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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 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 due to its logo of 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 was also the creator of the logo. He felt the logo would remind his employees to handle the parcels as if they were their own kids.

But why does Japan love Kuroneko so much?

1. They’ll deliver to your location, no matter where you are

Do you live in a snowy place? No problem, because Kuroneko has some special vehicles in their **fleet** so they can reach you no matter where you live. Included in their delivery fleet are boats that they use to 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

When a computer confuses 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

Whether you are waiting for a box of books or sending something a little more breakable, you can be confident that 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 redeem 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

Whether it is a cat at someone’s house or a **stray** cat taking a break under a car, Kuroneko employees take extra care to make sure the animals are having a good day.

6. They help the environment

In this age we need to seriously start taking better care of the environment. Kuroneko now uses bicycle driven carts. You see these things 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. 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 the company when they began their door-to-door service. Although permission to use the word wasn’t really necessary, Kuroneko approved the use 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.