King Announces Leadership Changes

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LONDON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 23, 2022-- King, the leading interactive entertainment company for the mobile gaming world and a subsidiary of Activision Blizzard, is today announcing a series of leadership changes.

Tjodolf Sommestad is the new President of King. He will take over from Humam Sakhnini, who, after six years at King and 12 years at Activision Blizzard, is stepping down to return to the US with his family. In addition, Sebastian Knutsson, one of the co-founders of the company, is stepping down from his current role as Chief Creative Officer as part of a long-term succession strategy to focus more on personal charitable work. Sommestad will serve as president of King effective immediately while Sakhnini will work closely with him on the transition until the end of March.

“Tjodolf is an exceptional leader who has played a central role in driving the continued growth and development of our mobile games’ franchises,” said Daniel Alegre, President and Chief Operating Office of Activision Blizzard. “He brings a wealth of experience in innovation, technology, and games development. Working alongside an expanded leadership team, I am confident King will be able to sustain its growth while serving its player community with the enduring delight of its games.”

Sommestad has worked at King for more than a decade, including most recently as Chief Development Officer, where he led King’s Games Studios and technology teams, and previously as the Senior Vice President for the *Candy Crush*™franchise and Central Studios.

Sommestad said, “I’m delighted to be taking over as the new President of King – a business I’ve been proud to be part of for more than a decade. After breaking revenue records in 2021, we expect to build on this momentum through a continued focus on building playful player experiences across our live franchises, so we can continue to delight our players and make the world more playful. Thanks to Humam’s leadership and the fantastic work and dedication of our teams, the business is in a position of financial and creative strength, setting the stage for King’s next level of growth.”

Bobby Kotick, CEO of Activision Blizzard, said, “I want to thank Humam Sakhnini and Sebastian Knutsson. I have greatly valued my partnership over these twelve years with Humam. He was instrumental in both the acquisition of Blizzard and King, and our Company has been fortunate for his contributions. And Sebastian helped created an entire industry bringing gaming to hundreds of millions of new players around the world. He is a pioneer and visionary, and we are grateful for the passion and creativity he inspired within King. Both Humam and Sebastian have worked tirelessly to build a great culture at King and prepare the business for this exciting next level.”

Humam Sakhnini said, “I am incredibly proud of what King has achieved. We delivered record results and delighted our players around the world thanks to the commitment, great work and passion of our talented teams. I'm excited about King's next chapter under Tjodolf's leadership. He is a tremendously talented leader who will continue to drive innovation in our franchises."

Co-founder Sebastian Knutsson said, “From our humble start-up beginnings 19 years ago to today, I have been proud of the fun we've delivered players through a focus on creativity and innovation. It has truly been a tremendous journey, and I look forward to seeing what is next for King. I will continue to cheer on King from the sidelines.”

The leadership changes come as King’s fourth quarter financial results show it achieved over $1 billion annual operating income last year, with in-game net bookings in 2021 increasing 14% year-over-year to a new record, driven by *Candy Crush*, King’s largest franchise.

About King

King is a leading interactive entertainment company for the mobile world. It had 240 million monthly active users as of fourth quarter 2021 across web, social and mobile platforms, and has developed more than 200 exclusive games that are enjoyed all around the world through its king.com, Facebook, and mobile distribution platforms such as the Apple App Store, Google Play Store, Microsoft Windows App Store and Amazon Appstore. King was acquired by Activision Blizzard (NASDAQ: ATVI) in February 2016. King has game studios in Stockholm, Malmö, London, Barcelona and Berlin, along with offices in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and Malta.

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FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES:
KingComms@king.com

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