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HIT ENTERTAINMENT UNVEILS PLANS FOR THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THOMAS & FRIENDS™

The world's number one preschool property Makes Tracks to Great Destinations in 2010

30 October 2009, Brand Licensing Europe, London – HIT Entertainment, one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights owners, has today unveiled its broadcast, retail, marketing and PR plans for the 65th Anniversary celebrations for the world's number one preschool property Thomas & Friends.

HIT Entertainment kicked off the 65th Anniversary year with the theatrical premiere of the all new CG animated special **Hero of the Rails** at VUE Cinema in Leicester Square last weekend. The 60-minute DVD showcases Thomas & Friends in CGI animation for the first time along with individualised character voices including the first ever British voice for Thomas. **Hero of the Rails** was screened in 53 VUE cinemas over the weekend and the DVD is set for release in the UK on 12 October in all major retailers. The all new CG-animated TV series is set to broadcast in January 2010 on Five's Milkshake!

HIT Entertainment has appointed Cake to handle Consumer PR for Thomas' 65th including high profile stunts, events and a year long programme of media relations. The PR plans will complement and support the ongoing marketing plans for Thomas & Friends which include themed Day out with Thomas parties, tie-ins with retailers and licensees including Thomas Land at Drayton Manor Theme Park and a Guinness World Record attempt at Hamley's in Spring 2010.

The Thomas & Friends website will also be given a CGI and 65th Anniversary make-over with new artwork and games along with news about the anniversary celebrations.

And finally, 2010 will herald an all new diecast range of consumer product from Global Master Toy Partner Fisher Price with an exciting new range set to hit retail shelves early 2010 and a new range from category partner Mega.

Commenting on the 65th Anniversary Year for Thomas & Friends Victoria Bushell, International Brand Manager, said, "2010 is shaping up to be one of the most exciting years ever for Thomas & Friends. We have developed a strong programme of retail, marketing and PR activity with our partners that celebrate Thomas' 65 years of preschool heritage as well as communicating the timeless values of the world's most loved properties."

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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. HIT also acts 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.