



**HIT entertainment**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **NEW THOMAS & FRIENDS™ WEBSITE IS LAUNCHED IN CHINA**

**14 April 2009, London & Beijing** – HIT Entertainment, one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights owners has announced the launch of an all new Thomas & Friends website in China. [www.thomasandfriends.cn](http://www.thomasandfriends.cn) will launch in April in Chinese.

The Thomas & Friends global website attracts more than 30 million visitors each month and is one of the most popular websites for preschool properties in the world.

Thomas & Friends launched on the national broadcaster CCTV in January 2009 and is one of the few selected foreign properties to be broadcasted nationally in China.

HIT Entertainment appointed PPW last year to manage the television and consumer product licensing for Thomas & Friends. Its first range of consumer products from TOMY and RC2 launched successfully in China in 2009. Children's Fun, part of Egmont Publishing, was also appointed in 2008 and has launched 8 Thomas & Friends TV tie-in titles in Chinese. Children's Fun Publishing will publish another 30 titles throughout the year including the launch of the globally successful Thomas & Friends story library in December.

Frank Foley, General Manager Asia HIT Entertainment commented, *"We are delighted to be launching our first Chinese language website for Thomas & Friends, one of the world's most loved children's properties. Now and for the first time, young Thomas fans in China can immerse themselves in the world of Thomas and interact online with their favourite brand."*

Thomas & Friends, the world's number one preschool toy property and is now broadcasting in over 185 territories and in 35 languages worldwide.

**- Ends -**

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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 *Fifi and the Flowertots™* in North America and Japan and 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 (including studios in the US and the UK), publishing, consumer products licensing and live events. With a catalogue of more than 1,500 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 Sprout<sup>SM</sup>, a 24-hour digital cable channel and VOD service for preschoolers. In 2007, HIT and Chellomedia, the European content division of Liberty Global, Inc and its subsidiary ChelloZone, announced a joint venture to launch and distribute JimJam, an international pre-school TV channel (excludes the US, UK and China). For more information, visit [www.hitentertainment.com](http://www.hitentertainment.com).

**About PPW**

With offices all over the world, Promotional Partners Group Ltd. (PPW) is a company with global infrastructure providing one-stop-shop marketing promotional services to its international clients. PPW has extensive experience in licensing and premium business, it is the Overseas Master Licensee of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, the exclusive licensing representative for FIFA World Cup 2002 and the exclusive licensing representative for Lucasfilm Star Wars, and it works closely with internationally renowned licensed properties owners such as Sony Pictures, Sanrio and Discovery Channel. PPW has strong root in China with full team of China experts in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Qingdao offices, right now it provides professional services such as license matching and retail distribution channel building, it also acts as a brand facilitator for its clients to develop their brands in China.