



NYCC 2022

LICENSING TRENDS

Every year New York Comic Con draws thousands of fans, young and old, to convene and celebrate their appreciation for the most popular gaming, entertainment, comic book, and publishing titles. The Fashion Snoops Culture team attended New York Comic Con 2022 at the Javits Center in Hudson Yards on October 14th, taking to the exhibition floor to observe key licensing trends. This report highlights thematic design trends for licensed goods and the top franchises and properties that appeared on the show floor.

NYCC 2022: Licensing Trends

1



Toy Temple (Vendor)

CUTE-IFIED CHARACTERS

Amidst an atmosphere of uncertainty throughout the world, cuteness acts as a grounding force, igniting a sense of calm and reminiscence on childhood years. Vendors sold a variety of merchandise from plush toys, t-shirts, posters, and figures depicting cute versions of famous characters across different franchises.

2

RETROMANIA

Gen Z's affinity for retro aesthetics was reflected in the work of many artists on the show floor, as well as the presence of authentic vintage merchandise from vendors. Since the pandemic began, nostalgic consumption has continued to drive trends. A rise in young collectors has also taken shape, with Gen Z consumers interested in rare products from the archive.



Matthew Lineham (Artist)

4

HERITAGE INFLUENCE



Matsu Moto (Illustrator)

Culturally inspired designs were pervasive throughout the show floor. Asian art styles were particularly common, as pop culture influences from Japanese and Korean media continue to gain audiences in the West. When taking inspiration from specific cultures, always make sure that you provide proper context and credit to origins. Consider bringing these communities into your creative process to ensure respect and inclusion.

3

SOPHISTICATED GRAPHICS



Unknown Vendor

As Millennials and Gen X media and gaming enthusiasts mature further into adulthood, graphics shift towards more sophisticated and everyday-appropriate aesthetics. Vendors showcased licensed graphics elevated into designs inspired by art movements like Art Deco and Modernism. Some also took more subtle approaches to licensing with smaller, discreet graphics and understated color palettes.



At New York Comic Con 2022, these four major themes stood out prominently across the exhibition floor where hundreds of vendors set up shop. In a mixture ranging from adorable plushies to deeply cultural heritage art styles, the massively popular convention's show floor reflected a number of micro trends and consumer shifts.



NYCC Mystery Box (Brand)



Disney Publishing (Publisher)



Marvel (Brand)

Marvel's dominance in the spotlight continued at NYCC 2022. Coming off of one of the most anticipated sequels for the entertainment giant, the theatrical release of *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* aligns firmly with the brand's ability to muster hype. Deadpool's sarcastic and iconic brand is always a fan favorite, making plenty of appearances throughout the convention as well. Cute-ified, Chibi-style renditions of popular characters like Spider-man and the Green Goblin also appeared.



Stylin Online (Brand)



Alex Ross (Artist)



Unknown

DC Comics' major success in their revival of superstar characters like Robert Pattinson's Batman and Gal Gadot's Wonder Woman certainly carried over into NYCC 2022. As popular as they are in their latest forms, iconic DC characters also appeared in different renditions from the company's vast, celebrated history.



Meowits Mart (Brand)



Kehasuke (Artist)

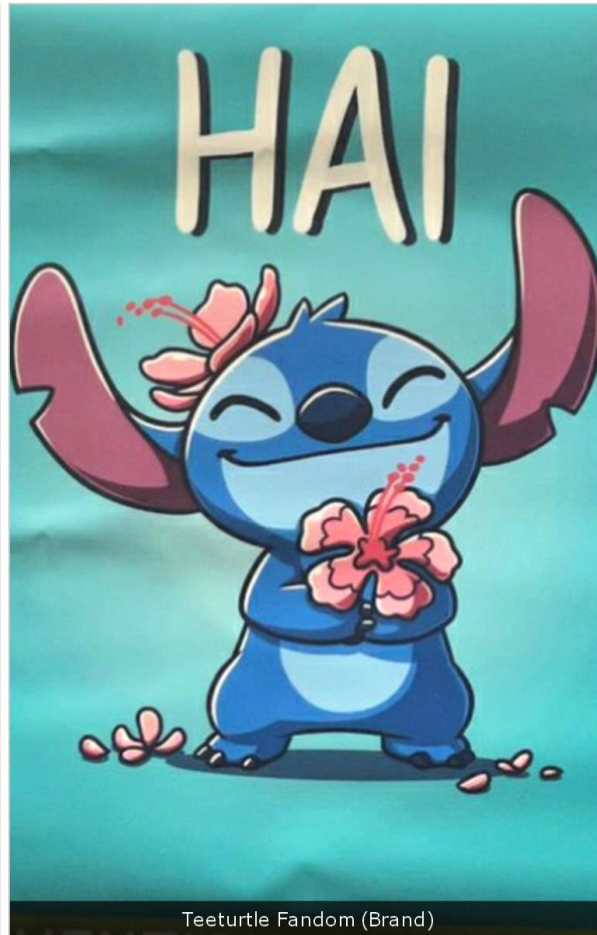


Unknown Vendor

As to be expected, fan favorite Pikachu was everywhere and available in countless different shirts, plushies, and stickers. The appeal of *Pokémon* continues to extend across new generations, gearing up for the video game series' newest entries set to release soon. Another massively popular Nintendo property *Kirby* also made numerous appearances in support of its latest video game release.



Stylin Online (Brand)



Teeturtle Fandom (Brand)

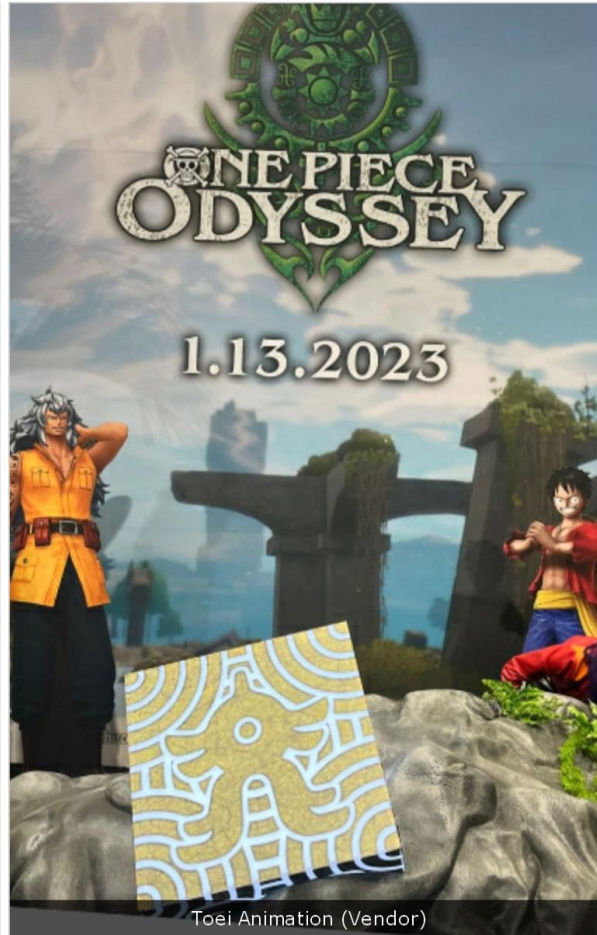


Popminded by Hallmark (Brand)

Disney continues to find new ways to reinterpret its historical characters, such as Mickey and Minnie Mouse, seen on new bags, stickers, and apparel. Early 2000s favorite Stitch from the *Lilo & Stitch* series also saw a significant resurgence in content at this year's event.



Toei Animation (Brand)



Toei Animation (Vendor)



Kehasuke (Artist)

Toei Animation is the studio behind long-running favorites *Dragon Ball Z*, *One Piece*, and *Sailor Moon*. These series remain massively popular years after the airing of their final chapters and continue to garner a cult following.



Studio Ghibli (Brand)



Kehasuk (Artist)



Studio Ghibli (Vendor)

Studio Ghibli's signature characters from productions like *My Neighbor Totoro* and *Spirited Away* were a must-have at Comic Con. The animation studio's familiar yet surreal brand of films are famous for covering deeply emotional stories, all while captivating viewers through an instantly recognizable art style.



NYCC Mystery Box (Brand)



Bandainamco (Brand)



Penguin Random House (Publisher)

Stranger Things was on full display at this year's Comic Con, giving fans a close-up look at the otherworldly Demogorgon. Booths were stocked with in-universe merch like nods to Eddie Munson's Hellfire Club, as well as spin-off and background media to accompany the main series. The series' success in bringing the 80s to life represents a great opportunity to incorporate retro aesthetics.



Unknown Vendor



Kehasuke (Artist)



Bandainamco (Vendor)

With the show's return to the spotlight via its recent availability on Netflix, the revival of *Avatar: The Last Airbender* was in full effect. Originally a heavy hitter on children's network Nickelodeon, a new series within the franchise has been greenlit under Netflix and is currently in production, which should extend its appeal to new and younger audiences.



Unknown Vendor



Penguin Random House (Publisher)



Unknown Vendor

Best-selling video game *Minecraft* hasn't left popularity since its release over a decade ago. The game's influence has even started approaching the fashion sector, as evidenced by Loewe's latest collection of pixelated garments and collaborations with brands like Burberry. Comic Con saw the game giant marketing merchandise, as well as new story-driven titles within the franchise.



Disney Pins (Vendor)



Bandainamco (Vendor)



Stylin Online (Brand)

Few franchises have the multigenerational following that *Star Wars* does. With Disney's acquisition of Lucasfilm in 2012, the storied franchise has gained momentum in recently years, notably on the heels of *The Mandalorian* series, whose success has opened the door for numerous spin-offs like the current, critically acclaimed show *Andor*.