

# Entrepreneur®

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## Just Picture It

With his plush word toys, one man discovered how to spell success.

### Vital Stats

Don Moody, 45, of WordWorld, LLC in NYC

### Company

A multiplatform media business focused on helping 3- to 5-year-olds develop literacy skills

### Projected 2008 sales

\$26 million

### Spelling It Out

Bringing a business to life is an entrepreneur's gift. Bringing words to life and making a business out of it is Don Moody's gift. When Moody's wife became pregnant in 2000, inspiration for his word-based venture was born. In an effort to help battle children's illiteracy, Moody set out to create an animated world where actual words are craftily spelled out in the objects they represent. Recalls Moody, "I [thought], 'Wouldn't it be great if the word shark just turned into a shark and swam off the screen and the word ice turned into ice and broke?'"

### Success Visualized

In 2004, after years of research and a trip to China, Moody created a line of plush toy characters that form words but pull apart into individual letters. He arranged a small launch at FAO Schwartz in New York City, and the toys sold out in less than three days. Moody immediately retracted and spent the next few years raising money and developing a truly multiplatform business. "I wanted to build a big brand on the American landscape," he says, "and I wanted to hold true to my original plan, so I rolled it all back in and hid it away."

### Spreading the Word

Moody resurfaced last September when his WordWorld TV series, featuring characters and objects made up of letters, premiered on PBS Kids. And as 2008 got underway, Target stores throughout the country launched a line of WordWorld plush toys and megablocks, which also connect to build words.

Moody's world of words, including more than 500 animate and inanimate objects, has taken on a bustling life of its own. And though every entrepreneur has a tale to tell, Moody is telling his story one word at a time.

