

Holmes & Marchant

Ten Trends from The Toy Fair
Kensington Olympia

February 2012



The only dedicated toy, game and hobby exhibition in the UK and a fantastic opportunity to see what products the suppliers think will excite kids.

This report captures ten trends for 2012, some innovations, some influencers and some observations – all of which will give an insight into what ‘makes children tick’.

I Collaboration

From action heroes to television icons, collaborations were extremely popular for toys of all types and for children of all ages. Having your favourite celebrity or character endorsing your toy is the ideal way of connecting what's seen on screen to what's played with at home.



2 Best of British

Understandably British themed products were very popular this year - from puzzles to posters to cuddly toys. This 'celebration' is only likely to become more popular, more overt and unfortunately more pushy! We're still not convinced about those Olympic mascots!



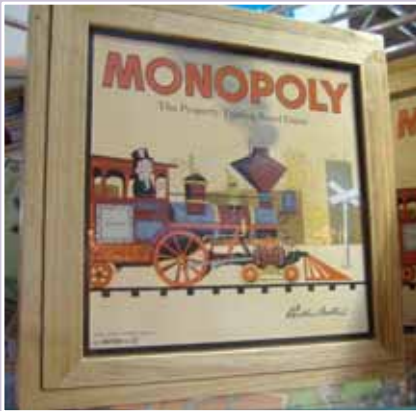
3 Living the Adult Life

From cooking and cleaning to motorcycling, it seems like this year brands are keen to promote 'grown-up' activities. There were even toy versions of the classic 'Henry Hoovers' and the 'Dyson'. Are these functional adult brands too 'old' for children?



4 'Old School' Comeback

Amongst the 'new toys' there was still an important place for the old classics like Marbles and Tiddly winks. These classics will of course be particularly appealing to parents who will be purchasing the toys in search of the good old days!



5 Wooden/Traditional

While wooden toys and plastic figures have been around for years, they are still extremely popular. These good quality toys are 'easy on the eyes' so are also popular with parents and this trend is very much in-line with the increasing return of old brands like Wispa. Something authentic to steady the nerves in uncertain times.



6 Arts, Crafts & Science

Arts and Crafts were in plentiful supply at the toy fair, in fact far outnumbering outdoor games. It looks like the more traditional arts and crafts are being trumped by extremely wacky but great fun science kits which are aimed at both girls and boys. With the lure of computer games and technology, brands will need to work a lot harder to grab both children's attention as well as their imagination.



7 Adult & Trivia

We can't forget about the adult toy range, which, although very limited, consisted of a variety of 'drinking' and 'after dinner' games. Trivia style games also made quite an appearance, appealing to both children and adults.



8 Innovations & Influences



A cool new product is this 'make your own lip balm kit'.

A fantastic new product this year is magic chocolate, a non-melting formula which you can mould and then eat ... it tastes pretty good!



There was a definite Japanese influence to some of the new products, like this craft kit and 'nano' blocks.

9 Innovations & Influences



With all the hype about 'going green' it is not surprising that there were a few new organic toys like this elegant farmers market from a company called miYim.



These high tech, innovative bugs look like they may become a new trend...



These new moshi toys, which you can clip onto your clothes also look like they may be a hit!

10 Innovations & Influences



Motorised scooters and bikes could be a new trend, along with accessories such as bright helmets and handlebar decorations.



And finally... possibly the most exciting new toy this year from Apptoyz – gadgets that you use in conjunction with your iPhone and iPad!

One Final Thought

With young people living in an increasingly 'digital' and 'virtual' world, the brands that are successful will be those that can seamlessly connect the real world with this virtual world.

Relevance is King – be where they are, see what they see and don't forget even a three year old has power over what Sainsbury's call their bread!

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