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SLAM DUNK

SUCCESS

The Licensing Book chats with NBA Vice President of Licensing Lisa Piken Koper about the wide appeal of the international sports brand.

How do you keep the female demographic interested in the NBA brand?

Women are an integral component of our fan base and great consumers of NBA merchandise. The NBA works with its partners and licensees to develop programs and merchandise that cater to the female fanbase. Our female fans are stylish and aware of fashion trends, but we understand that not all women are the same. As such, we continually try to diversify our women's offering by adding compelling, progressive products to ensure that we offer something for everyone. We now offer maternity, plus size, juniors', and kids' merchandise in a variety of styles and fabrications. Additionally, we offer products geared toward women ranging from swimwear to home goods, to accessories including handbags and jewelry.

What is your strategy for consumer product sales beyond the U.S.? Is NBA top-of-mind with consumers in other countries?

The NBA is definitely top-of-mind with consumers in other countries. The league has established a major international presence with games and programming in 215 countries and territories in 47 languages, and NBA merchandise is for sale in more than 125,000 stores in 100 countries on six continents.

The growing popularity of basketball and interest in the NBA globally contin-



Peace Love World's NBA collection pairs team names and logos with signature Peace Love World affirmations and symbols, including "I love my team," "I am love," "I am passion," and "believe."

ues to fuel our merchandise business. Thirty percent of merchandise sales are generated from outside the U.S., with China being our No. 1 market outside of the U.S. and Europe being No. 2.

In addition to our domestic e-commerce site, NBAStore.com, the NBA has four dedicated international e-commerce sites: LojaNBA.com (Brazil), NBA.TMall.com (China), NBATienda.com (Mexico), NBAS-tore.eu (Europe, Middle East, and Africa), and Jabong.com (India), with more to follow soon, including a site for Australia. This provides access to fans around the world and helps to keep the NBA engaged with consumers in other countries.

How do you utilize social media to promote consumer interest in NBA products?

The NBA is the No. 1 professional sports league on social media, with more than 650 million likes and followers globally across all league, team, and player platforms. We utilize Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to update our social media and tech-savvy fans on the latest merchandise—whether it's new uniform designs, adidas on-court collections, or new product categories, product lines, licensees, or promotions on NBAStore.com.

Social media is a very powerful tool that helps the league reach our global fanbase.

In fact, as a way to pay tribute to the loyal, tech-savvy fans of our game, the NBA recently added its social media han-

dle, @NBA, to the official Spalding gameball.

How important is fashion to the NBA brand?

The NBA continues to enjoy a high level of engagement with the fashion-forward fan. Through licensees such as adidas, Mitchell & Ness, Unk, Majestic Threads, and Sportiqe, we offer a broad range of apparel products for men, women, and children that feature sleeker cuts, comfortable material, and body-conscious designs. While our core products continue to see strong growth, our fans demand new and creative products, and we work closely with our licensees to give the fans what they want.

It's also important to note that the fashionable fan doesn't only reside in the U.S. Internationally, MK Trend, the lifestyle fashion apparel licensee in Korea, has opened 67 NBA-branded shops as of this past July, with plans to open eight more by the end of the year. In addition, there are more than 45 NBA Shops in Taiwan. By the end of the year, we will have more than 30 NBA Shops in China and additional NBA Shops in Australia, Japan, and the Philippines.

How important is fitness to the NBA consumer products line?

As a sports league, the NBA always encourages fans to live a healthy, active lifestyle. For that reason, we work with our licensees to provide consumers with fitness equipment, apparel, and accessories that they can use while engaging in physical activity—whether it's on a basketball court, at the gym, or while working out at home. For example, licensee Cirrus Fitness now provides a line of exercise equipment such as yoga mats and medicine balls that feature the logos of all 30 NBA teams, allowing fans to show support wherever they are.

Are there any new licensing categories you are looking to break into?

Technology continues to be at the forefront of discussions, especially since our fan base is the youngest, most tech-savvy group among major sports. It's a natural brand extension to see the growth of NBA products in the digital space, specifically with gaming partners.

As the gaming business evolves, we are looking to expand as well, starting with the league's premiere gaming partner, 2K Sports. The property will continue to reach fans around the world, including China, where *NBA2KOnline* is the leading online sports game. In addition, the league works with a dozen active partners in the gaming space, including DeNA's NBA My Dream, the popular card battle game in China, and RenRen's endless runner game, *NBA Rush*, which pits NBA stars against aliens.

The NBA's fans want to have a full-contact experience and engagement with the NBA, so we are continuing to look for new ways to break further into the gaming and digital space.

What do you look for in a new licensee?

We look for licensees that can offer new, on-trend products that contribute to the broad range of merchandise that we already offer for men, women, and youth—whether it's a totally new category or an innovative twist on an already existing product.

Lisa Piken Koper serves as NBA vice president of licensing and oversees the apparel and sporting goods business, which includes two global apparel and equipment partners, adidas and Spalding.





CIRRUS FITNESS

Cirrus Fitness aims to encourage healthy living by creating fitness products that are personal to the user. The brand has broken new ground by developing a line of authentic, professional sports-licensed fitness equipment, including medicine balls, yoga mats, and yoga mat bags. Available with all 30 NBA team logos and colors, the fitness equipment drives fans to reach their personal health and fitness goals while representing their favorite NBA team.

MITCHELL & NESS

Mitchell & Ness Nostalgia Co., a manufacturer of vintage sports goods, introduces an all-new headwear collection for the upcoming NBA season. This year's line features team logos and colors on the front with white mesh fabric on the backside of the caps. Signature Mitchell & Ness branding is also prominently

featured above the hat's adjustable snapback.

The collection is available in 10 team designs on NBAStore.com.



ADIDAS

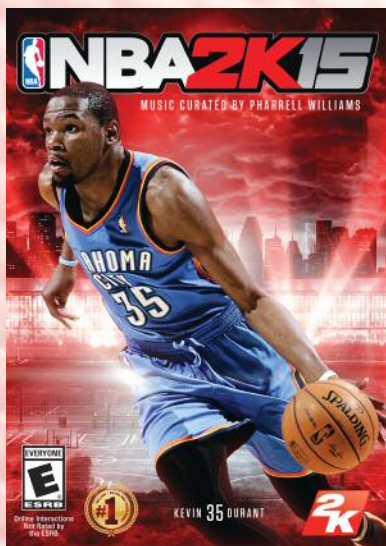
For the upcoming 2014-2015 NBA season, adidas and the league will debut the official On-Court Collection for all 30 teams. This new line of warm-up apparel includes stylish designs and elite performance features to outfit NBA athletes and fans worldwide. Embodying a modern take on the classic varsity bomber, the Anthem Jacket features a sleek mix of high-end materials, including poly double-knit and woven matte. Crafted embellishments on the jacket include an enlarged NBA logo on the hip, team logo on the chest, and ribbing with three-stripe detail around the neck collar. The apparel will be available this month at NBAStore.com.



2K SPORTS

On the heels of *NBA 2K14's* 70 Game of the Year award nominations, the NBA 2K franchise is the ultimate basketball simulation experience.

Featuring NBA MVP Kevin Durant on the cover, *NBA 2K15*, from 2K Sports, a division of Take Two Publishing, is the 16th installment of the franchise and hits the court with unprecedented lifelike graphics, ultra-realistic NBA gameplay, and a soundtrack curated by Pharrell Williams. The game was released on October 7 in North America for Microsoft Windows, Xbox One, Xbox 360, PlayStation 3, and PlayStation 4.



FOR BARE FEET

For Bare Feet, the NBA's official on-court sock provider, has made the full assortment of on-court socks worn by the world's best athletes available to consumers. Sold exclusively at Champs Sports nationwide, three versions of the socks can be purchased:

Speed, Agility, and Balance.

While the Speed version

has been at retail since

the socks were first

produced in 1999,

this is the first

time Agility and

Balance are avail-

able to fans. The socks

feature the same techno-

logical and ergonomic fea-

tures as the pairs worn by NBA players.

