



## **BUILD-A-BEAR WORKSHOP® Opens its first international store in Sheffield's Meadowhall Centre**

November 10, 2003

St. Louis, MO, USA (November 10, 2003) Build-A-Bear Workshop, the multi-award winning entertainment retailer based in the United States opened its first store in the UK in Sheffield's Meadowhall Centre on November 7. Meadowhall is the first Build-A-Bear Workshop store to launch outside the United States and Canada. Further stores are planned in the UK in 2004. The second location will open in Croyden just outside of London in early March. Other international locations will open in Asia and Europe in the first half of 2004.

Build-A-Bear Workshop is a fun, interactive shopping experience that stimulates imagination and creativity in people of all ages allowing Guests to create their own stuffed animal by choosing the animal, stuffing it, stitching it, giving it a heart, naming it and creating its very own birth certificate.

Build-A-Bear Workshop is an environment that creates a wonderful, inclusive experience where individuals, families, friends or groups from 3 to 103 can enjoy a truly interactive shared activity, while making a new furry friend or gift for any occasion.

This exciting idea, introduced in the UK is based on the original concept pioneered by Build-A-Bear Workshop® in the United States six years ago. "The Build-A-Bear Workshop concept is superbly executed in the United States and is arguably the best example of retail entertainment in the world," said UK Chair Bear, Steve Bedford. "We aim to bring the same magical sense of participation and excitement to shopping centres and high streets across the UK & Eire."

Build-A-Bear Workshop Founder and Chief Executive Bear Maxine Clark adds, "We are thrilled that Build-A-Bear Workshop now has its first store in the UK and at such an exciting centre as Meadowhall. We have over 40,000 UK residents who have visited our stores in the U.S. and we always believed that Build-A-Bear Workshop would translate well to the UK. I was able to speak with many of our UK Guests while at the Meadowhall Centre opening and they are thrilled we are there."

About Build-A-Bear Workshop:

UNITED STATES - Build-A-Bear Workshop, Where Best Friends Are Made®, was founded in October 1997 in St. Louis, MO and is an interactive entertainment, mall-based retail experience that invites customers to make their own personalized stuffed animals. The company is the innovator and leader of the make-your-own-stuffed-animal concept and currently operates 153 stores in 36 states and Canada, and a very successful e-commerce business. In six short years Build-A-Bear Workshop has grown to \$200 million in sales and sold over 15 million stuffed animals.

AWARDS - Build-A-Bear Workshop has been acknowledged by the retail industry with numerous awards for retail excellence including: National Retail Federation's International 2001 Retail Innovator of the Year and

has been the subject of several best selling books on business and retail (see below):

**PRICELESS: Turning Ordinary Products into Extraordinary Experiences**  
(Harvard Business School Press, December 2002)

**CREATING CUSTOMER EVANGELISTS: How Loyal Customers Become a Volunteer Sales Force**  
(Dearborn Trade Publishing, December 2002)

**BRAND CHILD: Remarkable insights into the minds of today's global kids and their relationship with brands**  
(Kogan Page Ltd, 2003)

**INTERNATIONAL** - Based on the universal appeal of the teddy bear, Build-A-Bear Workshop® has always viewed international expansion as a natural extension of its business growth. Agreements have been signed with franchisee partners in Japan, Korea, Denmark and France all who plan to open stores in 2004.

Even as a young company, the Founder and Chief Executive Bear, Maxine Clark planned on opening stores around the world. "Our decision to have stores open in other countries was really made some time ago and we are thrilled to now see this plan put into action. Growing internationally is in direct response to the many requests we have received from our international Guests who have shopped in our stores in the United States and registered on our Find-A-Bear® ID database or visited our web site, both factors indicating a strong customer base around the world. Our ambition is to bring the hug-a-bility of a teddy bear to everyone."