

Volume XVII Editions #1
Continually Updated During the Period of:
January 3-9, 2015

**Not only does 'the Bloom Report' give you all the news you need to know...
 we give you all the news you didn't know you needed to know!!!**

Compiled below, are "links" to toy industry news & articles. **"the Bloom Report" will be continually updated throughout every business day. You can reach all of these "links" by "clicking" on each of them to view the website that contains the story. For all the latest news and information, visit "the Bloom Report" regularly.**

- Registered subscribers will receive a **weekly e-mail** from **"the Bloom Report"** announcing the posting of a new edition to our website and other important announcements and information. An edition of **"the Bloom Report"** will consist of "links" compiled for the past seven days. Anytime you visit **"the Bloom Report"** website, "links" for the past seven days will be posted. The most current posting dates will be listed first to make it easier to keep up with all that's new and important to you. As we continually update and post "links" throughout every business day, every time you visit the website, all the latest news and information will be there for you to view.
- We hope this makes **"the Bloom Report"** a productive resource for you to use

*****Company Profile Of The Week*****

**Want to know more about the companies in our industry?
 In this space we feature a different company profile each week...**

This week's profile: Rotuba, Inc.

Scents for toys (and many other products) that last and last - Is the mantra at Linden, NJ based **Rotuba, Inc. – maker of Auracell®** – a scented bio-plastic polymer. A "bio what", you may ask?

Auracell® www.auracell.com/whatis.html polymer is a renewable natural material – cellulose acetate – which is made from wood pulp (yes, wood) or cotton instead of petroleum base. This makes it breathable, which – through a patented process - locks the fragrance inside and releases it slowly when exposed to air, so the aroma lasts much longer than with typical scented plastics. According to Adam Bell - President and CEO - the fragrance typically lasts at least six months after it has been removed from its packaging and that's a very conservative estimate because they have products that have been around for years where the fragrance is still very noticeable.

Auracell® plastic resin can be used without further processing in its base pellet form – say in a mesh bag inside a stuffed toy or pillow – and it is also readily extrusion and injection-moldable into an accessory or component.

Scented products have been growing in popularity as marketers come to realize the power of scent marketing. Smell is the strongest of the senses, and the most closely linked to the emotion-processing areas of the brain. Think about it. The smell of a simple pleasure—say, a chocolate ice cream cone on a summer evening—can summon wonderful feelings and specific memories of good times.

Fragrances have a powerful influence on our moods, behavior and memories—all great places for a brand to linger. Research suggests people remember 35% of what they smell, compared to just 5% of what they see, 2% of what they hear and 1% of what they touch.

In the toy industry – the key reason for adding fragrance to products is far more prosaic. Kids just love scented dolls and toys – not to mention jewelry and accessories! While Rotuba, founded in 1945, has been selling resin to toy makers for a few years, the marketing efforts relied mainly on word-of-mouth and networking, so in late 2013 the company decided to make a more concerted push into the market by teaming up Jim Stern – a veteran of toy industry component sales and B2B services. If he hasn't contacted you yet to preach the gospel of smelly toys, you can reach him at james@rotuba.com to learn more.

Auracell® - a sustainable plastic that's perfect for nearly any scented product you can imagine!
At the heart of Auracell is Cellulose, a material derived from sustainable resources that's ideally suited to carrying complex scents.

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www.rotuba.com
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E-mails to the Editor

Always interesting, sometimes provocative, occasionally humorous...

Don't miss what our subscribers have to say!

[Click on this link to view "Emails to the Editor"](#)

posted 2/28/14: Conditions in China Toy Factories

posted 3/16/13: ToyFest West Observations

posted 2/15/13: New York Toy Fair 2013 Observations

posted 8/31/12: South & Central America & Mexico Toy Markets

Tell us what's on your mind about the Toy Industry or "the Bloom Report"...

Let us know what you think about the issues facing us all...

e-mail us at: email.to.editor@theBloomReport.com

"the Bloom Report" announces that Philip Bloom (Publisher) and Ethel Beckett (Operations Manager)

will be at Toy Fair in Booth #2701 on Saturday February 14 thru Monday February 16.

We hope that all of our friends and subscribers will stop by to say hello.

"the Bloom Report" continues to provide our industry with all the news you need to know...

as well as all the news you didn't know you needed to know!!!

"the Bloom Report" Covering the Week Of:
Saturday January 3 through Friday January 9, 2015

Financial & Legal News

Saturday January 3 through Friday January 9, 2015

**Links to the financial news & articles appropriate to the industries we cover...
You can reach the WebSite that contains the complete story by "clicking" on each
"headline link"**

[Ravensburger Acquires Swedish Toy Company BRIO](#)~The Ravensburger Group has acquired the renowned Swedish toy company BRIO AB from the Swedish investor Proventus. BRIO is known above all for its high-quality wooden train sets and ranks among the most prestigious brands in the toy market. The deal makes it possible for BRIO to continue its growth. The acquisition also unites two family businesses, which share a similar corporate and product philosophy as well as a longlasting history and tradition, Ravensburger being 131 and BRIO 130 years of age. Ravensburger chairman...

[Federal mediators join West Coast ports dispute](#)~U.S. mediators are joining the labor talks at West Coast ports in an attempt to jumpstart the stalled negotiations between the powerful International Longshore & Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA). The U.S. Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service announced its involvement in the talks. "We are prepared and ready to render prompt assistance," Allison Beck, acting director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, said. The ILWU and PMA are negotiating a new contract to replace one that...

[Super Soaker creator awarded nearly \\$73 million in royalty dispute](#)~Lonnie Johnson, 65, who holds more than 80 patents, is most known for inventing the Super Soaker water gun. He, was recently awarded \$72.9 million from Hasbro for royalties Johnson believed were owed to him for use of the ever-popular Super Soaker water gun design. Johnson filed a claim against the toy giant for underpaid royalties from 2007 to 2012, stemming from an inventor's dispute going back to 2001. Apparently, Hasbro agreed to pay Johnson royalties from the Nerf water gun line, but Johnson claimed he...

[Target's New CEO Is About to Make a Big Decision on the Retailer's Future](#)~New Target Chairman and CEO Brian Cornell is poised to make one of the biggest decisions of his professional career: whether to pull his new employer completely out of Canada, where it currently has 133 stores. "We know that to succeed in Canada we will need a major step change in performance, and the fact is, given where we are performing today, we need to see improved financial performance from every Target store in Canada over time," said Cornell on the company's third-quarter earnings call in...

[Why Canada is giving Target heartburn](#)~If you build dozens of beautiful department stores, but raise prices too high and leave many shelves bare, will anyone come? For Target's floundering Canada unit, the answer is no. The retailer's botched rollout of 133 stores in the country has turned into a major headache for CEO Brian Cornell. He pulled out all the stops over the holidays to revive Target Canada, including stuffing store shelves with thousands of new items and matching competitors' prices. The company's holiday performance there will likely factor heavily into Cornell's plans for...

[Target CEO's \\$47 Million Retirement Illustrates 401\(k\) Gap](#)~The gap in the U.S. workplace between the highest and lowest paid has been growing for years. Far less noticed has been the growing gulf in retirement pay. While the very top often continue to receive executive pensions as well as other benefits, most workers are left only with their 401(k) plans. CEO compensation at large U.S. companies was 204 times higher than the pay of workers on average in 2013, up 20 percent since 2009. And the retirement benefits divide "perpetuates income inequality into old age," said a corporate...

[Sellers on Amazon.com sell more than 2 billion items in 2014](#)~Amazon.com said that sellers on its site sold more than 2 billion items in 2014, setting a record. Sellers from than 100 countries fulfilled orders to customers in 185 countries, using the Fulfillment by Amazon service. China and Hong Kong-based sellers offering goods internationally grew 80% from 2013, while offers from India more than tripled. On Cyber Monday, more than 16 million units were ordered, and orders processed by businesses using Amazon Payments grew more than 60% from the year earlier...

[Philadelphia Toys R Us store hit by gunshot during robbery attempt](#)~Police say a man trying to rob a Toys R Us store in Philadelphia fired a gunshot at the front door and fled. They say the man fired at the glass door after employees preparing to open the Port Richmond store refused to let him inside. No injuries were reported. No arrests have been made. The investigation is continuing...

[A day with Apple Pay: The pros and cons of paying with a wave of your Iphone](#)~For years, payments industry insiders have been skeptical of the rise of the mobile wallet, a vision of the future where customers eschew wallets for credit cards stored on their smartphones. And then came Apple Pay. The new product, which lets customers pay for items in retail stores with a wave of their iPhone, has seen more adoption from banks, retailers and credit card companies than previous offerings from Google or cellular carriers like Verizon and AT&T. And while it's too early to say the product...

[Tencent and Alibaba are invading each other's turf in China By Lutz Muller](#)~Alibaba's recent IPO generated a lot of hoopla for the company. However, there is another Chinese entity that is a bigger technical company, much more diversified and much more profitable - Tencent, Inc. Alibaba and Tencent are now squaring off against each other in China and this may well have implications for investors in either company. This is how the two companies compared in revenue terms for the third quarter 2014...

[Why many of Spain's small businesses are being wiped out after New Year's Day](#)~The resplendent Christmas display of dolls and teddy bears in the window of the Asi toy store is a hallmark of the holiday season on Madrid's Gran Via, one of the Spanish capital's busiest shopping streets. This year, there is a farewell notice among the decorations: "Thank you for these 72 years!" it says. Dozens of shoppers stop to take photos for posterity of one of Madrid's oldest and best-loved stores. Asi is soon to close its doors for the last time: Jan. 1 marks the end of an era in Spain, with the...

[LeapFrog Hopes To Hop Into The New Year](#)~LeapFrog (NYSE:LF) is coming off quite the dismal year with three consecutive quarters of negative income. Analysts are expecting that string to end when the company reports fourth quarter earnings in February. However, the earnings estimate range of .16 to .23 per share won't be enough to turn the year from negative to positive. The big unknown is whether or not this positive catalyst will be enough to make investors' 2015 new year a prosperous one...

[Can LeapFrog Bounce Back in 2015](#)~It wasn't easy to be a LeapFrog investor in 2014. The stock plunged 41% on the year as the maker of electronic learning toys experienced lightening demand for its once popular kid-friendly tablets. Its first half of fiscal year 2015 has been horrendous, posting back-to-back quarters of 43% declines over the prior year in net sales. Making matters worse, LeapFrog has delivered wider quarterly deficits than Wall Street analysts were targeting. LeapFrog was a pioneer in making reading and learning fun with its electronic playthings, and for a while it...

[LeapFrog Has Cash And Knows How To Use It](#)~Although it suffered poor performance in the wake of large inventory carryover following the 2013 holiday season, LeapFrog's management team has demonstrated that the company has great potential as a children's educational entertainment company. LeapFrog entered the 2014 holiday season with a very strong product lineup. Its three major products, the LeapPad 3, LeapTV, and the LeapBand, all won awards from Dr. Toy, and LeapTV and LeapBand have no significant direct competition. While the company operates in a competitive industry with relatively high capital intensity, it has a balance sheet with no debt and very high cash reserves. Despite these strengths, the company...

[Dynamics, Inc.: Come See the First "Computer in a Credit Card"](#)~Security: Interactive Payment Cards from MasterCard and Dynamics, Inc. For enhanced security, Dynamics interactive payment cards can include a display and keypad. When a consumer enters the correct unlocking code into the buttons of the card, the payment card number is provided on a display (for online use) and is written to the stripe (for in-store use)...

[2014: The Year We Confronted the Meeting Menace](#)~Q: What has the potential power to kill Barbie, cost billions, and cripple teams? A: Bad meetings We have met the enemy and it is us. The secret is out -- we're wasting hundreds of hours and millions of dollars in pointless meetings across organizations both big and small. This is not new information. In fact, some of the most often quoted The Time Trap, published in 1972. Yet, in 2014, something shifted. We stopped talking about meetings as a time management problem and started talking about them as an organizational...

[A Better Mattel Analyst Report](#)~Speaking from experience, most of the traders out there that I have had conversations with have to no ability to judge the intrinsic worth of a stock. That's happening with Mattel right now. Lots of you want to be like Warren Buffett, and I'm going to tell you right now, that unless you learn to interpret accounting statements, you will never have the ability to understand what he does. So this is an article about investment accounting, and a quick guide to help you see what's likely coming in the 4th quarter for Mattel...

[The 12 worst investments of 2014, #10: Mattel](#)~**What happened?** Sales of Mattel's Barbie and Fisher-Price brands plunged in 2014, and the company saw a 20 year partnership with Disney bite the dust, just as Disney's film Frozen became the must-see movie for under-eights everywhere. **Who are the losers?** Barbie sales plunged 21% in a year and sales of American Girl dropped 4%, but sales have been in decline for at least three years. **Who are the winners?** Hasbro, makers of My Little Pony, picked up the Disney Princess contract instead of Mattel (which will take effect...

[Sears an 'enormous loser' this holiday](#)~Former top Sears executive Mark Cohen is at it again with harsh words recently about Sears holiday performance and long term viability. Cohen, former chairman and CEO of Sears Canada turned teacher at Columbia's business school, appeared on CNBC to share his views on a holiday season with top line growth that appears to have exceeded earlier forecasts. "Sears again is going to be an enormous loser," Cohen said. Overall, the holidays could be a catastrophe from a profitability standpoint from many retailers due to extensive...

[Amazon Didn't Toy With Prices This Christmas](#)~Both Walmart and Toys R Us dropped prices after Black Friday and raised them after Super Saturday. But Amazon held steady throughout. Do you think as many Americans would disrupt their Thanksgiving holidays with shopping trips if they had access to the chart below. Target, Toys R Us, and Walmart all offered lower prices on toys after Black Friday this year—in some cases decidedly so. Toy pricing, on average, was 8% lower at Toys R Us on December 2 than it was on the nation's biggest shopping day of November 28, and...

[Ringing In A Good Year for Retail](#)~The shouting is over – 2014 ended with strong sales and most retailers will be happy with their sales results. Now inventories have to be cleansed and pared down to make room for the New Year. The Christmas season was good, helped during recent weeks by even more sale events and promotions than usual. All retailers had the proverbial hook out to pull customers into their stores through strong value promotions. Stores were open longer, highlighting managements effort to generate business. I think that my estimate of a 4% increase for the...

[Toys and Games in Poland...New Study Released](#)~Euromonitor International's Toys and Games in Poland report offers a comprehensive guide to the size and shape of the market at a national level. It provides the latest retail sales data 2009-2013, allowing you to identify the sectors driving growth. It identifies the leading companies, the leading brands and offers strategic analysis of key factors influencing the market - be they new product developments, distribution or pricing issues. Forecasts to 2018 illustrate how the market is set to change...

Company Reporting	Financial Reporting (January 3-9, 2015)
Financials	Scholastic Corporation (SCHL)
Company Reporting	Future Financial Reporting
Family Dollar Stores, Inc. (NYSE: FDO)	January 8 ~Discount store chain operating more than 8,100 stores in 46 states will host a conference call for investors and analysts to discuss financial results for the first quarter ended November 29, 2014. The Company will also discuss various business initiatives for fiscal 2015. After some prepared remarks from the management team...
Electronic Arts Inc. (EA)	January 27 ~Will release its financial results for the third quarter fiscal year 2015. In conjunction with this release, EA will host a conference call to review its financial results for the third quarter, discuss its outlook for the future and may disclose other material developments affecting its business and/or financial performance. Listeners may...
Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. (NASDAQ:TTWO)	February 3 ~Announced that it plans to report financial results for the third quarter of its fiscal year 2015, ended December 31, 2014. The Company plans to hold a conference call to discuss its results at 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time, which can be accessed by dialing (877) 407-0984 or (201) 689-8577. A live, listen-only webcast and a replay of...
Activision Blizzard, Inc. (Nasdaq: ATVI)	February 5 ~Intends to release its fourth quarter 2014 results after the close of the market. In conjunction with this release, will host a conference call that will be broadcast over the Internet. presentation corresponding with the conference call will be available in Adobe Acrobat format at http://investor.activision.com/events.cfm . A replay of...

Stories & Comments

Saturday January 3 through Friday January 9, 2015

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[5 Traditions Surrounding The Three Wise Men Day "Día de Reyes"](#)~January 6 is the end of the christmas holiday season for most people in Latin America and Spain because the Three Kings Day ("Día de Reyes") is still coming on the 12th day of Christmas. For many children excitement is high in anticipation for the Three Kings to bring the presents Santa Claus brought to others. The holiday marks the arrival of the three Wise Men to adore baby Jesus, whom, according to the Gospel of Matthew, found the divine child by following a star across the desert for 12 days to Bethlehem...

[5 Ways American Girl Dolls Are So Much Better Than Barbie For Young Girls](#)~When I was growing up, American Girl Dolls were a big deal. To receive one was a Major Life Moment. My sisters and I had avidly consumed all of the American Girl Doll books by that point, but the dolls—Samantha, Kirsten, and Molly were available then—seemed like an impossible dream. But there she was that Christmas, nestled in her box. I still have Kirsten wrapped up in my parent's

attic, alongside my sisters' Samantha and Molly dolls. Here are five reasons that they are worth holding...

[BabyFirst, the Channel for Babies & Toddlers, Now Available on TWC](#) ~BabyFirst is now available to Time Warner Cable customers nationwide. The award-winning independent network features fun, interactive and age-appropriate content for babies, toddlers and their parents. Programming is created by leading experts to help tots and their parents explore developmental basics like numbers, colors, animals, art, music and more. "We are proud to work with Time Warner Cable to bring BabyFirst's beloved programs to more families across the U.S." BabyFirst's schedule of programs...

[Stunt car maker builds life-size Hot Wheels for Mattel](#)~A race car that can withstand eight G-forces on a double-barrel loop. A dune buggy that can hit a ramp and launch into a 360-degree corkscrew flip. A Darth Vader roadster that breathes like the Star Wars super villain and tops out at 150 mph. These are among the life-size Hot Wheels vehicles that have come out of Action Vehicle Engineering. To date, Hammon has built 15 Hot Wheels vehicles. Other Star Wars cars likely will come out in advance of the Episode VII film, which hits theaters this fall, but Hammon couldn't discuss...

[Do people in China think that Buzz Lightyear and Iron Man are the same guy, or something?](#) ~Bootleg superhero toys have been all the rage on the internet amongst many nerds around the world. However, a very interesting example of bootleg superhero toys has arrived. As you can see in the photograph, it's a bootleg Avengers toy set featuring two small figures, and those are the Thing from the Fantastic Four, what appears to be Kingpin. However, the only large figure in the box is an almost unappealing version of Buzz Lightyear from Disney and Pixar's Toy Story franchise. ...

[SBPRA Introduces GAMIBOTS](#)~So what are "Gamibots"? This fun craft was invented by author Bakham Sayavong, who came up with the idea of creating a robot made out of paper. Much like origami - which is the Japanese art of paper folding - "Gamibots" is a wonderful art form that is inexpensive and can be made by most anyone. "Gamibots" originated when the author was younger and his family didn't have much money to spend on toys. He created "Gamibots" out of paper to play with instead. One big advantage to "Gamibots", is that crafters can create more than one, even...

['Hobbit' Movie Dominates Box Office for Third Straight Weekend](#)~"The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies" held the top spot in U.S. cinemas for the third straight weekend, outdrawing the new horror release, "The Woman in Black 2: Angel of Death." The third and last installment of J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Hobbit" posted sales of \$21.9 million in the U.S. and Canada. Disney's "Into the Woods" took in \$19.1 million, while "Unbroken" collected \$18.4 million."Angel of Death" generated sales of \$15.1 million. Studios and theaters enter the year looking to bounce back from a slow...

[How a home computer from 1979 pushed electronic entertainment to the bleeding edge](#)~35 years ago, a video game revolution was sweeping through American culture. Shopping mall arcades were crammed with teenagers blasting menacing Space Invaders and lethal Asteroids to fading phosphorous particles. Cartridge-based home gaming consoles were beginning to catch on, bringing interactive entertainment into living rooms. Two revolutionary new home computers from Atari appeared on store shelves, machines which would forever change our perceptions of what PCs were...

[The perils of toy making...The rewards can be great, but experts warn there are plenty of perils out there for inventors](#)~Tech 4 Kids CEO Brad Pedersen has been pitched every way possible by toy inventors. Reaching out via email, LinkedIn, even telephone, they are usually armed with functional prototypes and snappy demo videos, though "there's a number of inventors who will scratch something on a napkin and send it to us . . . that to us is not that compelling," said

Pederson. "We'll know if an inventor really believes in their invention by the amount of effort they put into their..."

[Lego lost at sea 17 years ago washed up on beaches](#)~Lego is continuing to wash up on the shores of Devon and Cornwall beaches 17 years after a container ship was struck by a freak wave and close to five million pieces were lost overboard. Only three containers from the lost load were recovered intact - the rest were assumed to have sunk and were not considered a hazard for shipping, a report in the Lloyd's List maritime journal...

[Three Kings Day extends holiday shopping season](#)~Christmas may be over but families that celebrate Three Kings Day help extend the holiday shopping season for retailers on both sides of the border. In Latin America that includes the Jan. 6 epiphany when Christians believe the three kings or wise men came bearing gifts for baby Jesus. In Latin America that is the holiday when most children get presents. "A scooter for me," said six-year-old Jessica Talamantes. She carried her gift down South El Paso Street while accompanying her mother and father on a shopping spree. Her...

[Broon F870 Is Coolest Toy Supercar Any Kid Can Own. Even Big Boys Will Drool](#)~Munchkins who want to speed away in their own fancy car can do so thanks to Henes, which has taken the wraps off the Broon F870, a car meant for kids. The Broon F870 is a child-sized electric car and is so cool that it will even make adults wish they were tiny tots and could hitch a ride in the dream machine! "The sophisticated design, state of the art mechanism, the maximum level of safety, and the smartest technology, Broon certainly deserves to be entitled the ultimate the toy of wonders..."

[Kicking Off The Best Possible Start Campaign, Fisher-Price Asks Parents Around The World To Share A Wish For Their Child's Future](#)~Fisher-Price, one of the world's leading infant and preschool toy manufacturers and a subsidiary of Mattel, released a short film entitled Wishes for Baby, marking the official launch of the Best Possible Start marketing campaign. Filmed with real parents around the world on New Year's Day and the final days of December 2014, this short film captures the incredible love and hopes all parents share for their children during those first moments...

[Postal service gives Lego the stamp of success](#)~Post Danmark released two new stamps depicting Lego blocks and figurines as its 2015 contribution to the Europa stamp series. This year's Europe-wide theme for the Europa series, a co-operation program between the European postal services, is toys. International success Martin Pingel, the head of design at Post Danmark, said in a press release that it was therefore not difficult to choose the motif for the Danish stamps. "When it comes to toys, you don't find anything bigger or more popular than Lego bricks," he said. "They are..."

[Not Again: Toys"R"Us sending out Super Smash Bros. Wave 2 amiibo cancellations](#)~They're at it again. Toys"R"Us began sending out emails late Friday morning informing customers with standing amiibo orders and pre-orders that their orders were being cancelled. Amid the panic across NeoGAF and Reddit, evidence suggests that the cancelled orders are all (or at least mostly) for Captain Falcon and Pit, the last of the Wave 2 amiibo to arrive at the toy retailer. Wave 3 pre-orders, such as those for the Toys"R"Us-exclusive Lucario amiibo, have not been affected (yet). Since this...

[Dash and Dot -- The Best Toy to Teach Computational Thinking](#)~Wonder Workshop programmable robots for kids---Dash and Dot--- was one of the best toys of the season. They not only SUPER FUN, but also teach kids computational thinking and promote collaboration between siblings and between parent and child. So what motivates me as an educator to write about toys? As teacher of media and tech, I have been interested in ways to teach students computational thinking. This year was the first time I found a toy that helps do just that. Dot and Dash are little robots that use...

[Lego Bricks Are The Uncut Diamonds Of The Modern World](#)~Everybody from thieves to drug dealers is interested. The thing that makes Legos so lucrative is that they are completely untraceable, and their origin can be easily fudged. Thieves can very easily sell unopened Lego sets almost immediately online for as much or more than the retail price. Furthermore, a cautious thief can choose to sit on them for a while, and unlike stolen electronic merchandise, the majority of the large Lego brick sets appreciate in value. Online e-commerce platforms are a perfect place to sell off...

[The story behind one of the most important creations in the history of video games](#)~To understand where NES came from, it's necessary to go back a ways to 1889 and the origin of Nintendo in Japan. Fusajiro Yamauchi was the company's founder, and he had big dreams of manufacturing Hanafuda playing cards. Hanafuda, essentially the Japanese alternative to Western-style gambling card games, was very popular, and Yamauchi believed that by producing intricate and beautiful cards, Nintendo would be able to differentiate itself from the cookie-cutter offerings of his...

[Lavender bear wins Chinese hearts](#)~When Chinese President Xi Jinping stepped on to the airport tarmac in Australia's smallest state Tasmania he was presented with a purple-coloured fluffy toy called Bobbie. The welcome gift he received, stuffed with lavender and wheat, was not in the shape of the southern island's iconic Tasmanian devil, but instead a teddy bear that has captured the hearts and wallets of Chinese consumers. 'Bobbie' has been an overwhelming success in China with a remarkable following — the bear's success has helped creator Robert Ravens, the owner of the...

[The Cat in the Hat building set leaps to LEGO Ideas](#)~Over the years, The Cat in the Hat has taken on numerous guises, from book form and animated series to a motion picture and even musical. Now, a life-long fan of the famous feline has embarked on a mission to bring the character to the world of toys, with the first The Cat in the Hat LEGO Ideas project. Created by Dr. Seuss and first published in 1957, The Cat in the Hat was developed as an alternative to the children's learning books of the time. LEGO Ideas user, ToaRickBrick has made it their task to pair the frantic fun of The Cat...

[It Took This Guy Over 7 Hours To Solve the World's Hardest Rubik's Cube](#)~ Seven hours sounds just about right for the average puzzle enthusiast to solve a standard 3x3x3 Rubik's Cube. Instead of tackling a 3x3x3 cube, he solves this incredibly complex 17x17x17 cube designed by Oskar Van Deventer. In the end it took him about seven-and-a-half hours to get all the colored sides put back in order, and you can check out a timelapse of the entire process. To put things in perspective, there are 66.9 quinquagintatrecentillion possible ways to scramble a 17x17x17 Rubik's...

[10 best sledges](#)~Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow... because we've found the best sledges around for all the family to enjoy. Leave granny's tea tray at home and go for something altogether more fun instead. It's all downhill from here. Verdict: Sledges spend most of their lives languishing in the garage, so for our money, something sturdy like the Lillehammer wooden sledge is perfect as it'll probably be around for your grandkids too. (For info, hipsters have been known to use them as coffee tables in warmer months.) For cheap thrills and spills, though, it's the Zibob every time. Whoosh!...

[13 Classic Vending Machine Toys, Ranked](#)~Let's take a trip down memory lane to the vending machines of our past. I've ranked 13 classic vending machine prizes, starting with the most boring and working my way down to the absolute best — y'know: The truly spectacular ones you were lucky if you encountered just once in your short little life. Cross your fingers you get the golden egg this time!...

[These Are Most-Loved...And Most-Hated...Brands Of The Year](#)~ Which brands improved their reputations on social media in 2014? And which companies made them worse? MGA made the

"loser" list. MGA Entertainment, a manufacturer of children's toys and entertainment products including the Bratz Dolls and Little Tikes, is the largest private toy company in the world. But the toy industry in general has been undergoing many changes as trends in kids play shift away from traditional toys toward digital options. The company is struggling on social this year, with a 75% decrease in...

[The 3 Most Anticipated Video Games of 2015](#)~2015 is shaping up to be one the greatest years in the history of video gaming. A combination of exciting new concepts (Splatoon, Evolve, No Man's Sky) and established franchises (Final Fantasy, Batman: Arkham, Mortal Kombat) should have gamers opening their wallets for software, and spending countless hours in front of their entertainment centers. In total, there are perhaps two dozen different games one might consider highly anticipated, but a few in particular stand out. Below are three of the most highly anticipated games, ones...

[10 top retail stories of 2014: Boardroom coups, activism and drama](#)~What a year it's been in the world of retail. Activists took aim at plenty of companies (hello PetSmart, eBay and Family Dollar), major retailers announced CEO changes (J.C. Penney, Home Depot, Walmart US and Target) in a year that was particularly full of them, there were truces between bitter enemies (LVMH and Hermès) and even changes in fortune for long struggling retailers (books sales are rising again at Barnes & Noble.) Let's have a look at the action-packed year that was...

[Disney Enlists Maker to Create 'Star Wars' Series Online](#)~Maker Studios, the Web video network owned by Walt Disney Co, will produce short-form shows about everything from "Star Wars" fashion to games to help its new parent promote the next film in the space-adventure series. Maker, the largest operator of channels on YouTube, has secured sponsors to help fund the shows. "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" is scheduled to open in theaters on Dec. 18, 2015. The "Star Wars" package underscores why Disney bought Maker for \$500 million in May. The Maker series will help the...

["Hot-Toys Finally Done It ?](#)~After Years Of Waiting!~Have you ever wanted a Superhero figure after leaving the movie theaters. Did you rush to the store to find the perfect action figure that made you happy. Have you ever wondered what it would be like to own Captain America's Suit from the Avengers or Black Widows ? Well now you can well you could always have it just not in your size say what. Most people i talk to about these 12-inch figures never knew they even existed...

[2014: News of the year in the UK](#)~From out of the blue big name acquisitions, high profile exec moves, the dominance of Frozen, Loom Bands and LEGO, through to new retailers staking their claim on the UK High Street, 2014 was another busy year for the toy trade. Look back at some of the key headlines. January: The year kicked off with over 80 per cent of independent and multiple stores telling ToyNews that they feel confident about the year ahead. Responding to our annual retail survey, outlets cited their quality customer service, the rise of in-store events and strong product lines as...

[Why Has 'Avatar' Been Forgotten Just Five Years After Its Release?](#)~Kids don't play 'Avatar' on the playground nor with action figures in their homes. There is little-if-any 'Avatar'-themed merchandise in any given store. Most general moviegoers couldn't tell you the name of a single character from the film, nor could they name any of the actors who appeared in it ... 'Avatar' didn't inspire a legion of would-be 'Avatar' rip-offs, save perhaps for Walt Disney's disastrous 'John Carter.' It didn't set the mold for anything that followed save its use of 3D which turned the post-conversion tool into a...

[Penis-Shaped Play-Doh Toy Ruins Christmas for Uptight People Everywhere](#)~Play-doh had the hard job of doing some damage control on Facebook after what I can only assume was a cock-up in the design phase resulted in a plastic accessory looking less like the Cake Mountain icing maker it was supposed to be and more like, well, a dil-doh. But ruining Christmas? That's probably a bit of a stretch. As with most cases of inappropriate innuendo for children, the ones who get it are

already beyond being affected, and the ones who don't will never notice. That hasn't... [Hasbro Decided To Replace Their Penis-Shaped 'Play-Doh' Toys After Everybody Complained](#)~Earlier we brought you the questionable decision by Hasbro to include their "extruder" tool in their new "Cake Mountain" set, ruining many Christmases across the nation because it looked like a d*ck. The story was trending here after the holidays, but that doesn't mean we can't get the full story now. After allegedly deleting comments on their Facebook and facing complaints left and right, it seems that Hasbro decided to change the "extruder" into a newer concept. his new piece looks like...

[The Cringe-Worthy Capitalism of Tech Toys for Kids](#)~If you haven't heard of Littlebits, they're like legos for the Internet of Things. You snap them together, and use a combination of motors and sensors to make smart devices. Littlebits was the dark horse contender for every year-end Top 10 list for tech toys, and went on to be one of the hottest gifts for parents who wish their kids would take advantage of a few extra brain cells. It's a beautiful pitch: with Littlebits, kids can build the connected networks of their dreams—an erector set for the digital native. But when we went to find more...

[Russia's kids ask Ded Moroz to fulfill their New Year's wishes](#)~Every year Ded Moroz (Grandfather Frost), Russia's equivalent of Santa Claus, receives almost 200,000 letters from every corner of Russia and beyond. Unlike his Western counterpart, however, Ded Moroz gives children presents for New Year's instead of Christmas, sweeping into houses across the land to leave his gifts on the night of Dec. 31. It is generally three- and four-year-old children who believe in Ded Moroz, who traditionally leaves his gifts under the Christmas tree. Seven-year-old children think that they are visited...

[Russians Welcome the Year of the Goat](#)~As Russians get ready to meet the new year, foreign tourists visiting the capitol may be wondering why shop windows and kiosk shelves are flooded with figurines of goats and sheep. But if astrologers are to be believed, the year of 2015 — otherwise known as the "year of the goat" for Russians going by the Chinese astrological calendar — might bring some relief from economic woes. The symbol of 2015 suggests the year may be less turbulent than 2014's year of the horse, which was full of newly annexed territories, diplomatic spats, major...

[Why comic books are big business](#)~For what has for many years been the preserve of the young and the geeky, comic books and other pieces of "nerd culture" entered the mainstream this year with six of the top 10 grossing films in 2014 linked to a graphic novel. "Guardians of the Galaxy", based on a Marvel Comics franchise, was the top grossing film in U.S. theatres, making over \$332 million in the box office and \$772 million worldwide. "Transformers: Age of Extinction" — based on a children's toy and TV series of the 1990s — made the most money globally this year by grossing over...

[Why 'The Lego Movie' is the year's most successful original movie](#)~'Lego' scored at the box office, becoming the fourth-highest grossing film of 2014, but it wasn't only a financial success — it also received praise from critics for how it poked fun at superhero conventions and prophecy-driven tales. This February's "The Lego Movie," an animated film about Emmet Brickowski ("Guardians of the Galaxy" star Chris Pratt) and his adventures with a group of superheroes and franchise characters, was the fourth-highest grossing movie of 2014. It's also one of the only films in the top 10 with an...

[12 Things to Know About the Rubik's Puzzle Cube](#)~About a month ago, I came across my wife's original Rubik's Puzzle Cube. I remember seeing these things my entire life, and thinking that the people who can solve them must be crazy smart. This time, looking at this 34-year-old toy, it struck me that I could learn to solve it. I just had to try. I found out some interesting things along the way...

[Blow Better Bubbles with the 3D Printed Bubble Box](#)~Camilo Parra Palacio is the inventor of a 3D printable bubble blowing machine that he calls the Bubble Box. It is completely 3D printable and available to download entirely free on Thingiverse. Initially designed as a laser cutting project, the

Bubble Box has been turned into a 3D printable toy, which consists entirely of 3D printed parts, and no need for any batteries. "Since the initial design is for laser cutting, it is very easy to 3d print," Palacio says. Palacio initially posted up the design files for his first version of the bubble box, but has...

[Who Made "Ouija Board" the Most Googled Gift in Dallas?](#)~People in other, more normal cities bought each other cool gifts like Beats headphones and men's Uggs for Christmas. Popular toys and games in the rest of America were Legos, Cards Against Humanity and the Xbox, all fine choices. But in Dallas, for some reason, there appears to have been an enormous number of Ouija board purchases. This was not part of a national trend. We are the only city with the words "Ouija board" listed under our name in a special New York Times story about the most popular gift-related...

[Toy Story 3 Was Almost Going to be Set in Taiwan!](#)~If there is one movie which came close to breaking through my harsh, barren exterior, it was Toy Story 3. I almost blubbed like a baby when watching that film. Now, we've discovered that the plot of Toy Story 3 could have been rather different - although it still looks like it would have provided an emotional slap to the face. Some new keyframe and concept art from Circle 7's unmade version of Toy Story 3 has just arrived online and it shows a version of the film which sees Woody and the gang travelling the globe to save Buzz Lightyear...

[Movie Attendance Among Younger 'Digital' Audiences Drops 15% in 2014](#)~The silver screen continues to lose sway among younger, more digitally oriented consumers — the most coveted demo for Hollywood. Americans aged 12-24 said they saw 15% fewer films in cinemas versus 2013. In 2014, consumers in the demo — which Nielsen dubs "digitals" — said they saw an average of 7.1 movies at the theater, down from 8.4 in 2013. The decline extends a years-long trend among the 12-24 cohort, which saw an average of 10.3 movies in theaters in 2008. Meanwhile, moviegoing...

Inventor Spot: [Fridet Cleans Toddler Butts Like Nobody's Business](#) | [Shocking Liar: The Game That Hurts](#) | [5 Products That Will Make Your Next Bike Ride A Little Easier](#) | [Nitro Rail Is The World's First Dragster Bike](#) |

["This Week in "Global Toy News"](#)~**Richard Gottlieb** knows about play. He blogs about its future, what it means to a civilized society, and how it can help make us better, more imaginative and more creative people. A well known toy industry commentator and president of Richard Gottlieb's USA Toy Experts, a toy industry consultancy, he helps toy manufacturers enter North American and global markets. Richard also writes for several European toy magazines...**Be sure to read what Richard (and his guest columnists) have to say...editor.** [Reach Kids Through an Integrated Marketing Communication!](#) | [Sometimes a Toy is Just a Toy](#) | [Age Convergence; not age compression](#) | [Top 10 "Global Toy News" Articles of 2014](#) | [Hong Kong Toys & Games Fair; list of toy categories and countries](#) | [Augmented Reality and Toys; an interview with Kevin Mak](#) |

UK News from the UK Trade Press:

[ToyNews](#)~The UK's leading toy industry magazine and website, serving the toy trade with a focus on editorial quality. ToyNews magazine has an ABC-accredited readership of 6,199, making it the UK's most-read monthly toy trade publication. ToyNews has established itself as an indispensable read, both in the UK and internationally.

[Toys 'n' Playthings](#)~The leading trade press publication for the UK toy trade, established in 1981. Still run by the same toy trade expert Malcolm Naish. With regular product features, many news sections, toy trade gossip and columnists, it is an essential read for anyone working within the toy trade - be it retailer, supplier or anyone in between.

[Toy World](#)~The business magazine with a passion for toys! The newest, freshest magazine for the UK toy trade. launched in september 2011 by John Baulch, who has spent the past 32 years

working in the toy trade press, Toy World has already established itself as the UK's number one monthly toy trade publication.

Worldwide Licensing News and Information...

[License Agreement Territory Exclusivity](#)~Trademark license agreements sometimes include a grant of an exclusive territory. The question is, does an exclusive territory provision mean that only the licensor is prohibited from selling licensed products into the licensee's territory or does the exclusivity also prohibit the licensor's distributors against selling licensed products into the territory? And what if an unrelated third...

[Pedigree Plans PvZ Annual](#)~Pedigree has inked a deal to create a new annual for PopCap Games' app brand Plants vs. Zombies, which is represented by Bulldog Licensing. An activity annual and activity annual bumper pack will hit shelves in February across the U.K. and Eire, Commonwealth countries and North America.

[Energizer, Eveready Charge into New Products](#)~A host of new Energizer and Eveready licensed products are on display this week at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Nev., including flash drives and mobile chargers. Among the new products are...

[The 14 Biggest Licensing Stories of 2014](#)~While it's quite a challenging task to summarize the events of an entire year, these 14 stories not only highlight the top licensing news of 2014, but also showcase some of the key trends that shaped the year and form the foundation of things to come in 2015 and beyond. It's always fun to look back at the top stories, and this review provides a useful tool for planning another year of exciting new deals, acquisitions and content...

[First 4 Figures!](#)~We're going to close 2014 with a new license, and what could possibly be the most detailed piece we've created so far. From Konami's Castlevania series comes Dracula. Castlevania Lords of Shadow 2 gave fans the chance to play as the series' longest running antagonist: Dracula, and it is from this game we base our portrayal of the Prince of Darkness. Sat brooding upon his great throne, our statue...

[Rovio, Baltika Breweries Partner for Angry Birds-Themed Drinks in Russia](#)~Rovio Entertainment has partnered with Baltika Breweries for production and distribution of four new Angry Birds soft drinks in Russia. The flavors will come in Red (tropical), Chuck (orange), Bomb (cola), and Minion Pig (apple-pear), and will be distributed throughout Russia. The canned drinks will include Angry Birds award codes that unlock...

PEOPLE, COMPANIES, ORGANIZATIONS...

[Child's Play Communications Adds Filip Technologies to Its Client Roster](#)~Child's Play Communications, the award-winning public relations agency specializing in connecting brands with moms, has announced the addition of Filip Technologies as a client, for the launch of FiLIP 2, the next generation wearable phone, smart locator and watch for kids ages 4-11. With FiLIP 2, parents can call, text and locate their child right from their mobile device, allowing children to safely and independently explore, play and grow while staying connected to mom and...

[Toys R Us hopes to retain Times Square store for "many years to come"](#)~Toys R Us has revealed it will continue to evaluate its lease renewal options amid rumours surrounding the future of one of its largest international stores on Times Square, New York. In 2013 it was reported that the future of the store was in the balance as rent was to jump from around \$12 million to more than \$50 million by 2016. As the toy giant draws ever closer to the end of lease date, speculation has reared again over whether the store will hold on to the 110,000...

[The Nigerian Entrepreneur Who Built A \\$10 Million Toy Company](#)~Paul Orajika, a 37 year-old Nigerian entrepreneur, is the founder of Auldon Limited, a manufacturer of African-themed toys. Auldon manufactures dolls and other toys which depict, promote and teach Africa's cultural heritage to children. Orajika founded the company 17 years ago with less than \$100; it now has annual revenues of more than \$10 million. Apart from Nigeria, Auldon's toys are now sought after in countries like South Africa, Ghana, Kenya, and some parts of Europe. Last...

[Big Year for Locally Owned Toy Store](#)~The National Retail Federation expects shoppers spent some \$617 billion this November and December; local retailers say a good portion of that holiday shopping was done at a small business. After five years in business in her downtown Sioux Falls storefront, Child's Play Toys owner Nancy Savage is celebrating the end of her biggest holiday shopping season. "The four Saturdays in December were our four best days we've ever had and I really attribute that to people supporting local businesses all...

[6-year-old lands toy ad campaigns](#)~Like many 6-year-olds, Alexa Hanson-Evers is a huge fan of the popular children's cartoon characters "Doc McStuffins" and "Sofia the First" on the Disney Junior channel. But unlike her peers, she has the distinction of being featured on both the characters' toy boxes. Shortly after signing with the modeling agency Wilhelmina Philadelphia, the pint-sized, lively brunette was picked for the popular characters' packaging by Just Play, a consumer goods company that makes toys for Disney Consumer Products, Marvel...

[Toys R Us to close Crystal Lake store](#)~Toys R Us plans to close its Crystal Lake store, but city officials say they already have a national retailer ready to take over that space and the adjacent former Marshall's store in 2015. It's not clear when Toys R Us will shutter its 30,000-square-foot store in the Commons of Crystal Lake. The store manager declined to comment on the closure. A company spokesperson couldn't immediately be reached for comment about when the store was closing or how many employees would be affected...

[American Girl's 2015 Girl of the Year: Meet Grace Thomas, Baker and Entrepreneur](#)~American Girl's Girl of the Year 2015 was revealed on "GMA," and her name is Grace Thomas. Grace, 9, is described by American Girl as an avid baker and aspiring entrepreneur. She is the newest doll in the specialty line which produces dolls depicting girls of diverse races and interests as well as physical differences and disabilities. Each doll comes with books detailing her individual story and character. Grace was motivated to follow her dream of starting a...

[Target Canada Story: Origin, Fall & Restoration](#)~Target had initiated its international expansion last year, when it opened its first store in Canada. The company had substantial faith in the country's retail market along with its brand image, which is evident from the fact that it established a giant fleet of 124 stores within a single year. However, the retailer expanded aggressively in the region without setting up an effective supply chain to supplement its needs. Due to Canadian packaging laws, protectionist tariffs on certain food products and exclusive...

[Target Taking Heat For 'Annie' Ad Featuring White Model Since New Movie Stars](#)

[Black Actress](#)~Target has come under fire for featuring a white model in a campaign to promote its new "Annie for Target" clothing line because the actress who plays "Annie" in the latest movie is black. One 8-year-old biracial Annie "super fan" saw an ad online, which featured a white girl wearing Annie's iconic red dress and locket outfit, and said to her mom: "That's not what Annie looks like. How come the new black Annie isn't good enough? Does that mean I'm..."

[ICTI Annual Meeting to Take Place in Cancun, Mexico](#)

~The 41st annual general meeting of the International Council of Toy Industries will be held in Cancun, Mexico from May 3-6 next year. The meeting will be hosted by the Mexican Toy Association at the Fiesta Americana Grand Coral Beach Cancun, and will bring ICTI members to discuss the state of the toy industry and update on each country's domestic market. According to the Toy Industry Association, the general meeting agenda will include discussions and presentations, including a...

[Holiday Advertising? Big Lots Nailed It](#)

~The holidays are all but over and a new year is upon us, but I'd be remiss in not declaring a Christmas winner. You may not be the type who thinks Christmas is a thing to be won (you probably also give tube socks to children for Christmas). But if you're reading Ad Age, you should at least admit that for marketers the season is definitely about winning. There were a number of good efforts this year. But if I had to direct Santa to one marketer this season, it would be Big Lots. The retailer sang and danced...

[How Target Turned Business Around](#)

~Target's business is on fire. The discount retailer's shares rose an impressive 19% this year. Recent sales results have also topped Wall Street's estimates. Target made several important decisions to turn around business, according to Brian Yarbrough, consumer analyst at Edward Jones. Yarbrough told Business Insider how the company was able to get customers back in stores...

[The most unpopular company in America is...](#)

~The most unpopular company among consumers is not an airline. And it's not a mobile phone company. The honor goes to Time Warner Cable Internet Service Provider, which placed last on the list. On a list of 230 household brands surveyed, TWC scored 54 out of a possible 100, just behind Time Warner Cable's television service (56), Comcast ISP (57) and United Airlines (60). **Wal-Mart** was the most unpopular retailer on the list (71). The index scores each company based on more than 70,000...

[What You Can Learn From 8 Kids Already Making a Million Dollars](#)

~There's no age limits when it comes to being a millionaire these days, and a handful of kids have struck it rich well before they can legally vote. They're small business owners, inventors and entrepreneurs. These impressive kids learned from their own failures early in life but determined to keep going and to do it better the next time around. If you haven't made your first million yet, the teen next door might actually be able to teach you something. Check out these eight kids who made...

[My thoughts on Toys R Us' tech refit](#)

~IN July, our mystery shopper gave an unforgiving assessment of Toys R Us' Peterborough store due to the store's cluttered shelves and messy floors. While this was disappointing, I knew that it was most likely a one-off. Toys R Us still has a lot going for it with its wide range of categories, not to mention that classic Christmas ad jingle. The chain has also recently implemented a revamp of its tech and electronics sections in its stores, in a bid to make it easier for customers to find what they need. I visited the retailer's...

From the Toy Industry Association (TIA): [TIA welcomes 91 new members that joined the Association since October 2014](#) | [TIA to Present Research on Australian,](#)

[Mexican, U.S. Toy Markets at Toy Fair](#) | [Reminder: TOTY Tribute Book Fundraiser Closes January 23](#) | [TIA's Annual General Meeting, Toy Safety Compliance Update to be Held at Toy Fair](#) | [President's Letter – January 6, 2015: TOY FAIR SOLD OUT!](#) |

Toy Safety Related Articles from Around the World... the many perspectives you need to know about:

[GERMY TOYS: A quick study of children's toys, bacteria](#)~When kids are covered in food, grime and other assorted sticky stuff, their toys and gadgets inevitably become covered in those substances, too. To illustrate just how dirty kids' toys can be, a North Dakota State University Microbiological Sciences associate professor tested various toys to see which harbored the most bacteria. She tested plastic toys from a 1-year-old; a toy plane, figurine, stuffed animal, and video game from a 4-year-old; and a video game and cell phone from a 10-year-old. It was...

[China to develop safety standards for baby feeding products](#)~The China Toy and Juvenile Products Association will develop the country's first industry-wide safety standards for infant and children's feeding utensils. At a news conference at the China Toy Expo and the China Kids Expo, held in Shanghai earlier this year, representatives spoke about the voluntary effort, which they hope will lead to a government standard. "We have to start right from the beginning," said Liang Mei, secretary of the China Toy and Juvenile Products Association. "There isn't a..."

[Bogus Frozen dolls could contain killer cancer chemicals, warn consumer watchdogs](#)~Killer dolls inspired by the smash-hit Disney film Frozen could be circulating in the UK. Trading standards bosses said fake singing Anna, Elsa and Olaf the snowman toys potentially contained chemicals linked to cancer, birth defects and infertility in men. Walsall Council said it was investigating reports the Chinese-made products were being sold on a market stall and Facebook. "It is pretty much impossible to tell these dolls are counterfeit just by looking at them but they are..."

CPSC Recalls and Product Safety News: *None reported at this time...*

Industry Websites Recommended by the Editors of "the Bloom Report"

[Steven Reece](#)~A leading international consultancy to toy and games companies around the world. Working across the UK, Europe, North America and beyond to increase performance and add value across the industry. CEO, Steve Reece, has worked extensively & highly successfully across Toys, Games and Entertainment, working on both established Category leading Brands and new kids on the block.

[Klosters - your competitive intelligence partner](#)~Managed by Lutz Muller, Klosters Trading Corporation, in business since 1987, is a provider of competitive intelligence in the toy, video game and craft space. Click link for "Breaking News".

[ToyDirectory.com](#)~The complete guide for business-to-business trade within the toy and hobby industry. With over 21,000 retailers as registered members and 90,000 readers for its monthly magazine, ToyDirectory is respected as a leader in trade for the toy, hobby and gift industry.

Complete CPSC

Information~Current Recalls/Press Releases, Search for Recalls...**CPSC** is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death from thousands of types of consumer products. You can find information on over 4,500 product recalls and recall alerts using the various searches on this page.

Toy Shippers

Association Inc.~The Toy Shippers Association, Inc., is a not for profit association formed with the assistance of the Toy Industry Association in 1990. Through the combined leverage of our members we negotiate freight contracts and partner with other logistics providers to lower supply chain costs and improve transit and visibility to your product's in the supply chain.

Dr. Toy~World's first

website to provide information on the best in toys and educational products, offers year-round, award-winning toy and children's product information plus timely articles, useful resources, links and much more.

TIA
Toy Industry
Association

TIA leads the growth and health of the North American toy industry by serving as a champion for toy safety; an advocate for legislative, regulatory and trade issues; a facilitator of toy commerce via trade shows and events; a spokesperson for the media and other external audiences; and an information resource for members.

[Learn more about YOUR industry association!](#)

TIF
Toy Industry
Foundation

TIF is a 501(c)(3) charity organization whose mission is to bring joy, comfort, and learning to children in need through toys and play. Learn more about YOUR industry foundation and how you can help!

Explore our **[website](#)** to learn more about the work of our Foundation and how you can join us in making play possible for all.

ASTRA
American Specialty
Toy Retailing Association

Founded in 1992 on a simple premise: to bring members of the independent toy industry together to help each other succeed. Since then, ASTRA has grown to be the largest association for companies in the toy and children's products arenas, with more than 1,000 members, including: Independent toy retailers, Specialty toy manufacturers, Manufacturers' representatives, Industry affiliates, Suppliers and service providers, and other children's businesses.

Product Related Press Releases**Saturday January 3 through Friday January 9, 2015**

Compiled in this section, are "links" to Press Releases appropriate to the industries we cover, reaching over 8,000 industry members...instantly...with PR "links" published at no cost!

You can reach the WebSite that contains the complete Press Release by "clicking" on each "headline link"

Toy and Related Industries Press Releases Feature Section
For details on how to *feature* your press release in this *special* section
visit www.tbsubmit.com

[“the Bloom Report” will be at the American International Toy Fair Booth #2701](#)~“the Bloom Report” announces that Philip Bloom (Publisher) and Ethel Beckett (Operations Manager) will be at Toy Fair in Booth #2701 on Saturday February 14 thru Monday February 16. We hope that all of our friends and subscribers will stop by to say hello. “the Bloom Report” continues to provide our industry with all the news you need to know...as well as all the news you didn’t know you needed to know!!! “the Bloom Report” updates it website, www.theBloomReport.com throughout every business day with product press releases, financial news, and comprehensive articles about our industry. With over 8,000 registered subscribers in 29 countries (registration and complete access to our site is free), we provide all the industry news in one place...saving our readers valuable time in keeping up with what’s going on! We monitor over 4,500 sources all over the world, bringing toy and children’s industry articles you need to read. And...we publish “links” to your press releases at no charge!...

[.Reminder: TOTY Tribute Book Fundraiser Closes January 23](#)~Toy industry stakeholders are invited to expose their brands in front of top industry executives and support children in need by placing an ad in the 2015 Toy of the Year (TOTY) Awards Tribute Book. The deadline to submit an ad for the commemorative publication is Friday, January 23rd. As the official take-home program for guests attending the TOTY Awards ceremony this February, the Tribute Book is the Toy Industry Foundation’s (TIF) most critical fundraiser of the year. Each ad placed in the book directly supports the Foundation’s work to annually deliver brand-new, skill-building, and comforting toys and games to millions of children in need across the nation and around the world. “The Foundation depends on this fundraising effort so that we can continue to run our programs, which bring millions of smiles to millions of kids in need,” said Marisa Medina, TIF manager. “It’s also a great way to publically congratulate a TOTY finalist, or honor one of this year’s inductees into the Toy Industry Hall of Fame.” Ad options available for every budget...

[.GUND President Bruce S. Raiffe Elected to National Museum of Play Board of Trustees](#)~The Strong® (National Museum of Play) announces the election of Bruce S. Raiffe to its Board of Trustees. Raiffe — president of GUND inc., a subsidiary of Enesco LLC and preeminent plush toy manufacturer — has nearly 40 years of experience in the toy industry. Throughout Raiffe’s tenure at GUND, beginning in 1977, he has understood the significance of soft toys to the happiness, well being, and development of children. “Being on the board is a great honor,” says Raiffe. “It allows me to share my passion for the soft toy industry, while spreading awareness of the excellent research and academics coming from The Strong. My life’s work has been about learning new ways to make soft toys and imaginative play a positive contribution to every child’s life.” Raiffe holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration and accounting/economics from The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania. He has served on many nonprofit and community boards, including the Cerebral Palsy Association of...

[.AURORA® EXPANDS MY LITTLE PONY®™ PLUSH COLLECTION TO INCLUDE BRUSHABLE SPARKLING HAIR](#)~Leading plush toy, gift and doll manufacturer Aurora World Inc.® announced its award-winning MY LITTLE PONY plush collection of more than 50 styles gets a sparkling addition for 2015. Aurora’s 12 new ponies feature styled, “brushable” hair with glistening, mylar accents, adding to one of the largest, MY LITTLE PONY soft toy collections in the toy and gift industry. PINKIE PIE, RAINBOW DASH, APPLEJACK, RARITY, FLUTTERSHY, PRINCESS TWILIGHT SPARKLE, PRINCESS LUNA and SPIKE THE DRAGON highlight Aurora’s diverse offering that already includes seated and standing plush, jumbo plush, keychain “clip-ons” and pony carriers. “We strive to be a one-stop-shop for high-quality, high-value, distinct plush and styles that stay true to the MY LITTLE PONY characters,” says Michael Kessler, Aurora’s senior vice president of sales and marketing.

Aurora also offers various MY LITTLE PONY merchandising programs that include full signage and display racks designed to...

LIVE THE PLUSH LIFE IN 2015 WITH MANHATTAN TOY TRAVEL & COMFORT™

LINE~The Manhattan Toy Company is hoping everyone is ready for the plush life in 2015 as it unveils an armload of whimsical products in its new Travel + Comfort™ collection. Soft Play Mats (\$45), animal-shaped Snuggle Body Pillows (\$40), an orange Activity Spiral Fox (\$22) or a cushy Tablet Wedge (\$28) make their debut at the North American International Toy Fair Booth 2433. "Play is not only fun, it's essential to a child's cognitive, emotional, and social development," declare the folks behind The Manhattan Toy Company, an innovator since 1979. They describe their design process as a "blend of science and whimsy to produce toys and accessories that offer children a rich array of visual and tactile stimulation and unlimited opportunities for imaginative exploration." Placing baby on a plush blue mat that resembles a bear will encourage ooohs and aaaahs from the grownups in the room. But peek around and appreciate how the tactile surprises stimulate baby's senses. Two Travel + Comfort Tactile Play Mats (\$45) akin...

MANHATTAN TOY LAUNCHES ADVENTUROUS DOLL LINE REFLECTING TODAY'S SMART, CURIOUS GIRLS

~Ask Mom or grandmom what kind of doll she cherished in her youth and watch her eyes light up. That's because a doll is more than a toy, it's a personality that is always there for an adventure. The Manhattan Toy Company looked around and noticed the fearless nature of today's little girls who can do anything, be anything, and dream anything. In 2015, their dolls should reflect that same brash confidence. Introducing Finch, Leaf and Sophia, the three new characters tagged as S.C.O.U.T.™ dolls (\$28) making their debut at the North American International Toy Fair Booth 2433. The new S.C.O.U.T. collection represents girls ages 5 and up who are Smart, Curious, Open, Unafraid and True. Like today's confident girls, these dolls plan to follow their dreams, wherever that may lead. And wearing Ugg boots (like Sophia) or a body cross bag (like Leaf) is part of the appeal of the clothing and accessory choices to mix and match, just like girls do every morning before school. These 16" dolls have soft...

TOYISH LAUNCHES INSPIRING TOY LINE MOTIVATING KIDS TO CREATE THEIR OWN TOYS

~Who knows better than kids how a toy should look, interact and entertain? Now they get their chance to create their own with a creativity-inspiring toy line launched by new company Toyish in Booth 5777 at the North American International Toy Fair®. In 2015, kids as young as 3 years old will design toys sparked by their imagination. Look for themed kits including Dancers, Foodies, and Champions (\$26.99 each) that transform through experimentation into anything from a Ballerina, an Ice Cream truck to a Samurai warrior or even a combination of the three. If play is the work of a child than the designers at Toyish want to work like kids. Their lab is filled with paper, clay, gadgets and computers. And they host workshops to observe exactly how youngsters play. During one of these sessions at the Polo Grounds Center in Harlem, NY-based Toyish had its a-ha moment. "At first it looked as though kids were just building toys," describes Toyish founder Assaf Eshet, an award-winning toy designer for Fisher Price...

PAPER PUNK LAUNCHES STUNNING JEWELRY KITS WITH PAPER GEMS YOU FOLD, DESIGN, WEAR

~Toy insiders have anxiously awaited Paper Punk's next themed kit where kids (and grownups) must use their hands to think -- no gadgets, no glue. Invented by a Stanford professor, art meets smart where folks open a box brimming with punch-out shapes to create, build, ponder until a 3D sturdy piece of art - a robot, a city building and now a bold necklace - appear. New for 2015 are two kits, Paper Punk Jewelry Fold - Triangle (\$19.95) and Paper Punk Jewelry Fold - Square (\$19.95). Try your hand at designing smart geometric necklaces, bracelets and earrings at Booth 1964 at the North American International Toy Fair. To describe Paper Punk kits to the uninitiated, consider merging a Legos kit with the art form of origami. It's a mash up that was created by Grace Hawthorne, MBA and MFA and mom. In her spare time as a Stanford professor (!) she

created a series of kits that require imagination and not much else -- no scissors, no cords nor chargers. In fact it's fun designed for anyone over the...

[.KIDS 'FEED' THEIR TROUBLES TO WONDERFUL WORRY EATER PLUSH AND GO ON WITH THEIR DAY](#)

~German engineering from cars (Audi) and clothing (Adidas) to cosmetics (Nivea) has always found an eager audience in America. Now the U.S. toy market is about to embrace the Worry Eater. Like the Tooth Fairy and Easter Bunny, there's a new childhood personality for kids and it's coming to the North American International Toy Fair® Booth 6217 courtesy of The Haywire Group, Inc., exclusive North American distributor of the plush collectibles that perform a miraculous deed – they eat childhood fears and concerns! Afraid of the dark? Worried about tomorrow's dental checkup? Feed it to your Worry Eater! The little softie with big eyes and a striped body comes in eight different personalities with names like Polli, Flamm and twins Bill and Betti. Each character has a hang tag that explains to tots as young as 3 years old that if they write their concern on paper -- or draw it if too young to write -- and toss it into the plush's zippered mouth, their Worry Eater will hold on to that fear for...

[.VOILA! MADEMOISELLE ET RIBABELLE JOINS MOULIN ROTY'S CATALOG OF IMAGINATIVE PLAY](#)

~The French have a flair for making simple things chic and in the toy world, no one does it more beautifully than Moulin Roty. Fairytale characters like those from the forest are transformed into classic toys with a nostalgic touch. New for 2015 are Owl, Otter, Mouse & Rabbit who join Mademoiselle in the pastel world of Mademoiselle Et Ribabelle. Be the first to embrace these sweet faced companions at the Atlanta International Gift & Home Furnishings Market® at Building 3, Floor 3 (the temporaries), Booth #1900. With gorgeous colors of powder pink, pearl grey, grey-tinted blue and pops of vibrant yellow and turquoise, this all-new line joins Moulin Roty's Les Petits collection of over a dozen themed worlds of play. The cultured forest friends adore ballet and dance. As they gather in the forest to await the start of Spring, Madame Chouette (Owl) wants to put on an opera. Monsieur Loutre (Otter) serves as the musician as Mademoiselle Souris (Mouse) twirls and dances. Mademoiselle (Girl with cat...

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[Spin Master Launches Interactive Meccanoid G15 KS](#)~This year, Spin Master is working with Meccano—known as Erector in the U.S.—on Meccanoid G15 KS, a personal robot built with the latest Meccano parts. It is an advanced, yet easy-to-use open source Robotic Building platform, accessible to builders covering a broad range of ages and skill sets. Four feet tall and programmable, the robot is...

[CMON Expands 'Kaosball,' 'Rivet Wars,' 'Arcadia Quest'](#)~CoolMiniOrNot has announced expansions for three of its game lines for January. Four teams are being added to Kaosball, streeting January 16th. Each team, sold in its own box with 14 miniatures, a magnetic team board, and one custom die, will retail for \$24.99. The four new products are Asgard Valkyries, Boomtown Cowboys, Bridgetown Trolls, and Salem...

[Magnetic Plans 'Basil and Moebius' Graphic Novels, Fiction, Short Film](#)~Magnetic Press will release a series of four graphic novels based on The Adventures of Basil and Moebius, a new property created by Ryan Schifrin, beginning in March 2015. In addition to the graphic novels, a short film and fiction based on the property are also planned. The graphic novel stories will be adapted and co-written by Larry...

[My Little Pony Gets the Deluxe Treatment in New Storybook App](#)~PlayDate Digital, under license from Hasbro, has released a new deluxe interactive storybook app, My Little Pony: Twilight's Kingdom, based on the two-part fourth season of My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic. The plot involves Twilight Sparkle, who is looking for a way to prove herself worthy of her title as princess. However, she needs help...

[Bandai Previews Lovable Yoshi Action Figure](#)~While we recently saw the release of Bandai's Luigi action figure, we were also graced with the announcement that Yoshi will join the plucky brothers sometime next year. Now we know that Yoshi will come out in May for around 4,500 yen. That's a bit more than the other Super Mario figures but Yoshi is bigger and appears to have more complex articulation. The reason why...

[Hot Toys Darth Vader Sixth Scale Figure from 'Star Wars: A New Hope'](#)~"I find your lack of faith disturbing." Ah yes, Darth Vader one of the greatest villains in movie history. We have seen several 12-inch versions of Darth Vader over the years, but Hot Toys has just announced what could potentially be one of the best, if not the best. Following "The Circle is Now Complete" teaser from last month, Star Wars fans...

[Temporum](#)~Temporum is a card game that allows players to travel through time and attempt to change the course of history. It features a board that is divided into 4 rows, with each row representing a different time period. Each time period has a certain number of zones that have various effects, but only 4 out of the 10 zones are "real". Since players can only visit the zones that are currently "real", it is their goal to...

['Arkham Horror' Designer on 'Achtung! Cthulhu' 'Secret War Boardgame'](#)~Modiphius Games has announced that Kevin Wilson, the designer of Descent: Journeys in the Dark, Arkham Horror, Android, and Sid Meier's Civilization: The Board Game, has been signed to develop a cooperative board game set in the universe of its Achtung! Cthulhu RPG. The new game, Achtung! Cthulhu--The Secret War, is set in the...