

TV Kids.ws

ABOUT ARTICLES MULTIMEDIA NEWSLETTERS PRINT SUBSCRIPTION ADVERTISE E-EDITIONS CONTACTS WORLDSCREENINGS CONTACT

TOP STORIES »

[Mediatoon Unveils Chicken Town](#)

[Disney UK Plans 3D Release for The Lion King](#)

[Deadline Approaching for MIP Junior Kids' Jury Entries](#)

[PTC Study Takes Issue with "Adult Content" in Kids' Animation](#)

[41e Presents Pilot for Blake: Double Identity](#)

FEATURES

[Now Playing Live](#)

[Preschool Swings Forward](#)

[Shopping Odyssey](#)

[Make Them Laugh](#)

[Make Way for 3-D](#)

INTERVIEWS

[Q&A: Tatiana Rodriguez](#)

[Q&A: Elie Dekel](#)

[Q&A: Hans Ulrich Stoef](#)

[Stuart Snyder](#)

[Elie Dekel](#)

PROFILES

[The House That Studio100 Built](#)

[Licensing Show Preview: Flying Off the Shelf](#)

[MIPTV: The Week in Kids](#)

[Bringing Back the Magic](#)

[Switchover Media Takes Lead in Italian Kids' Space](#)

COLUMNS

[Publisher's Note: The Marble Revolution](#)

[Anger Management](#)

[Figure It Out](#)

[The Wisdom of Crowds](#)

Licensing Show Preview: Flying Off the Shelf

By Anna Carugati

Published: June 20, 2011



Like

Renewed for a Third Season!

With creativity, persistence and out-of-the-box strategies, independent kids' companies are launching successful licensing-and-merchandising programs.

When a character from a book or TV show captures the imagination of a child, a remarkable bond takes hold. The child wants the beloved character to jump out of its two-dimensional form and take life in the real world, in the shape of an action figure, doll, plush toy or game.

Ken Faiер, the president of Nerd Corps Entertainment, notes, "You want to deliver a 22-minute episodic experience that kids will sit and watch and say, 'Wow, this is really cool,' and then get off the couch and say, 'I want to do that and I want to do it in a variety of ways. I want to do it in a very casual online game that I can spend five minutes with; I want to look online to see if there are any short videos that I can watch; I want to go to my iPod touch and download a simple casual game that will cost a dollar; I want to go to the toy store...and I want to buy the video game and play online in a much bigger video-game world."

The resulting consumer products bring hours of fun and strengthen the connection with the brand, and, more important, the revenues derived from licensing and merchandising have become essential in financing shows.

"TV license fees do not allow you to recoup your investment for high-quality content via television or even home video only," explains Hans Ulrich Stoef, the CEO of m4e. "If you have a high budget you need to make the consumer-products part work, otherwise you will lose money."

To help limit some of the risk involved in bringing kids' properties to market, a number of companies are reviving classic brands that have already been successful.

TRIED AND TRUE

"*Power Rangers* is now one of those properties that has transcended into an evergreen, and we've seen a tremendous interest in *Power Rangers* licensing," says Elie Dekel, the president of Saban Brands. "I think it's because of the longevity of the brand."

Bandai America is the master toy licensee for *Power Rangers*. Action figures are core to the property's play pattern, but more products will be coming throughout this year, including pajamas, school supplies, costumes, video games for the Wii and Xbox, mobile apps and digital products.

Another company that is reintroducing popular brands is Classic Media. "The beauty of working with a classic is that there is something that made it work the first time," says Nicole Blake, the company's executive VP of global marketing and consumer products. "So we identify the DNA of that property: Why did kids care about it when it first came out? Why did it have so many fans? We stay true to that but present it in a fun and fresh way. It's about having visibility and creating an event and a way for fans to engage with the brand. That can be done with TV, gaming, publishing or film. For example, we brought back *Where's Wally?* with new publishing and gaming. In the case of *Voltron*, the new TV series *Voltron Force* premieres this month on Nicktoons in the U.S., and that will be the first media event of the franchise in ten years."

Mattel will develop toy lines based on classic *Voltron* and the new *Voltron Force*; they are scheduled to launch in 2011 and 2012, respectively. THQ is preparing video games; the first is scheduled for release this fall. Other products include T-shirts, tops, swimwear, sleepwear, costumes, graphic novels and comics.

"When you are reinventing a classic, the strategy is to reengage the people that grew up with that property and remember it," says Blake. "Whereas when you are launching a new property, you have to establish awareness first and foremost."

A LOYAL FOLLOWING

For many children's properties, television is the most important launch vehicle. This was the case with the new version of *The Jungle Book* from DQ Entertainment.

"Our strategy is quite simple: the greater the TV audiences, the larger the followers it creates," states Tapaas Chakravarti, DQE's chairman, CEO and executive producer. "We have managed to generate very good traction on the L&M side. We have laid equal emphasis on both pay-TV and free-TV broadcasters so that the show reaches maximum audiences."



DQE's The Jungle Book



World Screen is the proud publisher of The International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences official publication - The International Emmy® Almanac. For more information, click here.