



Talks With Santa Bring Beary Good Holiday News: Build-A-Bear Workshop Becomes Santa's Workshop for the Holidays

November 2, 2009

Kicks Off Giving Season with Campaign to Benefit Toys for Tots

ST. LOUIS--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Nov. 2, 2009-- In a surprise move that is leaving the retail world breathless and parents and kids jumping for joy, Santa announced he is merging his operations with Build-A-Bear Workshop®. On Sunday, Nov. 1, Santa and his helpBEARS magically transformed Build-A-Bear Workshop stores across the world into Santa's Workshop just for the holidays. From Los Angeles to New York, Montreal to Miami, new Santa's Workshop signs now cover the popular retailer's brand name marquee for the entire holiday season.

The new holiday look heralds a fun, new and interactive experience for Guests, who will be able to mingle with magical elves and become honorary elves themselves while making personalized gifts for friends and family. It also signals the beginning of the season of giving and giving back. With the help of its Guests, Build-A-Bear Workshop will donate 100,000 stuffed animals and toys to Toys for Tots through a two-month campaign:

- On Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 7 and 8, stores in the United States will serve as Toys for Tots donation drop-off locations. Guests are encouraged to bring in a new, unwrapped toy or make a furry friend to donate to a child in need this holiday season.
- On Saturday, Nov. 21, Build-A-Bear Workshop will host screening parties of its original holiday classic, *Holly and Hal Moose™: An Uplifting Christmas Adventure*. The film will premiere Tuesday, Nov. 24, at 7 p.m. EST/6 p.m. CDT on ABC Family, marking the first time in the retailer's 12-year history that its plush animals are brought to life on television. Guests will get to see the movie for free in a private screening when they donate a new, unwrapped gift to Toys for Tots.
- Dec. 2-6, a virtual giving quest will be featured at buildabearville.com®. Each time a Build-A-Bearville® citizen finishes the online quest, Build-A-Bear Workshop will donate a "real world" toy to Toys for Tots.

"We are pleased and proud that Santa chose Build-A-Bear Workshop to help him bring even more joy to the holiday season," said Maxine Clark, founder and chief executive bear of Build-A-Bear Workshop.

Transforming Build-A-Bear Workshop for the Holidays

When asked how the deal went down, Clark demurred, saying it would be naughty and not so nice to reveal Santa's secrets. But sources at the North Pole provided this account:

As everyone knows, Santa not only delivers gifts; he solicits suggestions. Increasingly, Santa's elves were

reporting a groundswell through letters to Santa and social networking sites indicating that kids want gifts that are only available at Build-A-Bear Workshop. Santa pondered the situation and sent a team of elves to visit a Build-A-Bear Workshop store. Impressed by their report, Santa called Maxine Clark to see how they could work together. Maxine immediately said to send the elves to Build-A-Bear Workshop to help with the Christmas toy production, and they quickly made themselves at home. Now the stores are filled with elves, and the store signs have all been transformed into Santa's Workshop for the holidays. The signs will come down after Santa makes his annual flight.

Employing Elf Tech

The patented T-ink technology is being used to magically bring elves to life at Santa's Workshop. From Nov. 1 – Dec. 25, while quantities last, each Guest will receive an Honorary Elf Access Card with conductive ink that when touched to one of the cardboard elves in the store makes it light up and talk. Guests can interact with the elves around the store to unlock secret messages, reveal their elf names and get free virtual gifts to use at buildabearville.com.

Build-A-Bear Workshop is the first retailer to feature this technology in its visual merchandising. Guests will be able to experience even more elaborate T-ink innovations throughout the stores next year.

About Build-A-Bear Workshop

Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. is the leading and only global company that offers an interactive make-your-own stuffed animal retail-entertainment experience. Founded in 1997, the Company and its franchisees currently operate more than 400 Build-A-Bear Workshop stores worldwide, including company-owned stores in the United States, Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland and France, and franchise stores in Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa. In 2007, the interactive experience was enhanced - all the way to CyBEAR™ space - with the launch of buildabearville.com, the company's virtual world stuffed with fun. The company was named to the 2009 FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For® list. Build-A-Bear Workshop (NYSE: BBW) posted total revenue of \$468 million in fiscal 2008. For more information, call 888.560.BEAR (2327) or visit the company's award-winning Web site at www.buildabear.com.

About Toys for Tots

Toys for Tots, a 62 year national charitable program run by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, provides happiness and hope to disadvantaged children during each Christmas holiday season. The toys, books and other gifts collected and distributed by the Marines offer these children recognition, confidence and a positive memory for a lifetime. It is such experiences that help children become responsible citizens and caring members of their community. Last year the Marine Corps fulfilled the holiday hopes and dreams of 7.6 million less fortunate children. Since 1947 over 188 million children have been assisted. For more information, visit www.toysfortots.org.

TRADEMARKS

We would like to thank you for your interest in covering our business. As you write your story, we would ask that you use our full name: **Build-A-Bear Workshop** and that when referencing the process of making stuffed animals you use the word “make” not “build.” **Build-A-Bear Workshop** is our well-known trade name and our registered trademark of **Build-A-Bear Retail Management, Inc. Build-A-Bear Workshop** should only be used in capital letters to refer to our products and services and should not be used as a verb. Note: Parental permission may be required to buildabearville.com. Visit buildabearville.com for details.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: <http://www.businesswire.com/cgi-bin/mmg.cgi?eid=6087923&lang=en>

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