

Interview: LazyTown Gets Active, Signs With Joester Loria Group

Before U.S. cities began banning trans fat, and long before the introduction of Nintendo's sweat-inducing Wii games, children's television series LazyTown has been encouraging kids to eat healthy and to be active. After several successful initiatives in international markets, LazyTown is taking its message to the U.S and teaming with The Joester Loria Group for an upcoming merchandising program that will focus on motivating kids to live healthy lifestyles.

"Goomi" Magnason recently spoke with The Licensing Book's Elizabeth Reid about where the TV series is now and where it's headed.

The Licensing Book: How did LazyTown get started?

"Goomi" Magnason: The show was created by Magnus Scheving a long time ago, and it was all about motivating kids to make healthy lifestyle choices. Magnus had seen that there were no role models in health for kids. You had Popeye, and he ate spinach, but he smoked and hit people so that didn't really work. What we wanted to do is make education about healthy lifestyles entertaining for kids, and the show achieved that.

Now we have found the home for the show here domestically with Sprout. We'll be going on Sprout twice a week, starting September 3.

We are excited about the Sprout launch for two reasons. One of the things that we want to do as a brand is to be a tool for parents. Sprout is very focused on co-viewing. All of its advertising are parent-targeted. Sprout is now in more than 50 million homes. They have got one of the biggest VOD platforms in the country and more than a million downloads. They are averaging about 18 million a month now.

Their website is bringing more than a million uniques a month with an amazing time of an average .4 minutes on the websites. So, their platform is great.

Now that we're getting The Joester Loria Group to repre-



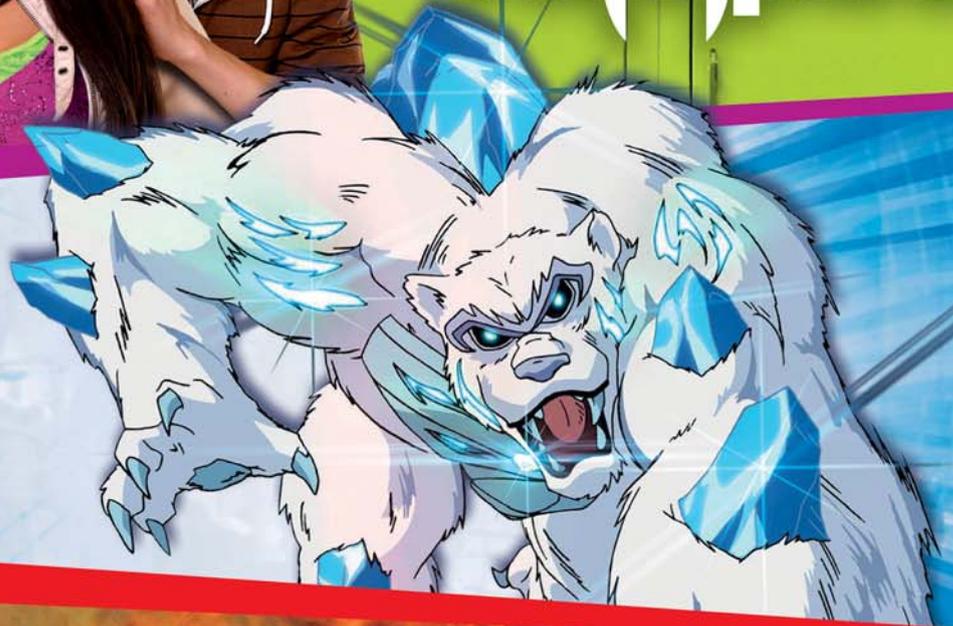
sent us, we're also working with the "Let's Move" initiative. For us it's different now than it was seven years ago, people are a lot more aware of the childhood obesity crisis. There's a lot more happening in that space, and the "Let's Move" initiative shows us that people are really paying more attention now.

Our kids have arrived!



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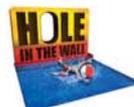


THE AQUABATS!

FremantleMedia Enterprises, home of some of the world's biggest family entertainment brands, announces a growing slate of kids licensing brands and programming.

For more information, please contact:

Andrea Brent Vice President of Consumer Products
Email: andrea.brent@fremantlemedia.com
Tel: 818-748-1387



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One of the areas where we've success in other markets is food and specifically fruits and vegetables. Characters of *LazyTown* call fruits and vegetables "sports candy." The main character gets his energy from eating fruits and veggies.

We have worked with Walmart UK, which is the biggest business Walmart has outside the U.S. And we've worked with them for two years, focusing a lot of our attention on the fruits and veggies. We've been doing programs where we have up to 44 percent increase in sales in fruits and vegetables, which is quite amazing because these categories, they don't fluctuate that much. So we have been immensely successful with that.

TLB: So what other categories are you looking at?

GM: We're looking at things like live pro-



gramming. We are already working on the live program, which we hope will launch in about one year. We're looking at apparel. Costumes are a big thing for us because having live characters on the show, kids really like imitating those, as opposed to imitating CGI or cartoon characters. Every market we have been in, we have done an amazing job with the costumes. We're looking at food categories like water, milk, etc., and then general

merchandise, with toys first. We'll have a lot of focus on activity toys. It's not common for brands to give so much focus to food, but we've shown in other markets that parents really like to use *LazyTown* to bring about behavioral changes in diet with kids.

TLB: Have you signed any deals recently?

GM: We have close to 400 deals under management internationally. So, we have a lot of activity in all the major markets—in Europe, Latin America, and Australia. We just closed with Joester Loria, so we'll be bringing out new deals here in the states.

We can all also agree that a lot has happened within the past seven years when it comes to being aware of this challenge for children's health. Magnus was a little bit ahead of his time in this regard in many markets. So, I think the stars have aligned for us in a way for that and also with the broadcast platform. These two elements are key to our success in international markets.