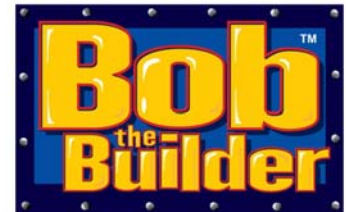




HIT entertainment



For Immediate Release

HIT ENTERTAINMENT BRINGS NEW LOOK TO FAVORITE SERIES

Thomas & Friends™ and Bob the Builder™ Move to CGI Animation in 2009 Broadcast Season

New York, NY & London, UK -- June 9, 2008 -- HIT Entertainment, one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights owner, has today announced that popular preschool television shows *Thomas & Friends* and *Bob the Builder* will now be produced in CGI (Computer Generated Imagery) animation. CGI brings a bright, fresh and modern look to these two evergreen brands, and allows for more enhanced, fluid movement by the characters while remaining true to the show's core values and strengths. In addition, the new series will be accompanied by refreshed style guides, offering an array of new opportunities for licensing partners.

Thomas & Friends, celebrating its 65th Anniversary in 2010, has commenced pre-production on the first CGI series (series 1300) in partnership with Nitrogen Studios, a Canadian-based production company who worked on the latest series (Series 1200) of *Thomas & Friends* introducing CGI elements to its existing Live Action format. The new CGI series has tested positively with audiences and broadcasters in key markets around the world, and will continue to deliver heartwarming adventures and lessons of discovery, friendship and cooperation. The new CGI series is making its broadcast debut in late 2009 on Five Milkshake! in the UK and on PBS KIDS® in the US, as well as other selected territories (excludes Japan). For the first time, the faces of Thomas and his engine friends, as well as Sir Topham Hatt, will move as a result of the CGI enhancement and offers a raft of opportunity for new Talking Thomas and Talking Engine products.

Bob the Builder, now broadcast in more than 240 territories worldwide, will move from stop-frame animation to CGI. HIT Entertainment, working with Los Angeles-based production company SD Entertainment, is now in pre-production for the new CGI series of *Bob the Builder*, scheduled for delivery in late 2009 for CBeebies in the UK and PBS KIDS® in the US. The new *Bob the Builder* series will allow for greater fluidity of movement for Bob and his machine team, allowing them to work together on bigger builds and larger construction projects. As always, Bob and his Can-Do Crew demonstrate that *The Fun Is In Getting It Done*. New style guides will also provide partners with expanded licensing opportunities.

The new CGI series of Thomas and Bob remain within the European quota standards.

HOT Animation, HIT Entertainment's wholly owned animation studio in the UK, will continue to produce *Bob the Builder: On Site*, a new direct-to-DVD series of live action and stop-frame animated specials.

Christopher Skala, Executive Producer and SVP Production and Programming HIT Entertainment commented, *"Bob the Builder and Thomas & Friends have been delighting children all over the world for many years so it*



was important to us that any change to the programming format retained the intrinsic charm of the characters and remained true to the core values of the brand. With our world-renowned production partners Nitrogen, SD Entertainment and CGCG, we felt it was the right time to refresh and update these loveable characters in CGI and take Bob and Thomas into a new era."

Peter Byrne, EVP Consumer Products Worldwide commented, *"We are really excited about Bob and Thomas moving to CGI as it heralds a new generation of consumer product for our licensing partners, in particular a new range of Talking Thomas products. With new style guides in 2009, we look forward to bringing new lines of consumer product to market throughout the year."*

About HIT Entertainment

HIT Entertainment, owned by private equity investment group Apax Partners, is one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights-owners. HIT's portfolio includes properties, such as *Barney™*, *Bob the Builder™*, *Thomas & Friends™*, *Pingu™*, *Fireman Sam™*, *Angelina Ballerina™* and *Rainbow Magic™*. HIT represents Chapman Entertainment's *Fifi and the Flowertots™* and *Roary the Racing Car™* in North America and Japan, as well as *Wallace & Gromit™*, *Shaun the Sheep™* and Aardman Classics from Aardman Animations. HIT also acts as a worldwide representative for The Jim Henson Company's library of classic family brands and as representative for *The Wiggles®* in the UK. Launched in 1989, HIT's lines of business span television and video production, content distribution, publishing, consumer products licensing and live events and has operations in the UK, US, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan. HIT is a part-owner of US-based preschool channel, PBS KIDS SproutSM, and international preschool channel JimJam, (outside of the US, UK and China). For more information, visit www.hitentertainment.com.

To download artwork, please visit www.hitnewsonline.com

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