



MARKETERS CASH IN ON CUTE KNUT

Zoo licenses bear for toys, tees and all manner of media

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[DÜSSELDORF, GERMANY] There are already Knut stuffed toys, china knickknacks and a CD. Now get ready for Knut the book, the musical and the movie.

The Berlin Zoo's most famous resident, the irresistible five-month-old polar bear rejected by his mother, is an indisputable media star. His story of being hand-raised by zookeeper Thomas Dorflein is both heartwarming (as a symbol of a greener world as scientists warn polar bears could become extinct) and con-

troversial (among animal-rights activists who believe humans should not raise animals). It has landed Knut countless news clips, including a Vanity Fair cover in which he shamelessly upstaged actor and green-hottie-in-chief Leonardo DiCaprio.

Knut's cute quotient draws tens of thousands of people each day to the Berlin Zoo, including Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi, who left festivities for the 50th anniversary of European Union to visit the baby bear.

Knut

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Marketers, naturally, aren't far behind.

The nonprofit Berlin Zoo is licensing the bear; has registered the Knut name; and, with the help of German agency Scholz & Friends, Berlin, created the logo "Respect Habitats. Knut." The logo will be used, according to the zoo, as "a seal of approval for positive steps, actions and strategies that deal with complex environmental challenges." An ad campaign from Scholz subsidiary Deepblue, Hamburg, Germany, is also under consideration.

"Respect Habitats. Knut" has the potential to appeal to all social classes and age groups and to call attention to the threatening climate catastrophe," said Gerald R. Uhlich, CEO, Berlin Zoo.

Not to mention raise a lot of green—and Mr. Uhlich said the zoo will forward all proceeds toward nature-protection programs and research.

So far, there are plenty looking to cash in on Knut mania. Plush-toy company Steiff has signed a license deal and offers Knut in two sizes. Universal Music, Berlin has issued the CD "Knut the Little Cuddle Bear." Berlin-based KPM Royal China Co. is marketing a Knut in china for \$201. And a video by TV station RBB will be available for sale in the U.S. by Universal Music. And, of course, there are the requisite T-shirts with the Knut name.

Turtle Pond Publications founder Craig Hatkoff saw the Vanity Fair cover and thought it was worth mak-



THE KNUT HOUSE: The Berlin Zoo is licensing the polar bear cub's name for use on a seal of approval "for positive steps, actions and strategies that deal with complex environmental challenges."

ing an overture. He e-mailed the zoo. A co-founder of the Tribeca Film Festival, Mr. Hatkoff couldn't get away from New York, so he invited zoo officials to join him at the festival, and negotiations were conducted in the city. His exclusive worldwide publishing pact with the zoo was inked in late April.

'POSSIBILITIES ARE LIMITLESS'

"I'll go to Berlin in the next couple weeks to see the zoo and meet Knut," he said.

Mr. Hatkoff said he'll write the 32-page, photography-based book "Knut: How One Little Polar Bear Captivated the World" with his two daughters, Juliana, 12, and Isabella, 8, as he did a previous book and website "Owen & Mzee," about an orphaned hippo named Owen who was raised by Mzee, a giant tortoise.

Knut's story will be updated frequently on the book's website, he

said. "He's become a true celebrity."

But the deal may go beyond a book and website. "We're having discussions about a much broader relationship," Mr. Hatkoff said. "The possibilities are limitless with this character."

And so the Knut loot is just the beginning. "We received many inquiries, among them one for a musical, another one for a film," Mr. Uhlich said. The zoo is about to sign a deal with German confectioner Haribo to produce Knuddel Knut, a jelly bean-like candy. Financial institution Volksbank is using the Knut logo on banking cards, and Mr. Uhlich said the zoo is talking to a jewelry producer and another china company.

"However," he said, "licenses will only be granted to companies which are engaged in the global climate debate." Presumably, of course, on the conservation side.

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