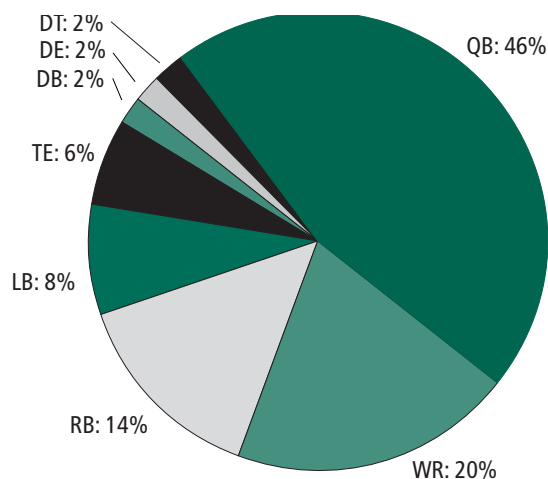
#### Offensive

- Quarterback (QB)
- Running back (RB)
- Tight end (TE)
- Wide receiver (WR)

#### Defensive

- Cornerback (CB)
- Defensive back (DB)
- Defensive end (DE)
- Defensive tackle (DT)
- Linebacker (LB)
- Strong safety (SS)

### Positions of Best-selling 50 NFL Players, 2018-19 Season

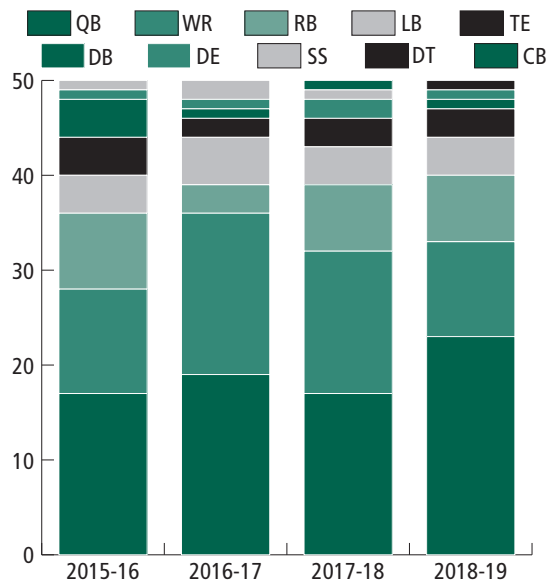


SOURCE: NFLPA, THE LICENSING LETTER

Continued on page 10

Tom Brady Leads Licensed NFL Player Sales in 2018-19 *Continued from page 9*

Best-selling 50 NFL Players, by Position, 2015-16 Through 2018-19 Seasons



SOURCE: NFLPA, THE LICENSING LETTER

**Top 25 NFL Players, by Retail Sales of Licensed Products**

YTD 2018-19 Season (Mar. 1, 2018-Nov. 30, 2018)

Rank	Player	Position	Team
19	Alvin Kamara	RB	New Orleans Saints
20	Von Miller	LB	Denver Broncos
21	Kirk Cousins	QB	Minnesota Vikings
22	J.J. Watt	DE	Houston Texans
23	Todd Gurley	QB	Los Angeles Rams
24	Julio Jones	WR	Atlanta Falcons
25	Christian McCaffrey	RB	Carolina Panthers

Note: As reported by over 70 NFLPA licensees such as Nike, Fanatics, Outerstuff, Fathead, McFarlane Toys, FOCO, WinCraft, and Funko. Licensed product categories include men's, women's, and youth game jerseys and t-shirts; player murals; collectible figures; matted and framed photos; bobbleheads; drinkware; calendars puzzles; and holiday ornaments.

Source: NFLPA, The Licensing Letter

**What's Your Position? Offensive Players Lead**

When it comes to generating licensed retail sales, quarterbacks dominate the playing field.

Quarterbacks dominated this year's NFLPA top 50 players list, taking nearly half of the top 50 slots with 46% share in the 2018-19 season—with six of the top 10 players occupying that position. They were followed by wide receivers (20%), of whom Antonio Brown from the Pittsburgh Steelers was the highest ranked (No. 8). Running backs (14%) were led by Barkley (No. 3). Rounding out the list was the defensive side, with linebackers (8%) led

by top-10 contender Khalil Mack (Chicago Bears). Aaron Donald (No. 49, Los Angeles Rams) is the first DT to make the list—ever.

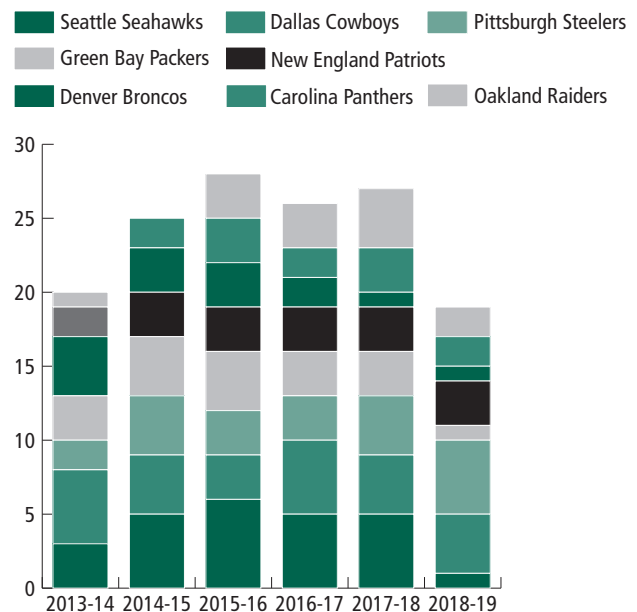
And this year wasn't an exception. For all the years the NFLPA has been tracking such data, the quarterback has been leading the pack.

**Seahawks, Cowboys Home to Best-sellers**

The Seattle Seahawks and Dallas Cowboys were the most popular teams to show up on the NFLPA's top 50 players list from the 2013-14 through to the 2018-19 NFL seasons. Here's the top 10 list:

1. Seattle Seahawks: 25
1. Dallas Cowboys: 25
2. Pittsburgh Steelers: 21
3. Green Bay Packers: 18
4. New England Patriots: 15
5. Denver Broncos: 14
5. Carolina Panthers: 14
6. Oakland Raiders: 13
6. New York Giants: 13
7. San Francisco 49ers: 12
7. Houston Texans: 12
8. Minnesota Vikings: 11

Best-selling 50 NFL Players, by Team, 2013-14 Through 2018-19 Seasons



SOURCE: NFLPA, THE LICENSING LETTER

LICENSING LAW

## Using Celebrity Likenesses: Without Permission?!

Consider, for a moment, the following situations:

- EA Sports uses likenesses of well-known college athletes as characters for its video games
- Samsung uses images and bios of legendary Olympians for its “Genome Project” app
- Pitbull mentions Lindsay Lohan in a song lyric
- Abercrombie and Fitch uses a famous surfer’s photo in its sales catalog

In the U.S., can a company use other’s intellectual property in these ways without being under a licensing agreement? The answer: “Yes, sometimes.” While it might seem an anathema for any sensible licensing professional to use a celebrity’s name or likeness in their company’s products or advertising without securing a licensing agreement, there are certain situations where doing so may be unavoidable.

Note that many retailers will require manufacturers or resellers to submit authentication letters or some other proof that their goods are officially licensed in addition to an indemnification that the retailer will not be held liable for any related issues. So even if you’re legally in the clear, you might still not be able to stock the shelves at Amazon or Walmart.

### What the Law Says: Right of Publicity versus Free Speech

The principal legal issue raised by unauthorized use of a celebrity for commercial purposes involves not federal but state law, specifically, the so-called “right of publicity.” In 38 states, individuals have not just privacy but property rights in the use of their name, likeness, voice and other personal traits for commercial purposes. (See page 13 to look up the laws of your state). Unlicensed use may violate the right of publicity and subject your company to lawsuits and damages.

But companies have rights, too, including the right to free speech under the First Amendment. In some situations, a company’s First Amendment rights outweigh a celebrity’s right of publicity. *Result:* They don’t need a license to use the celebrity. Unfortunately, these situations are extraordinarily specific. The important thing is to make sure you understand where the lines are drawn.

### How to Protect Yourself

Although the rules vary state-by-state, there are five (technically, six) situations where a company can use a celebrity without a license.

#### Situation 0: The Use is Allowed

The rarest of situations—where you won’t be able to obtain a licensing agreement but your use will nevertheless remain legally unchallenged. In this case, the celebrity has effectively donated their name and likeness to the public.

Note that the estate (after the celebrity has passed), may nevertheless elect to try to enforce these rights. (“Try” is the operative word.) In one of the only examples TLL is aware of:

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has no official licensing program but has decided not to enforce her right of publicity—that is, she is happy to allow merchandise bearing her likeness or name to be sold without any restrictions.

#### Situation 1: The Use Is Noncommercial

Unlicensed use of a celebrity is much easier to justify when you can show you didn’t do it to make money. *Caveat:* Noncommercial use won’t work if you’re using a celebrity as a way to enhance or advertise your product; you need to show that the use serves some kind of public interest, e.g., news reporting, or artistic expression. It’s up to courts to make this judgment on a case-by-case basis. Examples:

OKAY	NOT OKAY
Samsung’s use of Olympic athletes’ images and bios for “Genome Project” app enabling users to compare their Facebook profiles to the athletes that wasn’t designed to promote any Samsung products [ <i>Spitz v. Samsung Elecs. Am., Inc. (2013)</i> ].	Cell phone company’s press release comparing its emergency preparedness program to famous test pilot Chuck Yeager’s breaking the sound barrier was commercial because announcing the plan promoted an enhancement of its wireless service [ <i>Yeager v. Cingular Wireless, LLC (2009)</i> ].

#### Situation 2: Commercial Use Is “Incidental”

Commercial use of a celebrity may still be protected by the First Amendment if you can show that it was incidental and provided the company only marginal commercial advantage. What exactly is and isn’t “incidental use”? Although this is something courts have to decide on a case-by-case basis, consider a pair of recent cases that illustrates the factors a court may consider:

*Continued on page 12*

Using Celebrity Likenesses: Without Permission?! *Continued from page 11*

COMPANY WINS	COMPANY LOSES
<p><i>What Happened:</i> The rapper Pitbull includes the following lyric in his hit song “Give Me Everything Tonight”: “So, I’m tiptoein’, to keep flowin’/I got it locked up like Lindsay Lohan.” Ms. Lohan claims that she didn’t authorize the use of her name and sues Pitbull, the record label and its parent company for violating the NY state version of her right of publicity.</p> <p><i>Ruling:</i> The U.S. District Court dismisses the case without a trial [<i>Lohan v. Perez (2013)</i>].</p> <p><i>Explanation:</i> Use of Lohan’s name didn’t violate her right of publicity because it was incidental and fleeting, the court explained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The song mentions the name just once in 104 lines;</li> <li>■ The name doesn’t appear in the title or refrain; and</li> <li>■ The use of the name “is entirely incidental” to the song’s theme.</li> </ul>	<p><i>What Happened:</i> EA Sports introduces a new feature to the 2010 version of its popular “Madden NFL” video game: the option to play “classic” NFL teams from different eras using former players as characters. A group of former players used in the game sues EA for violating their right of publicity. EA claims it doesn’t need a license because the use was “incidental” and asks the court to throw out the case.</p> <p><i>Ruling:</i> The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit says the use wasn’t incidental [<i>Davis v. Electronic Arts Inc. (2015)</i>].</p> <p><i>Explanation:</i> The case was essentially a repeat of 2013 cases finding EA’s unlicensed use of college athletes for video games a right of publicity violation. The only difference is that this time EA’s argued incidental use. But the court didn’t buy it. Unlike Pitbull’s isolated mention of Lohan, EA’s use of the players’ likeness for its game provided the company significant commercial advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Realism is at the heart of the game’s popularity;</li> <li>■ Use of players’ likenesses is essential to creating that realism; and</li> <li>■ The use of the retired players for “classic” matchups was a prominent part of EA’s advertising.</li> </ul>

**Situation 3: Use Is Related to News or Public Events**

Unlicensed use of a celebrity is also allowed in connection with a commercial venture if the primary purpose is to report on matters of public interest and promote the public’s right to know rather than just to make money. As ever, courts have to make this judgment on a case-by-case basis. Examples:

OKAY	NOT OKAY
Local newspaper’s sale of poster reproductions of front page featuring QB Joe Montana paintings after 1990 Super Bowl because posters report “newsworthy events” [ <i>Montana v. San Jose Mercury News, Inc. (1995)</i> ].	Store’s use of illustration of famous surfer in its catalog is merely “window-dressing to advance the catalog’s surf theme and did not contribute significantly to a matter of public interest” [ <i>Downing v. Abercrombie &amp; Fitch (2001)</i> ].

**Situation 4: Use Is Transformative**

The use of a person’s identity without a license is allowed where the likeness is so transformed that it becomes an

original expression rather than just a reproduction of the celebrity’s likeness. Although better suited for works of art, “transformative use” can also work in commercial settings.

OKAY	NOT OKAY
Use of distortion, context, etc., transforms Andy Warhol silkscreens of Marilyn Monroe from mere reproductions into original form of social commentary.	Silkscreen prints of charcoal 3 Stooges drawings for tee-shirts and other retail items are straight commercial reproductions, not original works [ <i>Comedy III Productions v. Saderup (2001)</i> ].

**Situation 5: Use Is for Parody**

A close cousin of the “transformative use” defense is to show that the primary purpose of the celebrity’s use was for parody, lampoon, or caricature—rather than commerce. Politically-themed bobble heads and other knick-knacks typically fall under this exception. Also consider this example:

First Amendment protects comic book publisher’s right to caricature musicians Johnny and Edgar Winter as “villainous half-worm, half-human” characters where drawings aren’t just “conventional depictions” but original expressions designed to lampoon [*Winter v. DC Comics (2002)*].

**Conclusion**

Using a celebrity’s name, likeness, voice, etc., without a licensing agreement or other form of consent probably won’t violate the person’s right of publicity if:

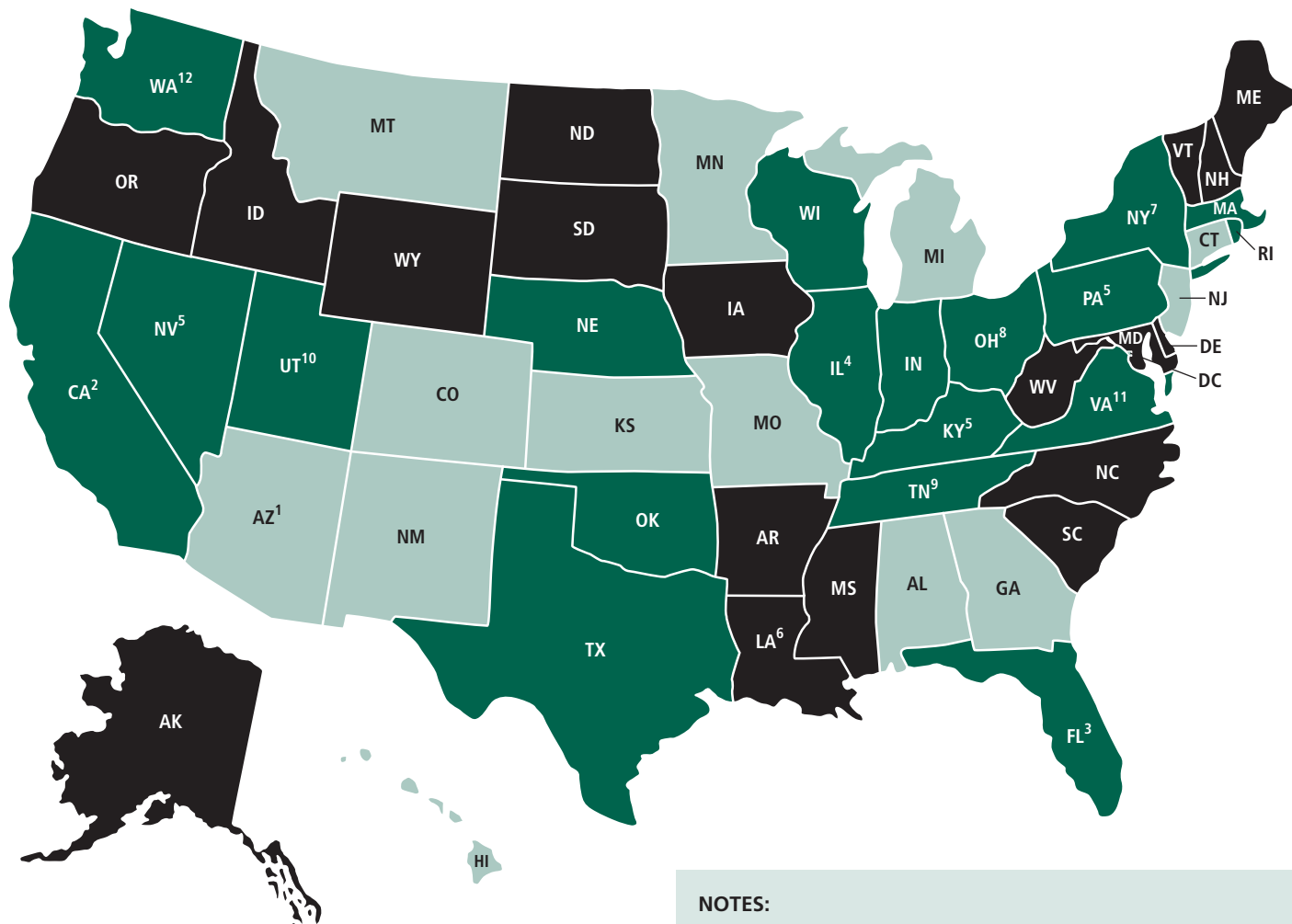
- a. You confine the use to one or more of the 18 states where individuals don’t have a right of publicity—AK, AR, DE, ID, IA, LA, ME, MD, MS, NH, NC, ND, OR, SC, SD, VT, WV or WY; or
- b. If your use is in a right of publicity state but you can show that it’s protected free speech by proving:
  1. The use was noncommercial; or
  2. The use was commercial but:
    - i. The commercial benefits were incidental or fleeting;
    - ii. The use was primarily to report news or partake in public events;
    - iii. The use was transformative; or
    - iv. The use was primarily for purposes of parody or caricature.

You should, of course, consult with counsel first. Even if you’re confident that you have the legal right to do something, that doesn’t mean someone else will agree—consider if you have the time and money to invest in defending against claims of infringement or even a formal lawsuit.

And last but not least, remember that right of publicity isn’t the only legal risk. Unlicensed use of a celebrity can also result in liability under other laws, including copyright, trademark, and false advertising.

## LICENSING LAW

The right of publicity comes from state rather than federal law—via statute or common law (i.e., case law) and sometimes both. But there are also 18 states that don't recognize an individual's right of publicity. Here's a geographic rundown.



**KEY:**

- Right of publicity under statute and common law
- Right of publicity under common law
- No right of publicity

**NOTES:**

1. AZ statute gives a right of publicity to members of the military but not civilians
2. In CA, the right of publicity is transferable and lasts 70 years after the person dies
3. In FL, the right of publicity lasts for 40 years after the person dies
4. In IL, the right of publicity is only statutory and lasts for 50 years after the person dies
5. In KY, NV, PA and TX, the right of publicity lasts for 50 years after the person dies
6. LA courts have neither recognized nor ruled out a right of publicity
7. In NY, the right of publicity is only statutory and ends when the person dies
8. In OH, the right of publicity lasts for 60 years after the person dies
9. In TN, the right lasts 10 years and for as long as it's used continuously thereafter (similar to trademark law)
10. In UT, the statutory right of publicity covers only use for false advertising
11. In VA, the right of publicity is only statutory and lasts 20 years after the person dies
12. WA provides different layers of protection depending on whether a person's identity has "commercial value"

## State of the Union: Reviewing Video Games in 2018

The U.S. video gaming industry broke records in 2018 to hit an estimated \$43.4 billion in sales, according to the **NPD Group**, marking a rise of 18% year-over-year.

- Hardware revenue, including peripherals, hit \$7.5 billion for a markup of 15% year-over-year.
- Software revenue was up 18% to reach \$35.8 billion.
- Accessory and game card spending for 2018 grew 33% year-over-year to \$4.5 billion, an all-time high.

The best-selling list of titles sold through **Amazon** in 2018 is dominated by titles for **Nintendo Switch**:

1. Super Smash Bros. Ultimate (Nintendo Switch)
2. Red Dead Redemption 2 (PS4)
3. Super Mario Party (Nintendo Switch)
4. Marvel's Spider-Man (PS4)
5. Mario Kart 8 Deluxe (Nintendo Switch)
6. Super Mario Odyssey (Nintendo Switch)
7. Pokémon: Let's Go, Pikachu! (Nintendo Switch)
8. Call of Duty: Black Ops 4 (PS4)
9. God of War (PS4)
10. The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild (Nintendo Switch)

Combining sales for all consoles, the **NPD's** list of top-selling games for 2018 is a little more diverse:

1. Red Dead Redemption 2
2. Call of Duty: Black Ops 4
3. NBA 2K19
4. Madden NFL 19
5. Super Smash Bros. Ultimate (*\*Does not include digital sales*)
6. Marvel's Spider-Man
7. Far Cry 5
8. God of War 2018
9. Monster Hunter: World
10. Assassin's Creed: Odyssey

When it comes to console systems, the Nintendo Switch was the top-selling console of 2018 in the U.S., France, and Japan (at least). Based on previous reports, the PS4 had been outselling Xbox One units two-to-one earlier in the year.

Despite bad press surrounding 2015's *Star Wars Battlefront* reboot series, **Disney** CEO Bob Iger indicated in an earnings call that the company will continue its "good relationship" with **Electronic Arts** as well as to license out games to other companies. "We've just never managed to demonstrate much skill on the publishing side of games ... but we've been great at the licensing side which obviously doesn't require that much allocation of capital."

This year, **Rovio** is adding to its mobile games portfolio with *Angry Birds Dream Blast*, a casual tap-to-match puzzle game. The company plans to launch at least two new games throughout 2019 during the 10th anniversary year for the Angry Birds brand. The company's 2018 brand licensing business declined as expected year-on-year to €0.8 million (\$34.8 million; down -37.4%) due to the large revenue peak of the *Angry Birds Movie* in 2017.

**Twitter** reports that 2018 saw one billion tweets about gaming globally. Here are the regions that tweeted most about gaming in 2018:

1. Japan
2. U.S.
3. U.K.
4. France
5. South Korea
6. Spain
7. Brazil
8. Canada
9. Mexico
10. Germany

Meanwhile, the most-tweeted about games last year, according to Twitter, were:

1. Fate/Grand Order (@fgoproject)
2. Fortnite (@FortniteGame)
3. Monster Strike (@MStrikeOfficial)
4. Splatoon (@SplatoonJP)
5. PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (@PUBG)
6. Granblue Fantasy (@granbluefantasy)
7. Ensemble Stars (@ensemble\_stars)
8. Super Smash Brothers (@NintendoAmerica)
9. Overwatch (@PlayOverwatch)
10. Final Fantasy (@FinalFantasy)

## TOYS &amp; GAMES

## M&A: Thanks for Playing

U.S. retail sales of toys reached \$21.6 billion in 2018, down 2% from the \$22 billion in sales in 2017, according to **The NPD Group**. The decline was attributed largely to the Toys”R”Us liquidation and significant shifts in retail.

Only four out of 11 toy categories showed growth—action figures, dolls, youth electronics, and arts and crafts. Dolls had the most significant uptick due to the L.O.L. Surprise!, Barbie, and Hatchimals. Action figures had the second-highest growth with sales from Jurassic World, Marvel Universe, and Beyblade driving sales. The arts and crafts category increased due to Cool Maker, Cra-Z-Art, and Kinetic. Finally, youth electronics were boosted by Fingerlings, Kidi, and L.O.L. Surprise!

Per the NPD, 2018’s leading properties, based on overall dollar sales, included L.O.L. Surprise!, Barbie, Nerf, Marvel Universe, and Hot Wheels.

**Simba Dickie Group** acquires American toyco **Jada Toys**, known for its die-cast collectibles, radio control vehicles, and pre-school toys. The move will help Simba Dickie Group expand into the American market, while simultaneously giving a global platform to Jada.

**Bandai Namco Collectibles**, a newly established dedicated division of the global toyco of the same name, acquires Nippon Imports (dba **Bluefin Distribution**) as part its greater strategy to expand its market share in the North American toy and hobby market. For 2019, Bandai and Bluefin are developing powerhouse properties such as Mobile Suit Gundam, Star Wars, and Godzilla (for Tamashii Nations) as well as focus on Dragon Ball product lines from Bandai’s Shokugan, Hobby, and Tamashii Nations lines.

Former **Toys”R”Us** executives are reviving the toy chain. Former TRU chief merchant Richard Barry is the President & CEO of a new firm called Tru Kids Inc., which holds ownership rights to the Toys”R”Us, Babies”R”Us, and Geoffrey the Giraffe marks, as well as over 20 (formerly private label) consumer brands. The company is now wholesaling brands like Imaginarium, Journey Girls, Avigo, Koala Baby, Fast Lane, True Heroes, Animal Zone, You & Me, Bruin, and Just Like Home. Toys”R”Us and Babies”R”Us generated over \$3 billion in global retail sales in 2018 through more than 900 stores and ecommerce businesses across Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

The intellectual property is properly owned by a group of hedge funds, including Solus Alternative Asset Management and Angelo Gordon, who hung onto the marks throughout TRU’s bankruptcy proceedings. An auction was held in October to sell the brands, which served as collateral on their loans to the bankrupted retailer, but at least two groups of bidders got rejected.

While the chain’s stores liquidated nationwide last summer, a team of ex-TRU execs has been quietly collecting licensing fees and servicing the company’s overseas stores. Tru Kids will continue doing so, as well as service the Geoffrey line of private label toys and Geoffrey’s Toy Box kiosks (launched inside Kroger supermarkets during the holidays). The team is seeking additional partnership opportunities, including more pop-up shops. The leadership team includes former legal counsel James Young (EVP Global Licensing & General Counsel) as well as other merchandising and financial executives including Yehuda Shmidman (Vice Chairman), Matt Finnegan (CFO & Treasurer), Jean-Daniel Gatignol (SVP “R” Consumer Brands), and Rich Ryan.

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# Licensing News

## Properties Available Or Recently Assigned, U.S.

PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORIES AVAILABLE	LICENSING CONTACT
Best Friends Animal Society	American animal welfare organization dedicated to Saving Them All.	All	Louis Drogin, Brandgenuity
Woodstock Festival (1969)	Rare photographs from the 1969 Woodstock Concert from Rolling Stone's chief photographer Baron Wolman and others. Celebrating its 50th Anniversary.	All	Dianne Duenzl, Woodstock 69 Photos

## Licenses Recently Granted, U.S.

PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
Alliance of American Football (AAF)	G-III Apparel Group*	On-field apparel, uniforms	Alliance of American Football (AAF)
Bandai America	Loyal Subjects (The)	Vinyl figures	Bandai America
Barbarian	Jay Franco & Sons	Bath accessories, beach towels, bedding, home storage	Brand Liaison (The)
Boxy Girls	S&G Apparel div. S&G Companies	Footwear, sleepwear (girls')	Jay at Play Intl.
British Museum (The)	Rosland Capital	Limited edition coins	British Museum Co. (The)
Carmen Sandiego	Basic Fun Inc.	Games	Brandgenuity
Complexity	Panini America	Trading cards	Complexity Gaming
Fantastic Beasts & Where to Find Them	McFarlane Toys	Action figures	Warner Bros. Consumer Products
FAO Schwarz	Galerie Candy & Gifts	Chocolates, gift sets, seasonal confections	ThreeSixty Brands Group LLC
FAO Schwarz	UNCAS International	Hair accessories, jewelry, key chains	ThreeSixty Brands Group LLC
Greg Norman	GGB Beauty div. Green Growth Brands	Personal care products	Authentic Brands Group (ABG)
Harry Potter	McFarlane Toys	Action figures	Warner Bros. Consumer Products
How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World	Accessory Innovations	Accessories	Universal Brand Development
How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World	Basic Fun Inc.	Toys	Universal Brand Development
Kathy Ireland Worldwide (kiWW)	TK Classics	Outdoor decor, outdoor furniture	Kathy Ireland Worldwide (kiWW)
Kenmore	Cleva North America	Vacuums	Kmart/Sears Holdings
KISS	Dynamite Entertainment	Comics	Epic Rights
L.O.L. Surprise!	S&G Apparel div. S&G Companies	Sleepwear (toddlers'), slippers	MGA Entertainment
LEGO	S&G Apparel div. S&G Companies*	Sleepwear, slippers	LEGO Systems
LEGO Movie 2	S&G Apparel div. S&G Companies	Sleepwear (toddlers'), slippers	Warner Bros. Consumer Products, LEGO Systems
LEGO Star Wars	S&G Apparel div. S&G Companies*	Sleepwear (toddlers'), slippers	LEGO Systems
MAD Magazine	Marc Jacobs	Accessories, apparel	Warner Bros. Consumer Products
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	American Classics	Apparel	Fred Rogers Productions (form. Fred Rogers Co.)
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	Funko	Accessories, apparel	Isaac Morris
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	ODM/Olaes Enterprises	Apparel	Fred Rogers Productions (form. Fred Rogers Co.)
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	Surreal Entertainment	Giftware	Isaac Morris
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	Trau & Loevner Imprinted Apparel	Apparel	Fred Rogers Productions (form. Fred Rogers Co.)

\*Extension or renewal.

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## Licensing News *Continued from page 16*

### Licenses Recently Granted, U.S.

PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	Unemployed Philosophers Guild	Novelty items	Fred Rogers Productions (form. Fred Rogers Co.)
Monica+Andy	Interior Define	Furniture (children's)	Monica+Andy
Monique Lhuillier	Pottery Barn div. Williams Sonoma	Bridal giftware, home decor	Monique Lhuillier
NASCAR	Far Out Toys Inc.	Toys	NASCAR
NBA	2K div. Take-Two Interactive*	Video games	NBA Entertainment (National Basketball Association)
New York Botanical Garden	Tea Forte	Gift sets, tea	Jewel Branding & Licensing
Peeps	Danone North America	Coffee creamer	Just Born, Inc., Brand Activation Consulting (BAC)
Peeps	Kellogg	Cereal boxes	Just Born, Inc., Brand Activation Consulting (BAC)
Pokémon	Funko	Figures	Pokémon Company Intl.
Popeye	deKryptic	AR accessories, AR apparel	King Features Syndicate
Powerpuff Girls (The)	Champion/Hanesbrands	Apparel	Cartoon Network Enterprises
Rita Ora	Giuseppe Zanotti Design	Footwear	Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group
Ryan's World	Far Out Toys Inc.	Toys	pocket.watch
Sesame Street	SGI Apparel div. SG Companies	Sleepwear (toddlers'), slippers	Sesame Workshop
Starter	G-III Apparel Group*	Sportswear (children's)	Iconix Brand Group
Tasty	Nestlé U.S.A.	Ice cream	BuzzFeed
University of Florida	Fanatics	Apparel	IMG College Licensing (form. Collegiate Licensing Co./CLC)
Weight Watchers (WW)	Gibson Overseas	Kitchenware, lunch bags, tabletop products	WW Intl. (form. Weight Watchers Intl.)
University of Florida	Fanatics	Apparel	IMG College Licensing (form. Collegiate Licensing Co./CLC)
Weight Watchers (WW)	Gibson Overseas	Kitchenware, lunch bags, tabletop products	WW Intl. (form. Weight Watchers Intl.)

### International Properties Available or Recently Assigned

PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORIES AVAILABLE	LICENSING CONTACT
Aelfie Oudghiri	Textile designer creates happy, funky designs to fill homes with happiness. Inspired by youth culture, tribal textiles, internet art, and high fashion.	Accessories, apparel, gift products, home decor, paper goods, stationery (North America)	Kathleen Brady, Current Co. (The)
Art of Marbling (The)	Art brand uses ancient art form dating back to the 11th century. Handcrafted, proprietary marbling patterns from organic 'stone' to intricate feather-like designs.	Fashion accessories, giftware, home decor, melamine, stationery, textiles (Worldwide)	Marty Segelbaum, MHS Licensing + Consulting
Bruno Mars	American singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, record producer, and dancer.	All (North America)	Kim Winkeleer, Trelmage LLC
CatCoq	Illustration and design brand by artist Cat Coquillette. Bright pops of color, vibrant typography, and a blend of hand-painted brushwork and clean vector illustrations.	All (Worldwide)	Ilana Wilensky, Jewel Branding & Licensing
Chickapig	Board game similar to a mixture of chess and checkers; free your flock of Chickapigs while dodging opponents, hay bales, and an unruly pooping cow.	All (Worldwide)	Morgan Ward, Dimensional Branding Group (DBG), div. of Bay Tek Games, Inc.
Cold Stone Creamery	Top rated American ice cream parlor chain with over 1,500 locations across the U.S. Seeking co-branded partnerships.	Accessories, apparel, baked goods (incl. cakes & brownies), breakfast, egg nog, liqueur, pudding, spirits, tabletop, toppings, toys, yogurt (North America)	John Shero, Brand Licensing Team

\*Extension or renewal.

*Continued on page 18*

## International Properties Available or Recently Assigned

PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORIES AVAILABLE	LICENSING CONTACT
<b>Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football (The, CONCACAF)</b>	Organization is the governing body for soccer in North America, Central America, and the Caribbean.	All (Worldwide)	Alex Altamirano, OEG Sports div. One Entertainment
<b>Daisy &amp; Ollie</b>	Pre-school series encourages kids to question the world around them.	All (Europe)	Tina Louise Foster, Nimbus Nine Consulting
<b>Dr DisRespect</b>	American Twitch streamer and internet personality with over 3MM followers on the platform. Known for his mustache and playing battle royale video games.	All (Worldwide)	Robert Schwartz, CAA-GBG Global Brand Management Group
<b>Fixies (The)</b>	Animated series stars tiny creatures that, unbeknownst to humans, live inside of and conscientiously maintain machines, appliances, and devices.	All (Russia)	Marina Semenikhina, Brand Extensions Russia JJP Ltd.
<b>Gorjuss</b>	Lifestyle brand by artist Suzanne Woolcott. Feature stripey socked girls who are in snapshots of their own little worlds.	All (GAS)	Guenter Vetter, Euro Lizenzen
<b>Hollywood Life</b>	American entertainment website covers celebrity, fashion, beauty, and entertainment news, with 1.16MM subscribers and over 740MM views.	All (WW)	Kevin LaBonge, Penske Media Corp. (PMC)
<b>Hustler</b>	Adult entertainment and lifestyle brand celebrating vitality, health, beauty, and emotion.	All (Worldwide)	Debi Rosenfeld, NxtGen Brand Marketing & Licensing
<b>It's All In Your Head</b>	Kaleidoscopic pop-science brain book/brand devoted to the awesomeness of the human brain. Incl. TV, gaming, and education.	Apparel, publishing, puzzles, toys & games, video games (North America)	Michael Hermann, Wicked Cow Entertainment
<b>Jane Foster</b>	Illustrator, children's author, and textile designer uses bold, happy Scandi and mid-century influenced designs. Over 24 books with over 300K copies sold worldwide.	Baby products, crafts, home decor, paper goods, stationery, textiles, toys (North America)	Kathleen Brady, Current Co. (The)
<b>John Keeling</b>	Art brand capturing the essence of the subject, the fragility of a delicate flower or devoted gaze of a beloved pet, through the fresh watercolor medium.	Fashion accessories, giftware, home decor, melamine, stationery, textiles (Worldwide)	Marty Segelbaum, MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Larva</b>	Animated series follows the misadventures of two adorable and hilarious larva.	All (North America)	Michael Carlisle, Wildflower Group (The)
<b>Lulu is a Rhinoceros</b>	Children's book by music super-exec, Jason Flom, and his bulldog, who believes she's a rhino. Themes include individuality, tolerance, and acceptance.	Apparel (children's), baby products, back-to-school, bedding & bath products, paper goods, plush, stationery (North America)	Michael Hermann, Wicked Cow Entertainment
<b>Moomins (The)</b>	Book series by Tove Jansson starring the Moomin family and their friends live an adventurous life in the idyllic and peaceful Moominvalley in harmony with nature.	All (Benelux)	Victoria Whellans, CPLG (U.K.)
<b>Mya Go</b>	Preschool series about a young girl whose enthusiasm for life infects everyone around her. Encourages children to explore and be curious about the world around them.	All (Spain)	Pau Pascual, CPLG (Iberia & MENA)
<b>National Gallery</b>	British museum housing 2,300 works of some of the world's most recognizable paintings incl. Van Gogh, Monet, Velázquez, Raphael, Turner, and Cézanne.	Accessories, apparel, gifts, home decor, publishing, stationery (North America)	Michael Carlisle, Wildflower Group (The)
<b>Outdoor Life</b>	North America's premier multimedia brand focused on hunting, fishing, and outdoor adventure.	All (Worldwide)	Richard Oren, Bonnie
<b>Panda Panda</b>	Preschool character brand illustrated by Mona Koth. Follows brother-sister twin pandas, Beau and Dot, as they introduce viewers to their world.	All (North America)	Joan Packard Luks, ThinkTank Emporium
<b>Popular Science</b>	America's foremost brand dedicated to science and technology.	All (Worldwide)	Richard Oren, Bonnie
<b>Purple Turtle</b>	Animated series celebrates the joy of childhood curiosity and discovery. Models ingenuity, perseverance, and critical thinking while having fun and figuring things out.	All (Worldwide)	, Cyber Group Studios
<b>Rainbocorns</b>	Plush brand with a surprise hatching from its bright mystery egg. Has a reversible sequin heart that reveals a magical surprise when swiped.	All (U.K., EMEA)	Ashley Holman, Riverside Brands

\*Extension or renewal.

*Continued on page 19*

## Licensing News *Continued from page 18*

### International Properties Available or Recently Assigned

PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORIES AVAILABLE	LICENSING CONTACT
<b>River Cottage</b>	Cookery brand consisting of award-winning TV series, cookery schools, three restaurants, and books.	All (Worldwide)	George Birtchnell, Point.1888 (The)
<b>Robb Report</b>	American luxury lifestyle magazine featuring the latest superlative products and experiences incl. automobiles, aviation, boating, real estate, and accessories.	All (WW)	Kevin LaBonge, Penske Media Corp. (PMC)
<b>Rolling Stone</b>	Founded in 1967, Rolling Stone is a multi-media brand reaching 60MM people per month globally; synonymous with music, culture, and style.	All (Worldwide)	Kevin LaBonge, Penske Media Corp. (PMC)
<b>Roobarb &amp; Custard</b>	British animated series from the 1970's follows the fun adventures of a loveable green dog and a pink cat.	All (U.K.)	Russell Dever, Those Licensing People (TLP)
<b>Saveur</b>	Media brand features the most impactful, one-of-a-kind stories and recipes for the world's most enthusiastic cooks.	All (Worldwide)	Richard Oren, Bonnier
<b>Super Nova</b>	CGI animated series set in 2162. Features siblings living on an international space station and accompanying their parents on interstellar missions.	All (Worldwide excl. ANZ)	Arne Lohmann, ZDF Enterprises GmbH
<b>Tasty Peach Studios</b>	Woman-owned indie brand with the look and feel of Japanese minimalism has its own unique take on the style.	All (U.S., Canada, U.K., Japan)	Morgan Ward, Dimensional Branding Group (DBG), div. of Bay Tek Games, Inc.
<b>Transport for London</b>	Integrated transport authority runs the day-to-day operations of London's public transport network incl. the London Underground, red buses, and Elizabeth Line.	All (ANZ)	Alan Schauder, Merchantwise
<b>Ultraman</b>	Japanese sci-fi series stars a superhero from a distant planet able to grow to 100 ft. His mission: Protect the Earth from invaders.	All (North America)	Danny Simon, Licensing Group (The)
<b>University of Oxford</b>	Oldest university in the English-speaking world. Unique and historic institution with 38 colleges, Bodleian Libraries, Ashmolean Museum, and Oxford Botanic Garden.	Accessories, apparel, home, lifestyle (Worldwide)	Teri Niadna, Brandgenuity Europe
<b>Vitamix</b>	Americahigh-performance blending equipment brand. Mission is to produce the world's best-performing, most reliable blending solutions.	All (Worldwide)	Michael Carlisle, Wildflower Group (The)
<b>Whitney Houston</b>	Iconic singer whose career incl. 7 consecutive #1 Billboard Hot 100 hits, 8 multi-platinum albums, 6 Grammys, 16 BMAs, and 22 AMAs.	Publicity rights incl. advertising and endorsement opportunities (Worldwide)	Tamra Knepper, Greenlight div. Branded Entertainment Network (BEN)
<b>Wright Kitchen by Brittany Wright</b>	Food photography brand founded by Brittany Wright focuses on food culture. As well as its aesthetic, Wright showcases the beauty of locally produced foods.	Domestics, fashion, gifts & novelties, housewares, stationery (Worldwide)	Heather Rosenthal, Brand Squared Licensing
<b>YooHoo &amp; Friends</b>	Toy brand and animated series follows big-eyed, furry animals on a mission to protect the environment and, along the way, learn the value of harmony and friendship.	All (Worldwide)	Dee Dee Valencia, Aurora World
<b>Young Offenders (The)</b>	British comedy set in Cork City, Ireland. Follows the coming-of-age adventures of to rogues as they navigate their awkward teen years, not always successfully.	All (U.K. Ireland)	Charlie Donaldson, Rocket Licensing
<b>ZAFARI</b>	Animated children's series. A secret valley at the base of Mt. Kilimanjaro is filled with one-of-a-kind animals magically born with the skin of other species.	All (Italy)	Maurizio Distefano, Maurizio Distefano Licensing (MD Licensing)

### International Licenses Recently Granted

PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
<b>44 Cats</b>	Chicco/Artsana Group	Accessories, apparel, educational toys (Italy)	Rainbow S.p.A.
<b>Abominable</b>	Rainbow Designs	Plush (U.K.)	DreamWorks Animation
<b>Adventure Time</b>	Miniso	Accessories, cosmetics, gifts, stationery, toys (North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa)	Cartoon Network Enterprises (Asia Pacific)
<b>Al Agnew</b>	Manual Woodworkers & Weavers (MWW)	Bath mats (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Amylee Weeks</b>	Design Design	Greeting cards (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting

\*Extension or renewal.

*Continued on page 20*

International Licenses Recently Granted			
PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
Amylee Weeks	Fabrique Innovations	Fabric, fleece throws (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Amylee Weeks	Kay Dee Designs	Kitchen textiles (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Andy Warhol	Kidrobot	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Greenlight div. Branded Entertainment Network (BEN)
Anthem	Abyse Corp.	Giftware (U.K., Europe)	Bulldog Licensing
Anthem	Level Up Wear (LVLP)	Apparel (U.K., Europe)	Bulldog Licensing
Anthem	Rubber Road Ltd.	Accessories, apparel (U.K.)	Bulldog Licensing
Anthem	Trademark Products Ltd.	Accessories (U.K.)	Bulldog Licensing
Aquaman	Factory Entertainment	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Warner Bros. Consumer Products
Archie	Hot Topic	Accessories, apparel, novelty & gift items (U.S., Canada)	King Features Syndicate
Art of Marbling	Fox Chapel Publishing	Books (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Ascot	Karen Millen	Apparel (Worldwide)	WME/IMG Worldwide Licensing d.b.a. Endeavor (U.K.)
Audrey Jeanne Roberts	Downeast Concepts	Christmas cards (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Audrey Jeanne Roberts	Manual Woodworkers & Weavers (MWW)	Bath mats, comforters (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Audrey Jeanne Roberts	Stony Creek at Home	Lamps, ornaments (U.S., Canada, U.K.)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Audrey Jeanne Roberts	Sun 'N' Sand Accessories	Totes (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Baby Blues	Lappan Verlag GmbH div. Carlson Verlag	Calendars (GAS)	King Features Syndicate
Barbie x National Geographic	Mattel	Dolls (Barbie) (Worldwide)	National Geographic Partners
Batman	Factory Entertainment	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Warner Bros. Consumer Products
Beatles (The)	Factory Entertainment	Bath toys, bottle openers, key chains, metal miniatures, plush, statues, totes, towels (Worldwide)	Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group
Betty Boop	Eva Green S.A. de C.V.	Flip flops, luggage, phone cases, power banks, sneakers (Mexico)	King Features Syndicate
Betty Boop	UNIQLO div. Fast Retailing	Hooded sweatshirts, sweatshirts, t-shirts (Japan, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea)	King Features Syndicate
Between Friends	NobleWorks	Greeting cards, postcards (Worldwide)	King Features Syndicate
Big Lebowski (The)	Factory Entertainment	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Universal Brand Development
Brick Bradford	Le Coffre à BD	Hardcover books (France, DOM TOM, French-speaking Belgium, Luxembourg, Canada)	King Features Syndicate
Buck Wear	A & M Wholesale Group	Cutting boards, tin signs (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Buck Wear	SJT Enterprises	Bottle openers, magnets, plaques (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Bud Light	Poetic Brands Ltd./PoeticGem	Apparel (U.K.)	Anheuser-Busch InBev
Budweiser	Poetic Brands Ltd./PoeticGem	Apparel (U.K.)	Anheuser-Busch InBev
Care Bears	TruffleShuffle.com	Apparel (U.K.)	Bulldog Licensing
Carmen Sandiego	Pressman Toy/Goliath Games	Board games (U.S., Canada)	Brandgenuity
Carmen Sandiego	Spencer Gifts/Spirit Halloween	Accessories, costumes (U.S., Canada)	Brandgenuity
Christine Adolph	Design Design	Greeting cards (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Coach	Incipio	Mobile accessories (North America, South America, Asia, EMEA)	Movado Group
Collin Bogle	Argus Spol s.r.o.	Greeting cards (Slovakia, Czech Republic)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Collin Bogle	Uncle Jerry's Tee's	Fleece throws (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Corbert Gauthier	Moonlight Creative Group	Greeting cards (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting

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**Licensing News** *Continued from page 20*

<b>International Licenses Recently Granted</b>			
<b>PROPERTY</b>	<b>GRANTED TO</b>	<b>PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED</b>	<b>GRANTED BY</b>
<b>Cranston</b>	Kay Dee Designs	Kitchen towels (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Cuphead</b>	H3 Sportgear	Accessories, apparel, headwear (U.S., Mexico)	King Features Syndicate
<b>Cuphead</b>	NTD Apparel	Activewear, headwear, loungewear, sleepwear, swimwear (Canada)	King Features Syndicate
<b>Cuphead</b>	Vision/Eleven Apparel Mgmt.	Accessories, apparel (Canada)	King Features Syndicate
<b>Cuphead</b>	Yetee LLC (The)	Enamel pins, hoodies, patches, posters, screen print, stickers, t-shirts (Worldwide)	King Features Syndicate
<b>Dirk Bikkembergs</b>	Global Brands Group	Footwear (Worldwide)	Dirk Bikkembergs
<b>Disney</b>	Kano Computing Ltd.	Electronic learning toys (Worldwide; 2 yrs.)	Disney Consumer Products
<b>Dumbo</b>	Rainbow Designs	Toys (infants') (U.K.)	Disney Consumer Products
<b>emoji</b>	Tezenis div. Calzedonia SpA	Pajamas, socks, underwear (Europe, Middle East)	Maurizio Distefano Licensing (MD Licensing)
<b>Flash Gordon</b>	Le Coffre à BD	Hardcover books (France, DOM TOM, French-speaking Belgium, Luxembourg, Canada)	King Features Syndicate
<b>Flash Gordon</b>	Oasis Family Media LLC/Oasis Audio	Audio books (Worldwide)	King Features Syndicate
<b>Ghostbusters</b>	Factory Entertainment	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Sony Pictures Consumer Products
<b>Ghostbusters</b>	Playmobil Germany/Brandstätter Stiftung & Co. KG*	Playsets (Worldwide)	Sony Pictures Consumer Products
<b>Gigantosaurus</b>	Outright Games	Video games (Worldwide)	Cyber Group Studios
<b>Halloween</b>	Factory Entertainment	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Creative Licensing Corp. (CLC)
<b>Hautman Brothers</b>	Thirstystone Resources	Coasters (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Heidi Bienvenida</b>	Admiranda S.r.l.	Personal care products (Italy)	Mondo TV S.p.a.
<b>How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World</b>	Amscan Asia Pacific	Party goods (Australia)	Universal Brand Development
<b>How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World</b>	Funko	Blind packs, pop vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Universal Brand Development
<b>How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World</b>	SG Footwear div. SG Companies	Footwear (North America)	Universal Brand Development
<b>Jeff Renner</b>	Riley Blake Designs	Fabric (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Jetty Home</b>	Manual Woodworkers & Weavers (MWW)	Bath mats, comforters (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Jetty Home</b>	Toss Designs	Bag tags, cocktail napkins, cosmetic bags, kitchen towels, water bottles (U.S., Canada, Brazil)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Jim Killen</b>	A & M Wholesale Group	Tin signs (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Jim Killen</b>	Northcott Silk	Cotton fabric (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Jim Killen</b>	SunsOut	Puzzles (Worldwide excl. Russia)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Judy Buswell</b>	Thirstystone Resources	Coasters (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Jungle Jim</b>	Le Coffre à BD	Hardcover books (France, DOM TOM, French-speaking Belgium, Luxembourg, Canada)	King Features Syndicate
<b>Jurassic Park</b>	Factory Entertainment	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Universal Brand Development
<b>Kiddets</b>	Hengxin Shambala Culture Co., Ltd. (HSK)	Master toy (China)	Pukeko Pictures
<b>Kidrobot x Futurama</b>	Kidrobot	Key chains, plush, vinyl figures (Worldwide)	20th Century Fox Consumer Products
<b>Kidrobot x Sanrio</b>	Kidrobot	Plush, vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Sanrio

*Continued on page 22*

International Licenses Recently Granted			
PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
Kidrobot x The Addams Family	Kidrobot	Key chains, plush, vinyl figures (Worldwide)	MGM Consumer Products
KISS x emoji	Emoji Co. GmbH	Emoji (Worldwide)	Epic Rights
Kitt Wichmann	Evergreen Enterprises	Decorative flags (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Kung Fu Panda	Rainbow Designs	Plush (U.K.)	DreamWorks Animation
Laurel & Hardy	American Mythology Productions	Comic books (Worldwide)	Larry Harmon Pictures
Laurel & Hardy	Rachel Lowe Ltd.	Puzzles (Worldwide)	Larry Harmon Pictures
Laurel & Hardy	Rockin Pins	Enamel pins (Worldwide)	Larry Harmon Pictures
Laurel & Hardy	Sun Star Models Development	Die-cast replica vehicles (Worldwide)	Larry Harmon Pictures
Levi's	Safilo U.S.A.	Eyewear (Worldwide)	Levi Strauss
Lion King	Rainbow Designs	Toys (infants') (U.K.)	Disney Consumer Products
Little Baby Bum	MGA Entertainment	Master toy (Worldwide)	Surge Licensing
Little Prince (The)	Finn + Emma	Apparel (infants', toddlers') (North America)	Licensing Works!
Little Prince (The)	Golden Bell Studios	Card games (North America)	Licensing Works!
Little Prince (The)	Litographs	Blankets, pillows (North America)	Licensing Works!
Little Prince (The)	Moonlite World Inc.	Story book apps (North America)	Licensing Works!
Little Prince (The)	Rizzoli Intl. Publications	Calendars (North America)	Licensing Works!
Lottie Dolls	Bigjigs Toys	Dolls (U.K., Ireland, France, Italy)	Lottie Dolls/Arklu (Ireland) Ltd.
Louise Carey	Sun 'N' Sand Accessories	Totes (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Louise Carey	Thirstystone Resources	Coasters (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Love Hearts	My Icon Story	Art prints (U.K., Europe)	Blonde Sheep Licensing
Luis Fitch	Great American Products	Drinkware (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Lyrics by Lennon & McCartney	ALEX AND ANI	Jewelry (Worldwide)	Epic Rights
Madagascar	Rainbow Designs	Plush (U.K.)	DreamWorks Animation
Mandrake the Magician	Le Coffre à BD	Hardcover books (France, DOM TOM, French-speaking Belgium, Luxembourg, Canada)	King Features Syndicate
MasterChef Junior	Meredith*	Promotional products (North America)	Endemol Shine North America
May Gibbs	Kip & Co.*	Apparel, bedding (ANZ)	Merchantwise
Mickey Mouse	Beats By Dr. Dre	Headphones (Worldwide)	Disney Consumer Products
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	Funko	Accessories, plush, vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Fred Rogers Productions (form. Fred Rogers Co.)
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	Ripple Junction	Accessories, apparel (U.S., Canada)	Fred Rogers Productions (form. Fred Rogers Co.)
MLB	Nike	Baselayers, outerwear, training apparel, uniforms (U.S., Canada)	MLB Properties
Monster Jam	Spin Master	Master toy (Worldwide)	Feld Entertainment
Monty Python	Factory Entertainment	Bottle openers, desktop environments, key chains, metal miniatures, plush, statues, totes (Worldwide)	Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group
MoonPie	Naked River Brewing Co.	Beer (U.S., Canada)	Lisa Marks Associates (LMA)
Neil Lane	DK Publishing	Books (North America)	Authentic Brands Group (ABG)
NFL Players Association	Tik Tok div. ByteDance	Virtual stickers (Worldwide)	NFL Players Inc. (NFLPA)
Nightmare on Elm Street	Factory Entertainment	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Warner Bros. Consumer Products

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<b>International Licenses Recently Granted</b>			
<b>PROPERTY</b>	<b>GRANTED TO</b>	<b>PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED</b>	<b>GRANTED BY</b>
Northern Promotions	Northcott Silk	Cotton fabric (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Northern Promotions	Riley Blake Designs	Fabric (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Oi! book series	Fiesta Crafts Ltd.	Activity toys, educational toys (Europe)	Maximum Licensing
Old Pal	Flower One Holdings	Cannabis products (U.S.: Nevada)	Old Pal
One Piece	Skechers U.S.A. Inc.	Footwear (Asia, U.S., Europe)	Toei Animation
Panda Panda	Cottage Door Press	Publishing (U.S., Canada)	ThinkTank Emporium
Peanuts	Asvina	Cookies, peanut butter (U.K.)	CPLG (U.K.)
Peanuts	Blueprint Collections	Stationery (U.K.)	CPLG (U.K.)
Peanuts	Ecell Global Ltd.	Phone cases (U.K.)	CPLG (U.K.)
Peanuts	Fashion U.K.	Apparel (children's) (U.K.)	CPLG (U.K.)
Peanuts	Hype Associates	Greeting cards, mini cards (U.K.)	CPLG (U.K.)
Peanuts	Kokomo Ltd.	Health & beauty aids (U.K.)	CPLG (U.K.)
Peanuts	Portico Designs	Calendars (U.K.)	CPLG (U.K.)
PEZ Candy	Graphics Lab Printing	Stickers (North America)	Lisa Marks Associates (LMA)
PEZ Candy	RUZ Distribution Inc.	DIY items, headwear, home decor, plush, stationery (U.S., Canada)	Lisa Marks Associates (LMA)
Phantom (The)	Le Coffre à BD	Hardcover books (France, DOM TOM, French-speaking Belgium, Luxembourg, Canada)	King Features Syndicate
Pikwik	Playmates Toys	Master toy (Worldwide excl. China)	Guru Studio
Piranha Club	Bulls Licensing div. Bulls Pressedienst GmbH	Books (Norway)	King Features Syndicate
Pokémon	Mattel	Construction block sets (Worldwide)	Pokémon Company Intl.
Pokémon	Wicked Cool Toys	Action figures, plush, role play (Worldwide)	Pokémon Company Intl.
Popeye	Cabbeen Apparel Co. Ltd.	Accessories, apparel, footwear, outerwear (China)	King Features Syndicate
Popeye	Eva Green S.A. de C.V.	Flip flops, luggage, phone cases, power banks, sneakers (Mexico)	King Features Syndicate
Popeye	Funko	Pop vinyl figures (U.S., Canada, U.K., ANZ)	King Features Syndicate
Popeye	Leon International Inc.	T-shirts (Japan)	King Features Syndicate
Popeye	Mezco Toyz	Limited edition figures (Worldwide)	King Features Syndicate
Popeye	Sima Enterprises Development	Action figures (China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan)	King Features Syndicate
Popeye	Toyoshima & Co. Ltd.	Apparel, bags, bandanas, mugs, patches (Japan)	King Features Syndicate
Prince Valiant	Fantagraphics Books	Books, comics (Worldwide)	King Features Syndicate
Prince Valiant	Oasis Family Media LLC/Oasis Audio	Audio books, books (Worldwide)	King Features Syndicate
Prince Valiant	Planeta Editorial	Hardcover books (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico)	King Features Syndicate
Puma x Maybelline	Maybelline New York div. L'Oreal	Cosmetics (U.S., Canada)	Puma North America
Rainbow Brite	Coleco/Colecovision	Mini arcade games (U.S., Canada)	Hallmark Licensing
Rebecca Stoner	Evergreen Enterprises	Napkins (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Rebecca Stoner	Kay Dee Designs	Kitchen towels (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Rick & Morty	Black Milk Clothing	Apparel, swimwear (Worldwide)	Cartoon Network Enterprises (Asia Pacific)
Robin Roderick	Northcott Silk	Cotton fabric (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
Robotech	Coleco/Colecovision	Mini arcade games (U.S., Canada)	Harmony Gold U.S.A.
Rocky	Super7	Action figures (North America)	MGM Consumer Products

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<b>International Licenses Recently Granted</b>			
<b>PROPERTY</b>	<b>GRANTED TO</b>	<b>PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED</b>	<b>GRANTED BY</b>
<b>RWBY</b>	Viz Media	Publishing (Worldwide)	Rooster Teeth Productions
<b>Ryan's World</b>	American Greetings	Party goods, seasonal products (U.S., Canada)	pocket.watch
<b>Ryan's World</b>	Jada Toys	Toy vehicles (Worldwide)	pocket.watch
<b>Ryan's World</b>	Just Play	Dress-up & role play, musical instruments, playsets, seasonal products (children's), toys (Worldwide)	pocket.watch
<b>Ryan's World</b>	Kids Preferred	Wooden toys (U.S., Canada)	pocket.watch
<b>Ryan's World</b>	Zak Designs	Home products (U.S., Canada)	pocket.watch
<b>Sabrina</b>	Hot Topic	Accessories, apparel, novelty & gift items (U.S., Canada)	King Features Syndicate
<b>Shaun the Sheep</b>	Create and Craft*	Craft products (U.K.)	Start Licensing
<b>Shazam!</b>	Factory Entertainment	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Warner Bros. Consumer Products
<b>Shopkins</b>	Blipd	AR mobile game (Worldwide)	Moose Toys, Carlin West Entertainment (CWE)
<b>Shrek</b>	Rainbow Designs	Plush (U.K.)	DreamWorks Animation
<b>Simon's Cat</b>	360 Games	Mobile games (China)	Endemol Shine China
<b>Sissi, the Young Empress</b>	Blue Ocean Entertainment AG	Magazines (GAS)	Active Merchandising
<b>So Totally True</b>	CARD.com	Credit cards, debit cards, e-wallets (U.S., Canada)	Lisa Marks Associates (LMA)
<b>SpongeBob SquarePants</b>	Alpha Group Co. Ltd. /Auldey Toys	Master toy (Worldwide)	Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products (NVCP)
<b>Stacey Yacula</b>	Manual Woodworkers & Weavers (MWW)	Bath mats, comforters (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Star Trek</b>	Factory Entertainment	Bottle openers, desktop environments, key chains, metal miniatures, plush, vinyl figures, wine stoppers (Worldwide)	CBS Consumer Products
<b>Stephanie Ryan</b>	Design Design	Greeting cards (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Stephanie Ryan</b>	Enchante Accessories	Gift bags, greeting cards, storage boxes, wine tubes (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Stephanie Ryan</b>	ITEM Studio LLC	Paper plates & napkins (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Stephanie Ryan</b>	Leap Year Publishing	Calendars (U.S., Canada, Australia)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Terry Doughty</b>	Riley Blake Designs	Fabric (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Tina Higgins</b>	Design Design	Greeting cards (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Tina Higgins</b>	ITEM Studio LLC	Boxed greeting cards (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Tom &amp; Jerry</b>	Monnalisa S.p.A	Apparel (Europe)	Warner Bros. Consumer Products
<b>Tony Hawk</b>	Hog Wild Toys	Activity toys (Worldwide)	Cherokee Global Brands
<b>Toy Story 4</b>	Rainbow Designs	Toys (infants') (U.K.)	Disney Consumer Products
<b>Transformers</b>	Super7	Action figures (North America)	Hasbro
<b>Turleen Trailer Park Queen</b>	IconLogin Ltd.	Lock screen apps (Worldwide)	Alita's Brand Bar
<b>UglyDolls (film)</b>	Centum Books Ltd.	Books (U.K.)	White Space Entertainment
<b>UglyDolls (film)</b>	Signature Publishing Ltd.	Magazines (U.K.)	White Space Entertainment
<b>Universal Monsters</b>	Super7	Trick-or-treat buckets (North America)	Universal Brand Development
<b>UTurn Studios</b>	CBC Group	Bookmarks, magnets, stationery products (Worldwide)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>UTurn Studios</b>	Stupell Industries	Wall decor (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>UTurn Studios</b>	Wally Packaging/Dream Works Design	Gift bags (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>UTurn Studios</b>	Willow Creek Press	Calendars (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting
<b>Val Warner</b>	Manual Woodworkers & Weavers (MWW)	Bath mats (U.S., Canada)	MHS Licensing + Consulting

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## International Licenses Recently Granted

PROPERTY	GRANTED TO	PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED	GRANTED BY
Very Hungry Caterpillar (The)	KidKraft	Toys (U.S., Canada, U.K., Europe, Australia, Netherlands)	Joester Loria Group (JLG)
Warheads	Flex Beauty Labs	Bath items, body care, hair care, hand sanitizers, lip balms (U.S., Canada)	Lisa Marks Associates (LMA)
We Bare Bears	Miniso	Accessories, cosmetics, gifts, stationery, toys (North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa)	Cartoon Network Enterprises (Asia Pacific)
Wiggles (The)	WowWee USA	Master toy (North America)	Wiggles Pty Ltd. (The)
Winnie the Pooh	Rainbow Designs	Toys (infants') (U.K.)	Disney Consumer Products
Wizard of Oz (The)	Factory Entertainment	Vinyl figures (Worldwide)	Warner Bros. Consumer Products
WWE	New Era Cap	Headwear (Worldwide)	World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE)
Yellow Submarine	Factory Entertainment	Bath toys, bottle openers, key chains, metal miniatures, plush, statues, totes, towels (Worldwide)	Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group
Yellow Submarine	Factory Entertainment	Bath toys, bottle openers, key chains, metal miniatures, plush, statues, totes, towels (Worldwide)	Bravado Intl. Group div. Universal Music Group
Yoga with Adriene	Teespring	Apparel (U.K., Europe)	WME/IMG Worldwide Licensing d.b.a. Endeavor (U.K.)
Zac Brown Band	BBR Music Group/BMG	CDs, vinyl records (Worldwide)	Zac Brown's Southern Ground



## contacts & connections

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

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**A & M Wholesale Group**, Mike Coke, Co-owner, 270-821-7100, mike@aandmwholesalegroup.com, P. 20,21.

**Accessory Innovations**, Karyn Weiss, SVP Business Development & Licensing, 212-292-1238, kweiss@accessory-innovations.com, P. 16.

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**American Classics**, Tommy Cost, VP, 256-737-9995, tommy@americanclassics.biz, P. 16.

**American Greetings**, Julie Deal, Senior Licensing Director, 216-252-7300, julie.deal@amgreetings.com, P. 24.

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**Beats By Dr. Dre**, Omar Johnson, Chief Marketing Officer, 424-268-3055, ojohnson@apple.com, P. 22.

**Blipd**, Travis Riggs, CEO, travis@blipd.com, P. 24.

**Bonnier**, Richard Oren, Director Licensing, 212-779-5545, richard.oren@bonniercorp.com, P. 18,19.

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**Cartoon Network Enterprises**, Daria Cronin, Senior Director Licensing Soft Lines, Publishing & Licensed Promotions, 212-275-6811, daria.cronin@turner.com, P. 17.

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**CBS Consumer Products**, Veronica Hart, EVP Global Franchise Management & CBS Consumer Products, 212-975-6894, veronica.hart@cbs.com, P. 24.

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**contacts & connections** *Continued from page 25*

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**Fred Rogers Productions** (form. Fred Rogers Co.), Micah Southwood, Licensing Manager, 412-291-8811, southwood@fredrogers.org, P. 16.

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**Gibson Overseas**, David Nicklin, VP Marketing & Licensing, 323-832-8900, davidn@gibsonusa.com, P. 17.

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## Who's News

Are you hiring? Being promoted, changing jobs, retiring? Launching a new company? Issuing a tribute? Email the editor at [karina@plainlanguagemedia.com](mailto:karina@plainlanguagemedia.com) and we'll announce the news in our next issue of Who's News.

After selling a minority stake to private equity firm Bancroft Investment, Rubik's Brand recruits a new CEO in the form of **Christoph Bettin**. Bettin is expected to use the new capital to help realize the potential of the Rubik's Cube brand and focus on entering new channels.

**John Leonhardt** is the new Head Consumer Products for Crunchyroll, charged with creating 360-experiences with merchandise, gaming, events. The anime streamer counts over 2 million global subscribers and carries over 1,000 titles.

Hasbro brings on **Warwick Brenner** as VP EMEA Consumer Products, based out of its Stockley Park office in the U.K. Warwick's key focus will be to drive franchise brands and expand into new categories, channels, and markets.

Bandai Namco establishes a dedicated North American Collectibles division and acquires Nippon Imports (dba Bluefin Distribution). Bluefin CEO **Steve Fujimura** continues his leadership role and partners with COO **Koji Iwata**, a Bandai SVP. Meanwhile, **Adam Newman** is appointed as CMO of Bluefin to oversee North American sales and marketing efforts.

Boat Rocker Studios hires former Mattel exec **Kate Schlomann** as EVP Brand Management & Content Marketing. Based in New York, she reports to recently-promoted MD **Jon Rutherford**.

Activision Blizzard names **Steve Young** President Consumer Products as **Tim Kilpin** retires from the post.

Cloudco Entertainment (form. American Greetings Entertainment) expands its executive team at its Los Angeles office. **Elizabeth Litten Miller** joins as Head Marketing from 20th Century Fox Consumer Products, reporting to President **Sean Gorman**. Plus, **Cristina Villegas** join as VP Domestic Licensing from The Walt Disney Co., reporting to Head Licensing **Robert Prinzo**.

Turner Intl. names **Johanne Broadfield** its new VP Cartoon Network Enterprises EMEA & Intl. Strategy. In addition to her current remit overseeing Turner's licensing activities across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, Broadfield will be responsible for Turner's international licensing strategy, partnering with the U.S. in shaping the global view for key decision making; taking on joint responsibility for the P&L of Cartoon Network licensing activities across Latin America along with **Pablo Zuccarino**, SVP & GM Kids Latin America; and working in close partnership with **Vikram Sharma**, VP Cartoon Network Enterprises Asia Pacific in a strategic capacity. SepaWratel, **Paul DeBenedittis** joins Nickelodeon as Programming EVP.

Macy's promotes **Patti Ongman**, the general business manager for home merchandise, to Chief Merchandising Officer effective March 1. Ongman, who has been at Macy's in various roles for 33 years, replaces retiring executive **Jeff Kantor**.

Edgar Rice Burroughs adds **Christopher Paul Carey** to its

executive staff in the role of Director Publishing. He will work closely with President **Jim Sullos** and VP Operations **Cathy Wilbanks** in administering the intellectual property of the American author.

Literary agent **Simon Green** is tapped to head the book and publishing division of Abrams Artists Agency. Green was, until last spring, an agent at CAA.

Rakuten Kobo appoints **Marianne Hamilton** to the role of CMO, reporting to CEO **Michael Tamblin**. The role was formerly held by **Alan MacNevin**, who is newly appointed as Chief Operating Officer.

The NFL Players Association (NFLPA) adds **Kathy Ireland** and **Jenny Abramson** to its Board of Directors. Ireland is the Founder of kathyireland Worldwide (kiWW) and brings with her experience in fashion, licensing, and supporting non-profits. Abramson is the Founder & Managing Partner of Rethink Impact, a venture capital firm investing in female entrepreneurs using technology.

Iconix Brand Group names **John T. McClain** as the company's EVP & CFO. **Jeffrey Wood**, the company's interim CFO, will resign in order to pursue another business opportunity.

**Sarah Fletcher** joins MGA Entertainment as Head Licensing in its U.K. team, working across brands incl. L.O.L. Surprise, Little Tikes, Poozie Slime Surprise, Num Noms, Project Mc2, Crate Creatures, Baby Born, and Zapf Creation.

TSBA Group appoints **Jo Edwards** to its global licensing team as Licensing Director, based in the London office. She will develop new opportunities for the company across brands like Formula E, The Open, Silverstone, Transport for London, and Iconic Images.

Maxx Marketing names **George Funk** as VP Sales.

Women's activewear brand Outdoor Voices appoints **Pamela Catlett**, a former Nike and Under Armour executive, as President & COO.

**Steven P. Lawrence** is now EVP & Chief Merchandising Officer at Academy Sports + Outdoors.

Ikea U.S. President **Lars Petersson** will retire in August after 36 years with the company. He is succeeded by **Javier Quinones**, who currently serves as Retail Manager for the Ireland and U.K. units.

**Claire Finn** is brought in as MD of Lighthouse Studios, the new joint-venture prodco formed by Canada's Mercury Filmworks and Ireland's Cartoon Saloon to focus on 2D animation.

Lands' End creates a new executive position for **Chieh Tsai** as Chief Product Officer to oversee all design, merchandising, and global sourcing for the company. The apparel retailer also appoints **Rosalind Drisko** as VP Public Relations & Brand Marketing, reporting to **Matt Trainor**, SVP Brand Creative.

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Nest Fragrances names **Maria Dempsey** as its new CEO.

Jakks Pacific reorganizes its top ranks: **Tara Hefter** is promoted to EVP & GM Disguise (the company's costume div.), **Dan Cooney Jr.** is promoted to EVP Intl., and **Virginia Reneau** is hired as VP Global Licensing. At the end of 2019, both current Intl. President **Carmine Russo** and Disguise President **Joe Anton** will retire.

VF Corp. appoints **Laurel Krueger** as VP & General Counsel of Kontoor Brands, the independent, publicly traded company that will result from the previously announced separation of VF's Jeanswear organization.

NBCUniversal taps **Bonnie Hammer** to lead the development of its new in-house streaming service launching early 2020 as Chairman Direct-to-Consumer & Digital Enterprises. Hammer will also manage NBCUniversal's relationships with digital giants like Vox, Snap, and BuzzFeed.

Separately, NBCUniversal appoints **Mark Lazarus** as Chairman Croadcast, Cable, Sports & News and **Jeff Shell** as Chairman Film & Entertainment, overseeing NBC Broadcasting, Spanish-language network Telemundo, and NBCUniversal's international operations. **Donna Langley** assumes Shell's position as Chairman Universal Filmed Entertainment Group.

New enterprise Endeavor Streaming will be co-led by Endeavor Chief Technology Officer **Nick Wilson** and Endeavor Streaming President Business Operations **Will Staeger**. Endeavor Content taps **Tim Robinson** as COO.

DHX Media appoints **Lara Ilie** to the newly created position of VP Rights Strategy, reporting to CCO **Anne Loi**, to implement integrated strategies worldwide and manage sales of DHX Media's content library in Canada, Italy, Spain, and Australia. Separately, **Rachel Taylor** is now Commercial Director for WildBrain, based in the U.K. and reporting to Managing Director **Jon Gisby**.

Imagine Entertainment's **Brian Grazer** and **Ron Howard** launch Imagine Kids & Family, a division that will develop and produce premium animated and live-action feature films, television series, and short-form content across platforms. **Stephanie Sperber** will continue her role as CEO of White Space Entertainment while also serving as President of Imagine Kids & Family, and Imagine Entertainment will continue its ongoing client relationship with White Space.

**Jon Ollwerther** joins Genius Brands Intl. as its new VP Business Development.

**Joanna Dodd Massey** launches J.D. Massey Associates, Inc. (JDMA), a governance strategy and communications firm focused on corporate brand risk and reputation management with offices in New York and Los Angeles.

Following the death of his brother **Blake Nordstrom**, **Erik Nordstrom** will add the role of Principal Executive to his current remit as Co-President with brother **Peter Nordstrom** at fashion retailer Nordstrom.

Macmillan Publishers hires **Maya Mavjee** as President Publishing Strategy, starting March 1, reporting to CEO **John Sargent**. Separately, the publisher hires licensing specialist **Keith Pashley** to bring the licensing programme for its Dear Zoo brand in-house.

**Kelly Del Sordi** joins Billboard Media Group as its new Director Licensing, leading consumer products for Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Spin, and Vibe.

JCPenney promotes **Mike Robbins** to EVP & Chief Stores/Supply Chain Officer and hires **Truett Horne** as Chief Transformation Officer. The retailer is still looking to fill five other high-level positions to facilitate its turnaround, including Chief Merchant, a role it eliminated last year.

Serta Simmons Bedding names **Melanie Huet** as CMO. She reports to CEO **Michael Traub**.

Studio71 launches a 360-degree talent management unit dubbed Moxie, operating out of its U.K. headquarters. **Grace O'Reilly** leads as Director Talent Strategy, **Rebecca Dowel** serves as Talent Strategy Manager, and **Marlene Juenck** is named Head Talent. Moxie's roster includes seven-piece parkour team Storrer (3.6MM YouTube subscribers); family channels King Kenny (1.6MM) and TheNewAdamanB99 (1.8MM); and lifestyle celebrities Alizey Mirza (110K Instagram followers). Studio71 is owned by Red Arrow Studios, a division of ProSiebenSat.1.

Content licensing giant Jukin Media hires **Craig Parks** as its new General Manager Brands, a newly-created role.

Lloyd Flanders promotes **Warren Juliano** to SVP Sales & Marketing and **Jess Flanders** to VP Marketing.

Turner appoints **Riccardo Donato** as VP Commercial Development U.K. & Nordics, based out of London.

Crest Furniture promotes **Mike Gallagher** to President.

**Chris Lamontagne** is the new CEO of Teespring, which operates Merch Shelves with YouTube.

CMON promotes **Adam Lovell** to VP Sales & Operations.

Hallmark taps **Michael Todd** to serve as Managing Director Australia & New Zealand.

Rocket Licensing appoints **Richard Hollis** as Head Retail.

**Paula Kaplan** expands her role as EVP Talent Development of Viacom Digital Studios to now oversee talent for Nickelodeon. She reports to both Nickelodeon President **Brian Robbins** and Viacom Digital Studios President **Kelly Day**.

At Asmodee, **Steve Buckmaster** is now Head European Distribution. **Alex Green** replaces him as Managing Director U.K. and **Anil Boodhoo** takes on the new role of Sales & Marketing Director.

Dakine Equipment, a division of JR286 Inc., in partnership with Marquee Brands appoints **David Orr** as Global General Manager.

Ravensburger North America hires **Jake Theis** as Head Marketing.

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**Melanie Nolan** is named CP & Publisher at Knopf Books for Young Readers.

Character Options promotes **Laura Gunton** to the role of Senior Brand Manager.

Ex-Netflix kids' chief **Andy Yeatman** joins Moonbug to lead its Americas-based children's content business.

G2 Esports adds Commercial Director **Lindsey Eckhouse** and Partnership Executive **Sabrina Ratih** to its senior management team.

Indie Russian broadcaster CTC Media appoints **Ksenia Gordienko** as Director Animation, reporting to CEO **Vyacheslav Murugov**. She will develop new original animated projects and seek Russian and international licensing opportunities with the goal of building global franchises.

Bass Pro Shops names **Michael P. McDermott**, a former executive at the Lowe's home-improvement chain, as the replacement for **Jim Hagale** as President.

Channel 5 preschool block Milkshake! hires **Louise Maloney** as its new Acquisitions & Program Manager, reporting directly to VIMN U.K. Kids Programming VP **Louise Bucknole**.

**Kevin Carrigan** resigns from Ralph Lauren, where he was SVP & Creative Director of the women's Lauren and Chaps brands.

**Mickey Drexler** steps down as chairman of J. Crew, exiting the company after a 15-year stint, at a time when the retailer is also looking for a new CEO. Drexler resigned as CEO in 2017 and was succeeded by **Jim Brett**, who left late last year.

Snap CFO **Tim Stone**, the Amazon alum who joined in May, is leaving to "pursue other opportunities" as a result of a "personality clash" between him and CEO **Evan Spiegel**.

**Rakesh Kapoor** plans to step down from his role as CEO of consumer goods group Reckitt Benckiser by the end of the year.

Express President & CEO **David Kornberg** steps down; COO **Matthew Moellering** will replace him on an interim basis as the retailer searches for a permanent replacement.

**Jerry Stritzke**, CEO of REI, resigns after an investigation into a personal relationship with the unnamed leader of "another organization in the outdoor industry," the company said. Stritzke joined the retailer in 2013 and his resignation will be effective March 15.

**JD Gibbs**, who served as President and later Co-Chairman of NASCAR team Joe Gibbs Racing, has passed away.

Women in Toys, Licensing & Entertainment (WIT) honors **Pam Kaufman** (President Global Consumer Products at Viacom/Nickelodeon) and **Gaye Dean** (Marketing Director, Licensing at Target), at the 15th Annual Wonder Women Awards.

Machinima ceases operations and lay off most of its staff roughly one month after the 19 year-old gamer-focused digital network was subsumed under the Otter Media umbrella amid the reorganization of parent company AT&T's digital properties.

Puma is establishing a new North American headquarters in Somerville, MA that will combine two of its current offices based in Boston and Westford. The move will be consummated in 2021.



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