

THE ONLINE MARKET OF ANIME RELATED PRODUCTS IN ROMANIA

Adrian Nicolae Cazacu

PhD Student, Doctoral School of Cybernetics and Economic Statistics,
Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

*Abstract:*The style of animation of Japanese origin called "anime" has spread from its appearance until the present on a worldwide scale. These animations are not characterized only by their own artistic style, they include elements belonging to the universal culture as well as their own original elements, fact that helped them to gain a worldwide audience. Around these animations, a culture and a market destined for both them and the products specific to the anime, like manga comics created in the artistic style of the anime, games, figurines, posters, etc. These products are intended for the anime fans, as well as for the general public, consumer of entertainment.

After the anime was presented to the Romanian public in the 1990s, the market for anime products also appeared in Romania and was developed especially with the means of online marketing.

Keywords: anime, culture, cyberspace, market, e-marketing

1. INTRODUCTION

The term "anime" means all animation produced in Japan. This animation has very distinctive characteristics both from an artistic point of view and from a content point of view. These features are both artistic in nature but also related to the topics covered (Winge, 2006), combining unique visual elements with content from universal culture as well as elements unique in nature, appreciated by the public as exotic. These particularities can be considered as defining. Since its debut in America during the 1970s, anime has spread to other countries, other than Japan, and has gained worldwide audiences. The anime received its first positive feedback from the American public in the late 1970s and 1980s, which prompted many American companies to buy licenses from Japanese producers, who doubled and subtitled anime in English, and began to distribute these products, first in America, then worldwide (MacWilliams, 2008). The anime becomes a formidable rival to the traditional western animation, but it also forms a solid base of anime fans.

According to the Japanese Foreign Trade Organization (JETRO) ("Japanese animation has ranked first in world animation for nearly two decades") A study in 2005 showed that over 60% of global animation were produced in Japan (JETRO, May 2005).)

Animes are often inspired or accompanied by comics, made in the same artistic style called "manga." In addition to these comics, a wide range of products are sold to fans, such as: **figurines, ornaments, clothing, toys**, etc. The Romanian public has started to discover anime culture since 1990, when the Romanian TV stations started broadcasting anime films and serials, as well as the Animax channel broadcasting many anime subtitles in the Romanian language, a cultural phenomenon called "**anime conventions**" (Lamerichs, 2013), began to expand in Romania which attracted anime fans and also exponents and traders of derivative anime products, like the ones that were mentioned.

2. CASE STUDY

The first manifestations of the anime products market in Romania were the anime-specific conventions, the first of which was Nijikon, whose debut took place in 2009. This

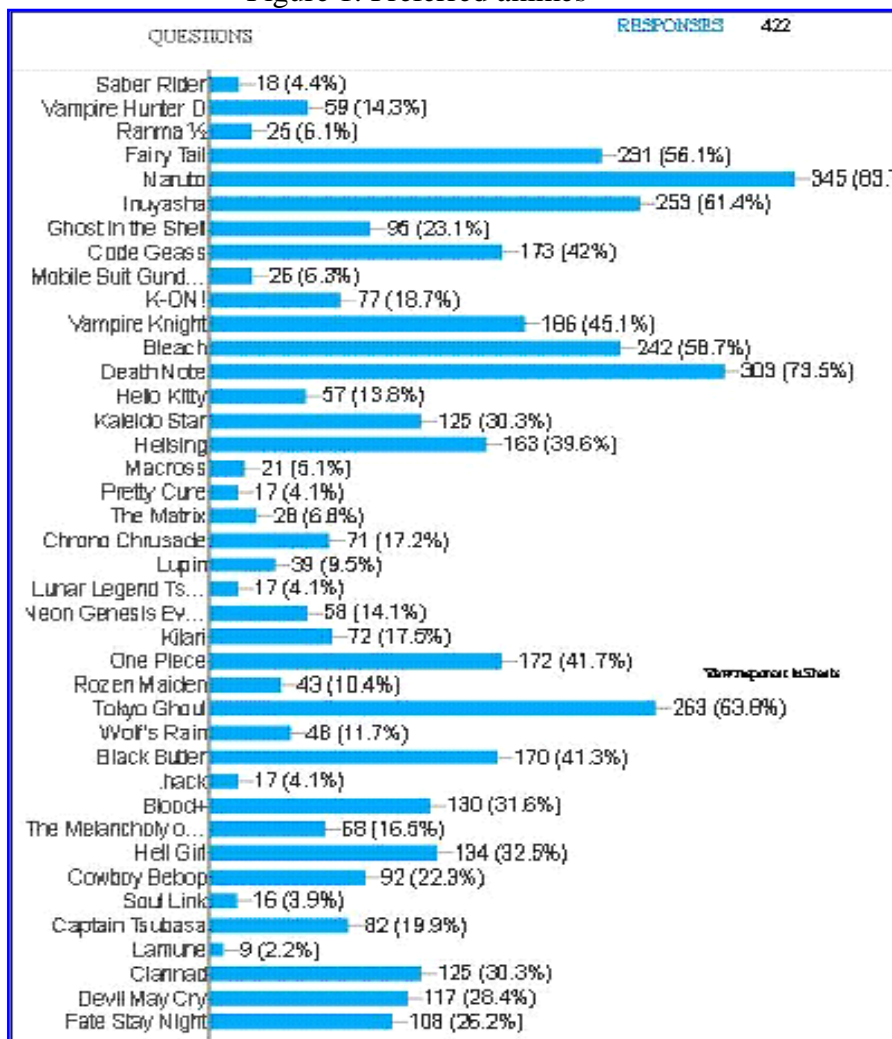
convention presented to the Romanian public, with the help of the present exhibitors, anime related products imported from Japan. Observing the increased interest for these products, the first online stores of anime products began to appear, which continued and increased the flow of anime products on the Romanian market during the period between the conventions.

These **online stores** have attracted their customers, especially with the help of online discussion groups about anime and mass-media entertainment within the social network Facebook, through e-marketing, fact analyzed extensively in previous studies.

Currently, anime-specific products, such as manga, can also be purchased outside the online environment, from libraries.

In order to complete the overview of the transformations of the anime products market in Romania, we considered the analysis, during the period when the market for anime products existed largely in cyberspace, of the sales of such an online store.

Figure 1. Preferred animes



Source: author research, 2016 survey

Table 1. Preferred animes, percentes, absolute frequencies

NAME	PERCENT	ABSOLUTE VALUE	NAME	PERCENT	ABSOLUTE VALUE
Naruto	83,70%	345	Rozen Maiden	10,40%	43
Pokemon	82%	338	Lupin	9,50%	39
Death Note	73,50%	303	Sandy Bell	8,50%	35
Tokyo Ghoul	63,80%	263	The Matrix	6,80%	28
Inuyasha	61,40%	253	Mobile Suit Gund...	6,30%	26
Full Metal Alchemist	59,50%	245	Candy Candy!	6,10%	25
Bleach	58,70%	242	Ranma ½	6,10%	25
Dragonball Z	58%	239	Macross	5,10%	21
Fairy Tail	56,10%	231	Saber Rider	4,40%	18
Vampire Knight	45,10%	186	Pretty Cure	4,10%	17
Avatar:The Last...	43%	177	Lunar Legend Ts...	4,10%	17
Code Geass	42%	173	.hack	4,10%	17
One Piece	41,70%	172	Soul Link	3,90%	16
Black Butler	41,30%	170	Macron	2,90%	12
Hellsing	39,60%	163	Lamune	2,20%	9
Sailor Moon	37,10%	153	Rozen Maiden	10,40%	43
Digimon	33,70%	139	Lupin	9,50%	39
Hell Girl	32,50%	134			
Blood+	31,60%	130			
Kaleido Star	30,30%	125			

Source: author research, 2016 survey

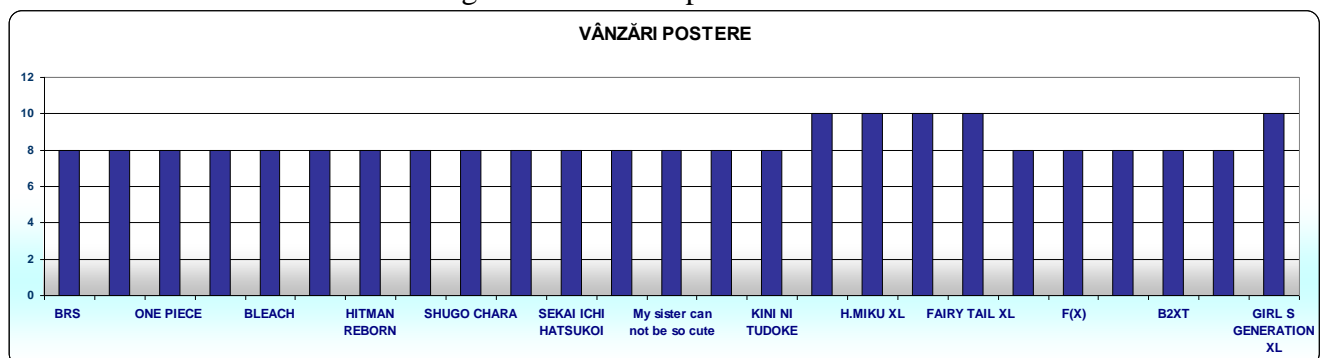
3. FAN FAVORITE ANIME RELATED PRODUCTS

Table 2. Preferred posters

NAME	CATEGORY	CODE	PRICE	PIECES
BRS	POSTER	OSP004	15	8
DEATH NOTE	POSTER	OSP005	15	8
ONE PIECE	POSTER	OSP006	15	8
H.MIKU	POSTER	OSP007	15	8
BLEACH	POSTER	OSP008	15	8
SUZUMIYA HARUHI	POSTER	OSP009	15	8
HITMAN REBORN	POSTER	OSP010	15	8
KUROSITSUJI	POSTER	OSP011	15	8
SHUGO CHARA	POSTER	OSP012	15	8
CODE GEASS	POSTER	OSP013	15	8
SEKAI ICHI HATSUKOI	POSTER	OSP014	15	8
K-ON!	POSTER	OSP015	15	8
My sister can not be so cute	POSTER	OSP016	15	8
RANDOM	POSTER	OSP017	15	8
KINI NI TUDOKE	POSTER	OSP018	15	8
BRS XL	POSTER	OSP020	25	10
H.MIKU XL	POSTER	OSP021	25	10
AO NO EXORCIST XL	POSTER	OSP022	25	10
FAIRY TAIL XL	POSTER	OSP023	25	10
LEE MIN HO	POSTER	OSK009	20	8
F(X)	POSTER	OSK010	20	8
BIG BANG	POSTER	OSK011	20	8
B2XT	POSTER	OSK012	20	8
EXO	POSTER	OSK013	20	8
GIRL S GENERATION XL	POSTER	OSK20	35	10

Source: author research, Constantza, 2013(online store OTAKU SHOP)

Figura 2. Preferred posters



Source: Table 2 data

For the purpose, we have studied the sales of a company from Constantza, OTAKU SHOP, a company that, during a few years, has commercialized such products.(tables no.

2,3,4) The company bought the products from a foreign producer and sold them in Romania. The performed study, is based on the data provided by the company, data of which we present a sequence over a period of 6 months in 2013.

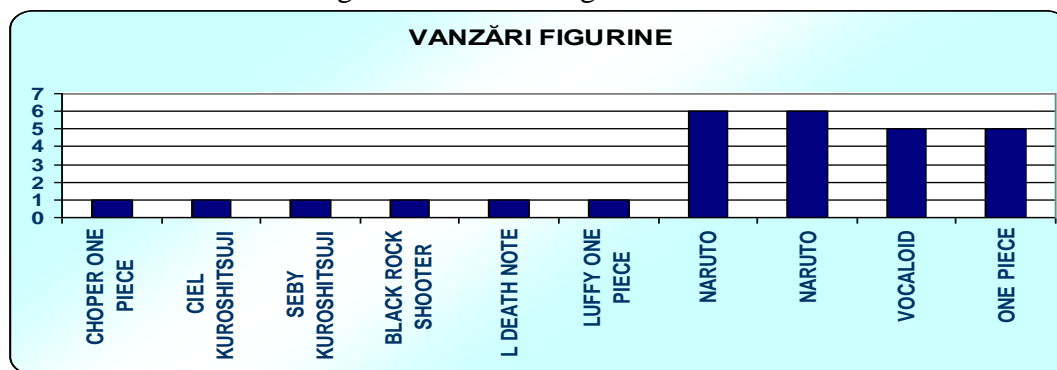
Given the segment of population that is mainly addressed to the young people, especially school students and high-school students, the fluctuation of the trend can be explained, with maximums in June, when the courses are completed and in August, when the coast is visited by students, students and tourists from the country, of all ages, on vacancy or away, and in October, respectively, when the students return back to courses, the most interested segment being the population in the age range of 18-25 years (students).

Table 3. Preferred figurines

NAME	CATEGORY	CODE	PRICE	PIECES
CHOPER ONE PIECE	FIGURINE	OSF001	30	1
CIEL KUROSHITSUJI	FIGURINE	OSF002	40	1
SEBY KUROSHITSUJI	FIGURINE	OSF003	40	1
BLACK ROCK SHOOTER	FIGURINE	OSF004	40	1
L DEATH NOTE	FIGURINE	OSF005	40	1
LUFFY ONE PIECE	FIGURINE	OSF006	30	1
NARUTO	FIGURINE	OSF007	20	6
NARUTO	FIGURINE	OSF008	20	6
VOCALOID	FIGURINE	OSF009	15	5
ONE PIECE	FIGURINE	OSF010	10	5

Source: author research, Constantza, 2013(online store OTAKU SHOP)

Figure 3. Preferred figurines



Source: Table 3 data

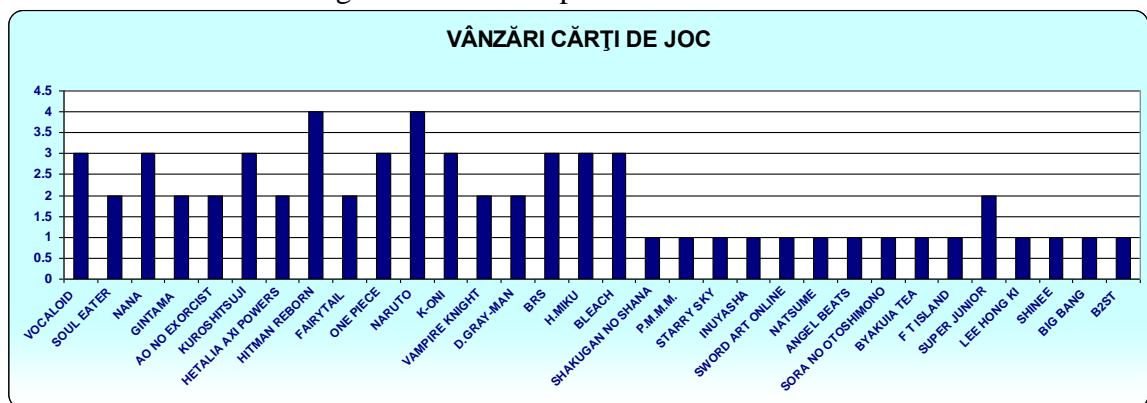
Table 2. Preferred poker cards

DENUMIRE	TIP PRODUS	COD	PREȚ UNIT	BUCĂȚI
VOCALOID	POKER CARDS	OSC001	15	3
SOUL EATER	POKER CARDS	OSC002	15	2
NANA	POKER CARDS	OSC003	15	3
GINTAMA	POKER CARDS	OSC004	15	2

AO NO EXORCIST	POKER CARDS	OSC005	15	2
KUROSHITSUJI	POKER CARDS	OSC006	15	3
HETALIA AXI POWERS	POKER CARDS	OSC007	15	2
HITMAN REBORN	POKER CARDS	OSC008	15	4
FAIRYTAIL	POKER CARDS	OSC009	15	2
ONE PIECE	POKER CARDS	OSC010	15	3
NARUTO	POKER CARDS	OSC011	15	4
K-ONI	POKER CARDS	OSC012	15	3
VAMPIRE KNIGHT	POKER CARDS	OSC013	15	2
D.GRAY-MAN	POKER CARDS	OSC014	15	2
BRS	POKER CARDS	OSC015	15	3
H.MIKU	POKER CARDS	OSC016	15	3
BLEACH	POKER CARDS	OSC017	15	3
SHAKUGAN NO SHANA	POKER CARDS	OSC020	15	1
P.M.M.M.	POKER CARDS	OSC021	15	1
STARRY SKY	POKER CARDS	OSC022	10	1
INUYASHA	POKER CARDS	OSC023	10	1
SWORD ART ONLINE	POKER CARDS	OSC024	10	1
NATSUME	POKER CARDS	OSC025	10	1
ANGEL BEATS	POKER CARDS	OSC026	10	1
SORA NO OTOSHIMONO	POKER CARDS	OSC027	10	1
BYAKUIA TEA	POKER CARDS	OSC028	10	1
F T ISLAND	POKER CARDS	OSK001	20	1
SUPER JUNIOR	POKER CARDS	OSK002	20	2
LEE HONG KI	POKER CARDS	OSK003	20	1
SHINEE	POKER CARDS	OSK004	20	1
BIG BANG	POKER CARDS	OSK005	20	1
B2ST	POKER CARDS	OSK006	20	1

Source: author research, Constantza, 2013(online store OTAKU SHOP)

Figure 4. Preferred poker cards



Source: Table 4 data

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows the existence of a **significant interest for the products of the anime culture on the Romanian market, as well as a market segment reserved for the products of this culture in Romania**. Although many companies in our country import these products, **there are no local producers** holding licenses to create products specific to anime culture. The studies conducted so far also demonstrate the need to formalize the localization of anime in Romania (subtitling in Romanian language).

As a result, it is **necessary and beneficial** for the Romanian consumer, **the acquisition of the licenses** by the responsible companies for the media products subtitling or duplication in Romania, from the Japanese producing anime companies. It is a well-known fact that these licenses are not very expensive and the costs of their purchase will be easily amortized by the selling costs of the located products, on the Romanian already existing market, as we have shown.

An investment that has been proved as very profitable in other countries, such as America, where the sales of the anime products in 2009, when the profit was of \$ 2,741 trillion (JETRO).

Therefore, we consider the local producers should invest in **buying licenses to make these products more suitable on the Romanian market** and/or, to the same extent, **to increase the import of these products from the anime field, because the market demands for them exists**.

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