



## ACAMAR FILMS

## The international success of Bing

Licensing Magazine interviewed **Katie Rollings, Chief Licensing Officer at Acamar Films** to learn more about the latest activities and next plans for the international pre-school brand, Bing.

How has Bing become one of the top Preschool brands in the UK and internationally?

It is mainly because of its authenticity. Bing centers on the true experiences and reactions of pre-schoolers and celebrates the simplicity of the everyday. It is a child-centric show, the micro dramas that play out in every episode reflect the reality of every child, which is what makes it globally relevant. Bing is truly about seeing the world through the eyes of a child: the audience sees itself reflected in Bing, and through



Katie Rollings

him the viewers become able to make sense of their own development and also the world around them, and to do it in their own way. I consider that this is really what sets Bing apart.

In this post-pandemic world, the parents are defining different priorities. Now it is much more about the EQ, rather than the IQ: the importance of building mental, emotional and social skills has never been more urgent. Bing has never been more relevant, because the parents



### FOCUS ON THE ITALIAN MARKET



#### WHAT DO THEY SAY

**Simona Sironi, Marketing Director Italy at Giochi Preziosi Group**

With Acamar, we have been working together for many years now. A strong partnership that allows us to speak effectively to purchasing managers and the trade. Integrated marketing activities have ensured strong brand awareness of the entire toy line and made the product instantly recognisable on the shelf. Over time, Bing has thus become one of the most loved brands by small children in Italy.



are looking for tools to help build their children's emotional resilience. In my opinion, Bing really has a great purpose, which is why it is one of the top pre-school brands in the market.

#### Which are the key markets of this brand?

We launched Bing in the UK back in 2014, and now we are excited as we come into 2024, to be celebrating our 10th anniversary. We have seen huge success over the years in the UK, and success on YouTube and BBC iPlayer where Bing is a top requested show. With a great number of licensees and good products at retail, we are building out our experiences to find new ways to connect with our audience. The UK is our primary market and where we premiered. I would say another important market for us is Italy, where Bing is the number 1 most streamed

### FOCUS ON PUBLISHING

HarperCollins is the master publishing partner of Acamar Films for Bing. LM asked **Annabel Walwyn, Media Brands Editorial Director**, and **Veronica Re, Rights Manager** at HarperCollins, about the Bing publishing.

#### Which products do you develop with Acamar?

As master publisher of Bing, HarperCollins Children's Books has spent the last ten years cultivating an excellent working relationship with Acamar create best-in-class publishing for the brand. We have developed a huge range of successful pre-school formats in

Veronica Re



all shapes and sizes. Each title aims to help children learn about the world around them through the experiences of Bing and his friends with relatable and authentic storytelling and soft learning. Since our publishing launched in 2014, we have created 26 picture books, 6 board story books, 6 annuals, 16 activity books and 23 novelty and gift formats.



#### What results are you achieving?

We have sold over 5.4 million Bing books globally. We have created more than seventy titles in the UK. In the international arena, Bing has been translated into 14 foreign languages and has sold more than 3 million copies across all non-English markets. Our partners are very committed and publish a variety of formats spanning from story books to treasury bind-



ups, from lift-the flaps to moving tabs, from sticker albums to colouring books.

Annie Walwyn





pre-school series on the RaiPlay platform. We have over 1,200,000 YouTube subscribers, and we work with Maurizio Distefano Licensing as our agent in the market. The same can be said of Poland and the CEE markets, where we also have over 1,000,000 YouTube subscribers. We have had fantastic store openings in Hungary, a great success with our cinema events and strong retail performance.

Another key market has been the Netherlands, where we had sold-out theatre shows, and a strong consistent retail performance. Recently, we are very pleased to have had a strong content launch in France. We have seen strong viewership which is paving the way for us to drive a licensing focus as we go into 2024. This international growth is a huge priority for us over the next 3 to 5 years. There are still several big markets in



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Giandiego Coloru

**WHAT DO THEY SAY**

**Giandiego Coloru, Marketing Director at SIMBA TOYS ITALIA S.P.A.**

Our collaboration with Acamar dates to 2020. Together with them we developed 4 Bing-themed products: two scooters, one tricycle and a kitchen.

We are very happy with the partnership with Acamar: the results we have achieved in recent years thanks to Bing have been absolutely positive: in particular, Bing scooters have been among the best-selling in Italy in the category.



which we plan to launch. Our approach is a gradual rollout to achieve long-term growth, with a robust localization strategy.

**You have built an incredible network of partners. Could you quote some of them in Europe?**

We have a large network of incredible partners across numerous product categories and our content platforms. And if I were to call out one or two, and not in any particular order, we obviously have Golden Bear, who is our Master Toy partner, distributing throughout Europe. We work with HarperCollins and have had a very long-standing relationship with them, as they are our Master Publishing partner. We work with other European licensees such as Giochi Preziosi and Clementoni. We

are hugely glad about our partnership with Leolandia, which we are excited to launch as we go into next year, and we are still continuing to explore additional opportunities with other partners, continuing to find new ways to engage and innovate.

**Which are your goals at the Licensing Expo?**

The Licensing Expo comes at the absolute perfect time. It allows us to meet with everybody in a much shorter and concentrated period of time, where we can share our vision and plans, explore those new opportunities and really excite partners with what is to come.

We are very keen to start sharing our plans around the 10th anniversary of the UK launch of Bing, which we really feel

**FOCUS ON THE ITALIAN MARKET**

**WHAT DO THEY SAY**

**Federica Iezzi, Licensing & Marketing Manager at Lisciani Giochi**



Federica Iezzi



Starting from 2018 we have developed Bing products for infant and pre-school targets in several categories, as educational games, puzzles, board games and electronic educational games. Bing has been our best-licensed pre-school IP over the last five years. Our achievements are very

satisfying. With one and a half million pieces produced over the years, we have reached all sales channels at the distribution level and some products have climbed all the sales charts in the corresponding categories, especially puzzles and educational games.





is a huge opportunity to celebrate the brand's endurance and look ahead to the future.

**Italy is one of your key territories, following the UK. According to you, how did you get such a great fellowship for Bing in this region?**

Bing's Montessori-inspired approach to child development places emphasis on more child-led self-directed and hands-on learning, and collaborative play. This aspect is well recognized by Italian audiences and resonates very well with them.

We have also had incredible support from Rai on Rai Yoyo and Rai Play, as well as Rai Radio Kids.

As I mentioned earlier, we have an incredible partner in Maurizio Distefano Licensing, who really sees the value of



## FOCUS ON THE ITALIAN MARKET

### WHAT DO THEY SAY

**David Tommaso, Marketing & Sales Director at Leolandia**



David Tommaso

In the Leolandia theme park, we offer Bing products in our shops. We sell a lot of Bing's merchandise, produced and distributed by official licensees. Moreover, we also plan to develop co-branded licensed products, to provide our guests with truly unique memories of their Bing experience at Leolandia. The partnership with Acamar is a long-standing one and it is destined to have a long way to go. Bing arrived at the park in 2019 as a temporary IP, but we immediately saw its great potential. We have many values in common, and this is the reason why we have signed a multi-year agreement that will see the development of a dedicated, highly experiential themed area over the next few years.

## FOCUS ON THE ITALIAN MARKET



Alessandra Cittadini

### WHAT DO THEY SAY

**Alessandra Cittadini, Licensing Business Development Leader at Clementoni**

Clementoni has totalled 17 Bing licensed products launched on the Italian market since 2020, ranging in different toy categories. Additionally in 2024 we are releasing a product novelty which combines Bing's world with fun learning. Each of these games aim at fostering children's logic, coordination and observation skills while having fun with their beloved friend Bing.

Our licensing partnership with Acamar has shown good results with a stable performance through the 3 years. Bing is very beloved by little kids, and we believe that it has all the potential to establish in the long-term among the classic characters for its target audience.



## FOCUS ON THE ITALIAN MARKET

### WHAT DO THEY SAY

**Beatrice Fini, Children's and YA Editorial Director, Giunti Editore Spa**



Beatrice Fini



We acquired a very broad publishing licence to build a full-bodied and heterogeneous editorial plan. We are very satisfied with the sales results and the cooperation with Acamar, as we share info, activate synergies and support promotions together with them.

Bing is the ideal IP for our catalogue because it combines commercial appeal with high-quality content allowing us to build a long-selling publishing project.



Bing, one of the strongest franchises in their portfolio. We work incredibly closely with them, and we are delighted that we have sustained the brand's success over the last five years, and we look forward to continuing that.

**Which are your next plans and projects for this brand and Acamar?**

We are building new and innovative ways to truly bring the essence of Bing to life beyond the screen, through great products and engaging experiences. We are working to accelerate partnerships and promotions and using the 10th anniversary as a way to reinforce what Bing is all about, and to celebrate not only the legacy, but what is to come in

the future.

We are looking at what else we can do in the experiential field, creating special memories for families. We are continuing to focus on our already established publishing programme, so there is a lot that we want to do, and our international rollout and growth are of huge importance.

