ABSTRACT
Anime (animated films) and manga (comic books) fans are easily misunderstood and can even face prejudice. In fact, they are considered nerds or weirdoes in the eye of many people. This is an unfortunate happenstance for two simple reasons. First, it is a gross misperception of fans, which is fundamentally unfair to them. Second, with a growing fan base, this ever-expansive population presents ample opportunities for businesses. However, any biased view toward those fans may likely hinder marketers’ efforts to serve them in an effective manner. We would like to show people what anime and manga fans are all about. This chapter aims to introduce readers to the world of anime and manga fandom and to its fans, in particular. It will present and explain specific terms such as weeaboos, otaku, waifus, husbando, fujos, and critics. We will also describe the different characters of anime and manga fans and explain how these characters can affect marketing.

INTRODUCTION
According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2019), fan is an enthusiastic devotee (as of a sport or performing art) usually as a spectator, or an ardent admirer or enthusiast (as of a celebrity or a pursuit). Fan is a shorten version of fanatic, which comes from the Latin word fanum, meaning “sanctuary, temple.” As the definition indicates, people that have an intense passion or love for, or dedication to an object, sport, art, or activity may be considered fans of those things. Fans of a particular pursuit do not necessarily have a direct face-to-face contact. However, fans have a long history of publishing fan magazines, at-
tending cons, writing fanfic and making fanvids to create and interact together in self-contained bubbles. That is, fans have a desire to interconnect to and socialize with other like-minded people. Consequently, fandom emerges, which is “a subculture composed of fans characterized by a feeling of empathy and camaraderie with others who share a common interest” (Wikipedia, 2018). Simply speaking, fandom is the interconnected networks of individual fans sharing the same interest. Since the explosion of the internet, fandom has become a very modern online phenomenon. For example, the internet has turned politics into fandom (Ditum, 2018). Fandom draws on popular contexts from all around the world, from media such as Hollywood blockbuster films to local programming such as Afghan Idol, Afghanistan’s adaption of American Idol (Gray et al., 2007).

This chapter aims to introduce readers to the world of anime and manga fandom and explore the marketing implications for this industry. It will present and explain many specific terms used in this fandom. To better understand anime and manga fandom, this chapter will begin with a description of its origins and history.

The chapter will then introduce different types of fans like otaku, fujoshi and waifu and explain their characters in order to better understand them and their behaviours. Finally, this chapter will explore the relationship between anime and manga fandom and consumption and discuss implications for marketing.

**ANIME AND MANGA FANOM: A PRIMER**

**Fandom in Modern Society**

Today, it is normal to see people standing in line waiting for a new product or to meet a celebrity. For example, Apple draws a long line at its stores every time when it launches a new model of its iPhone (Hein, 2018). The fans of Taylor Swift, which are called “swifties,” sang along with the singer and some even cried in her Reputation Tour concert (Florio, 2018). Or we see groups of people dressed in ‘strange’ cosplay (condensed version of costume play) outfits, communicating and hanging out together. Some movie or TV characters including Disney Channel are different to cosplay, but this does not dampen fans’ enthusiasm for trying it out and pulling it off (Mitchell, 2018). Or, on the internet, we can find many virtual communities discussing anime and using words that are not familiar to us (Commander, 2019). We can easily identify all of these people as fans of something or someone.

Fans and fandom are daily words in modern life. As mentioned earlier, a fan can be described as an enthusiastic follower of something or someone, including films, books, games, celebrities, anime and manga.

Thanks to the internet, fans can now communicate with each other everywhere at any time. The frequency of interactions between fans significantly increases the number and variety of fans’ activities. Because of the internet, fans can communicate faster and with an increasing number of other fans. Before the internet, fans had limited ways to ‘meet’ each other: letters, phones and meeting in real locations. This limited the number of people that could meet, which in turn limited the speed at which fandom could spread. The internet and social media have solved these problems. Fans can now meet and talk to each other in virtual rooms, like Twitter, Facebook and blogs. They can talk to thousands of other fans at once and get feedback in a second. Also, they can attract many new fans at an unbelievable speed.

Being a fan means being a member of a fandom, or subculture. As fandoms spread increasingly faster, fans groups are becoming stronger and larger and fandom is becoming ever more powerful in our daily life.