

Toy Industry Newsletter

In this issue:

- I. Visit our upgraded website – ToyRecruiter.com
 - II. Supply Chain Guru Wanted
 - III. Featured Candidate - Online Marketing Social Media & Virtual World Expert
 - IV. Business Opportunity – website for sale
 - V. Ask the Patent & Trademark Expert – **David Hrina, Esq.**
 - VI. Cell phone “Apps” and toys – a match made in heaven – David Fitzgibbons
 - VII. Parting Shots - Why doesn't Lisa Gherardini have eyebrows?
-

I. VISIT OUR UPGRADED WEBSITE

The Executive Search Group has upgraded our website – www.ToyRecruiter.com. Our site has a fresh and clean look, easier navigation and less clutter than comparable sites. We added a [Featured Candidate](#) interview for our clients and sortable fields for our [job listings](#). Our website content is the best in the business and if you haven't viewed our site in a while please take this opportunity to read our [Testimonials](#) and our [Ask Dave](#) pages; we think it shows the knowledge and quality of the recruiter you are dealing with.

TWITTER

Because we were asked nicely by many readers, we can now be found on Twitter. We will utilize Twitter as a means of passing along professional advice and insights and to get the word out lightning quick regarding **job opportunities**.

We can be found at <http://twitter.com/ToyRecruiter>. [If your browser won't redirect you, just search for “toyrecruiter” after you sign into [Twitter](#).

II. Supply Chain Guru Wanted - \$6-figures – East Coast

This is a new position with an incredibly successful East-coast company. This is your opportunity to mold the position around your skills and abilities and make it your own. You will be called upon to manage the supply chain, identify weak points and develop a plan to improve the process. Technically skilled in factory prioritization and capacity planning is essential.

Compensation is open, \$6-figures++ (based on your experience and needs).

If you or someone you know is an appropriate fit for this opportunity, please contact [David via email](#).

III. Featured Candidate - Online Marketing, Social Media & Virtual World Expert

The Executive Search Group presents our [Featured Candidate](#), “Brian”, who is an expert in Online Marketing, Social Media and Virtual Worlds for Tweens and Teens;

Brian has also established himself as a strong proponent of web-based products and technology and he has the unique ability to properly position a company for future expansion. Here are Brian's thoughts:

ESG: This month's Toy Book ran an article about web-based play and it's impact on the industry. You have unique experience in developing web-based products...can you tell us a little about that and why virtual worlds and web-based toys hold significance in our industry?

I developed some of the first toy products that had a web connection. In 1998 we had three different hand-held games that connected to the computer so that children could upload their high scores to compete with friends. As toys have evolved and kids' tastes evolved, we noticed that kids at much younger ages demanded and expected their toys to have technology components. Products like Webkinz, Shining Stars and SeaPals are significant because it has allowed gift companies like Ganz and Russ Berrie to become hybrid toy companies. Kids today demand web-based play and many kids have 5, 10, 15 different accounts and places they play online all at the same time.

This is very attractive to companies because the entry to market is far less expensive than most traditional toys. You can develop a compelling web or internet based experience in most cases cheaper and quicker than developing a toy. With the costs of manufacturing in Asia increasing you can develop a product, either a hard good or virtual in nature, and avoid many of the hassles associated with a traditional toy.

Right now web-based play is exploding and a very exciting area for toy and entertainment companies willing to get in and play. This area is only going to get larger, and more kids are going to expect that their traditional toys to have some sort of web piece. These web experiences do not always have to be a fully immersive virtual world. Even simple experiences that tie a traditional product to some sort of web piece will be enough. Also, since this area is growing so fast, development costs and time to market continue to decrease making it much easier to try or get your feet wet.

Frankly, I can't imagine why any company isn't leveraging their web presence to increase the value of their product and increase sales.

You can find the complete interview with Brian on our website. We ask Brian what makes a great web-based experience (for child and parent?)? What he thinks of companies that aren't leveraging the power of web-based toys? How important is a company's internet presence and how his background can be of help to a company.

To read the full interview [CLICK HERE>>>](#)

If your firm would like to meet and interview Brian, please [contact David E. Fitzgibbons](#) of the Executive Search Group at 330.867.7725.

IV. Business Opportunity – Website for Sale

Chances are your company's web presence is best described one of two ways:

1. Either you have no web presence at all

2. Or you have a website that no one knows about - or goes to

My client has a well-established website (launched in 2004) with over 100,000 registered users. This site can help make your product a must-have brand and it will make your product top-of-mind when parents or grand-parents are at retail. Your company will have the ability to get numerous impressions with a high frequency rate on an established and successful website that is drawing in thousands of your potential customers right now.

If your company sells to infant, preschool and/or toddler – than this site can make a difference for you. Please contact [David](#) for more information about this website.

V. Ask the Patent & Trademark Expert – David Hrina, Esq.

Dear Dave:

I am a freelance designer who designed a logo (and all packaging art) for a successful line of toys. Before the project started the company told me they weren't investing heavily in this line and they paid me a small (but acceptable) sum for my work. Now the line has exploded and my artwork is everywhere – including television. I went back to the client and asked for some royalties on my artwork and they just laughed saying it was "work for hire" and I have no recourse. Is this accurate?

[Name withheld]

Dear [Name Withheld]:

Thank you for your excellent question. Generally stated, and pursuant to U.S. Copyright Office Circular 9, absent a written agreement between the parties acknowledging that a particular work is a "work for hire", as that term is used in Title 17 of the United States Code, the author will retain copyright in the work and all rights attendant thereto. Therefore, I recommend that you review your agreement with your customer to determine if it includes such "work for hire" language. If it does not, I recommend that you contact an attorney.

David Hrina is a licensed Patent Attorney and a member of the Corporate and Intellectual Property Practice Groups at **Buckingham, Doolittle and Burroughs, LLP**. David may be contacted via email (No Free Advice) at DHrina@BDBLAW.com or via phone at 800.686.2825.

VI. Cell Phones "Apps" and toys...a match made in heaven – David Fitzgibbons

In our Featured Candidate interview this month, Brian finds it is "unbelievable" for a company not to maximize its internet presence. Our target audience for toys is extremely internet savvy; they live on the web – and, as the trends are showing, they are beginning to live on their cell phones. Our target audience talks, texts, surfs the web and plays games on their cell phone. We can easily tap the "play" part of the cell phone experience via "Apps".

Apps, short for application, are programs that the user downloads into their cell phone. For this article, I am referencing apps that come from Apple's iTunes App

store. The App store recently celebrated its first anniversary and experienced its one billionth download. Apps range in cost from free to \$9.99 and are utilized by the Apple iPhone or iTouch.

There is a correlation between cost and quality with respect to number of downloads however many free apps have become the most popular because of their usefulness. When it comes to our toy industry obviously a video game is perfectly suited to a platform like the iPhone/iTouch but what if your company makes action figures, dolls, games, puzzles or construction blocks?

Well, if the world gives you lemons...then make lemonade. If your firm makes construction blocks then design an app that utilizes your component parts and allows the user to build his own creations by dropping and dragging the pieces around the landscape of his phone. Allow the user to create new buildable models which they can then submit – via their phone – to your company for the chance to have it made. Drive them to your website and keep your product top-of-mind.

Fast-food seller Chipotle designed a free food ordering app that was so successful it overloaded their systems. It is since being reworked to accommodate the increase in business. Pennsylvania-based Zippo manufacturing company, maker of the Zippo lighter, created a Zippo lighter "*experience app*" where the user can recreate the look and feel – and sound – of the lighter. Zippos app is a Top 10 application and like Chipotles, drives customers to their website for sales.

If a burrito maker and a lighter company can design successful apps, why can't the creative types in our industry do the same? The opportunities are out there in this market to reach your target audience, entertain them, inform them on your products and drive them to your website. I suggest reaching them now before you lose them for good.

VII. Parting Shots - Why doesn't Lisa Gherardini have eyebrows?

Lisa Gherardini was a mother and housewife. Lisa was a woman of means and married to an Italian who was in the garment industry. Lisa had an excellent life – what Lisa didn't have was eyelashes and eyebrows.

By now you may have guessed that Lisa Gherardini is arguably the most famous woman ever, ***Mona Lisa*** painted by Leonardo Da Vinci. Leonardo began the painting in 1503 and finished it 4 long years later. The painting was commissioned by Lisa's husband, a wealthy Florentine silk merchant, Francesco, to celebrate their new home and birth of their second son.

Infrared camera technology revealed that Lisa was originally wearing a bonnet and clutching her chair but that Leonardo changed both. As is, Lisa sits in a chair with an expansive landscape of icy mountains, winding paths and a wooden bridge behind her. It is true, Lisa has no eyebrows or lashes but it wasn't because they were removed during a cleaning (as some believe) but rather because it was common for genteel women of that era to pluck them out as they were considered unsightly.

Lisa is a small painting by any standard measuring only 30"x21". **Louis XIV** hung Lisa in the **Palace of Versailles**. Several years later she resided in the bedroom of **Napoleon I**. Lisa has had acid thrown on her, been pelted with a rock and stolen.

Police thought **Pablo Picasso** was behind the theft and he was detained but eventually let go as he was innocent. Lisa now sits safely behind bullet-proof glass in 50% humidity in her own room in the **Louvre**.

6 million people view Lisa every year with an average viewing time of 15 seconds. My guess is that there are very few art lovers in that crowd of 6 million that only hang around for a few seconds. That's alright however as Lisa has the last laugh being that someone appreciates her value...her value is estimated between \$1 billion dollars and priceless – even without eyelashes or eyebrows.

The **Toy Industry Newsletter** © is published by www.ToyRecruiter.com All Rights Reserved.

David E. Fitzgibbons, CPC of the Executive Search Group may be contacted directly at 330.867.7725

If you wish to UNSUBSCRIBE to the Toy Industry Newsletter – send an [email](#) with the subject heading UNSUBSCRIBE and you will be promptly removed.