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TOM TOM ENGLISH



8 Reasons to love Kuroneko takkyubin

VOCABULARY

Fleet =

A number of vehicles, ships or aircraft operating together under the same owner

Isolated =

Far away from other places or things

Delicacy =

Gentleness, softness, carefulness

Catalogue =

A complete list of items for sale or for offer

Discussion questions

1. Do you use takkyubin services? How often do you use them? What do you send? What do you receive?
2. Is Yamato Transport your favourite delivery company? Or do you prefer another company? Which one? Why?
3. Did you ever have a problem with a delivery? What happened?
4. Have you seen the movie "Kiki's Delivery Service"? Did you like it? Why? Why not?
5. What's the Japanese title of "Kiki's Delivery Service"?
6. What other Ghibli movies have you seen? What are their English titles? Which one is your favourite? Why do you like it?

VOCABULARY

Stray =

Wandering, lost, or with no owner

Hub =

Centre of an activist, region or network

Emissions =

Centre of an activist, region or network

Salute =

A gesture of respect or polite recognition

Yamato Transport is known simply as “kuroneko” (literally “black cat”) in Japan. This is because their logo is a mother cat carrying her kitten in her mouth. It is the largest door-to-door delivery company in Japan. The company was founded in 1919 by Yasuomi Ogura, who also created the logo. He felt the logo would remind his employees to handle the parcels like babies.

But why does Japan love Kuroneko so much?

1. They’ll deliver to your location, anywhere

Do you live in a snowy place? No problem, because Kuroneko has some special vehicles in their **fleet**. They can reach you no matter where you live. Their delivery **fleet** includes boats that can reach some of Japan’s **isolated** islands.

2. They’ll deliver to your address even when they have only a phone number and post code

If they can’t find your address, Kuroneko won’t just give up and return the package to sender. They will use your information, like a phone number and postal code, to figure out where the package should go.

3. They’ll give it the “soft touch in purin” care

Even if your package is very delicate, you don’t need to worry. Your package will be handled with extreme **delicacy**. You could probably send custard pudding on a plate and it would arrive in perfect condition.

4. Customers can use Kuroneko points to get a pair of Kuroneko gloves themselves

Unfortunately, you can’t buy their cute kitty print gloves in any store. But you can get them from their **catalogue** with Kuroneko points. They cost about 150 points and you can choose between green, pink, blue and yellow gloves.

5. They’ll always look out for cats

Kuroneko employees take extra care to make sure cats are having a good day. They look under trucks to find **stray** cats.

6. They help the environment

In this age we need to start taking better care of the environment. Kuroneko now uses bicycle driven carts. You see these everywhere in urban **hubs** like Tokyo.

7. They’ll piggyback on passenger buses

Another way the company is doing helping the environment is by putting long-distance parcels onto buses that are already traveling on that route. This saves on gas and **emissions**, and saves the customers some money too!

8. They helped sponsor the Ghibli movie “Kiki’s Delivery Service”

The word “takkyubin” was a word created and trademarked by Yamato when they began their door-to-door service. Kuroneko approved the use of the word and enthusiastically sponsored the movie. This was probably because a black cat, Jiji, plays such an important role in it.

If you live in Japan, next time you see a Kuroneko truck on the street, make sure you thank them for all their hard work. To those who deliver our packages, we **salute** you.