

eKids takes America's travel retail success to international markets

By **Hibah Noor** on August, 9 2017 | Gifts & Children's Products



One of America's most popular children's electronics brands -eKids -is now targeting international travel retail with its range of licensed products including headphones, walkie-talkies, boom boxes, speakers and more. A division of leading US consumer electronics company iHome, eKids is well established in America's travel retail with extensive listings through Dufry and Hudson.

"eKids products are everywhere in the US domestic market including Walmart, Best Buy, Target, Barnes & Noble, Toys R Us and Kohl's," says eKids Key Account Manager Gabriella Nogueira. "We are sold in over 400 Hudson outlets including Las Vegas, New York JFK and Los Angeles LAX airports, as well as in Dufry in Brazil and will soon be opening at Colombia and Mexico airports."

With a strong domestic presence in Europe through Smyths Toys, Argos, Otto, Expert etc, eKids believes now is a perfect time for building travel retail distribution through all channels - ground, air and at-sea.

"eKids has built a phenomenal portfolio of international licenses for its product range including Frozen, Disney Princess, Moana, Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Star Wars, SpiderMan, Finding Dory, and many more," continues Nogueira. "We're continually updating these and adding new lines to stay 'on-trend' and relevant to current films; this year has seen us add Spiderman Homecoming, Cars 3, Guardians of the Galaxy, Beauty and the Beast, Thor and COCO."

Nogueira says all eKids licenses are approved for distribution through travel retail markets globally, collectively enabling the brand to offer a wide-ranging assortment of electronic products to meet all regional preferences.

eKids works with the Latin American Dufram Corporation who are responsible for branding, plus the commercial and marketing development of the travel retail business. "They ensure that all products are presented, packaged and marketed in the right way for travel retail," explains Nogueira. The success to date with Hudson confirms that they are on the right track, including awards in 2014, 2015 and 2016 for Best New Vendor, Best Sales Increase and Vendor of the Year respectively.

Headphones are eKids top selling items, offering exceptional quality and are available in various models to target all age ranges - all with volume limiters. "We have Fun Youth Headphones, Bluetooth headphones, Youth Bluetooth headphones for younger children and Over-the-ear and Fashion headphones aimed at teenagers and young adults," says Nogueira. "In addition we have a range of earbuds including noise-isolating, under-earbuds and fashion designs, so there is something to suit everyone."



In addition to headphones, eKids' portfolio covers three other categories: Toys, Speakers, Boombox and Mobility, all available in different licensed film and character themes. Toys include Walkie-Talkies, MP3 Microphones and interactive toys, such as the Cars Kids interactive wheel. The Speaker and Boombox Category includes a Sing-along Boombox, Voice Changer Boombox, CD Player Boombox (so kids can play by themselves), and Sculpted Bluetooth speakers. The Mobility Category includes Molded USB Flash drives, Lightning cables and Power banks.

"We see eKids becoming a must-stock brand for any airport retail store offering electronics and/or children's items," says Nogueira. "This is a really under-developed area for travel retail, yet we see the fantastic sales from these items wherever they are stocked. By adding eKids we are confident that retailers will see incremental sales - adding to basket size and spend per head."



Airports are not the only place eKids sees potential. “For inflight we are offering products that match with the airline’s need for compact items to fit the cart: earbuds, small sculpted Bluetooth speakers, flash drives, and power banks can really help lift an often boring selection for children and teenagers inflight,” says Nogueira. “We also see smaller items being perfect for point of sale – great as additional impulse purchases.”

Ferries and cruise-ships offer equally interesting revenue channels for the company. “We don’t see a place in travel retail where our line would not be appropriate.” Nogueira adds: “In the US eKids is everywhere – we even supply JC Penney and Macy’s for the holiday season. Our ambition is for eKids to be equally prominent in the travel retail channel.”

Nogueira will be in Cannes during TFWA World Exhibition week. “It’s a great opportunity for us to meet with potential new business partners,” she says. “We’re looking at all possibilities, including working with regional agents for specific markets and/or sectors.”

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