



HIT entertainment

For Immediate Release

HIT ENTERTAINMENT AND DRAYTON MANOR ANNOUNCE PLANS TO OPEN EUROPE'S FIRST *THOMASLAND*

10 May 2007 -- London – HIT Entertainment, one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights owners, in conjunction with Drayton Manor Theme Park, the award winning UK attraction, has today announced plans to open Europe's first *ThomasLand* in the UK, set to open in the Spring of 2008.

ThomasLand, a visitor attraction inspired by the popular preschool character *Thomas & Friends*[™], will be set within 6,000 square metres of beautiful parkland at Drayton Manor Theme Park in the Midlands. For the first time in Europe, young Thomas fans and their families can enter the magical world of Sodor featuring brand new themed rides such as Cranky Crane Tower Ride, the Troublesome Trucks Rollercoaster and Harold the Heli-Ride. *ThomasLand* at Drayton Manor will also showcase a brand new Thomas train that takes children on a five minute magical journey through Sodor, which will include special appearances from the Fat Controller.

ThomasLand at Drayton Manor Theme Park has been inspired by the world's first *ThomasLand* in Japan which opened in 1998 and attracts over a 1.7 million visitors per year.

ThomasLand at Drayton Manor will be supported by a strong retail, marketing and publicity campaign. The attraction will open with a strong retail presence offering a range of *Thomas & Friends* licensed merchandise. The development presents significant marketing and retail cross-promotional opportunities for licensees.

Bruce Steinberg CEO HIT Entertainment commented, "We are thrilled to be working with Drayton Manor, an outstanding and well respected theme park, in bringing this unique visitor attraction to life. The *Thomas & Friends* brand continues to grow from strength to strength, with a presence in over 150 countries worldwide and sales of more than 200 million books globally and the has been the No.1 preschool toy brand in the UK for the past 8 consecutive years. *ThomasLand* is a natural extension of the *Thomas & Friends* brand and we look forward to working with Drayton Manor to deliver an exciting attraction for young Thomas fans and their families to enjoy."

Colin Bryan Managing Director Drayton Manor commented, "This is a wonderful opportunity for Drayton Manor and we are looking forward to working with HIT to make this a huge success. *ThomasLand* will attract yet more family visitors to our already popular theme park."



Thomas & Friends is the Number One licensed pre-school toy brand in the UK (Source: NPD License to Thrill 2006) and has enjoyed 8 years of consecutive double digit growth. *Thomas & Friends* can be seen on Milkshake! on Five in the UK and is broadcast in over 150 countries around the world. For further information, visit www.thomasandfriends.com.

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About HIT Entertainment

HIT Entertainment, owned by private equity investment group Apax Partners since June 2005, is one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights-owners. HIT's portfolio includes properties, such as *Bob the Builder*[™], *Thomas & Friends*[™], *Pingu*[™], *Fireman Sam*[™], and *Angelina Ballerina*[™]. HIT acts as a representative for *The Wiggles*® in the UK and as worldwide representative for The Jim Henson Company's library of classic family brands. HIT also owns the Guinness World Records[™] publishing and television property. Launched in 1989, HIT's lines of business span television and video production (including studios in the US and the UK), publishing, consumer products licensing and live events. With a catalogue of more than 1,000 hours of young children's programming, HIT sells its shows to more than 240 countries worldwide, in more than 40 different languages and has operations in the UK, US, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan. In 2005, the Company joined Comcast Corporation, PBS and Sesame Workshop to launch PBS KIDS SproutSM, a 24-hour digital cable channel and VOD service for preschoolers. For more information, visit www.hitentertainment.com.

About Drayton Manor

Drayton Manor was first opened to the public by the Bryan family in 1950, after co-founders, husband and wife, George and Vera Bryan, converted 80 acres of land into a wonderful family attraction. Today, the park boasts over 280 acres of beautiful lakes and parkland, packed with great rides and attractions for everyone to enjoy. The family owned theme park is one of the Midlands' most popular attractions with over a million people visiting annually. Drayton Manor also features a first class 15-acre zoo that is home to more than a hundred different animal species from around the world. In 2006, Drayton Manor was awarded the Best UK Attraction at The Group Leisure Industry Awards 2006. Every category is voted for by readers of Group Leisure magazine, who are mainly in the group travel sector throughout the UK and abroad. Drayton Manor was also named the 2006 Coach Tourism UK Attraction of the Year after being voted for by the readers of routeone (correct) and Coach Monthly magazines. As well as these two prestigious prizes, further recognition also came in the form of the Silver award at the Heart of England Excellence in Tourism Awards 2006 in the category of Visitor Attraction of the Year (large). Drayton Manor opened to the public 24th March for the season, and will be open until 28th October. The Zoo is open every day except between 23rd December and 3rd January 2008. The park's full address is Drayton Manor Theme Park, near Tamworth, Staffordshire, B78 3TW. Website: www.draytonmanor.co.uk.

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Drayton Manor

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