EDITOR'S CORNER

A LOOK AT LATIN AMERICA AND GERMANY REVEALS TWO DISTINCT MARKETS AT THE CROSSROADS

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This month *The Licensing Book International* is pleased to include coverage of two important, yet very distinct, licensing markets: Latin America and Germany. Latin American countries, particularly those in South America, are having their share of economic problems as the Asian financial epidemic continues to spread about the globe. Yet, as the article points out, the potential remains very significant. Key industry representatives offer their insight as to why Latin America is prime licensing real estate and what it takes to succeed there.

Germany's potential is well established. With close to 100 million consumers on hand, it remains a pivotal market on the European continent. *The Licensing Book International* addresses important issues that confront licensing's major players in Germany and why they feel this is indeed the market to watch in the 21st century.

As always, we provide general news coverage from markets around the world. If you have news to report, please let us know. Your input is welcome.

Finally, just a reminder that booth space is filling up in Munich for the next Worldwide Licensing Exposition, to be held Match 23-25. Reserve your space now. Also, don't miss the first Worldwide Licensing Conference Latin America, set for May 1999.

LICENSING NEWSWATCH

INDUSTRY LEADERS IN GERMANY FORM EUROPEAN LICENSING ASSOCIATION

Leading players in the international licensing community have formed the European License Marketing & Merchandising Association (ELMA). Elected president is Sir Michael A. Lou. Founding members are Lou's Hamburg based licensing agency, V.I.P. Promotions; SAT1; Bavaria Sonor, one of Germany's leading merchandising agencies; BMG Ariola Media (Bertelsmann Group); Michael Schumacher's agency, PPM Pole Position Marketing; and the Frankfurt Messe.

The foremost aim, of ELMA will be to develop new target groups of licensed products, define and control professional standards for the licensing manager and agents, and to combat piracy of licensed properties, according to a press statement by V.I.P. Promotions of Germany. Other priorities include the promotion and fostering of the public image of the licensing and merchandising industry by active public relations; the research of all marketing data and statistics relevant to the licensing industry; the exchange of ideas and information with other trade and industry organizations; the formation of specialized councils and commissions to deal with specific matters upon demand; and the establishment of representative offices and chapters throughout Europe.

Members of the European License Marketing & Merchandising Association.

During the start-up process, ELMA will share offices with V.I.P., with plans to open a separate office in Berlin in the near future.

As to why Germany was chosen as the site of Europe's first licensing association, Lou says: "The German speaking territory with its almost 100 million consumers and top spending power is the key market in Europe and the gateway to the East."