

## **Toying Around**

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By Alexa Hyland

Transom Capital Group LLC last week acquired Uncle Milton Industries Inc., a Westlake Village toymaker best known for creating the Ant Farm. Terms of the deal weren't disclosed.

Frank Adler, president and head of sales and marketing at Uncle Milton, said the sale will help make the toy company operate more efficiently.

"Transom brings management expertise that will be really beneficial to us," Adler said.

Uncle Milton was founded in 1946 by Milton M. Levine and E. Joseph Cossman. The company, which specializes in science and nature toys, launched its famous Ant Farm in 1956. Products now include a line of "Stars Wars"-branded toys. The privately held company reports annual revenue of less than \$100 million, and its toys are sold at independent stores, and major retailers such as Toys "R" Us and Target.

Transom is a Century City private equity firm specializing in buyouts and turnarounds of small- and middle-market companies in the consumer, industrial and media industries. Uncle Milton is its first toy company.

"Uncle Milton has a strong corporate brand, strong set of products and a strong management team that can take some of the resources we bring to the table and grow the company," said Russell Roenick, managing director at Transom.

Roenick said the private equity firm typically invests in a company for three to seven years.