

TOY INVENTOR & DESIGNER GUIDE

THIRD
EDITION
2017

the **toy**
association TM

Imagination is the beginning of creation.

You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine and at last you create what you will.

George Bernard Shaw

Irish dramatist (1856-1950)



Toy Inventor and Designer Guide • Third Edition

Published: June 2014 • © The Toy Association

Comments on this Guide may be submitted to info@toyassociation.org

Contents

Contents	3
Getting Started	4
Coming Up with a Good Idea	5
Is it a unique and marketable idea?	5
Will it sell?	6
Is it cost-effective?	7
Is it safe?	8
Are you legally protected?	9
Entering the Marketplace	10
Selling Your Idea/Invention to a Toy Manufacturer	10
Manufacture and Distribute the Item Yourself	11
Promoting Your Idea	13
Bringing Your Product to Market	13
What Will Promotion Cost?	13
Join The Toy Association	14
Resources	15

Getting Started

New ideas are the backbone of the toy industry. The need for innovative product is constant.

Independent inventors and designers are an important source for new product ideas, but it can be a challenge for them to break into the industry. An original idea — one that is fully developed to a point where it is presentable in either complete drawings or prototype format — can be seen and it can be sold. To get started as an inventor or designer of toys or games, it’s wise to make an honest evaluation of your personal circumstances, as well as your invention. Ask yourself:

- Are you extremely self-motivated?
- Can you face business-related obstacles such as strong competition, criticism and rejection?
- Do you have the necessary time, resources and commitment to launch a new toy product?
- Are both you and your invention legally protected?

Some inventors devote themselves full-time to their venture, others pursue their design as a hobby or side business. Once an idea is on the path for production, it’s important to recognize that the “turnaround time” to get a new item on toy retail shelves sometimes exceeds two years. Research, legal fees and prototype production can be expensive, too. As for your invention, there are industry-related questions to consider:

- Is it a unique and marketable idea?
- Will it sell?
- Is it cost-effective?
- Is it safe? Will it meet the requirements of the relevant laws and safety standards, including the U.S. [Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act \(CPSIA\)](#)?
- Are you legally protected (by a patent, trademark, copyright, etc.)?

In addition to covering some of the procedures that may help you sell or license your invention or design or manufacture and market it yourself, this *Guide* also introduces you to some of the [rules and standards](#) that must be followed to meet U.S. safety requirements and to a variety of [resources](#) that can provide further information and assistance.

DID YOU KNOW

Six inventors have been inducted into [The Toy Association Hall of Fame](#):

Reuben Klamer (2005)
The Game of Life

Eddy Goldfarb (2003)
Kerplunk

Jeffrey Breslow, Howard Morrison
& Rouben Terzian (1998)
Ants in the Pants

Marvin Glass (1985)
Rock ‘Em, Sock ‘Em Robots

Coming Up with a Good Idea

Is it a unique and marketable idea?

Of the estimated 7,000 new toys and games that make their debut at The Toy Association-sponsored [American International Toy Fair](#) (Toy Fair) held annually in New York each February, most are created by salaried professional designers and research and development specialists at the more than 1,000 toy manufacturers based in the United States. New products also originate from toy design firms that sell their ideas to toy companies and from independent professional inventors who use their personal contacts to sell new ideas.

To gain a better idea of what is currently on the market (and whether the item you have invented – or something very similar to it – already exists), research the toy industry at the retail level.

Start by exploring the websites of both toy manufacturers and toy retail outlets. For a more in-depth, hands-on experience, visit as many toy retail outlets as possible (large toy chains and small, local toy stores; discount, variety, gift/novelty, card/stationery and department stores; as well other outlets including bookstores, museum gift shops, drug stores, supermarkets, juvenile furniture stores, sporting goods stores and home supply centers). In-store research may be most productive in the early fall when most new products have arrived at retail stores for the holiday shopping season.

DID YOU KNOW
[Understand Your Market](#), a free resource from the [Small Business Administration](#), provides additional research suggestions.

While you’re in the store, remember to observe how the various toys are being sold: pay attention to categories, pricing, packaging, product displays, and the amount of retail shelf space devoted to each category, etc. This information will be especially important if you should later decide to manufacture your invention yourself.

Read the industry trade magazines, especially after the new items have been previewed by toy buyers at Toy Fair and other major tradeshow. Check your library’s [Reader’s Guide to Periodical Literature](#) (see “toys, games” for feature stories about new toy industry products) to follow the consumer press; consider both seasonal updates (e.g., outdoor and ride-on toys will be covered more heavily in the spring) as well as news during the holiday shopping season. You may also want to obtain copies of annual reports of publicly-owned toy manufacturers and toy retail chains.

Explore online networking groups through social media outlets such as LinkedIn, Facebook “fan” pages for groups such as The Toy Association, blogs, and other online channels. Inventors’ groups, consultants and [manufacturers’ representatives](#) (who are also known as sales or advertising representatives) may also be available and willing to provide (free or fee-based) advice and guidance to help a new contact get started in the industry.

To be certain that the toy you invented is not already protected by the U.S. government, conduct a patent search. Patent searches are available online through the [U.S. Patent & Trademark Office](#). Because they can be time-consuming, patent agents, attorneys who practice patent law, or patent searchers can conduct the searches for you, for a fee. Remember, too, that toy companies often work two or more years in advance, so there is always a possibility that something similar to your invention may already be in a planning stage.

Will it sell?

The toy industry is frequently compared to the fashion industry ... styles and trends are seasonal and shift frequently. Today’s attention grabbing “hot toy” can become tomorrow’s “toy box filler.” Occasionally, though, a toy or game will catch and gain widespread appeal as a classic that entertains and engages many generations of kids. When moving forward with your invention, you should ask yourself:

- Does it have long-lasting play value?
- Will the consumer get his/her money’s worth?
- Is it fun?
- Is it safe?
- Is there growth potential (e.g., through brand extensions)?

Toy companies are more willing to purchase an idea that has demonstrated long-lasting consumer appeal. Most of the larger toy companies conduct extensive market research to determine what types of toys children like and play with the longest and the types of toys parents want to purchase for their children. Anticipating trends, however, is difficult at best ... even for the experts.

Many independent inventors conduct their own informal market research by having friends or relatives play-test a product with the age group for which the toy is intended. Keep in mind, while it’s smart to test out your concept and work out play patterns with friends and family, quoting this information at a sales pitch is often not credible, as those close to you may have biased opinions.

DID YOU KNOW

The Toy Association reports on [emerging trends](#) both in the toy space and in other industries that influence children’s products. Blogs and other online forums can also be great resources for low-cost market research on kids’ tastes and trending play patterns.

Is it cost-effective?

The product must be able to be manufactured at a reasonable cost to allow a competitive retail price within its category and to ensure a profit. Your initial research at toy outlets should provide a good idea of price range within the product’s category. A rough prototype or working model of your invention will help you determine its cost-effectiveness. A prototype is also important for presentation purposes if you are trying to sell your item to a toy manufacturer. The more complete your product is, the more willing a manufacturer is to buy the product.

Some prototypes, such as those for board games, can usually be made at home, but some toys, such as those requiring custom-made molds or pattern designing, may require professional input.

To determine the manufacturing cost, you will have to research suppliers and contractors for production cost estimates. Generally, the simpler the technology, the less expensive the item will cost to produce. If you want to design a/an:

board game, you will need to price printing (game board, instruction booklet, cards); playing pieces (tokens, spinners, timers); boxes; assembly; shrink wrap, and so on.

stuffed animal, you will need to price fabric; stuffing; accessories (eyes, voices, squeakers, etc.); assembly and stitching services, etc.

plastic toy, you will need to price molding options such as compression, extrusion, injection, rotational or blow (usually requires a custom-made mold.)

wooden toy, you will need to price the time-consuming, custom handwork and high-priced raw materials.

electronic toy, you will need to price the wiring, the electrical boards, the time involved to put it together, and so on.

Regardless of product type, other items to consider include: legal matters, safety requirements and testing, marketing and sales, warehousing and distribution, etc.

Toys and games can be low cost, low margin items on retail shelves. Since most toys must be relatively inexpensive to sell, the markup from production cost to retail is usually much lower than the normal 3x to 5x cost. Cost-effectiveness is top-of-mind for toy manufacturers who strive to keep production costs low.

DID YOU KNOW

Many companies specialize in making prototypes for toys. [ThomasNet.com](#) offers a directory of vendors.

In addition to comparing prices, ask for references and reach out to get feedback on sample quality.

Is it safe?

Safety is fundamental to the development and manufacture of toy products. All toys sold in the United States must comply with Federal government regulations. Many of these criteria have been in place for years within the ASTM F963 standard for toy safety; this standard was mandated in 2008 when the [Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act](#) (CPSIA) was signed into law. Aspects of the law continue to unfold as various implementing regulations are rolled out by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). In certain cases, additional federal regulations apply, as do specific additive regulations in several states.

The Toy Association and members of the toy industry are dedicated to ensuring the highest standards for safe toys. Because new issues emerge over time, toy safety standards are continuously reviewed and enhanced. These standards are shaped by a variety of considerations, including research on child development, dynamic safety testing, and risk analysis.

Toy designers and inventors often work with others that sit on toy safety standard-setting committees to synthesize information from parents, psychologists, educators, and child development specialists to understand how kids learn through play and at what age they are physically and cognitively ready for certain types of toys. They may observe children in controlled test settings to assess how they play with toys and to determine the durability and age-appropriateness of various products.

In 2008, the [Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act](#) (CPSIA) became the most sweeping piece of federal legislation for the toy industry since the Consumer Product Safety Act (CPSA) was passed. This comprehensive law has numerous implications for product invention and design – especially as it relates to the materials to be used in and on toys. These limits are something that inventors and designers must take into account when designing children’s products.

DID YOU KNOW

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission [website](#) contains the latest federal safety information.

The Toy Association maintains on its website general [safety resources](#) and a specific [CPSIA resource page](#).

As examples, as of August 14, 2009, the lead in surface coatings such as paints cannot exceed 90 parts per million (ppm), and as of August 14, 2011, the total lead content of substrate materials of a toy must be less than 100 ppm. The law also places a permanent ban on three specified phthalates in children’s products, and a temporary ban on three additional phthalates in mouthable components. Regulations that implement the new legal requirements are virtually complete, but The Toy Association continues to work with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to find ways to reduce unnecessary testing without compromising toy safety.

Are you legally protected?

You should obtain patent and trademark protection, especially if you are planning to sell your product to a toy manufacturer. Most companies (although not all) will not look at outside ideas unless this protection has been obtained.

Local colleges, business schools or adult education organizations may have courses on how to obtain patents and trademarks. You can also hire a patent or trademark attorney/agent who, for a fee, will provide this service for you. Along with a vast amount of information for inventors regarding patents and trademarks, the [U.S. Patent and Trademark Office](#) maintains an [online roster of agents and attorneys](#) that are registered to practice before the agency.

In some cases, a toy manufacturer will take care of obtaining the patent for you and hold it until such time when your agreement is dissolved. It is then that you would either buy the patent back at the end of the run or get the patent back after the contract is over. It is a dealing point and could save some money.

If you do not have a patent on your product, you should have your own non-disclosure agreement (NDA) to protect yourself. [\[view sample\]](#) Whether known as a confidentiality agreement, confidential disclosure agreement, proprietary information agreement, or secrecy agreement, this is a contract through which the parties agree not to disclose information covered by the agreement. Consider having a lawyer write your NDA. NOTE: NDAs are controlled by state law and some states find them invalid.

The manufacturers will seek protection, too. Before a manufacturer asks to see your invention, you will probably be asked to sign what is referred to as a “*Disclosure*”, “*Idea Submission Form*” or “*Agreement*.” These forms will vary in content, but their primary purpose is to protect both you and the manufacturer as it establishes exactly what you have revealed to them and at the same time releases them from certain liabilities regarding what has been disclosed.

DID YOU KNOW

The Toy Association offers online access to recorded webinars on the issue of patent and trademark protection, including [Protecting IP in the Toy Industry](#) (2014) and [Design Patents and the Role They Play in Protecting Toys and Games](#) (2012).

Entering the Marketplace

As an inventor or designer, you can typically introduce a new toy into the marketplace in one of two ways:

- Sell your idea/invention to a toy manufacturer (or have someone sell the idea for you)
- Manufacture and distribute the item yourself

Selling Your Idea/Invention to a Toy Manufacturer

How do you find someone interested in purchasing your idea? Some of the toy manufacturers seeking new product inventions from the outside will purchase ideas from toy design firms that range in size from one to 30 or more staff. Others will utilize independent professional designers and toy agents with whom they have ongoing business relationships and who are knowledgeable about their companies' needs. Many toy companies are often so busy in the development phase of their current product lines that they rely very heavily on the outside inventing community for innovative ideas. Also, as companies look for cost savings, more and more are turning to the inventor community. On the other hand, some manufacturers will purchase an outside idea only after the item is actually on the market and has demonstrated consumer appeal and sales.

A larger company may receive thousands of ideas from external sources each year. An independent inventor's best chances may lie with contacting small- and medium-sized manufacturers directly. These companies are more likely to have smaller budgets for product research and development, thus increasing the chances of their interest in purchasing outside ideas. Be certain the manufacturer you contact and your product are compatible (e.g., don't build up your hopes if you approach a doll manufacturer with a board game idea). Narrow your targeted list by eliminating those companies who do not accept outside ideas. Do your research online (don't forget to check out Facebook and LinkedIn pages) or contact them directly to ask where (and to whom) you may address correspondence related to new product submissions.

The toy industry trade magazines, LinkedIn groups and other online sites will frequently carry classified ads placed by manufacturers or design firms who are looking for new product ideas. You might also consider placing a classified ad offering your invention for sale. [See example below]

"For Sale - unique strategy board game combining elements of backgammon, checkers and chess. For ages 12 and up. Patents and trademarks applied for. Professionally test-marketed. Reply to"

Agreements and Royalties

If a manufacturer wants to buy your invention, a confidential royalty payment agreement is usually made between both parties. Royalty payments usually range from 2-10% of the item’s gross sales, with 5% being the average. Be prepared to receive a lower royalty on a licensed product. The toy company or licensee is obligated to pay the licensor for the rights to develop toys for their property, therefore an inventor’s royalty may be reduced to around 3% to account for this.

Brokers

You may choose to obtain the services of a third party that will “broker,” or negotiate, the sale of your idea to toy companies. Manufacturers sometimes turn to these middlemen for outside ideas. They may be referred to as toy brokers or toy agents; some are former toy industry executives and many are independent toy inventors or former toy company staff designers. They work on commission, and their fees may range from 15-60% of the royalties paid to the inventor by the manufacturer.

You should deal with these third parties as you would other professional service people: if they haven’t been recommended to you, ask for references and check them thoroughly. Exercise caution when any individual or organization requires payment in advance.

Invention or invention promotion firms are also brokers, with the exception that they usually handle all types of consumer products. Their services and fees also vary: some may require a fee of 10% of the royalty paid; others may ask for as much as 50% and still others may work on a flat fee basis. Check the invention firm with a local Better Business Bureau or Chamber of Commerce, your state’s Attorney General’s office (many states have laws protecting inventors from invention promotion firm “scams”) or have an attorney do this for you, prior to paying or signing contractual agreements. Ask the firm for examples of ideas that they have placed with toy companies, and confirm this with the references they give you.

DID YOU KNOW

The Federal Trade Commission has a brochure on the subject of “[Invention Promotion Firms](#)” (printed copies are available from the FTC’s Public Reference Branch at 202.326.2222).

Manufacture and Distribute the Item Yourself

Many thriving toy manufacturing enterprises began as small, entrepreneurial businesses. Though more time-consuming and costly than selling your idea – and certainly requiring more general business skills – doing it all yourself may lead to success in a couple of ways: (1) the personal satisfaction of establishing a business of your own, or (2) having another toy company recognize your success and purchase the rights to the product post-introduction to the market.

Many successful entrepreneurs cite the importance of studying how others have made their way into a new field. You may wish to ask those familiar with the toy industry about the best way to proceed with starting up a toy business of your own, your realistic chances of success, and pitfalls to avoid. Don't be shy about asking tough questions ... there's a lot to learn.

For example, if you decide to form your own business to manufacture and distribute your invention yourself, you must be able to:

- Raise capital;
- Contract for production services at an affordable cost;
- Obtain orders from toy retailers and ensure timely delivery; and
- Continue promotional activities to increase consumer interest and sales.

And remember to consider aspects such as:

- Legal matters (patent and/or trademark protection);
- Safety (there are Federal government regulations covering more than 100 areas, including small parts, sharp points and edges, lead and phthalates, flammability, toxicity, electrical hazards, proper labeling, etc.);
- Product life cycle and stability of demand;
- New competition;
- Purchasing a bar code to put on the packaging of your product;
- Marketing (getting toy retailers nationwide to carry your product); and
- Distribution.

Starting and maintaining a successful business requires many skills, and proper planning is crucial. Create a business plan prior to introducing your product, determine cost-effective manufacturing, distribution and marketing strategies and project sales growth.

Your business plan may call for purchasing all the raw materials (components) and assembling your product yourself, or hiring various suppliers and contractors to perform these services for you. Suppliers of materials and services (molds; eyes; fabric; stuffing material and machinery; game parts; sound devices; boxes; art service designers of illustrations, logos, cover art, etc.; die-cutting for customized game boards; packaging services; photography; wood fabricating; and toy and game assembly) can be found on the Internet or in the Yellow Pages.

Promoting Your Idea

Bringing Your Product to Market

How does a toy get into the hands of a consumer? You can sell directly to stores and/or toy wholesalers in your area. You can also send direct mail pieces to retailers/wholesalers by purchasing mailing labels of these outlets from mailing list brokers. Reaching mass-market toy buyers is a difficult task. Since retailer relationships are so important to your product line’s success, you may want to consider hiring a sales rep firm that specializes in the toy industry. These firms already have solid pre-established relationships with toy buyers. You can also advertise in one or more toy trade magazines.

Exhibiting at a trade show is the most cost-effective way to reach a large number of toy buyers at one time. The largest U.S. toy trade show is The Toy Association’s [American International Toy Fair](#). Each year, this trade show is visited by more than 14,000 toy wholesale and retail buyers from all over the world who attend to see – and place orders for – the latest toy offerings by over 1,100 exhibitors. Very few other industries provide such a relatively inexpensive method of entry into the marketplace.

At one time, industry insiders recommended against exhibiting at a trade show unless sufficient inventory existed to be able to fill an order. A more recent philosophy is that today’s manufacturing techniques are now fast enough that it could be acceptable to hold on production until the initial order(s) have been received. In either case, it’s a wise business decision to have a plan in place regarding how an order will be fulfilled once that first order has been received.

What Will Promotion Cost?

It’s important to understand competitive retail price points. Are you proposing a TV promoted toy or a non-TV promoted toy? For instance, if you’re pitching a TV promoted large doll, you should know at what price they will sell. Watch children’s television to see what toys are being advertised. Or watch mom-directed programming to see what Infant and Preschool toys are being advertised. Toys promoted on television often include exciting visuals, such as lights, action and sound. Toys that are advertised are frequently higher priced. Toys that are not promoted are usually lower priced but need to have a great “try-me” concept at retail. The better you understand pricing, the more successful you will be.

DID YOU KNOW

The Toy Association maintains an [online directory of manufacturer sales representatives](#) who can help sell your product to wholesale and retail customers.

DID YOU KNOW

The Toy Association members have the unique opportunity to work with [Blue Plate Media Services](#), a full service media agency providing comprehensive advertising packages at up to 80% off open rates.

Professional toy inventors and designers and design firms are eligible to join The Toy Association as Associate members. As a member of The Toy Association, you have the ability to promote your company to the industry, attend valuable networking events to connect with other industry executives, receive important information about safety regulations and other industry topics and take advantage of discounts on exhibit space at Toy Fair and other events.

As a member, you will be included in the The Toy Association Member Directory that is available exclusively to other members. Available 24/7 with real-time updates for contact information and other key data, this searchable tool assists members in making new industry contacts and connecting with prospective customers. Associate members also receive a free listing in the The Toy Association [Inventors & Designers Directory](#) (non-members do have the opportunity to include their contact information for a modest fee).

The Toy Association hosts a variety of events that help members build industry relationships and attract exposure to their business. [Fall Toy Preview](#) and [PlayCon: The Toy Association's International Conference of Play Professionals](#) each boast a networking reception where you are sure to make valuable industry connections. The annual [Toy of the Year Awards \(TOTY\)](#), held in conjunction with Toy Fair each February, offers another perfect opportunity to network with industry executives.

Members of The Toy Association receive exclusive benefits at trade events such as Toy Fair. Discount rates and priority points on exhibit space are available to Associate members as well as a discount on material handling costs for advanced shipments. Discounts are also available on services ranging from insurance to shipping and from payment processing to retail solutions through The Toy Association's [Affinity Partner Program](#), through which the Association partners with a number of highly respected companies to offer members substantial savings on products and services.

As mentioned previously, safety in toys continues to be an important issue that the industry faces on a daily basis and it starts with toy design. The Toy Association works diligently to maintain the industry's reputation on safety issues and to assure that emerging regulations are practical, sensible and effective. Our staff ensures that The Toy Association members stay informed of all the latest toy safety developments with e-updates delivered straight to your inbox, along with a detailed webinar series that outlines the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act and how to comply.

In addition to these offerings, the The Toy Association sponsors periodic seminars, trade show workshops and referral services for toy inventors and designers.

Members have access to all of this information free of charge. For more information about [The Toy Association membership](#), please visit the Association's website at www.toyassociation.org.

Resources

The Toy Association | www.toyassociation.org

[The Toy Association Inventors & Designers Resource Page](#)

[The Toy Association Directory of Inventors & Designers](#)

[The Toy Association Manufacturer Representatives](#)

[The Toy Association Chart of U.S. Toy Safety Standards](#)

[The Toy Association Consumer Product Safety Information Act \(CPSIA\) Resource Page](#)

[The Toy Association Small Business Resource Page](#)

Toy Trade Shows and Inventor Events

Toy Fair (New York City - February)

Toy Fair, c/o The Toy Association, 1375 Broadway, Suite 1001, New York, NY 10018 Phone: 212.675.1141 | www.ToyFairNY.com
toyfair@toyassociation.org

Fall Toy Preview (Dallas - October)

Fall Toy Preview, c/o The Toy Association, 1375 Broadway, Suite 1001, New York, NY 10018 Phone: 212.675.1141 | www.FallToyPreview.org
toyfair@toyassociation.org

Chicago Toy and Game Fair (Chicago – November)

6842 N. Kilpatrick Ave, Lincolnwood, IL 60712
Phone: 847.677.8277 | www.chitag.com
info@chitag.com

Associations

Association of Small Business Development Centers

8990 Burke Lake Road, Burke, VA 22015

703.764.9850 | www.asbdc-us.org

The ASBDC provides assistance and training to Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) across the country and sponsors the National Innovation Workshops. Will provide a free list of SBDCs in your state/local area.

Inventors Workshop International Education Foundation

1029 Castillo Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

805.962.5722 | www.inventorsworkshop.info

This non-profit membership organization has a Toy, Game and Novelty Division. Sponsors “Creativity in America,” an expo of new ideas, products and services.

National Business Incubation Association

20 E. Circle Drive, #37198, Athens, OH 45701-3571

740.593.4331 | www.nbia.org

A private, non-profit trade association for business incubators. These professionals help new small business people and entrepreneurs; the association will provide a free list of business incubators in your state/local area.

National Congress of Inventor Organizations

Post Office Box 931881, Los Angeles, CA 90093-1881

323.878.6952 | ncio@inventionconvention.com | www.inventionconvention.com/ncio

Membership is open to individual inventors and inventors’ groups.

United Inventors Association of the United States of America

Post Office Box 23447, Rochester, NY 14692

583.359.9310 | uiausa@aol.com | www.uiausa.com

Membership is open to organizations and individuals who are engaged in, or who have a sincere interest in creative, inventive and entrepreneurial processes. Publishes a monthly newsletter and the magazine Inventors’ Digest

Educational Institutions

The following educational institutions offer a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Toy Design:

Fashion Institute of Technology

227 West 27th Street, Room B231, New York, NY 10001

212.217.7133 | www.fitnyc.edu/toydesign

Otis College of Art and Design

9045 Lincoln Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045

310.665.6800 | www.otis.edu

Publications – Books

Del Vecchio, Gene. **The Blockbuster Toy! How to Invent the Next Big Thing**. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2003. www.pelicanpub.com

Levy, Richard C. and Weingartner, Ronald O. **The Toy and Game Inventor's Handbook**. Updated Third Edition, 2013. www.amazon.com

Miller, G. Wayne. **Toy Wars: The Epic Struggle Between G.I. Joe, Barbie, and the Companies that Make Them**. Collingdale, PA: Diane Publishing Co, 2001.

Monosoff, Tamara. **The Mom Inventors Handbook: How to Turn your Great Idea into the Next Big Idea**. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2005. www.mcgraw-hill.com

Peek, Stephen. **The Game Inventor's Handbook**. Cincinnati: Betterway Books division of F & W Publications, 1993. www.fwpublications.com

Tinsman, Brian. **The Game Inventor's Guidebook: How to Invent and Sell Board Games, Card Games, Role-Playing Games and Everything in Between**. Garden City, NY: Morgan James Publishing, 2008. www.publishing.morgan-james.com

Watson, Bruce. **The Man Who Changed How Boys and Toys Were Made: The Life and Times of A.C. Gilbert, the Man Who Saved Christmas**. New York City: Penguin Books, 2003. www.penguin.com

Publications - Consumer Magazines

[Entrepreneur](#)

[Inc.](#)

[Inventors' Digest](#)

[Minority Business Entrepreneur](#)

[Opportunity World](#)

[Small Business Opportunities](#)

Publications - Trade Magazines

[edplay Magazine](#)

Monthly; for specialty toy, game, gift and museum store retailers.

[Hobby Merchandiser](#)

Monthly; covers model railroading, radio control, plastic model kits and other hobby items.

[Model Retailer](#)

Monthly; covers model railroading, radio control, rocketry, games (adult, role-playing, adventure, strategy, war games and gaming miniatures), plastic and die cast model kits and dollhouse miniatures.

[Playthings](#)

Monthly; also weekly e-mail newsletter, *Playthings EXTRA*.

[Toy Book; Licensing Book and Specialty Toys & Gifts](#)

Monthly; also weekly e-mail newsletters, Toy Report and Licensing Report.

[Toys and Family Entertainment and Royalties](#)

Monthly; cover all aspects of the toy and licensing industries.

U.S. Government - Offices/Publications

U.S. Copyright Office

101 Independence Avenue, S.E., Washington, DC 20559

202-707-3000 | www.copyright.gov

Publications include: *Copyright Basics*, *Copyright Fees*, etc.

Inventors Assistance Center

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313

800-PTO-9199 or 703-308-4357

www.uspto.gov

Publications include: *Agent and Attorney Roster* (licensed to practice before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office), *Basic Facts About Patents*, *Basic Facts About Trademarks*, etc.

U.S. Small Business Administration

Washington, DC 20416

Small Business Answer Desk: 800-U-ASK-SBA (827-5722)

answerdesk@sba.gov

www.sba.gov

Publications include: *Ideas, Inventions and Innovations*; *Researching Your Market*; *Checklist for Going Into Business*; *A Venture Capital Primer for Small Business*; *Business Plan for the Small Manufacturer*, etc.

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

4330 East West Highway

Bethesda, MD 20814

Headquarters General Information: (301) 504-7923

www.cpsc.gov

CPSIA information: www.cpsc.gov/about/cpsia/cpsia.html | [CPSC publications](#)

U.S. Government Bookstores

888-293-6498 or 202-512-1530

bookstore.gpo.gov

List of U.S. Government Bookstores nationwide and online ordering for such titles as: *Starting A Small Business & Keeping Records*; *Financial Management: How to Make a Go of Your Business*, etc.

State Governments - Offices/Publications

Many states have a Department of Economic Development to aid small business people/entrepreneurs.

General business assistance and information is available in many local offices of the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#) and its partner, [Small Business Development Centers](#).

Some publications offered by the SBA include:

- [A Checklist for Going into Business](#)
- [A Venture Capital Primer for Small Business](#)

For specialized information about the toy industry, you may want to obtain copies of annual reports of publicly-owned toy manufacturers and toy retail chains. Toy consultants, who may be listed on the Internet or in the Yellow Pages under that heading, offer varying services, but can usually provide information themselves or obtain it for you from other sources. [Manufacturers’ representatives](#) for the toy industry, who are also known as sales or advertising representatives, may be available for consulting purposes. They are salespeople who handle incoming orders for manufacturers and are usually located in major cities in all states.

DID YOU KNOW

[SCORE](#), the “Counselors of America’s Small Business Owners,” is a national association dedicated to helping small business owners form and grow their businesses.

Headquartered in Herndon, Virginia and Washington D.C., SCORE has 364 chapters across the United States as well as in several U.S territories.

SCORE is a partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

*“I believe in human dignity as the source of national purpose,
human liberty as the source of national action,
the human heart as the source of national compassion,
and in the human mind as the source of our invention and our ideas.”*

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

35th U.S. President (1917-1963)



1375 Broadway • Suite 1001
New York, NY 10018

t. 212.675.1141

info@toyassociation.org
www.toyassociation.org