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## Comicroft creating Japanese comic-book font 6,000-character lettering typeface will be first of its kind

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. — Comicroft, the comic-book industry's leading lettering and design company for over 20 years, is creating the first comic book-style lettering font for the Japanese writing system.

What started as a limited font to letter a few short comic strips to promote Blizzard Entertainment's *Overwatch* video game, has grown to nearly 2,500 characters over the past year, as more strips were added for *World of Warcraft* and *Hearthstone*. Now Comicroft has launched a Kickstarter to raise the funds to see this massive font to completion, so that other comic-book artists and publishers can use it to letter comics in Japanese.

"Even though comic books are incredibly popular in Japan," says Comicroft font designer John Roshell, "they're lettered with mechanical typefaces dating back to the 1960s. No one has ever created a font that mimics pen lettering like we have here in the U.S.—probably because it's such a huge undertaking."

The letters, numbers and punctuation for a typical English-language font comprise about 100 characters. Accents for Western European languages add another hundred, and even with Central European accents and Russian Cyrillic alphabets, the typical Roman-based font tops out at 500 characters. Comicroft creates at least a dozen of these font families a year.

But Asian fonts contain thousands of characters, so they are usually created by teams of people working for large companies, and take years. While Comicroft is a small studio of three, its designers are used to pushing boundaries and seeking out challenges.

In the early 1990s, founder Richard Starkings was one of the first comic book pen letterers to convert his handwriting to the computer, and hired a small team with the goal of providing high-quality digital lettering under tight deadlines. Comicroft pioneered the methods and techniques that became industry standards, while pushing comic lettering to new artistic heights with their pioneering work on *X-Men*, *Avengers*, *Superman*, *Batman* and *Spider-Man*. They have designed custom fonts for many of the top artists in comics, like Dave Gibbons, J. Scott Campbell and Scott McCloud, and recently created a family of fonts to help brand the Angry Birds movie, video games and licensed merchandise.

"Someone's eventually going to create a Japanese comic-book font. Since we've created more comic fonts than anyone, I think we can do it the best," says Roshell. "Plus, it's just fun. The Japanese writing system is beautiful. Each character is like a little story unto itself. I've really enjoyed learning about the character shapes and how they fit together. I'm really looking forward to seeing this font come to completion."

Comicroft's Japanese font Kickstarter launches on Saturday, November 19th at [www.kickstarter.com](http://www.kickstarter.com)

**ABOUT COMICRAFT:** Comicroft is a comic-book lettering and graphic design studio based in Southern California. Founded in 1992, they have lettered thousands of comic books for publishers large and small, including Marvel, DC, Image, Dark Horse, Disney and Nickelodeon. Recipients of every prominent comic-industry award, their commercially available fonts are coveted by ad agencies, comic-book publishers and design nerds the world over.

Learn more about them at [www.comicroft.com](http://www.comicroft.com)

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