

For Immediate Release

May 5, 2010

Contact: Jason Milch
312-846-9647
jmilch@jaffepr.com

Pirate Website www.htmlcomics.com Shut Down by Coordinated Efforts of Department of Justice, FBI, Katten and Consortium of Comic Publishers

LOS ANGELES – Comic book pirating website www.htmlcomics.com has been shut down and all of its servers confiscated, following an FBI search based on a warrant alleging criminal copyright infringement. The FBI investigation was performed in coordination with the U.S. Department of Justice, a consortium of comic publishers and their legal counsel, a team of **Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP** attorneys specializing in the areas of intellectual property, publishing and comics, as well as local counsel in Miami.

Prior to the combined efforts of the consortium and the authorities, Htmlcomics was believed to have been the largest, best-known and most easily accessible website of its kind, producing rampant copyright infringement on a daily basis and depriving artists and publishers of hard-earned and much-needed revenue. By April 2010, the website claimed to have an average of 1.6 million visits per day and more than 6,630,021 pages of comic books offered for unrestricted viewing. Ridding the Internet of such a large source of pirated content is a major victory for the comic industry and the publishing industry in general.

Htmlcomics creator Gregory Hart, 47, acquired pirated copies of more than 5,700 series of comics spanning every major comic publisher in the United States, and made them available for public viewing on his site. The comics could be viewed from cover to cover and page by page and the infringing copies were reproduced on Hart's servers and publicly displayed without authorization. Titles available included *Spider-Man*, *Superman*, *Batman*, *The Simpsons*, *Futurama*, *Avengers*, *Incredible Hulk*, *Wolverine*, *Dilbert*, *Peanuts*, *Catwoman*, *Flash*, *Green Lantern*, *Wonder Woman*, *Hellboy*, *Star Wars*, *300*, *Predator*, *The Mask*, *Iron Man* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, among thousands of others.

The FBI's Tampa Field Office headed the investigation leading to the warrant. The consortium of publishers cooperating with law enforcement include Marvel Comics, DC Comics, Dark Horse Comics, Bongo Comics, Archie Comics, Conan Properties Int'l LLC, Mirage Studios Inc., and United Media.

Katten has one of the nation's premier, full-service entertainment and media practices, providing comprehensive domestic and international representation in the entertainment industry. The firm's entertainment and media attorneys consider themselves partners with clients from concept to completion. When litigation becomes necessary, the practice represents its clients aggressively and effectively, in matters involving intellectual property issues, contractual and business tort disputes and

May 5, 2010
Page 2

distribution rights issues, among others. Katten also provides representation to entrepreneurs in business and personal matters. The firm's entertainment attorneys pride themselves on providing cutting-edge, creative solutions to complicated problems.

Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP is a full-service law firm with more than 600 attorneys in locations across the United States and an affiliate in London. The firm's business-savvy professionals provide clients in numerous industries with sophisticated, high-value legal services, with a focus on corporate, financial services, litigation, real estate, commercial finance, intellectual property and trusts and estates. Among our clients are a wide range of public and private companies, including a third of the Fortune 100, as well as a number of government and nonprofit organizations and individuals. For additional information, visit www.kattenlaw.com.

###