

Optom joins the bear market

OPTOMETRIST AND ENTREPRENEUR, Imran Hakim has struck a 'multi-million pound' deal with Argos to stock his iTeDDy product in all 684 of its stores.

The Bolton-based 29-year-old was joined by investors and *Dragons' Den* TV presenters, Peter Jones and Theo Paphitis, to launch the 'edutainment' toy at London Zoo on Thursday (June 21).

Mr Hakim said: "It's a multi-million pound deal with Argos, the biggest toy retailer in the UK. With their intimate understanding of how the toy industry works, it is invaluable to get them behind us."

The product was such a huge hit on the BBC TWO show that it secured £140,000 investment from the two presenters, who dressed as iTeDDy's for the launch, which took place beside the zoo's bear enclosure.

Mr Hakim, who graduated from UMIST with a BSc in Optometry and Vision Science, said: "To get these guys dressed up in teddy bear suits shows how much they are behind the concept and idea.

"With their support we are looking at being a success worldwide, as a teddy bear has an international appeal. It will be easy to transfer this product to the Middle East and the Spanish-speaking market," he said.

Mr Hakim hinted that he will be hoping to



take this success back into his optics businesses, but would not divulge his plans.

"The new plans that we have for optometric market is a form of joint venturing. It will show us taking conventional models within optometry and adding our own perspective to make them more attractive to the end user. We have some great ideas about how we can deliver something different, innovative and fresh."

The iTeDDy has a removable personal media player that shows games, cartoons, music and recorded sound. The product retails at £59.99. See www.iTeddy.com.