



NEWS RELEASE

Date 28 January 2005

Ref: TRA/0105

...AND THE WINNER IS!

The UK's voice of the toy retailers recognised the leading toys and the people behind them at its annual awards ceremony tonight (Friday, 28 January 2005).

The awards event for 2005 - Celebrating Our Stars - was held at the heart of the British Toy Fair which is currently running at ExCel in London's Docklands, and was staged in association with Turner Broadcasting Channels, Toonami, Cartoon Network and Boomerang. Around 500 toy industry executives gathered for the event at the Platinum Suite, held as part of the British Toy Fair, which opened yesterday (Thursday) at Excel and runs until Sunday (30 January).

The Toy Retailers Association has been promoting the role of the toy retailer and the value of toys to the consumer since 1950 and now represents more than 75% of the toy trade in the UK.

Members of the Toy Retailers Association include Toys R Us, Hamleys, Gamleys, The Entertainer and all independent shops who are members of the Toymaster and Youngsters buying groups, as well as many other small and medium sized retailers.

The Association's chairman Ben Green told guests: 'The face of the whole toy industry is changing. We did not expect the challenges that 2004 threw at us. Many thought that things would improve from the previous year, how wrong they were.'

‘For many years retailers have competed for market share with price as their main weapon, but we are now firmly in a new age, the age of ‘promotions’. The High Street is under renewed threat from large format and out-of-town retailers. Manufacturers and retailers alike, have to adapt to this new environment and the challenges it brings.

‘Looking ahead to 2005 only one thing seems certain, there will be change! Suppliers and retailers alike will need to work in ever closer partnerships to nurture and grow their joint businesses, we all need each other to survive and prosper. Innovative solutions and ideas are required to continue to drive our industry forward.

‘The trade associations will need to work hard both jointly and with their individual members to protect against the ever increasing burden of red tape, not only from Westminster but from Europe as well.

‘We cannot predict what challenges face us or what our industry will look like twelve months from now, what is certain is that by working together and discussing the issues facing us we are more likely to overcome them.

‘The Toy Retailers Association has already taken the first steps to encourage dialogue and debate between all sectors in our industry and we will continue this work,’ added Mr Green.

The Company of the Year Award, which recognises the effect a single company can have on the toy industry, went to Leapfrog, which has developed into a top five company in the sector in just five years and enjoyed four products in the Top 15 sellers by value in December.

Character Options’ Robosapien, which Mr Green told guests, ‘captured the hearts of the industry at Toy Fair last year’ was named as Toy of the Year.

Commented Mr Green: ‘It was launched in June; it won over journalists and enjoyed massive PR coverage; it went on to drive sales not only to kids but to their Dads as well, proving that the toy industry can sell high ticket products.’

The full award details are:

Special Recognition Award	CASDON - Penny Falls DEKKERTOYS - Spider Man Suits PLAYMOBIL - Noah's Ark
Game of the Year	HASBRO - Trivial Pursuit 20 th Edition
Craze of the Year	GROSSMAN - Cosmolight Alien Eggs
Retro Toy of the Year	BANDAI - Tamagotchi Connexion
Outdoor Toy of the Year	TP ACTIVITY TOYS - Trampolines
Feature Doll of the Year	ZAPF - Baby Annabell
Pocket Money Toy of the Year	MATTELL - Hot Wheels Basic Car Assortment
Electronic Learning Toy of the Year	VTECH - V-Smile
Plush Toy of the Year	HASBRO - FurReal Luv Cubs
Pre-School Toy of the Year	TOMY - Aquadraw
Girls Toy of the Year	VIVID IMAGINATION - Bratz Funk Out Party Assortment
Construction Toy of the Year	TREASURE TROVE - GeoMag
Company of the Year	LEAPFROG
Toy of the Year	CHARACTER OPTIONS - Robosapien
Lifetime Achievement	ALAN MUNN

Details about the organisation can be found at www.ToyRetailersAssociation.co.uk

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Notes to Editors

1 The Toy Retailers Association (formerly British Association of Toy Retailers) acts as both a watchdog and persuader to ensure fair play for toy retailers. It also represents the toy retail sector on government panels and safety organisations in the UK informing and advising members on current and future legislation, as well as ethical practices in respect of toy safety, requirements under the Health and Safety Executive, consumer and employment rights.

2 In association with The British Toy & Hobby Association (BTHA), all Toy Retailers Association (formerly BATR) members are Approved Lion Mark Retailers - that is they adhere to a strict Code of Practice on selling toys.

The British Toy and Hobby Association developed the Lion Mark to be displayed on products of the highest safety standards, and the Toy Retailers Association produced a strict Code of Practice for its members, which together with regular safety advice and activity, allows them to display the symbol as an Approved Lion Mark Retailer.

This scheme has proved a major contributor to the reduction of complaints and prosecutions involving toy safety.

3 The Toy Retailers Association keeps members up-to-date about legislation and other relevant matters resulting from both the UK Parliament and the European Parliament. It is a member of the British Shops and Stores Association and is invited to make members views known to these bodies and governments.

4 Toy Retailers Association members undertake a number of commitments, including offering for sale only products that conform to all current toy safety legislation.

Members also undertake not to market or sell counterfeit toys and ensure that advertising is honest, truthful, legal and decent and is in accordance with all applicable codes, in particular the British Code of Advertising Practice and the ITC Code.

They also undertake that any toy gun, imitation or replica firearm modelled on a firearm design or produced since 1998 and offered for sale is marked in accordance with the BTHA code for such a product. A full copy of the code of practice can be found on the organisation's website at www.ToyRetailersAssociation.co.uk

5 The Toy Retailers Association can be contacted at:

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