

Trends in Japan

Pop Culture

Discover manga, anime, J-pop, and much more in this section showcasing the latest pop culture phenomena to capture the imagination of Japan's young people.

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Rival Magazines Celebrate Anniversary Together

Two trailblazers in the world of Japanese manga magazines celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their inaugural issues in March 2009. *Weekly Shonen Magazine*, published by Kodansha Ltd., and *Weekly Shonen Sunday*, from Shogakukan Inc., have both produced a vast number of hit manga series while forging a relationship as amicable rivals. Meanwhile, *Weekly Shonen Jump*, a popular publication from Shueisha Inc. known for featuring "One Piece" and "Naruto," marked its fortieth anniversary in 2008. And *Nakayoshi*, a monthly girls' manga magazine from Kodansha known for featuring the best-selling "Sailor Moon," will celebrate its fifty-fifth anniversary in December 2009.



The first edition of *Weekly Shonen Magazine*. (C)Kodansha



The June 2009 edition of *Weekly Shonen Magazine*. (C)Kodansha



A recent edition of *Weekly Shonen Sunday*. (C)Shogakukan 2009



The August 2009 edition of *Nakayoshi*. (C)Kodansha

The Kawaii Ambassadors (Ambassadors of Cuteness) Web Japan

Meet Japan's Pop Culture Envoys



The Ambassadors of Cuteness. Photo: Takamasa Sakurai

Japanese manga, anime, fashion, and other pop culture has taken the world by storm. In an attempt to harness this boom to deepen understanding of Japan among young people around the globe, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan appointed three young leaders as Kawaii Taishi ("Ambassadors of Cuteness") in February 2009. The role of the three ambassadors, each a leading figure in a particular genre of fashion, is to represent Japan's vibrant popular culture overseas. They have already been making a splash at Japan-themed events around the world.



Cosplay.



The venue for Japan Expo. (C)EURO JAPAN COMIC



A fashion show.

“Cool Japan” Takes Hollywood by Storm

Japanese Manga, Anime, and Games Become Hit Movies

Hollywood is the latest place to experience the worldwide boom in Japanese pop culture. Studio executives in America's movie-making capital cannot get enough of the manga, anime, and video games for which "Cool Japan" is famous. *Astro Boy*, *Dragonball*, *Evangelion*, *Gatchaman*, *Onimusha* . . . These are just a few of the Japanese comics, cartoons, and games that are being made into live-action or computer-animated movies by US and international film makers.



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Street Fighter IV. (C)CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2008, 2009 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



Onimusha.(C)CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2006 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



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