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### **The Unstoppable American Icon:**

**For 20 years, the Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> has remained an endearing mascot to Americans, inspiring millions to persevere while also selling a whole lot of batteries**

(ST. LOUIS, MO – December 4, 2008) The Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> marked the beginning of his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday year by surprising Parade spectators when he drummed past the stopping point of the 82<sup>nd</sup> annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade<sup>®</sup> in New York City and continued down the street. A new website, [www.energizer.com/bunnybirthday](http://www.energizer.com/bunnybirthday) captured the event and features fun and interactive ways to celebrate the longevity of America's favorite energetic icon.

It was a live reprise of that memorable television commercial in 1989 when a drum-banging pink bunny clad in oversized sunglasses and flip flops marched off the set as a stage manager directs, "Stop the Bunny, please." But he was unstoppable. The *Energizer Bunny* next appeared in a series of parody commercials, interrupting pitches for wine, coffee, a cold remedy, bath soap, long distance telephone service and more. Americans identified so strongly with the never-quit attitude and irreverent sense of humor of the *Energizer Bunny* that, to this day, millions use his name and his "*Keep Going*<sup>®</sup>" catch phrase to describe themselves and others.

On Thanksgiving Day, the 40-foot tall Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> Balloonicle surprised and amused all those in sight by bringing that first commercial to life. When the other Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade participants and floats turned right on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and came to a stop, the *Energizer Bunny* escaped the Parade route and continued straight down 34th Street.

Why all the fuss? Thanks, in part, to the *Energizer Bunny*, Energizer is one of the world's largest manufacturers of batteries and lighting products and a global leader in the dynamic business of powering people's lives. So when the icon's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday came around, Energizer decided to celebrate in a big way. And Macy's stepped up to help.

Robin Hall, executive producer of Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade<sup>®</sup>, said his team was excited to get involved. "It just shows you the level of creativity, high-energy and never-quit spirit we're dealing with here. I'm not a bit surprised that the Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> was the first-ever participant to break away from the pack, but again, the *Energizer Bunny* has always marched to his own drum!" Hall said.

Ward Klein, chief executive officer of Energizer Holdings, Inc., said the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade provided a perfect stage to launch the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. "The Macy's Parade is an iconic event in American life, and the *Energizer Bunny* is an iconic figure," Klein said.

Klein is one of the executives who helped bring the *Energizer Bunny* to life 20 years ago in a windowless conference room at Energizer world headquarters in St. Louis, Mo.

### **Two Great Decades**

Energizer marketing executives felt they had been handed a clever idea in 1989 when they were introduced to the drum-banging bunny. But the first bunny commercial did not create the buzz we all associate with the campaign. Klein was charged with taking the bunny concept to a new level and brought in California-based advertising agency, Chiat\Day (now TBWA\Chiat\Day) to help.

"Chiat\Day gave us two ideas," Klein said. "One was an excellent idea around the theme of "Don't Risk It." It was a fanciful campaign around what might happen to your day if you didn't use Energizer batteries and your battery failed. It was hilarious. But then, they said, "you know there's a second campaign idea we like as well."

This one had the Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> interrupt a series of commercials for fake products. "Nothing outlasts the Energizer," the voiceover said. "They keep going and going and going..."

The breakthrough came when the creative team recognized that a storyline could be developed for the Bunny that could endure for years to come. "We could take him out of this context and put him in a whole new context," said TBWA\Chiat\Day president Carisa Bianchi. "And we could send the message that Energizer batteries are so powerful that the Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> never stops."

Klein said, “We knew it was a breakthrough, but the way it vaulted into pop culture caught us off guard.”

All now readily admit, nearly 20 years later, that they had no idea they were in on the invention of an American icon – a signature character – the *Energizer Bunny*. Nor that they would create a buzz phrase – *Keep Going*<sup>®</sup> – which practically every living American has uttered when speaking to the qualities of energy and perseverance that they find in themselves or in the people they admire that are so like the *Energizer Bunny*.

“The message of the *Energizer Bunny* has remained consistent over the last two decades,” Klein said. “He speaks to longevity, determination and perseverance; he personifies the American spirit. He is a versatile character who plays a variety of roles – from being a spokesman for our portfolio of batteries to a role model who demonstrates our values as a company that cares about our customers and our communities.”

### **On everyone’s Lips**

American viewers never knew where the Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> would surface next, but they would remember that phrase ... “*Keep Going*<sup>®</sup>.” It didn’t hurt that public figures kept using it. For instance, the first President George Bush invoked the phrase to describe his political campaign. And “*Keep Going*” became married to the exploits of others from Cal Ripken, Jr.’s pursuit of Major League Baseball’s consecutive game endurance record to the ceaseless floodwaters of the Midwest.

Some *Energizer Bunny* appearances were orchestrated by Energizer, but outsiders started working the *icon* into their own acts. For instance, there was the time when a popular late night talk show host knocked the head off of a faux *Energizer Bunny* with a baseball bat and even that *Energizer Bunny* still kept banging his drum. “That was a great parody for us,” Klein said. “We couldn’t have designed it better.”

The popularity of the Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> has been documented through an advertising industry accepted standard known as the Q score, which judges the familiarity and appeal of programs, networks, personalities and characters. In a recent Cartoon Q study, 95 percent of respondents interviewed said they were aware of the *Energizer Bunny*, placing him in the 15 top corporate spokescharacters, including Ronald McDonald, Tony the Tiger, the M&Ms characters, Poppin’ Fresh (the Pillsbury doughboy) and the AFLAC Duck.

## **For the Greater Good**

As the years passed, Energizer had the Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> play a variety of roles in his ever popular commercials, taking on villains like Darth Vader, the Wicked Witch and King Kong and working with real life heroes like baseball's Cal Ripken, Jr. Increasingly, executives asked the *Energizer Bunny* to do more than simply sell batteries. He was put in charge of animating the American spirit and challenging us all to live by the *Energizer Bunny* motto of *Keep Going*<sup>®</sup>.

The Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup> Hot "Hare" Balloon, America's largest hot air balloon – taller than a 16-story building – began appearing at balloon races across the country. In 2004, Energizer used the never-quit spirit of the *Energizer Bunny* as a way of identifying with and supporting the Komen Race for the Cure on behalf of women with breast cancer.

By the mid-90s, everyone recognized the *Energizer Bunny* as a national symbol. And, at the turn of the century, AdAge.com made it official, naming the *Energizer Bunny* to its list of top ten advertising icons. In 2006, the Oxford English Dictionary added *Energizer Bunny* to its lexicon providing this definition:

*Energizer Bunny n.: A persistent or indefatigable person or phenomenon.*

Also in 2006, Energizer launched the *Keep Going*<sup>®</sup> Hall of Fame to honor people who have the same tenacious spirit as the *Energizer Bunny*. ([www.energizer.com/halloffame](http://www.energizer.com/halloffame))

The Energizer *Keep Going*<sup>®</sup> Hall of Fame captures the essence of this remarkable icon and recognizes people who persevere. The Energizer Bunny<sup>®</sup>, with his irreverence, humor and contagious optimism has inspired others to hang in there, put one flip flop in front of the other and never quit. The Hall of Fame honors these everyday people with the extraordinary power to "*Keep Going.*"

"We are in the business of powering people's lives," Klein said. "The *Energizer Bunny* helps power their spirits as well. He may be celebrating his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, but as a Company that has been innovating for 100 years, we can assure you he is just getting started."

## **Birthday Interactive**

Energizer launched a special website dedicated to the 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the *Energizer Bunny*, [www.energizer.com/bunnybirthday](http://www.energizer.com/bunnybirthday). The site includes an instant replay of the *Energizer Bunny* escaping the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. It also features vintage Energizer commercials and an interactive timeline of the company's pink icon through the years. Visitors can shop the Energizer Bunny® store and send *Keep Going*® e-cards to their friends and families with themes like birthday, happy holidays, get well, patriotic and more.

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