

LICENSINGBOOK®

BUILDING BUSINESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Feeling The Love, One Mars Brand At A Time

Blair Ford's experience in traditional, specialty, and tourist destinations includes working with Universal Studios and creating a merchandising area to promote the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. MRG is a division of Mars, Inc., a company that manufactures and markets a variety of products under many of the world's most recognizable trademarks, including M&M'S, Snickers, Uncle Ben's, Pedigree, and Whiskas.

BY BLAIR FORD, VICE PRESIDENT, MARS RETAIL GROUP

I love my job. I get paid to promote some of the world's favorite brands—like M&M'S, Snickers, and Dove.

At Mars Retail Group, we not only operate four M&M'S World locations that sell licensed merchandise (in Las Vegas, Orlando, and New York City), but we also work with licensees and retailers to create and sell high quality items emboldened with our iconic brands.

Earlier this year, Mars Retail Group announced that we've revamped our licensing program, making us an even more attractive partner for retailers. We can now offer retailers a variety of enticing promotional and co-branding opportunities. Over the past two years, we've ramped up relationships with licensees, and now we provide consumers and retailers with a broader product mix, a higher caliber of licensees, and a stronger product development program.

Our mission is to understand what the M&M'S Characters deliver from a personality perspective and to deliver quality products. Today, many of our items focus on the M&M'S Characters, and we're beginning to branch out to include other brands, such as Snickers and Skittles.

Several of our licensed items are strong sellers, including novelty items such as Candy Fans from CandyRific, sleepwear, earrings, charm bracelets, plush, hats, hair scrunchies, and accessories.