

news +++ Licensing China

Shenzhen World Exhibition and Convention Center, China, 9 – 11 April 2026



Licensing China debuts new look with strong international brand lineup

Shenzhen, 28 January 2026. After seven years of progress, Licensing China has transformed from a high-potential zone at Toy & Edu China, into an international fair favoured by brands and trending IPs from multiple categories. Capitalising on past success, the 2026 fair will further strengthen its independent positioning, supported by a new key visual. Attracting an influx of visitors in its own right, the refreshed Licensing China is also ready to expand cross-sector collaboration with Toy & Hobby China and Baby & Stroller China. From 9 – 11 April, the three concurrent fairs will kick off the South China sourcing season at the Shenzhen World Exhibition & Convention Center.



In 2025, Licensing China, Toy & Hobby China and Baby & Stroller China welcomed a total of 72,330 visitors from around the globe. The evolving Licensing China is set to strengthen its independent standing this year. (Photo: Messe Frankfurt)

On a global scale, the licensing industry is tapping into a range of possibilities. With European brand licensing valued at USD 79.3 billion in 2024, licensed sales have also been on the rise throughout the continent. Particularly impressive was the 14% licensed toys growth rate in EU5 (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK) in 2025, twice the pace of their overall toy market¹. Meanwhile, in the vast Chinese market, licensed merchandise sales experienced a 10.7% increase in 2024, with 63.4% of survey respondents expressing their willingness to increase licensed product spending in 2025².

¹ "Sales of Licensed Branded Consumer Products Grow 3.4% to Reach \$79.3 Billion in Europe, Outpacing Inflation", October 2025, Licensing International, <https://licensinginternational.org/news/sales-of-licensed-branded-consumer-products-grow-3-4-to-reach-79-3-billion-in-europe-outpacing-inflation/> (Retrieved: January 2026)

² "Licensing Industry in Hong Kong", May 2025, HKTDC, <https://research.hktdc.com/en/article/MzExMTU4MDMz> (Retrieved: January 2026)

Domestic licensing prospects remain promising, boosted by the support of e-commerce and the emotion-inducing 'goods economy'³.

Licensing China – South China's key trade fair unlocking diverse IP avenues

Held in Shenzhen, and featuring over 600 licensed images, brands and characters in 2025, Licensing China is regarded as an influential trade platform by key players from the toy, baby and licensing sectors.

Ms Wilmet Shea, General Manager of Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd, further explained the show's progressive expansion: "Since its inception, Licensing China has expanded far beyond animation and character licensing to include a wide variety of high-demand categories. This ranges from brand, celebrity, and sports to culture, art, and entertainment licensing, as well as licensed products. This reflects the fair's effectiveness at adapting to global market needs to the advantage of its unique participants. In 2026, the fair is set to create even more value, and will welcome a diverse visitor base which further supports the growth of the toy and baby sectors."

As South China's first major sourcing event this year, Licensing China will usher in an even **stronger lineup of exhibitors** to attract buyers from the toy, food & beverage, gifts, stationery, apparel, and other sectors. With new exhibitors still being confirmed each month, the fair will already include key brands in multiple licensing categories:

Animation & character: Bbang Bbang's Diary, Bduck, Boonie Bears, Catch! Teenieping, MEIHOUWANG (Monkey King), MINIFORCE, Pokémon, Shaun the Sheep

Culture & art: SMILEY, Tomarmon

Film & TV: Godzilla X Kong: Supernova

Sports: Alpine F1 team, F.C. Internazionale Milano

Among them, key brands such as Godzilla X Kong: Supernova and SMILEY will debut as exhibitors, sparking new possibilities at the fairground.

Showcasing a richer IP and licensed product selection, the enhanced Licensing China 2026 will also organise a **new business matching area**, reintroduce **various networking events**, and host the **Greater Bay Area Brand Licensing Industry Development Forum** to facilitate precise and meaningful licensing collaborations. Brands and IPs can also leverage the debut AI Smart Toy Area and the in-demand Trendy Toys & Collectibles Zone at Toy & Hobby China to fully harness their licensing potential. With effective connections made, licensors, licensees, designers, manufacturers and other related parties can pursue business expansion across multiple fields, including apparel, stationery, games, ride-ons and many more.

A first-time exhibitor at the previous edition, **Mr Rudy Khaw, CEO at AirAsia brand co.**, recognised the extensive potential available at the integrated cross-sector platform: "We received around 100 leads on the first day alone. Many of the interested buyers are from China, but also from India, Canada, Europe and more. With toys, hobby collections, baby strollers and so on all within the same space, I can see where there is relevance, and contacts and connections for potential licensors like us. We get to link with people across different industries, sectors, and age groups, and it can help expose us to more opportunities."

³ The 'goods' sector primarily includes designer toys, action figures, and IP merchandise.

A new fair image: visualising the convergent power and fluidity of IP

To support its evolving positioning and future standalone development, Licensing China will introduce a new visual identity in 2026. Defined by triangular aesthetics, the new key visual represents the versatility of IP and its ability to create value both independently and through cross-sector collaboration.

As a symbol of stability and synergy, the triangle reflects the relationship between exhibitors (brands and IPs), visitors, and the organising platform. This visual language captures the dynamic nature of Licensing China, highlighting its role as a convergent hub that brings together diverse industry players and displays the full spectrum of licensing potential.

Overall, the fair's strengthened positioning is poised to support the industry's prospects and drive new advancements in the market, in South China, Asia, and around the world.

Toy & Hobby China, Baby & Stroller China and Licensing China are organised by the Guangdong Toy Association, Guangzhou Li Tong Messe Frankfurt Co Ltd and Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd. For more information, please visit:

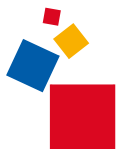
- [Toy & Hobby China](#)
- [Baby & Stroller China](#)
- [Licensing China](#)

Press information and photographic material:

<https://shenzhen-international-toy-and-hobby-fair.hk.messefrankfurt.com/shenzhen/en/press.html>

Social media and website:

<https://www.facebook.com/sztoybabyfair/>
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<https://licensing-china.hk.messefrankfurt.com/shenzhen/en.html>

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Background information on Conzoom Circle

conzoom-circle.messefrankfurt.com/information

Background information on Messe Frankfurt

The Messe Frankfurt Group is the world's largest trade fair, congress and event organiser with its own exhibition grounds. With a workforce of some 2,700* people at its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main and in 29 subsidiaries, it organises events around the world. Group sales in financial year 2025 were around € 766* million. We serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. One of Messe Frankfurt's key strengths is its powerful and closely knit global sales network, which covers around 180 countries in all regions of the world. Our comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. We are using our digital expertise to develop new business models. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services.

Sustainability is a central pillar of our corporate strategy. Here, we strike a healthy balance between ecological and economic interests, social responsibility and diversity.

For more information, please visit our website at: www.messefrankfurt.com/sustainability

With its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent).

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*Preliminary figures 2025