



## Build-A-Bear Workshop Unveils Newly Imagined Store at The Somerset Collection

October 22, 2012

*New store concept updates hands-on bear-making process with interactive features*

**ST. LOUIS** (Oct. 22, 2012)—Build-A-Bear Workshop®, the interactive entertainment retailer of customized stuffed animals, announced today that its highly anticipated newly designed store at The Somerset Collection will open on Friday, Oct. 26. The store is the fourth of six that the company will open this year in select markets across the United States.

Build-A-Bear Workshop has spent the last two years creating the newly imagined store design that merges the hands-on bear-making experience with innovative technology that is central to how kids play today. The updated store allows Guests of all ages to personalize the bear-making process and offers them a different experience each time they visit a Build-A-Bear Workshop store.

“Build-A-Bear Workshop invented experiential mall-based retailing 15 years ago and has been the leader in providing interactive experiences for kids of all ages,” said Maxine Clark, Build-A-Bear Workshop founder and chief executive bear. “Since our inception, over 100 million stuffed animals have been made in our stores. With this new store design, we are combining the love of a teddy bear with the best of digital technology. We look forward to continuing our leadership in the interactive retail space.”

### Newly Imagined Store Design

While the Build-A-Bear Workshop signature process remains at its core, Guests who visit the new stores will see noticeable changes to the company’s trademarked stuffed animal-making experience including:

- An **interactive storefront** which goes beyond the typical digital signage found in other retail locations and will change with the seasons, holidays, or other special events. Using *Microsoft’s Kinect technology*, and interactive touch elements, Guests can engage and play with the signage at the front of the store.
- The **Choose Me** station where Guests are introduced to all the furry characters and select one, which soon becomes a new friend. The stuffed animals are now at kid height so young Guests can touch, play, and form a connection with these furry friends. There is a large selection of stuffed animals to choose from including teddy bears, bunnies, dogs, kittens, and more.
- The **Love Me** station allows Guests to customize their furry friends with special personality attributes displayed as emoticons on an interactive table. Using *Samsung’s SUR40 with Microsoft® PixelSense™ technology* Guests can add unique traits - like cuddly, brave, silly and smart - to their red satin hearts, which are inserted inside their furry friends during the Stuff Me process.
- The award-winning **Hear Me** station, an interactive *touch screen* supplied by Canvys, features an

assortment of high quality sounds that can be inserted into the stuffed animals for further customization and personalization. Guests can select and load popular hits from current music or sounds onto a chip plus record their own voice to a Build-A-Sound to further personalize their new friend.

- The **Stuff Me** station, where Guests can now add **SCENTiments** to make their new furry friend smell yummy. An assortment of scents is available including: bubble gum, strawberry, cotton candy, and chocolate chip. The scents that are offered will change by season and holiday.
- After the Stuff Me station, the last seam is neatly pulled shut, nearly completing each new best friend. Before stitching a stuffed animal, a Bear Builder associate inserts a barcode, allowing it to be reunited with its owner if ever lost and returned to Build-A-Bear Workshop. Thousands of furry friends have been reunited through this exclusive Find-A-Bear® ID program. The barcode also generates a unique code on the birth certificate so Guests can bring their new friend to life online and play for free at Bearville.com™ to continue their friendship adventure when they get home.
- The **Fluff Me** station allows Guests to interact with their new furry friends at a “water rippling and splashing” digital bath tub that is enabled by *Samsung’s SUR40 with Microsoft® PixelSense™ technology*. The tub magically recognizes the items as they are placed on it and reacts with sensory effects such as virtual bubbles that appear when play soap is placed on the “water surface.”
- The **Dress Me** station is now organized by theme, such as dress up and super heroes, so coordinating items are grouped together and easily accessible. This station is updated with “Match Me” technology that allows Guests to see what is new and to receive suggestions on related items that can be added to further personalize their stuffed animals.
- The process culminates at the **Name Me** station, where Guests use a viewfinder or “bear-o-scope” that reveals the special attributes and personality that have been added to the animal throughout the process. At Name Me, Guests create a personalized one-of-a-kind birth certificate that now includes a photo of their new furry friend.
- Guests conclude their in-store bear-making experience at the remodeled **Take Me Home** station, which now resembles the iconic Build-A-Bear Workshop Cub Condo®. They receive their customized birth certificate that is themed to their stuffed animal selection and a special Stuff Fur Stuff® club membership, a rewards program for Guests. Each new furry friend is then placed in their very own Cub Condo® carrying case, which is designed as a handy travel carrier and new home.

### **New Locations**

Build-A-Bear Workshop has opened three concept stores at West County Center in St. Louis, Mo., Stoneridge Shopping Center in Pleasanton, Ca, and Westfield Annapolis in Annapolis, Md. Two other newly designed stores will open in the following premiere shopping centers:

- Fair Oaks Mall in Fairfax, Va. on Friday, Nov. 9
- Castleton Square Mall in Indianapolis, Ind. on Friday, Nov. 16

The Somerset Collection is owned and managed by The Forbes Company. “Build-A-Bear Workshop and The Forbes Company have had a tremendous relationship for many years,” said Linda McIntosh, corporate director of communications, The Forbes Company. “We are very happy that Build-A-Bear Workshop has selected The Somerset Collection as the site of one of its newly designed stores.”

### **Bears Working Together**

“It takes a village to raise a bear and our newly imagined store concept was created with many partners who have helped turn our vision for Build-A-Bear Workshop into a reality,” said Clark. “We

worked with companies and individuals who are leaders in their industries, many with which we have had long term relationships. There were many supporting partners that have contributed to a highly innovative brand experience.”

Working with Build-A-Bear Workshop on the new store concept were Adrienne Weiss Corporation, specializing in brand development and store design, Oei Design, a retail entertainment design firm, architects and construction management firm, Epoch Design Group, and Studio Productions, specializing in themed fixtures. Build-A-Bear Workshop also aligned with technology companies including Microsoft Corp, Samsung Electronics America, Infusion, Nanonation, Epicor Software, Parametric Sound Corporation, and Canvys - Visual Technology Solutions.

Leading cyber safety expert Parry Aftab, executive director and founder of WiredSafety.org and WiredTrust, worked with the company to ensure that the technological aspects meet all privacy and safety standards. WiredTrust has presented Build-A-Bear Workshop with the Socially Safe seal for its new store concept. This is the first time that the organization has given this award to a brick and mortar retailer.

Building on the tradition of including kids at the imagination stage and listening to what is important to them; Build-A-Bear Workshop also enlisted a group of “Cub Advisors”, children and their parents, to provide suggestions and help perfect the working model of the design.

“The Cub Advisors have helped us achieve our mission to bring the teddy bear to life while providing the ‘funnest’ hour of a family’s day,” said Clark. “Our new stores will continue to redefine the retail industry, much like we did 15 years ago. The addition of new sensory and technological features to our store concept will further propel Build-A-Bear Workshop to our next level of success. With over 400 stores in 18 countries worldwide, we have learned that a teddy bear hug is understood in any language. Our brand knows no boundaries and we look forward to significant expansion and growth for Build-A-Bear Workshop, both in the United States and internationally, in the future.”

#### **About Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc.**

Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. is the only global company that offers an interactive make-your-own stuffed animal retail-entertainment experience. There are more than 400 Build-A-Bear Workshop stores worldwide, including company-owned stores in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Kingdom and Ireland, and franchise stores in Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa, the Middle East, Mexico and South America. Founded in St. Louis in 1997, Build-A-Bear Workshop is the leader in interactive retail. Brands include make-your-own Major League Baseball® mascot in-stadium locations, and Build-A-Dino® stores. Build-A-Bear Workshop extends its in-store interactive experience online with its award winning virtual world and entertainment destination website at [bearville.com](http://bearville.com)™. The company was named to the FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For® list for the fourth year in a row in 2012. Build-A-Bear Workshop (NYSE: BBW) posted total revenue of \$394.4 million in fiscal 2011. For more information, call 888.560.BEAR (2327) or visit the company's award-winning website at [buildabear.com](http://buildabear.com)®.

#### **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.

#### **Contact:**

Jill Saunders

314-423-8000 ext. 5293

314-422-4523 (cell)

[JillS@buildabear.com](mailto:JillS@buildabear.com)

Shannon Lammert

314-423-8000 ext. 5379

314-556-8841 (cell)

[ShannonL@buildabear.com](mailto:ShannonL@buildabear.com)