



HIT entertainment

For Immediate Release



Aardman appoints HIT Entertainment for Wallace & Gromit, Shaun the Sheep and Aardman Classics in the US and Canada

12 September 2007, London, Bristol England and New York – Aardman Animations, the Oscar®-winning studio behind Wallace and Gromit, Chicken Run and the most recent Shaun the Sheep TV series has appointed HIT Entertainment to manage their licensing and home entertainment rights in the US and Canada. With immediate effect HIT will manage the rights of three properties, Wallace & Gromit™, Shaun the Sheep™ and Aardman Classics.

Aardman's much deserved reputation for producing global, award-winning children's productions continues with their latest production, "Shaun the Sheep". Aimed at 5 - 10 year olds and broadcast in over 145 territories, the series won the prestigious *Cristal Award for Best TV Production* at the Annecy Animated Film Festival earlier this year.

Shaun the Sheep made its TV debut on The Disney Channel (US) last month. The series follows the comedic stories of a young sheep who leads his barnyard pals into all sorts of adventures. The character was first introduced in the Nick Park/Aardman Oscar(R)-winning "Wallace & Gromit" 30 minute film "A Close Shave".

"Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were Rabbit" is the recipient of over 100 international awards including the Academy Award® for Best Animated Feature Film in 2006. A highly anticipated, and shortly to be announced, new Wallace and Gromit project will be released in the fourth quarter of 2008.

Stephen Moore, Chief Operating Officer, Aardman Animations says, "We are delighted at the prospect of partnering with HIT in the US and Canada on these our two most precious properties – their talent in managing top international brands will give Shaun and Wallace & Gromit a great springboard for tremendous success."

Peter Byrne, Executive Vice President Consumer Products Worldwide, HIT Entertainment commented, "HIT Entertainment continues to explore new and exciting children's properties, adding to our portfolio of world-renowned brands. We are delighted to be working with Aardman, whose reputation is second to none in creating and developing some of the most unique and endearing properties in the business."

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About HIT Entertainment

HIT Entertainment, owned by private equity investment group Apax Partners, is one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights-owners. HIT's portfolio includes properties, such as *Barney*[™], *Bob the Builder*[™], *Thomas & Friends*[™], *Pingu*[™], *Fireman Sam*[™], *Angelina Ballerina*[™] and *Rainbow Magic*[™]. HIT represents *Fifi and the Flowertots*[™] in North America and Japan and acts as a worldwide representative for The Jim Henson Company's library of classic family brands and as representative for *The Wiggles*[®] in the UK. HIT also owns the Guinness World Records[™] publishing and television property. Launched in 1989, HIT's lines of business span television and video production (including studios in the US and the UK), publishing, consumer products licensing and live events. With a catalogue of more than 1,000 hours of young children's programming, HIT sells its shows to more than 240 countries worldwide, in more than 40 different languages and has operations in the UK, US, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan. In 2005, the Company joined Comcast Corporation, PBS and Sesame Workshop to launch PBS KIDS SproutSM, a 24-hour digital cable channel and VOD service for preschoolers. For more information, visit www.hitentertainment.com.

About Aardman

Aardman, based in Bristol (UK), co-founded and run by Peter Lord and David Sproxton, is a world leader in animation. It produces feature films, television series and television commercials for both the domestic and international market. The studio has won over 400 international awards including 4 Oscars[®].

Aardman's multi-award winning productions are novel, entertaining, brilliantly characterised and full of charm that reflects the unique talent, energy and personal commitment of the very special people who make up the Aardman team. The studio's work is often imitated and yet the company continues to lead the field producing a rare brand of visually stunning and amusing independent and commercials productions.