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Settler Bears Chooses Taction to Help Establish U.S. Marketplace

WALDOBORO, Maine – August 22, 2006 – Two companies on opposite sides of the world are pairing up to bring a new breed of teddy bear to the United States.

Settler Bears of Ferntree Gully in Australia has hired Taction to help it establish a marketplace in this country for its cuddly, lovable plush bears and other animals.

Already popular in Australia, Japan, and New Zealand, the bears are being sold to retail stores throughout the United States.

The Australian plush toymakers hired Waldoboro-based Taction to assemble and manage a team of professional telesales agents who will call thousands of retailers to tell them about Settler Bears.

“We had heard of Taction’s high standards and commitment to representing companies to their fullest, so it seemed natural for Taction and Settler Bears to get together,” said Settler Bears’ CEO, Zane Brache.

Taction’s CEO agreed. “We are thrilled to have this client aboard and we can’t wait to get started,” said Steve White. “Retailers all over the United States will see exciting results when they offer their customers Settler Bears. These adorable bears are going to be incredibly popular here.”



The Australian company started as a family business in 1981, and eventually branched into teddy bears, which are now coveted collector's items on e-Bay and elsewhere. Two of its bears won industry TOBY Awards this year and are up for full TOBY awards. The TOBY, or Teddy Bear of the Year Award, is given out by *Teddy Bear and Friends* magazine and is considered to be the Oscar of the teddy bear industry.

One challenge for Settler Bears and Taction will be communication.

Ferntree Gully is located outside of Melbourne in Victoria, a state in the



The popular Victorian Collection #1

southeast of Australia. When it's 5 p.m. at Taction, it is 9 a.m. the next day in Ferntree Gully.

Taction's liaison to Australia will be Settler Bears' Director of U.S. Operations, Drew Housley. He relies on e-mail and extended office hours to stay in touch with his home base.

After opening accounts with retailers around the country, Taction's agents will service each account to the highest level, offering retailers information about Settler

Bears' extensive line of products, helping them keep their shelves stocked with their bestselling bears and other animals, and providing inventive ideas for alerting customers to new and current product offerings from Settler Bears.

Brache explained that the company's philosophy of creating special bears that bring a smile to children and adults will be important for Taction to convey to retailers and their customers.

"With the help of Taction, our goal over the coming years is simple: When a bear is given as a gift, the receiver will be as excited as we always are when the bear is first created," Brache said.

About Settler Bears: An Australian company founded in 1981 has evolved into an exciting teddy bear business known as Settler Bears. Already popular in Asia and the Pacific, the Settler Bears range is now available in the U.S.A. Bringing a

refreshing new influence, Settler Bears are designed by a team in Australia not afraid to use color, glamour, embroidery and jewellery. And the textures are simply irresistible. No wonder "I love the touch and feel" is a comment so often made about Settler Bears.

About Taction: Taction is a leading provider of contact center services for some of the world's most trusted brands. Current and past clients include Cuddledown, American Express, Kodak, Samsonite, Maine's Office of Tourism, Polaroid, SmartPak Equine and SmartPak Canine, Harbor Sweets, and the Maine Public Broadcasting Network. Founded in 1983, Taction was a call center pioneer, and today is one of the country's premier customer contact centers. The Waldoboro company provides its business-to-business clients with telesales and support that dealers and retailers welcome. It provides its direct-to-consumer clients' customers with great service, from order-taking to answering complicated product questions.

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