



2012 LACKLUSTRE TOY SALES LINKED TO LACK OF NEW PRODUCT LAUNCHES

London, January 22nd, 2013: New data on the European toy market released by global information company, The NPD Group shows the importance of new product releases in the European toy market. Combined value sales in the top five European markets dropped 2% in 2012 - the first time there has been a drop in eight years. The NPD Group's analysis relates this decline specifically back to the lower contribution made by new toy launches last year.

In the UK, Europe's largest toy market, 31% of value sales were generated by new products in 2012 – down 3% over the previous year. That is not to say new products didn't sell well in 2012. Lego Friends was a huge hit and, overall, NPD rates it as the best new property last year in the UK, as well as in Germany, France, Italy and the United States. Furby, relaunched with enhanced digital capabilities, was the number one seller in the UK in December. However, overall, the trend is the same in the top five European markets, with a smaller contribution being made to market value by new products than in the previous year.

The European Toy Market in 2012 - estimated market size

	Market Size 2012 (Estimated)	Top selling toy (value sales)	Average price in 2012	Launch Date
Top five Europe	£9.880bn	V Tech InnoTab tablet	£72.66	Various
UK	£2.947bn	LeapPad Explorer tablet	£67.65	Aug-11
France	£2.731bn	Beyblade Metal Fusion	£10.09	Sep-10
Germany	£2.340bn	Playmobil Advent Calendar	£9.79	Sep-12
Italy	£1.032bn	Ciccibello Bua doll	£39.46	Pre-2010
Spain	£830m	Monster High Assortment	£21.11	Sep-10

Source: The NPD Group / Consumer Tracking Service / Retail Tracking Service

The analysis also highlights the huge variety in the European toy market, with each of the top five countries having a different top seller in 2012. Overall InnoTab's VTech tablet took the top sales slot across Europe for 2012 as the biggest selling product thanks to a broad distribution in most countries, with over half a million units sold.

Frederique Tutt, Global Toy Industry Analyst with The NPD Group, says of the pre-school tablets' success, "Introduced in the UK in 2011 and to continental Europe in 2012, pre-school tablets have a relatively high price point and as such their strong sales performance shows that when the product is appealing, parents are prepared to pay more money despite the current challenging economic climate. In the case of tablets they strike a chord with parents and kids alike, all equally fascinated by their new technology, which is both entertaining and educational."

Tutt concludes, "Kids love new products, and that appetite is certainly fuelled by manufacturers with new product launches. This analysis shows the vital role innovation has in maintaining and growing the toy market."

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For more information, please contact:

Geraldine Gitel Mobile: + 44 (0)7787 686122 ggitel@greenfieldscommunications.com

Stuart Ridsdale Mobile: + 44 (0)7790 951229 stuart@greenfieldscommunications.com

Frédérique Tutt, European Analyst – NPD EuroToys Mobile: +33 (0)6 30 44 68 24

frederique.tutt@npd.com

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