

SURVIVAL KIT ITEM EIGHT

Trex Play Imaginative Characters

These teaching notes were prepared by Lau Geok Theng.

Item Description and Preparation

- Trex Play Imaginative character Knuckle Bear.
- Preparation:
 - The product can be brought into the classroom and pass around for students to have a look and feel.
 - Students should be asked to examine the website (<http://www.trex.com.sg/>).
 - The instructor should make sure access to internet can be shown on screen.

Company Description

- Singapore-based Play Imaginative is dedicated to toy and character designs of the highest caliber and aims to be Asia's premier producer and retailer of limited edition art toys, mass market toy-related products, and designer lifestyle products.
- Play Imaginative's flagship designer toy, trex, is a remarkable medium for ideals and thoughts. Brought to life in the form of a 3-inch action figure with a unique rotating head and articulated limbs, trex serves as an exceptional communication and branding platform.
- Storming the world market since its inception in 2004, trex speaks the universal language of artists, designers, personalities and corporate organisations worldwide. To date, trex has seen collaborations with celebrated designers such as Jon Burgerman, Tokidoki, Gary Baseman, Devilrobots, Mori Chack, Brothersfree, Furi Furi and many others; alongside well-loved corporate brands such as Coca-Cola, Motorola, Nike, and o.d.m.
- Also specializing in designer greeting cards and a range of other design-related print materials, Play Imaginative continually pushes the envelope for cutting-edge design.

Some Possible Topics for Discussions

Design Concept and Process

- What is design? How does it work?
- In many design structures, there is the core concept and creativity is played around the core concept or structure.
- In Trexi, the core concept or structure consists of the head in two parts joined together, the body which can be joined to the head, the upper limbs which can be joined to the body and the lower limbs which can be joined to the body.
- Creativity can be played around the design of the head, body, upper limbs and lower limbs.
- The instructor can show the whole Trexi collections (1.5", 3.0" and 10.0"): http://www.trexi.com.sg/collection_15series.htm and let students discuss the creativity that goes into the various characters using the basic structure described above.
- The instructor can then discuss design for some real products – the core structure and the creativity around the basic structure.
- The example of computer notebook can be used. What is the basic structure? You need keypad, screen (LCD?), mouse, battery, sockets for power, projector and accessories like printer, camera, hard disks etc. Do you need CD drive? External mouse? External battery?
- What creativity can they see in the design of notebook around this basic structure?

Characters

- What are the roles and use of characters in marketing? This area of discussion can be linked to the discussion of item 3 of the survival kit – Beijing Olympics mascots.
- Coca Cola Macau has six different Trexi designs (see: http://www.trexi.com.sg/collection_15series.htm). An example is shown below.



- Singapore International Racing Festival has two designs as follows:



- Tiger Airways has one as follows:



- Characters are useful tools to create awareness of an entity (such as an organization or company) and an event (such as the Singapore International Racing Festival). They help to convey associations of certain attributes or characteristics (such as fun or innovation) with an entity or event. It provides a convenient platform to give away free gifts or to generate additional revenue through merchandise.

NOTE: The suggestions for the use of the item above are only guidelines. I have deliberately written this note in outline form, so you can vary some of the ideas or try other ideas. I have not provided detailed descriptions or suggestions as I do not wish to bog you down with reading of unnecessary details. You can provide your feedback on the use of the above item for classroom discussion to McGraw Hill or myself (laugeoktheng@hotmail.com) so we can decide whether to include this item for future editions of the book and if yes, how to modify the suggestions for its use in the classroom.