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TOKYOPOP® To Deliver Authentic Manga to Fans with Original Right-to-Left Format Launch

New Policy Maintains Artwork Integrity and Increases Release Volume

LOS ANGELES – 1/28/02 – TOKYOPOP has made an unprecedented move to keep the English-language versions of manga (comic books and graphic novels) as close to their Japanese originals as possible. Starting in April 2002, TOKYOPOP will publish all of its new manga titles in the authentic right-to-left format, and give fans the true experience they have been asking for. This not only maintains the integrity of the original artwork, but also enables TOKYOPOP to release most graphic novel series on a frequency three-to-six times faster than the current industry standard. TOKYOPOP volumes will hit the shelves monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly versus the six months or longer typical of competitors.

“This move will revolutionize the U.S. manga industry,” said Sean Atkins, TOKYOPOP’s Director of Marketing. “With a launch that includes such hot, new titles as *Cowboy Bebop* and *GTO*, we will give fans the most authentic experience possible, minimize their wait from title to title, and do it all for an industry-leading price point of \$9.99 per book. That’s unheard of when you consider that most competitors charge \$12.99 to \$16.99 per book.”

In Japan, all published manga (and most Japanese printed material) is written to read from right to left. This is also true for most European adaptations of manga. When an English translation is published in the U.S., however, the common practice has used computer-reversed or mirror images that allow the books to read from left to right (the Western standard). Unfortunately, this often compromises the integrity of the title’s original artwork.

Today’s announcement makes TOKYOPOP the first U.S. publisher to adopt such a sweeping policy. While some Japanese manga artists have required that the English versions of their manga be published from right to left, TOKYOPOP is the first American publisher to unilaterally announce that it will maintain the original format for all of its future manga titles.

Additionally, TOKYOPOP will leave the original printed sound effects in place, one more way in which American readers gain from the authentic manga experience. In the Japanese language, use of the onomatopoeia (i.e., printed sound effect words like ‘buzz’ or ‘thump’) is incredibly well developed, and many manga artists have intricately incorporated these sound effects into their art – again, an element that has been commonly altered in U.S. translations.

“A good manga is a work of art,” said Senior Manga Editor, Jake Forbes. “If you reversed the works of Picasso and showed them to art lovers, they would know that something was off. Manga fans are no different. Staying true to the original format is an exciting move, both for the fans and for the artists.”

TOKYOPOP’s manga research has generated promising feedback, with enthusiastic reception from the fans and test-groups adjusting to the right-to-left format within just a few pages. An “authentic manga” how-to guide will be included in each graphic novel, but tests indicate that the new format will quickly become second nature. The authentic manga launch will also feature special packaging.

Upcoming TOKYOPOP Manga Releases in New Format:

April 2002:	<i>Chobits</i> <i>Cowboy Bebop</i> <i>Dragon Knights</i> <i>GTO</i> <i>Marmalade Boy</i> <i>Mars</i> <i>Planet Ladder</i> <i>Real Bout High School</i> <i>Skullman</i>	June – December 2002:	More than 70 additional volumes!
May 2002:	<i>Initial D</i> <i>Kare Kano</i> <i>Kodocha – Sana's Stage</i> <i>Love Hina</i> <i>Paradise Kiss</i>		

About TOKYOPOP®

TOKYOPOP®, founded in 1996, is the premiere distributor of international, character-based entertainment and licenses across multiple platforms. With exclusive rights to hundreds of publishing, video and music products, the company's growing portfolio has blossomed TOKYOPOP into a media convergence leader. TOKYOPOP is the leading provider of video game and anime soundtracks, has millions of books in print, and includes several hit properties based on popular Cartoon Network and Kids! WB programs. TOKYOPOP titles include *Sailor Moon*, *Gundam Wing*, *Initial D*, *Real Bout High School* and *Cowboy Bebop*, among others. With rapidly growing U.S. appeal for its properties, TOKYOPOP is actively expanding into television, film and licensed goods. For more information, visit www.TOKYOPOP.com.