



## **Pokémon Pandemonium is Back for Holiday 2007**

...now ranked in Top 5 action figure brands, total Pokémon sales in Canada are expected to almost triple this year...

**TORONTO – October 15, 2007** - Pokémon®, the global pop culture phenomenon that created a frenzy when it hit Canada in 1998, is back, and it's resurging with significant speed with a new generation of fans. With the new broadcast of the 10<sup>th</sup> television season entitled *Pokémon: Diamond and Pearl* on YTV this fall, Canadian sales of new Pokémon merchandise are expected to escalate even further.

The Pokémon brand in Canada is expected to reach \$30-million in retail sales in 2007 which represents double and, in some categories, triple the business it did in 2006 - including sales of video games, the Pokémon Trading Card Game, toys, home décor, and apparel. This resurgence was fuelled by this spring's launch of the *Pokémon Diamond* and *Pokémon Pearl* video games for the Nintendo™ DS, featuring more than 100 new Pokémon characters, and the introduction of a new expansion of the Pokémon Trading Card Game in May. *Pokémon Diamond* and *Pokémon Pearl* are the fastest-selling video games in the history of the series, with worldwide sales in excess of 10 million games, and Pokémon Trading Card Game sales up an astounding 300 per cent.

"Pokémon is a classic in the world of video games – since it launched the brand has always been among our top selling video games," said Nintendo of Canada vice-president and general manager Ron Bertram. "The two key drivers behind the wild success of the *Pokémon Diamond* and *Pokémon Pearl* video games are the renewed popularity of the brand, and the extraordinary nature of game play that is enjoyed by longtime fans of Pokémon, plus a whole new generation of kids." According to NPD, *Pokémon Diamond* and *Pokémon Pearl* video games are the top two selling portable video games in 2007 to date.

Already a top-rated program on Cartoon Network in the U.S., the Canadian debut on YTV of the 10<sup>th</sup> season of the animated TV series called *Pokémon: Diamond and Pearl*, is generating impressive ratings since its start on September 28.

"Pokémon toys started the year off within the top 10 most popular action figures, and then the momentum of the launch of the *Pokémon Diamond* and *Pokémon Pearl* video games nearly tripled sales of toys and catapulted Pokémon into the top five action figure brands," said Eddie Hayden, Director Marketing, JAKKS Pacific, Inc., a multi-brand company that designs and markets a broad range of toys and consumer products including Pokémon products. "As a result of this new wave of Poké-mania, we're working around-the-clock to make sure we have enough toys to fill the influx of Holiday 2007 orders from Canadian retailers."

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Pokémon is the collective name for the 490 characters that one can find, catch, train, trade, collect and use in battle against rivals in the quest to become a Pokémon Master. After launching

in Japan in 1996, Pokémon came to North America in 1998. Its arrival spurred a shopping frenzy that is still remembered by an entire generation of kids and their parents.

"A large assortment of Pokémon product is available at Toys R Us Canada," said Joe Ferraro, Divisional Merchandise Manager for Toys "R" Us Canada. "The new Pokémon entertainment and toy products coming to market are fresh and compelling to kids."

Pokémon Diamond and Pokémon Pearl introduce a new generation of fans to a new generation of Pokémon, featuring over 100 new characters hailing from the region of Sinnoh – a new land of blue lakes, mysterious forests and snowy hills.

Pokémon merchandise is available at major retailers across Canada.

#### **About Pokémon USA**

Pokémon USA, Inc., a subsidiary of The Pokémon Company in Japan, manages the property outside of Asia which includes licensing, marketing, the Pokémon Trading Card Game, an animated TV series, home entertainment, the official Pokémon website, and online retail center [www.pokemoncenter.com](http://www.pokemoncenter.com). Pokémon was launched in Japan in 1996 for play on Nintendo's Game Boy® and has since evolved into a global cultural phenomenon. Pokémon was introduced in North America in September 1998 and today is one of the most popular toy and entertainment properties in the world. For more information, visit [www.pokemon.com](http://www.pokemon.com).

#### **About Nintendo**

The worldwide leader and innovator in the creation of interactive entertainment, Nintendo Co., Ltd., of Kyoto, Japan, manufactures and markets hardware and software for its popular home and portable video game systems. For more information about Nintendo, visit the company's Web site at [www.nintendo.ca](http://www.nintendo.ca).

#### **About The Licensing Shop, Inc.**

The Licensing Shop, Inc. (TLS) is a Toronto-based licensing agency specializing in the merchandising and management of entertainment brands in Canada. It was founded in January 2006 by Stephen Fowler, former President of 3DO Europe, and Nancy Fowler, former President of DIC Consumer Products based in Burbank California. TLS has represented the Pokémon brand in Canada since April 2006.

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