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Global Marketing Report

2020 Q3

New Launch of EurekaKids

The Rise of the "Hape Toy Wonderland"

Is There A Little Musician in Your Home?



Toys & The Environment
Is The Toy Industry Leader or Follower?



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Love Play Learn



We Are Honoured by Grand Prix du Jouet

Congratulations to another successful collaboration between Hape® and Baby Einstein® - *Cal's Smart Sounds Symphony™*. Titled as Grand Prix du Jouet 2020 (Eveil Musical Category) winner – after *Magic Touch Piano* won the very same award in 2018! Rounding out the list twice on the winners' roll-call in merely three years by a paramount toy award in France - it is undeniable that wonderful collaborations by Hape® and Baby Einstein® truly have something for children.

Combining the classic entertainment of a wooden toy with the musical discovery of an electronic toy, *Cal's Smart Sounds Symphony™*, (the new collaboration by Hape® and Baby Einstein® in 2020), not only contains the basic elements of any Hape toy - high-quality, great play value, educational elements etc - it also marks another big step in the blending of wooden toys and touch technology after the classic *Magic Touch Piano*. Prior to *Magic Touch Piano*, *Cal's Smart Sounds Symphony™* brings music to life as a floor toy or table-top play surface as your baby grows! With every simple tap and touch, the magic orchestra encourages your babies' cognitive development as they discover instruments, colours and animals on their own through play.

In addition, the collaborations between Hape® and Baby Einstein®, having been thrown into the spotlight due to massive recognition in France at this time, are truly a grand success between the two companies. Echoing the inspired and innovative toy designer Adam Shillito's belief and concept for the collaborations - "My First Mini Band", the two sides will stay in close cooperation to develop more unique and valuable products for children, and also march into an even brighter and more successful future together.



Cal's Smart Sounds Symphony™



About Grand Prix du Jouet:

Open to all manufacturers, the Grands Prix du Jouet winners boast the major references in the industry in France. The games and toys, awarded by a jury of professionals from various distribution channels, gain a unique quality label, winning many consumers' recognition. This year, 114 games and toys are at the start line with 31 trophies at the finish. Grands Prix du Jouet has awarded trophies to quality toys submitted by world-renowned manufacturers in the industry like Lego, Hasbro, Bandai, Vtech, and more.

See more information at: <https://www.larevuejouet.fr/article/grand-prix-du-jouet-2020-et-les-gagnants-sont.53774>

(Photo Source: Hape Image)

Date: 16th to 17th September 2020
Place: Yunshang City in Hangzhou Brand Live Streaming Industrial Park, Zhejiang, China
Name: Taobao Live "Double 11 Official Goods Selection Fair"
Type: B2B
Website: /
Organized by: Hape China
Highlight: Organized by Taobao Live, the 2020 Double 11 Official Goods Selection Fair was held in Hangzhou, a frontier for China's online trade. It is the first time that "Double 11", the largest-scale online shopping spree in China, included Live streaming for recommending and selling products as the new and main platform for online trading.



The fair gathered over 10,000 quality products, more than 200 institutions with more than 1,000,000,000 followers, as well as 300 plus excellent anchors on site. Varying from apparel, shoes, accessories, food, to maternal and child products, the fair provided an appropriate venue for product manufacturers and product purchasers. Addressing the issue of "no good products for anchors while no entrance to live streaming rooms for good products providers", the face-to-face communication between the anchors and manufacturers in the fair helped the two sides learn more about each other and make the right choice for themselves. It is the first official platform for the two sides, in support of "Live Stream Economy", for its booming in China.

Displayed best sellers like *All-in-1 Easel*, *Teddy and Friends Bath Squirts*, *Magic Touch Piano*, classic items like *Pound and Tap Bench* and new items like *Monster Math Scale*, *Multi-use Segway Yellow*, all helped to lure numerous institutions and brilliant anchors to the Hape booth. Also, having kept the contact information of various anchors and institutions, Hape is bound for ever more collaborations to better present our quality toys to more consumers in the near future.

Live streaming for recommending and selling products is an emerging and powerful, new economic mode. Due to the pandemic, people are more available to keeping an eye on live streaming, and also more willing to shop online to avoid unnecessary contact. Moreover, the voice of a KOL (key opinion leader), an influencer or an online celebrity have increasingly more impact on the public and the consumers as well. The shaping live streaming for recommending and selling products in China tends to be a regular online shopping mode, and is more likely to spread to the rest of the world as well. Therefore, it is time for us to rethink and cater to the market trend, adjusting ourselves to some extent to provide our quality toys for the market. Participating in the Double 11 Official Goods Selection Fair is our attempt to go with the market trend and try the utmost to provide our quality toys to more children via a more convenient way.

CHINA

Date: 4th to 6th & 11th to 13th August 2020
Place: Online
Name: Astra Camp™ Digital Tradeshow
Type: B2B
Website: <https://www.astracamp.org/>
Organized by: Hape US

US



Highlight: This year, due to COVID-19, the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA) switched the annual Marketplace & Academy Fair into a digital tradeshow Astra Camp™ for all retailers, manufacturers and sales representatives.

The two-week virtual event, themed around a summer camp experience, invited the specialty toy industry to answer the call of adventure and take part in opportunities to discover new products and manufacturers, connect with fellow campers, and gain new business insights into navigating the fourth quarter. Hape, having attended ASTRA's physical tradeshow for many years, continued to participate in the digital tradeshow this year. Connecting with numerous representatives and retailers, we presented and explained many quality Hape toys to them through Zoom. The creative reimagining of the trade show experience helped the retailers and manufacturers learn more about the products as well as each other, giving them an unprecedented and unique fair experience.



S'MORE THAN A TRADE SHOW

An adventure-filled virtual experience to help the specialty toy industry navigate the wilderness of Q4
 August 4-6 and August 11-13

(Photo Source: Hape Image)

“When you can do a job for 35 years and still feel you have the best job in the world, it means something.”



(Photo Source: Hape Image)

The Rise of the “Hape Toy Wonderland”

Interview with Peter Handstein
(Founder & CEO of Hape Group)

As a leader in the design and manufacture of high-quality children's toys made from sustainable materials, and a quality brand possessing a long and respected history, Hape - a shining star in the toy industry - and its founder have attracted the attention of many renowned and influential associations from all around the world. Recently, Peter Handstein, the Founder and CEO of Hape Group, was invited to attend 4 interviews, sharing his unique experiences and extending his insightful ideas on Hape and the toy industry to all.



The China Toy & Juvenile Products Association (CTJPA), the only national association for the toy and juvenile products industry in China, as well as the sole legal representative for China's toy and juvenile products industry in the International Council of Toy Industry (ICTI), designated by the Chinese government, showed great interest in Peter's story and, therefore, invited Peter to an interview. Other than Peter's legendary entrepreneurship and unique vision, the CEO's farsighted view on sustainable development really caught the eyes of many. As Peter said, Hape has made a commitment to the environment, and makes endeavours towards carbon neutral development, as well as spending time researching the possibility of adopting more diverse and sustainable materials, like cork and natural rubber, into its toy production, in order to reduce the industry's effect on environment. Also, Peter believes that after the pandemic, more and more people will be focused on the environment, and may well be more willing to help protect nature. “Sustainable development and environmentally friendly toys are the trend of the times”, said by Peter, adding that Hape will always put a priority on the safety and sustainability of its toys' raw materials.



The world-renowned professional expo, Children-Baby-Maternity Expo (CBME), celebrated its 20th anniversary this year, and hosted an in-depth interview with Peter, attaching great importance to his ideas and views on the changing industry and society in general. CBME is a professional foreign trade forum for maternal and children's products that was established 20 years ago, in which time the children's and maternal products industry has undergone rapid growth, thanks in part to the firm support of CBME. Peter really appreciates such endeavours, and feels lucky to have made the right choice in 1990s, riding the crest of the wave during the robust development of China's economy and society. Also, Peter has always paid close attention to the industry, and has noticed that the consumers' consumption behaviour and habits have changed really fast in recent years, and that the voice and preferences of consumers has more impact on toy manufacturers in turn. In addition, Peter indicated that the views of Key Opinion Leaders (KOL) on social media has had a profound influence on the industry and on the consumers.

As an outstanding leader and entrepreneur, Peter was also invited to speak at the “2020 Female Leadership Forum: Leading with Purpose”, an online speech forum co-hosted by CEIBS MBA Women's Leadership Network and Global Women Connect. Peter inspired the audience with a Jewish allegory, “one can know the amount of seeds an apple has with a cut, but one can never get the accurate number of apples a seed can breed – none if in a barren land, but plenty if in fertile land with abundant sunlight and rain...”. And then, he shared a true story about Hape: 15 years ago, Peter offered a 25-year-old girl with great ambitions the chance to run a newly-acquired operation in Canada. The young woman, unafraid of failures and adversity, seized the opportunity and, after 7 or 8 years, the company was 10 times bigger than the original one. Backed-up by this true story, Peter restated his philosophy of “propelling change through empowerment”. Every person has infinite possibilities and endless potential, and there's nothing to stop female leaders making brilliant achievements.



And, last but not least, *The CEO Magazine*, a world-renowned business magazine that focuses on the world's most successful leaders, executives, investors and entrepreneurs, ran a story on Hape and Peter. For 35 years, Peter has kept his motto - “Good design principles, from day one, have the child in focus” - in his mind. Peter acknowledges he hasn't had many jobs throughout his career, but still maintains that his is the ultimate. It is love that makes Hape's toys stand out, leading them to being recognised by more and more experts and consumers around the world. Peter loves to make and create toys for children, and sticks steadfastly his commitment to children and the environment. Intelligent, honest and engaging, Peter insists on doing things for the greater good.

From an early childhood educational products supplier to a “Hape toy wonderland”, Hape is a miracle; and transforming from an ordinary blacksmith into an international group's CEO, has made Peter legend. Everything, however, has its own way. Only after undergoing 35 years of hardwork, did Hape gain popularity among the general public. Likewise, it's Peter's firm beliefs and high standards as a toymaker that make him a successful leader. In the future, we will stick to his commitment and deliver love and happiness to more children and families around the world through Hape toys and products.

(Photo Source: Hape Image)

An Insight into Alibaba International's Visit to Hape

China

On the afternoon of August 17th, Hape Group's manufacturing base in China featured on a livestream that gave insight into the recent visit by Alibaba International.

Mr. Peter Handstein, the founder and CEO of Hape Group, led Ken, an industry operation expert from Alibaba International, on a visit to the toy sample room, the warehouse, the production workshop, and to the general office area. The tour shone a light on our production process, testing standards and our wealth of play and experience in some detail, underscoring the unique and high-quality features endowed in Hape toys - such as their safety, environmental friendliness, play-value and educational meaning - and successfully conveyed Hape Group's intentions and ability to design and produce educational toys at high-quality.

Click to watch playback:

<https://activity.alibaba.com/page/live.html?spm=a27aq.17689968.1725052590.123.73fc52227YqMXW&scene=replay&topic=7b666234-2517-453c-8af0-025bbab99700&referrer=mainVenue>



“Eurekakids” in China Another Hit for the Leading Spanish Toy Store

On the morning of July 4th, the third Eurekakids retail concept store was launched in Ningbo, to great expectations. Just one year after its formal entrance to China, the top Spanish toy brand is rapidly seizing their share of offline retail stores selling children's toys - bolstering the strategic plan of rooting into the China market, with stores booming everywhere.

Mr. Peter Handstein, the Founder and CEO of Hape Group, attended the opening ceremony and expressed his congratulations by delivering a speech and cutting the ribbon. The cute Pepe became the favourite minion among the children, with interesting games attracting a group of children. Free play with fun toys also lured crowds into the store, making the ceremony even more fun! Rapt faces on the balance scooter, smart eyes behind the math scale, cheering parents aside, as well as happy laughter on the lucky winners, all created a warm and lively atmosphere for the ceremony.

Eurekakids gathered multiple internationally renowned toy brands, including Hape Group's subsidiary brands, such as the German wooden toy brand Hape®, German 100-plus-year-old handmade doll brand Käthe Kruse®, and Hape's strategic partners - the renowned infant and toddler products manufacturer Kids2's sub-brand Baby Einstein®, the micro building block brand nanoblock®, the plush toy tycoon Ty®, as well as the Thai premium quality wooden toy brand PINTOY®. There will be increasingly more quality brands in the future.

Eurekakids is a company specialises in the sale of high-quality educational toys and children's accessories for children aged from birth to 12 years old. Established in 2002 in Spain, Eurekakids is now in possession of over 190 stores in 15 countries around the globe. Eurekakids is not only a toy retail store, but also focuses on advocating advanced parenting concepts from Europe and providing children with high-quality play experiences. Hape invested in Eurekakids in 2018, introduced the new toy retail mode into the Chinese market in 2019, and plan to open more stores in China in the future. Stay tuned!

“Eurekakids” in Latin America!

In sequence to the new Eurekakids' retail concept store launch this July in China, another two Eurekakids stores were opened by PICI (Hape's Paraguayan distributor) in Paraguay this quarter. Hape®, PolyM®, Hape's strategic partners Baby Einstein®, Eltem®, and Beleduc® all entered the stores.

Shopping Mariscal López

Located on the second floor of the shopping mall, our Eurekakids store is next to a playground, where we will find plenty of children when the pandemic situation improves. This September, 24 years since its opening, Mariscal López, as a traditional shopping mall, attracted many customers.

Shopping del Sol

Situated on the second floor of the shopping mall, this new Eurekakids store is near the escalators which come from the food court and close to stores with numerous potential customers, like Nike, GAP, and Hering Kids. Furthermore, an app for Shopping del Sol's online sales with free delivery services has also included Hape's products. Moreover, a Shopping del Sol magazine, distributed to 36,000 people, with a digital version found on Instagram, Facebook and its formal website, featured a full-page Eurekakids and Hape product advertisement in its October edition, a special edition for 25 years anniversary of this magazine.

Still under the shadow of COVID-19, with Latin America being one of the severest pandemic-stricken areas in the world, launching these 2 Eurekakids stores was not easy but it is certainly very inspiring. Since this quarter, the Chamber of Commerce of Shopping Centres in Paraguay has carried out a series of measures to stimulate consumption and help the economy recover, bringing more customers into the two shopping malls and through our newly-launched Eurekakids stores. Toys are no substitute for medical supplies, and neither are we medical warriors, but we do hope that Hape toys will bring great happiness, and that Eurekakids stores will give you a special shopping and play experience! Visit Eurekakids stores, and take your own piece of "happiness" back home!



Shopping del Sol



Shopping Mariscal López

(Photo Source: Hape Image)



(Photo Source: Hape Image)

Is There A Little Musician in Your Home?



It is known to all that childhood is of crucial importance to one's entire life, not only for its irreversibility, but also for its impact on shaping one's mental development and physiology abilities and growth. Learning, however, can be boring sometimes, especially for a young child with an insatiable desire for play. And there lies the challenge for parents - how to help your child learn through play...

To cope with this issue, numerous educational toys have appeared on the market to help "teach" children through play, in order to help them develop skills and have fun. As for Hape toys, however, rather than "teach", we are more interested in helping children explore themselves, exploit their potential, gain happiness, and attain self-confidence. There is a vast difference between "teaching" and "learning". Teaching may give you knowledge and skills, but learning can help you gain knowledge and skills in your own way – and that's where Hape toys come in.

Do you ever imagine what your little one will be when they grow up? A Scientist? An Astronaut? An Inventor? Or maybe just a good person with happy life! Whoever he/she would be, it should relate to his/her interests and talents. Ergo, how do we discover and nurture our baby's interests and talents? By letting them play! Playing with good toys will inspire your child's talents, and playing with the Hape DJ Mix & Spin Studio will help children to discover their inner-musician!

The Hape DJ Mix & Spin Studio is the latest music toy launched by Hape, and features accurate timbres with 4 instrument sounds and 18 fun sound-effects. Let your little ones get familiar with different musical instrument sounds and explore their music potential through play. With this portable, wood-combined DJ studio, you can set one of the 5 background tunes off and use the tempo slider to change the speed, add DJ sound effects and scratch along to the music using the black record! Your little ones will entertain themselves all afternoon, savouring the music in their own little world!

Other than helping build stronger memory in modern electronic music and developing your children develop patience and their musical potential! Furthermore, among children aged between 12- we are fully convinced that this DJ studio develop an interest in music, learn more tion span. So, take one for your child as you

skills, sensitivity to timbres and rhythm, nurturing an interest hand-eye coordination skills, this DJ studio also helps will power,encouraging their creativity and feeding before going to market, we conducted a play-test months and 7-years old. Based on the positive feedback, will not only entertain your children, but will also help them about musical knowledge and develop their concentra- never know where the next great musician will spring up.



(Photo Source: Hape Image)

Hape and Gymboree Make Early Education Easier

Hape, a quality educational and STEAM-loaded toy brand, has joined hands with Gymboree, an expert in children's early education, to launch a series of new collaborations that offers more choice to parents with young babies.

On the basis of mutually respected principles – such as belief that age-appropriate and educational toys shall benefit children's early development - Hape, a toy manufacturer that originated in Germany, has established a cooperative relationship with Gymboree, a children's early education expert from the US, taking concerted efforts to help make children's early education easier and more effective. Good toys should inspire children's unlimited imagination and creativeness, and that's what Hape and Gymboree strive to do during children's early years. The intention is to provide more possibilities to combine play (toys) with learning (courses) for developing children.



The first launch of these collaborations is now on sale both in the Gymboree App and in Hape stores. See some new launch details below!

From birth to 12 months:

A sensitive period for baby's sensory and mobility development.



Cute little Gymboree with rainbow-block body, catch your babies' eyes at first glance!



Color Recognition



Auditory Development



Touch and Grasp Development



Comfort Function

Colourful Rattle
(exclusive to China)



Big soft blocks in different shapes and colours keep your babies safe whilst letting them feel and explore the world with their tender gums.



Color Recognition



Touch and Grasp Development



Auditory Development



Mathematics Learning

Soft Cubes
(exclusive to China)

From 1 year to 2 years old:

An important period for baby's motor and cognitive development.



This wonderful treasure chest integrates 5 different play-modes in one. Don't be surprised to find your baby playing this on their own for a long time!



Body Exercise



Fine Motor Skill Development



Visual and Auditory Development



Space Visualization Development

Activity Cube
(exclusive to China)



Advanced play for babies to help them gain sense of achievement through play.



Color Recognition



Geometry Matching



Fine Motor Skill Development



Mathematics Learning

Geometric Train Puzzle
(exclusive to China)

Over 2 years old:

A period quick cognitive development.



Play with your baby and this colourful block clock, taking the opportunity to teach him/her how to tell the time.



Color Recognition



Touch and Grasp Development



Geometry Matching



Time Learning

Clock Puzzle
(exclusive to China)



Are you ready to say "wow!" with your baby when the colourful dominos start to run?



Color Recognition



Auditory Development



Touch and Grasp Development



Comfort Function

Explorer's Domino
(exclusive to China)

(Photo Source: Hape Image)

Ty's Multicolour Praying Bear Brings Hope and Joy

*When you go to sleep tonight,
Pray everything will be all right.
And if you keep hope in your heart,
We'll stay together and never part!*



Multicolour Praying Bear

It has been a hard year for all, with the long-lasting COVID-19 crisis rampant all over the world, serious forest fires torching wildlife in Australia, earthquakes, floods, avalanches...Such tragedies makes us more acutely aware than ever how important it is to cherish the ones by our side, and Ty's Multicolour Praying Bear is great gift for loved ones that you would like to spread a little "hope" to!

Recently, Ty, in cooperation with Hape, the Ningbo Charity Association, and other partners, launched a campaign throughout China, encouraging subscribers to share their positive stories with us, with the best entry winning a Praying Bear. In late September, we posted a touching story on Ty's WeChat account, bringing hope and love to everyone. Furthermore, we have donated a batch of Praying Bears to Beijing SmileAngel Children's Hospital, bringing hope and joy to child patients in the hospital.

2020 may have had a difficult start, but if you bear hope inside, it may just have a great end. Ty and Hape, as toymakers, wish to convey happiness to everyone and to build a better world full of love and hope to the next generation.

Find Vigor and Passion in Italy

Nothing can stop us from pursuing vigor and passion in life, not even the widespread pandemic COVID-19.

This year, from 17th-20th September, Tocati – the annual Street Games International Festival was held as scheduled in Verona, the city of Romeo and Juliet, gathering 150,000 visitors on site. As a regular participant in Tocati, Hape, in collaboration with our partner Orma took part in the event this year from 19th-20th September, in the most iconic place: Piazza Bra in front of the beautiful Roman Amphitheater Arena. Despite some strict regulations on visitor access to the event area due to the pandemic situation, Hape still had an extraordinary attendance of over 500 kids over the 2 days. Hape featured 5 unique sections with different themes and toys namely, *Railway, Kitchen & Food, Quadrilla, Junior Inventor, and Novelties Section*. Hape was one of the most visited booths, with loads of children visiting the area. It is really worthwhile to see everyone wearing smiles on their faces while fascinated by Hape toys. We hope Hape toys help you regain vigor, passion, hope and happiness under the current circumstances.

(Photo Source: Hape Image)



Stay with You – Hape in the UAE

Does Hape Toys have many fans in the UAE? You may find your answer here...Babico, Hape's exclusive distributor in the Middle East, never lets consumers forget about Hape, taking diverse online and offline measures to keep the brand at the forefront of people's minds.

A large-scale try-out and giveaway activity for Hape toys was carried out online among numerous social media influencers. From toys for babies to toys for toddlers, Hape toys received lots of positive feedback from influencers, and simultaneously gained many new fans by virtue of numerous interesting posts. Also, a number of *All-in-1 Ease!* sets were sent to "Middle East Stationery", sponsored by Babico, for their "back to school campaign", in an attempt to stir up more interest from consumers. Furthermore, selected and voted by thousands of mothers in the UAE on Mumzworld (the number one mother, baby & child website in the Middle East), the Hape *Deluxe White Grand Piano* was rated 2nd place in the "Top 20 Birthday Gifts" list, whilst the *Optical Science Lab* topped the "Top 20 Educational Toys" roll call. Also, Hape was on the homepage of Firstcry's website, a shopping platform for children products and lures consumers to click and purchase.

Offline, consumers can see, feel and purchase more and more Hape toys in brick-and-mortar stores, and since August Hape toys have been on sale with improved displays and enhanced presentations in 8 Toys R Us stores in the UAE, Bahrain and Kuwait. Elsewhere, a new store, "Konoz", was launched in KSA, with shelves of Hape toys found inside.

The Middle East is still under recovery, like the rest of the world, having been hit by COVID-19, but Hape and its formidable partner Babico never leave children and parents alone.

Go Inside and Pick your Favorite Hape Toys in Japan!

Good news; you may catch Hape *Railway* toys when visiting children's store in Japan these days!

Since 25th September, a full shelf of Hape *Railway* toys has been on display in all 119 Akachan Honpo (Japan's largest maternal and child products enterprise) shops in Japan. Also, Hape *Railway Bucket-Builder-Set* and *Passenger Train Set* both appeared on the flyer for the store, gaining lots of attention and buzz. Elsewhere, Hape *Railway* toys can be easily found in a specialty store – Glim Land, in Japan. Since 29th August, a number of Hape *Railway* toys have been on display in a prime place where consumers can see them as soon as they step into Glim Land's Hashimoto store, with a variety of Hape *Railway* items, including new arrival *Railway Bucket-Builder-Set*, on display. Likewise, the same display has been showcased in Onoda store since 25th September.

Such endeavours shall attract more children and parents to Hape, and encourage them to become loyal fans for, hopefully, a sustained period of time. Hape meanwhile hopes to get well-rooted in the Japanese market and bring a unique play experience to children.

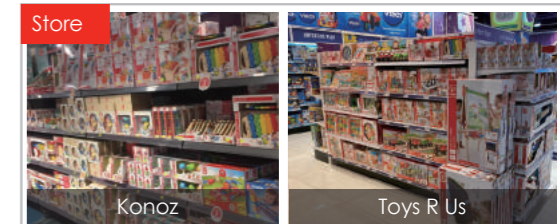


Ready to Reopen in the USA?

This quarter, Hape US continued its monthly email blasts to related representatives and retailers, in order to stay close with them and to encourage them to be fully prepared for the big reopening. Apart from the "Pick of the Week" products, selected product videos and related information, we also debuted the "Let's Get Social" part, where we shared selected store photos featuring the best presentation of Hape toys. Furthermore, the 2.0 Ding Dong Campaign (the 1.0 version, in which Hape's national sales manager held one-on-one video sharing sessions with representatives and retailers, to great success) is under way, with positive responses and numerous appointments booked by representatives and retailers.

To hopefully ease the tension of retailers currently struggling under the vast shadow of the pandemic, Hape US has made great endeavours to stay close with them, trying to motivate them to get prepared for the impending large-scale reopening.

(Photo Source: Hape Image)



Date: 14th August & 11th and 19th September
Influence Area: USA
Medium: Instagram & Website
Topic: Hape toys recommended by parenting websites & Online giveaway activity
Highlight: Hape's *Toddler Vegetable Basket* was included in the "7 Creative Eco-Friendly Sensory Toys for Summer" by Go Valley Kids website on 14th August and *Scoot-Around* was listed in the "Best Toddler Toys: 12-15 months" by Kids Play Tricks website on 11th September, two wide-reaching US parenting websites. Furthermore, in collaboration with @kidsplaytricks and some influencers, Hape gave away *Railway Bucket-Builder-Set* and *Jungle Maze* to the influencers' lucky fans on 19th September, receiving great recommendations by those influencers and the products' receivers. Hape once again gained more followers and recognition among US consumers.

Date: 8th July
Influence Area: Paraguay
Medium: Website
Topic: Online promotion
Highlight: Tienda Naranja, the online store for the biggest retail bank in Paraguay - Banco Itau, was inaugurated in July. Hape toys was one of its first presented products in the online store, getting rather good feedback with promotion under the negative impact on the region's economy due to COVID-19.



Date: July to September
Influence Area: Germany
Medium: Instagram & Facebook
Topic: Great postings by influencers
Highlight: Hape partners with dozens of influencers per month to raise Hape toys' awareness. In a long-term cooperation, selected quality Hape toys were sent to the influencers, and got their feedback in return. All positive comments and brilliant postings feature kids and Hape sharing wonderful play moments with their parents. Also, by supplying promotions including coupon codes on our online shop, Hape has performed great sales this quarter.

MAGAZINE

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Brief Introduction: *Kleine Leute* is an annual magazine published by Arbeitskreis richtiges Spielzeug, a 25-year association aimed at the toy trade industry, covering innovative toy retailers, original shop concepts and constructive experience exchanges. The magazine is mainly distributed to end customers in specialist shops.



(Photo Source: Hape Image)

Toys & The Environment Is The Toy Industry Leader or Follower?

Prior to the shattering impact of a global pandemic and subsequent economically damaging lockdowns around the world, 2020 was set to be the year the toy industry got serious about addressing environmental impact and sustainability.

Environmental Concerns VS Short Term Survival Mode

Unfortunately, as the massive economic hit unfolds from the COVID-19 pandemic, toy companies are in many cases in survival mode whereby anything goes to drive revenues and profits, which can often lead to non-immediate concerns to go out of the window. There is some room for optimism though, because while plastic backlash has muted somewhat due to a more immediate hit to our way of life, it has not gone away. We're seeing increased demand for those product categories which use sustainable materials both due to consumers still having environmental concerns and due to the immediate need to occupy, entertain and educate children which has led to a surge in board games made from cardboard and other products like wooden toys.

The fundamental issue though that the toy business is trying to address is a massive over reliance on plastic as the primary material for toy products. Bio plastics made from plant-based materials offer some hope but are more expensive (currently) and do not last quite as long or endure quite as well as plastic at this point. Rome wasn't built in a day though, and we can feel positive about the commitments from some of the major toy companies to remove unnecessary plastics in packaging. This must be low hanging fruit for all, as card-based materials and some simple packaging structure tweaks can surely minimize the need for plastic packaging.

Can the Toy Industry Borrow the Solution from Elsewhere?

That still leaves those big chunks of plastic inside the box or pack though. How do we make a fashion doll, action figure, playset or even plush toy for the highly pressurized price points our customers demand without super cheap plastic materials? That has to be a work in progress, and in the end it seems most likely that the solution will not come from the toy industry but instead will come from FMCG or other consumer product categories where volumes are far higher and so therefore are resources, and where the media and consumer focus is highest in terms of abolishing ridiculously wasteful and damaging excess plastic proliferation.

Think of those soft drinks companies whose business relies on selling billions of plastic bottles. These are the companies and the industries who will put pressure on science, supply chains and drive sustainability eventually in terms of raw materials. The recent history of humankind shows that when the business need is there to make big changes, technology combined with corporate priority will find a way.

The fundamental drivers for toy play are long since proven and have if anything been amplified by screen time addiction, so the future should be bright, but it would be a mistake for the toy business to rest. Change is coming, either due to innovations we deliver or those we can take advantage of from other industries, plastic is not the future anymore and we need to get on board with that asap to manage the change which is already underway.

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