

“GENUINE”

A few years ago I was visiting my hometown (Hi, Mom!). It is amazing how much your ‘hood shrinks. I covered most of my town with a 12 mile run on a Sunday morning. As I passed the tennis courts I grew up on, I spotted a guy I used to play against. I stopped and took a drink at the fountain and was pleasantly surprised when he recognized me. I was even more pleased when, moments later, he introduced me to his companion/friend as a “competitor”. What a word – as an athlete I can not imagine a better single word by which to be known.

The incident made me think about my business life. What single word would I be equally proud to be known by in my own industry? And what word would I use to describe some of the great people I have worked with?

genuine adjective truly what something is said to be; authentic : each book is bound in genuine leather. • (of a person, emotion, or action) sincere : she had no doubts as to whether Tom was genuine | a genuine attempt to delegate authority.

Truthful? Genius? Smart? Successful? Unique? Quirky? I have been called a lot worse, of course, and have worked with a few people who could be described by all those words and more. But what if you only had one word? That day in my hometown I thought I would use that quote “He was a competitor” on my headstone – you can’t do much better than that.

In a good part of my life it fits, but it isn’t the one word. I did not think I could come up with one, never really tried, until another friend introduced me to someone as “genuine.”

I thought, “That’s a good word!” How many people do we know or work with who are “genuine”?

It was a genuinely great compliment and a goal for all of us.

Wade

Basic Fun: More Than Just Keychains

For years, key chains were basically a “throw in” to licensed product deals – until Basic Fun changed the landscape. From the Super Soaker to Pokemon to Spongebob, Basic Fun is known as THE company that produces the highest quality of functional and figural key chains.

Under the umbrella of that success, Alan Dorfman and his team have sought to expand their presence through innovation. The next frontier: raising the bar in the novelty toy category.

To meet their goals they developed a group of new products that are poised to become the next iteration of the functional keychain.

One of the hottest products coming out of October’s Mass Market Toy Fair is Basic Fun’s line of Talking Key chains. Almost any movie or TV show that contains classic phrases is sure to make a great novelty product. Cartman’s “Respect my Authority” is a favorite that can be heard on Basic Fun’s Southpark keychain. Fox’s Napoleon Dynamite continues to be hot, and in 2006, look for more classic movies on Talking Key chains.

Another fast mover: removable, reusable Ipod Covers. The covers are sold in blister packs of five designs for each license. They feature Happy Bunny, the NBA, Hello Kitty and Disney Properties. Anime fans can select Naruto and Full Metal Alchemist covers.

Basic Fun has also found its niche within the preschool segment with Magic Washcloths. Sold as a “compressed puck”, these washcloths magically open to their standard shape when dropped in the tub. Each soft cloth features a licensed character such as Hello Kitty, Mr. Potato Head, and many others. Although by definition a bath item, they are being marketed in the toy aisle as a novelty toy.

The key to Basic Fun’s future is, ironically, more than the key chains that made them famous. Growing and innovating with the market, they are unlocking the trends that will lead the way in the novelty category.



CONSCIOUS IDLE

The Art of Inactivity

Our world is one of cycles. Tides ebb and flow, one season gives way to the next, night follows day. In our own lives, we have periods of great activity and periods of rest. Just as high tide is no better than low tide and summer no better than spring, activity is not, in itself, better than inactivity. In fact, these times of rest and rejuvenation, idleness and dreaming, help us connect to ourselves and to our divine source.

Our culture tends to applaud action and achievement. We are often most comfortable with ourselves when we are clearly traveling toward a goal. During these times of striving, we direct our energy outward. We take action on our vision and follow the steps that lead us to our goal. But there are moments in this process when the urge comes to take a break, retreat, or just lay low. The tendency may be to judge ourselves negatively as we may be less comfortable with these moments of down time which is a great time to check in with our intention.

By being aware of your intention behind the action of laying low you can gain a higher perspective on it. Ask yourself if your intention is to honor an essential part of your being or to hide from it. Is your intent one that is ultimately kind to yourself – empowering rather than diminishing? Perhaps you sense it is simply time to pause and allow the universe to work its magic on your behalf.

When you feel the urge to have down time, trust that this is a natural part of the process of achieving your goals. Know that what may appear to be a deviation from your path can actually prove to be a shortcut and give yourself permission to do exactly as you are moved to do. Curl up under the covers with a favorite book or catch an old movie on TV. Soak up some sun or daydream the day away. Better yet, do nothing at all. Allow yourself to simply be – alive and at ease.

– Author unknown received via email

NEWS AND NOTES

BQ WELCOMES SHELCORE TOYS

Children's products manufacturer, Shelcore Toys of Somerset, New Jersey, joined the Building Q roster earlier this year. The two companies are working together as Shelcore – which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2005 - strives to expand its product line of infant, preschool, juvenile and seasonal toys using licensing.

"We have been seeking to grow our licensing presence for quite some time and Building Q understood our approach from the start. We kicked off our relationship with a very successful Licensing Show this summer and based on the reactions from licensors, there are a number of opportunities on the table," said Deke Jamison, Shelcore Toys, vice president of sales and marketing.

ICING ON THE CAKE



One of the nicest compliments a professional can receive is when a customer asks you to speak on its behalf – which is just what BQ client Bakery Crafts has done. In December, Woody was invited to speak at the Bakery Crafts Annual Sales Meeting where he was the keynote speaker at their sales meeting. No half-baked presentation – just a taste of what's happening in "our" world.

WHO IS THAT GUY?

That is the question that some people ask when they've seen a svelte, well-suited Terry Hess on the street these days. Congratulations to Terry, who has embraced a healthy lifestyle – and a smaller suit size. As President of NYC's Chapter of Mended Hearts, a cardiac support group based at NYU Medical Center, he's taking his responsibilities as a role model very seriously – and he looks, and feels – mah-vel-ous.

A FINAL RACE

Ever wonder how Woody gets from one meeting to the next so quickly? Training. Case in point: he ran the 2005 New York City Marathon. How'd he do, you ask? "I did the training and felt good for the first 10 miles; then slowly (slowly being the key word) the day got away from me." Becky (Mrs. Browne) told me that my "mind makes up goals that my body can no longer deliver on" and for 16.2 miles I was thinking how right she was. "No more marathons for me."

UPCOMING TRADE SHOW SCHEDULE

- Consumer Electronics Show – Las Vegas – January 5-8
- Super Show – Orlando – January 23-25
- CHA Hobby Show – Las Vegas – January 30 – Feb 2
- American International Toy Fair – New York – February 12-15
- MAGIC – Las Vegas – February 21-24
- NYC Comic Con – New York – February 24-26

Pack your bags!
It's going to be a busy
first quarter!



My MARVELOUS Little Toy

If you are of a certain age, you may remember the Peter, Paul & Mary hit "My Marvelous Little Toy" with the chorus that goes "It went 'zip' when it moved and 'bop' when it stopped and 'whirr' when it stood still..." The song is about a toy given to the singer as a child by his dad and how he is passing it along to his own son. One of those "classic" childhood memories a parent wants to recreate for his or her own child.

Most of us remember the amazement we felt when we opened a package and knew that someone (mom or dad, Santa or the grandparents) knew our own hearts' desire. It was magic.

Some of us may have even chosen our careers based on a desire to bring that kind of magic to the next generation(s). So in the spirit of Toy Fair, here is a sampling of childhood memories from licensees, licensors and our own team that could very well explain how the gifts of yesteryear may have helped to make us the people we are today...

"My favorite toy was the Holly Hobbie Oven. It was a gift from my parents and I made my mother take me to Toys 'R Us every weekend to get cake/brownie refills. Even today I am obsessed with baking; I bake all the time."

— ALYSSA J. TUCKER, 4Kids Entertainment, Inc.

"My favorite toy growing up was Speed Racer's car - it went with me everywhere."

— DOUG HABER, Innovative Design

"Growing up a sports nut, I gravitated to one specific board game: Strat-O-Matic Baseball. My parents gave me the "Full League" version, and I enjoyed many seasons of "Strat" after that. Usually, I played the solo version, and "announced" the games to myself in my room. Good, wholesome fun growing up."

— GARY SCHNEIDER, Building Q

I have two favorites: My favorite overall toy was Silly Putty. At the time, I was about five years old and Silly Putty was being advertised on TV. I clearly remember my mom finally giving in and going to Baby Town to get it for me. I loved to copy comics on Silly Putty, which you can't do anymore, as they have changed the type of ink used on comics. I molded it, bounced it - in fact bounced it off my walls to the point where my dad was a little fed up with the constant knocking. Also, for some reason, it was cheap enough so my brother had his own Silly Putty, and I didn't have to share mine.

The other toy was also heavily advertised on TV for Christmas (also in the early '60s). I think it was called Johnny Seven, and it was a gun that had more projectiles than you could count. It took me about a week to lose them all, but for one week I was one happy kid. Being a toy maker, it makes me laugh to think about how that toy wouldn't stand a chance these days with toy safety regulations - it wouldn't make it out of the factory. And I was never really into toy guns, but this thing was so clever in all the ways in managed to fire something off that I had to have it. My brother was just as happy as I was - but only after I ran out of all the projectiles. Little brothers make obvious targets. I guess that is why we have toy safety regulations today.

— ALAN DORFMAN, Basic Fun

When I was 10 I received a 7-size acoustic guitar for Hanukkah. I remember holding it in my hands for the first time, feeling the strings, realizing that I could make my own music - it was a tremendous sense of creative freedom. I kept that guitar until my hands were large enough to buy a full size one as a young teen. It was a "toy" that literally impacted my life.

— ROBBIE TARPLEY RAFFISH, ASAPR public relations & marketing

I remember a wood pistol that my dad carved for me when I was about three years old. (It was shaped like a pirate musket pistol, with two chambers. The size was such that it hardly fit into my little hand. It was varnished to a luster and smoothness that felt good to the touch. I loved that toy and carried it around with me as I made my way down the pirate, cowboy and villain infested streets of Philadelphia. Later in life, I found out that little kids break things or lose things, and that my dad, that good dad, had made a few of those guns for me - I guess to stop me from crying after another one bit the dust.

My kids never had guns to play with. They never asked for them. We never volunteered. I'm glad to this day they didn't make me choose whether to say yes or no to the request. I will say, however, that if you look on a shelf in my den, you will find an old wooden pistol that was carved about 60 years ago, that will always be a very happy part of my history.

— HANK ROSE, Comic Images

One Christmas when I was seven years old I remember not being able to breathe on Christmas morning with the anticipation of what Santa had dropped off for me. After laying awake the whole night, finally morning came and I went down stairs to see what I had received. To my astonishment, I only had a few gifts, while my sisters, who had not been good, had a large pile of gifts.

I could only imagine that I'd been found out about something that I did and was being punished. Then my parents suggested that I should take a look in the basement. I lit up and ran down and there, on the ping pong table, was a new set of Lionel Trains that I had asked Santa for, all setup.

— TERRY HESS, Building Q

Around 1962 or 63, I remember my Platinum-haired Barbie that came with three different wigs: the Platinum bouffant "do", a brunette ponytail and a Redheaded flip! I remember it well because I discovered this Christmas present "early" (hidden in my Mom's upstairs closet!). It was the one and only time that I actually every went snooping for Xmas gifts; it obviously made a lasting impression!

— LAURA GUDER, Bakery Krafts

Without a doubt Tabletop Hockey...You controlled the players and goalie using rods that slid underneath the rink. Not only was it a great toy as a seven year old, I remember playing it in my college years. We got more creative with the game by spraying silicon on the playing surface to make the game move faster. The game was so classic in design and play value that it is still offered today!

— ALAN GORDON, Comic Images

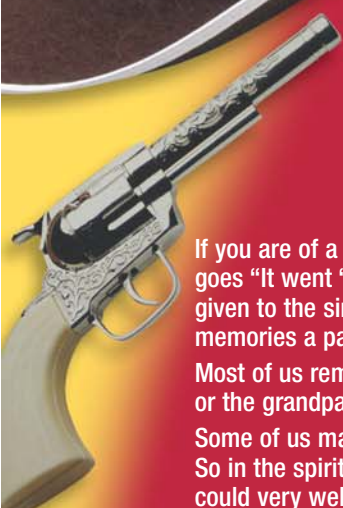
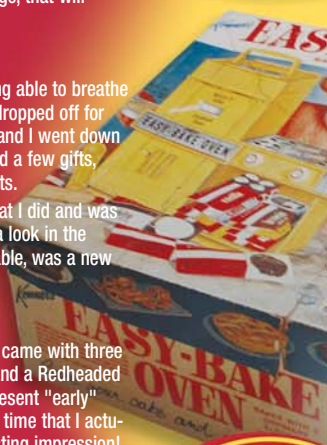
One of my favorite toys was my roller skates; the steel wheels and leather straps kind that you needed a key to adjust. A favorite memory about those skates: my mom's never ending patience teaching me how to use them and her stoic compassion for scraped knees and bumped heads in the days long before it was mandatory to wear knee pads and helmets!

— KATHY O'HEHIR, Modern Publishing

When I was seven years old and living in Buffalo, New York, I received one of my most prized toys on Christmas morning - the exciting Lite Brite! When I went to plug in my new toy we realized that it required a special watt light bulb that Santa must have forgot! BUT, living in Buffalo we were in a middle of a blizzard, snowed-in with no sight of a light bulb for days. The anticipation of finally getting to play with my new toy really made it a special "brite" memory!

— MICHELLE BROWN, Building Q

Some of the photos are courtesy of "Toys: Celebrating 100 Years of the Power of Play"





News & Previews

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CLIENT	DISTRIBUTION	CORE PRODUCT LINE	CURRENT LICENSES INCLUDE (LISTED ALPHABETICALLY)
APPAREL & ACCESSORIES			
BCI	Convenience Stores, Drug, Grocery, Mass	Sunglasses, Reading Glasses, Computer Eyewear	Crayola, Hawaiian Tropic, Wrangler
ODM	Department Store, Independent, Mass, Mid-Tier, Specialty	Men's, Young Men's, Boys, Ladies, & Juniors T-Shirts, Wovens, Knits in all models and fabrics including jersey and fleece, Headwear	Bob Ross, Bruce Lee, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Corona, DragonBall Z, GMC, Guinness Beer, Goodfellas, Happy Days, Hummer, Initial D, Jarritos, Jimi Hendrix, Leave it to Beaver, Magnum, Mickey's, Miller, Milwaukee's Best, Orange County Choppers, Old English, Pearl Drums, Pontiac, Samuri Champloo, Selena, Tonka, Topatio Hot Sauce, Trigun, Up in Smoke, World Poker Tour
PUGSTER VANDALE INDUSTRIES	Mid-Tier, Online, Specialty Department Store, Mass, Mid-Tier, Specialty	Italian Charms, Jewelry & Accessories Loungewear, Sleepwear, Daywear, Intimate Apparel for Junior's, Missy & Plus sizes	Curious George, Grinch, Happy Bunny, Pepsi Barcode Kitty, Co-Edikit, Curious George, Rampage
COLLECTIBLES			
COMIC IMAGES	Convenience Stores, Drug, Hobby, Mass	Trading Cards, Collectible Card Games, Antique Gumball Machines, Bobble Heads, Snow Globes, Bobble Pens	24, The Apprentice, Madagascar, Shrek, Stargate, Star Wars: Episode III, World Wrestling Entertainment
FOOD			
BAKERY CRAFTS	Bakery Distributors, Cake & Candy Supply Shops, Ice Cream Shops, Retail & Supermarket Bakeries	Cake Kits, Cake Toppers, Cupcake Decorations, Wedding Ornaments, Candles, Bakery Supply Equipment, On Demand Imaging Systems with Licensed Characters and Frames	American Chopper, Atomic Betty, Batman, Bionicle, Bratz, Build A Bear, Care Bears, Clifford, Crayola, Collegiate Licenses, Curious George, Harley Davidson, Hello Kitty, Holly Hobbie, Justice League, King Kong, Koala Bros., Lego, Miss Spider, NASCAR & Drivers, Orange County Choppers, Open Season*, Peanuts, Pokemon, Precious Moments, Scooby Doo, Sesame Street, Superman, Transformers
FRANKFORD CANDY & CHOCOLATE COMPANY	Convenience Stores, Drug, Grocery, Mass, Specialty	Seasonal & Everyday Chocolate & Non-Chocolate Confections, Jelly Pops & Novelties, Retentive Value-Added Containers, Novelty Lollipops, Dispensers	Barbie, Beatrix Potter, Care Bears, Curious George, Dora the Explorer, Hot Wheels, Nickelodeon, NBA*, Scooby Doo, Spongebob Squarepants, World Poker Tour
FUNERARY			
ETERNAL IMAGE	Funeral Homes	Caskets, Urns	American Kennel Club*, Major League Baseball*, Precious Moments, The Vatican Collection
HEALTH AND BEAUTY AIDS			
WATERJEL INC. <i>(formally DBA Kosmakare)</i>	Drug, Grocery, Mass	Licensed Personal Care, Adhesive Bandages, Bubble Bath, Soaps, Foam Soaps, Shampoo, Hair styling products, Tween Cosmetics, Hand Sanitizers, AntiBacterial Wipes, Bath Gift Sets	Barbie, Koala Brothers, Strawberry Shortcake, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, The Wiggles, Toy Story
HOUSEWARES			
ALOHA WORLDWIDE	Commercial/Industrial, Home Stores, Mass, Mid-Tier	Portable Heaters, Air Conditioners, Fans, Lighting & Lighting Systems	
STATIONERY AND PUBLISHING			
INNOVATIVE DESIGNS MODERN PUBLISHING	Drug, Grocery, Mass, Mid-Tier Dept. Stores, Specialty Drug, Grocery, Mass, Specialty	Stationery and School Supplies Coloring, Activity and Sticker Books, Dollar Stores, Warehouse Clubs Story Books, Paint with Water, Workbooks, Cut Outs, Dot-To-Dot, Board Books	American Dad, Atomic Betty, Care Bears, Family Guy, Groovy Girls*, Napoleon Dynamite, Orange County Choppers, The Simpsons, Wacky Packs Babar, Bratz, Build A Bear, Care Bears, Hasbro Games, Hot Wheels, Little Bratz, Little People, Orange County Choppers, Pokemon, Rescue Heroes, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Tonka, The Wiggles, Disney's WITCH
TOYS AND GAMES			
BASIC FUN	Craft Stores, Drug, Grocery, Mass, Specialty, Toy	Functional, Figural, Talking & Plush Keychains, Ipod Covers, Water Wigglers, Christmas Ornaments, XTS Trains System	Atari, Beavis and Buttthead, Build A Bear, Chicken Little, Disney Princesses & Standard Characters, Disney's Cars, Etch-a-Sketch, Family Guy, Fisher Price, Franny K. Stein, Full Metal Alchemist, Happy Bunny, Hasbro's Games, Hello Kitty, The Incredibles, Jeep, Justice League, Napoleon Dynamite, Naruto, NBA, Peanuts, Pirates of the Caribbean, Pokemon, Power Rangers, Scooby Doo, Simpsons, Snapple, Spongebob, South Park, Superman, Spy Gear, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Transformers, The Wiggles
CADACO	Mass, Specialty, Toy	Plug & Play DVD Games, Board Games, Activity Sets, Chalk and Outdoors, Magic Kits	Buzztime Entertainment, Counting Sheep, Lance Burton, Marshall Brodien, MLB Cooperstown Collection, MLB Players Association
FIBRECRAFT	Craft Stores, Drug, Mass, Specialty, Toy	Craft & Activities	Backyardigans, Blues Clues, Dora the Explorer, Go Diego Go, Koala Bros., Spongebob Squarepants, Scooby Doo
SHELCORE TOYS SRM ENTERTAINMENT	Drug, Grocery, Mass, Toy Drug, Mass, Specialty, Toy	Infant, Preschool, Juvenile & Seasonal Toys Light Chasers & Handheld Light Toys	Jeff Gordon, Tony Stewart, Jimmie Johnson, NASCAR*, Peppa Pig* Dora the Explorer, Justice League, Koala Bros, Scooby Doo, Sesame Street, Spongebob Squarepants

* - Contract Pending