



HIT entertainment

**For Immediate Release**

**IN FALL 2008 *THOMAS & FRIENDS*™ EMBARK ON THEIR  
GREATEST ADVENTURE YET**

***"THE GREAT DISCOVERY"* -- THE FIRST DVD FEATURE NARRATED BY PIERCE BROSNAN --  
IS FULL-STEAM AHEAD WITH NEW PUBLISHING AND TOY TIE-IN PRODUCTS**

**NEW YORK, NY, February 18, 2008** – Fans of the beloved Thomas the Tank Engine™, hold on to your engineer's cap, as *Thomas & Friends*™ pulls into the station with *The Great Discovery* in fall 2008. This forthcoming feature length, DVD special sees Thomas puff into new and uncharted territory in his biggest adventure yet. *The Great Discovery*, due in stores on September 9, is the first *Thomas & Friends* release to be narrated by Pierce Brosnan, who will also voice the new PBS series launching in September.

Toy partners, Learning Curve and HIT Toy, as well as, publishing partner, Random House will be supporting this title with all-new tie-in products. Additionally, the grassroots *Day Out With Thomas* tour, will be themed *The Great Discovery* in 2008. At the events, children will be provided with a "Great Discovery Tour Map," that guides them through the various on-site activities and at the last stop, each child will receive a free gift.

HIT Entertainment and key partners will support the *The Great Discovery* with a national multi-media advertising campaign, including TV, print and online.

***Thomas & Friends The Great Discovery DVD:***

In the first-ever feature length *Thomas & Friends* DVD release narrated by Pierce Brosnan, Thomas puffs into new and uncharted territory in his biggest adventure yet! One day, while racing James across the island, Thomas discovers a long-lost deserted town high in the mountains. This is Great Waterton, the oldest town on the island. The whole Island is thrilled with Thomas's discovery and Sir Topham Hatt, Controller of the Railway, declares that the town will be restored to mark Sodor Day! This exciting new adventure leads to many mishaps and lessons learned for Thomas & his engine friends. This release also introduced new tank engine, Stanley. Thomas meets *Indiana Jones* in this all action spectacular! (In Stores September 9; SRP \$19.98)

**Toys:**

HIT ToyCo expands its successful *Thomas & Friends TrackMaster*™ Railway System with *Thomas at Tumblin' Bridge* play set, Thomas zooms down a watery roller coaster, bursts through a waterfall, climbs a steep mountain track and features an exciting collapsing bridge. Inspired by *The Great Discovery* DVD, *Thomas at Tumblin' Bridge* offers endless opportunities for young engineers to explore new parts of Sodor with their favorite engine friends. (For children ages 3 and up; SRP \$49.99).



Learning Curve Brands continues to expand their *Thomas & Friends* collections with new wooden engine introductions inspired by "The Great Discovery" DVD in 2008:

**Stanley** - Introduced in *The Great Discovery*, Stanley is the newest tank engine on Sodor. He's a little bit bigger, a little bit newer and a little bit stronger than Thomas. And Thomas quickly discovers that when you're a friend in need... Stanley is a friend indeed. **Ages 2+, SRP \$10.99**

**Sodor Day Thomas & Stanley** - Sodor Day is the biggest celebration on the Island of Sodor! The new Sodor Day Thomas & Stanley are both decorated to join in the festivities! **Ages 2+, SRP \$19.99**

**Mud Covered Thomas** - Oops! Thomas went too fast and fell off the track! Now he's covered in leaves, branches, and mud! It's a good thing that one of Mud Covered Thomas' "really useful friends" chuffed along and helped to pull him out! **Ages 2+, SRP \$10.99**

Plus more engines and destinations to expand this line.

### **Day Out With Thomas: The Great Discovery:**

Pulling out of the station for its 13th consecutive ride on the rails, the ***Day Out With Thomas 2008: The Great Discovery Tour***, presented by HIT Entertainment and sponsored by Lego, will visit more than 45 cities in the United States and Canada. ***Day Out With Thomas*** is the only place for families to take a ride with a 15-ton replica of everybody's favorite #1 engine, Thomas the Tank Engine, and enjoy Thomas-themed activities at the Imagination Station, including stamps, temporary tattoos and hands-on arts and crafts. Each year the tour grows, traveling to new destinations, adding new activities and welcoming new visitors. As part of ***Day Out With Thomas 2008: The Great Discovery Tour***, children will be provided with a "Great Discovery Tour Map," that guides them through the various on-site activities and at the last stop, each child will receive a free gift.

### **Publishing:**

Random House will be publishing *Thomas & The Great Discovery* which follows the story of Thomas' discovery of Great Waterton and the many mishaps and adventures that he experiences along the way. *Thomas & The Great Discovery* is a Golden Book which includes 32-pages of original illustrations. (In stores September 2008; SRP \$12.95).

### **Online:**

The *Thomas & Friends* website, [www.thomasandfriends.com/greatdiscovery](http://www.thomasandfriends.com/greatdiscovery), will feature *The Great Discovery* landing page and will showcase all-new exclusive content, activities, streaming videos and games throughout the year.

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### **About Thomas & Friends**

*Thomas & Friends* invites children to enter a world of imagination through the tracks of a train and the words of a story. *Thomas the Tank Engine* was created by a father for his son more than 60 years ago. Today, families in more than 145 countries enjoy fun and adventure with their engine friends while experiencing timeless life lessons of discovery, friendship and cooperation. *Thomas & Friends* is making tracks to great destinations on PBS KIDS®, PBS KIDS Sprout<sup>SM</sup> and with downloadable episodes available through iTunes. For more information about the world of *Thomas the Tank Engine* and his friends, please visit [www.thomasandfriends.com](http://www.thomasandfriends.com).

### **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*<sup>TM</sup>, *Bob the Builder*<sup>TM</sup>, *Thomas & Friends*<sup>TM</sup>, *Pingu*<sup>TM</sup>, *Fireman Sam*<sup>TM</sup>, *Angelina Ballerina*<sup>TM</sup> and *Rainbow Magic*<sup>TM</sup>. HIT represents *Fifi and the Flowertots*<sup>TM</sup> 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 1,500 hours of young children's programming, HIT sells its shows to more than 240 countries worldwide, in more than 45 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 Sprout<sup>SM</sup>, a 24-hour digital cable channel and VOD service for preschoolers. In 2007, HIT and Chellomedia, the European content division of Liberty Global, Inc and its subsidiary ChelloZone, announced a joint venture to launch and distribute JimJam, an international preschool TV channel (excludes the US, UK and China). For more information, visit [www.hitentertainment.com](http://www.hitentertainment.com).

**To download artwork, please visit [www.hitnewsonline.com](http://www.hitnewsonline.com).**

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