

【NEWS RELEASE】

To the Press and Whom It May Concern:

April 28, 2021

KADOKAWA CORPORATION

KADOKAWA Announces Acquisition of J-Novel Club

April 28, 2021 (San Antonio, Texas) - KADOKAWA CORPORATION (Headquarters: Tokyo Chiyoda-ku, Representative Director and President: Masaki Matsubara, “KADOKAWA”) announced today the completion of their acquisition of J-Novel Club LLC (Headquarters: San Antonio Texas, President and Founder: Samuel Pinansky, “JNC”), a US company which engages in the English digital e-book publication of Japanese light novels and the operation of a digital subscription service platform.



Founded in 2016, JNC mainly focuses on the English publication of light novel titles of Japanese publishers through their “Digital First” strategy. The company’s pioneering and unique business model - in which the latest translated chapters are streamed through their digital subscription service platform with minimal delay from Japanese publication, after which e-Book format publications of the same titles are distributed through major English online stores - has won the support of the users in North America and other English speaking markets, thereby driving significant revenue growth in recent years.

Such growth of JNC is indicative of the positive growth trend seen in the overall light novel market in North America and other English speaking markets. Coupled with the global market expansion of Japanese anime, many of which are adaptations of light novel titles, the light novel market is also expected to enjoy continued growth going forward.

KADOKAWA’s acquisition of JNC is a part of the company’s effort to strengthen their e-Book business in the

English speaking market through BOOK☆WALKER Co.,Ltd., (Headquarters: Tokyo Chiyoda-ku, “BW”), the group’s subsidiary which engages in the distribution of digital e-Books, with a view to implementing the “Digital First” strategy, thereby maximizing the number of new titles to be published while effectively complementing and contributing to the comprehensive publishing business of Yen Press, LLC, KADOKAWA’s joint venture with the Hachette Book Group (Headquarters: New York, “YP”) formed in 2016.

Moving forward, KADOKAWA will seek to drive further expansion of the company’s light novel business in the English speaking market through various measures including the reinforcement of JNC’s promotional collaboration with “BOOK☆WALKER Global”, BW’s online English e-Book store, and with GeeXPlus, BW’s internet influencer talent agency subsidiary.

Sam Pinansky, JNC’s founder and Managing Director (effective today) says:

“Since I founded JNC five years ago, the company has grown from essentially a one-man operation to publishing over 250 titles a year. In order to guarantee our future growth, I needed a strong partner, and I’ve found one in BW as well as KADOKAWA. The possibilities for light novels to spread more and more throughout the world are nearly endless, and I’m sure that with this partnership we will be able to publish more and more of the content from not only our publishing partners we have worked with so far, but even more of the publishers and content creators we haven’t even started with yet! I can’t wait to get started.”

Ichiro Hashiba, Representative Director and President of BW (and Executive Officer of KADOKAWA) says:

“I am extremely happy to have been able to build such a strong partnership with JNC, especially knowing JNC was founded at almost the same time BW launched their BOOK☆WALKER Global service and we have been working together ever since so as to jointly expand the global market for Japanese light novels. Going forward, we would like to contribute to Japanese publishers by way of spreading Japanese light novels to the rest of the world.

Kurt Hassler, Publisher and Managing Director of Yen Press, says:

“When Yen Press launched its light novel imprint, Yen On, in 2014, it represented a monumental shift in the availability and subsequent awareness of light novels among English-speaking audiences. What followed shattered all expectations, and JNC has since become a significant contributor in helping to fuel that expansion. We look forward to seeing how their partnership with BW unfolds and exploring opportunities to further broaden the market.”

▼J-Novel Club

<https://j-novel.club/>

▼BOOK☆WALKER Global & GeeXPlus

<https://global.bookwalker.jp/>

<https://geexplus.co.jp/>

▼YenPress

<https://yenpress.com/>

▼Overview of KADOKAWA CORPORATION

Develops a broad range of businesses as a comprehensive entertainment company, including publishing, video, game, Web service, education, MD and business for inbound customers. Advances digital transformation, including Activity Based Working (ABW), and a global media mix strategy, which focuses on steadily creating intellectual property (IP) and expanding overseas.

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