

Discovering the Essence of JAPANESE FASHION & LIFESTYLE BRANDS

JAPAN'S VIBRANT FASHION AND BEAUTY INDUSTRY HAS SPAWNED A COLLECTION OF PREMIUM "HIDDEN GEM" BRANDS THAT PERFECTLY EMBODY SUSTAINABLE LIVING AND MINIMALIST AESTHETICS.

In a world increasingly interconnected, Japan's rich tapestry of consumer lifestyle brands, fashion retailers, and cosmetic products stands as a testament to the nation's commitment to excellence and craftsmanship. Now, more than ever, is the perfect moment to immerse oneself in the allure of Japanese style. With the Japanese yen at a historic low against the U.S. dollar and tourism to Japan soaring to unprecedented levels, millions of visitors have the opportunity to explore the unique offerings of this vibrant nation.

Japan's influence on global fashion and beauty is undeniable, with its brands embodying a perfect fusion of tradition and innovation. From premium labels to avant-garde designers, Japanese fashion transcends boundaries, redefining norms and pushing the boundaries of creativity. Similarly, Japanese cosmetics (known affectionately as 'J-beauty') embrace simplicity and efficacy, offering products that resonate with today's consumers' desire for natural ingredients and minimalist aesthetics.

Today, the country is home to several hidden gems in this space, each weaving a narrative of tradition, innovation, and meticulous attention to detail.

YOSHIDA & CO.: BAGS OF QUALITY

Blending tradition with innovation to produce premium bags that stand the test of time, Yoshida & Co.'s commitment to excellence is evident in every stitch of their signature bags. Company president Yukihiro Yoshida emphasizes the brand's dedication to sustainability, stating: "Our foundational philosophy revolves around preserving craftsmanship. This commitment has guided our collaborations, fostering partnerships that enable us to consistently produce high-quality bags."

Reflecting on the esteemed status of craftsmen in Italy, Mr. Yoshida aspires to

cultivate a similar appreciation for Porter Yoshida bags globally, noting that craftsmen are highly regarded members of society in Italy. "We aim to raise awareness of our brand globally and have our craftsmen recognized for their exceptional skills," he says. In a groundbreaking initiative for sustainability, Yoshida recently collaborated with Toray to develop 100% plant-derived nylon for its signature series, Tanker. "This environmentally conscious material presents a more eco-friendly alternative without compromising quality," Mr. Yoshida explains.

MOTHERHOUSE: MINIMALISM MEETS FUNCTIONALITY

MOTHERHOUSE embodies minimalism, color, and functionality in its high-quality leather bags and accessories. With a focus on collaboration with developing nations, the brand showcases the craftsmanship of local artisans while incorporating Japanese design aesthetics. Chief designer and founder Eriko Yamaguchi highlights the brand's philosophy, stating: "MOTHERHOUSE's products are a real collaboration between my Japanese influence and the work manufactured by the people of developing nations."

MASH GROUP: REDEFINING LUXURY AND SUSTAINABILITY

MASH GROUP is a multifaceted conglomerate that encompasses fashion, beauty, sports, food, and more, with a range of brands under its portfolio that include FRAY I.D, AOURE, gelato pique, Celvoke, and SNIDEL. Through its ethos of 'Wellness Design', the company pioneers sustainable practices and consumer engagement strategies. President of MASH Holdings Hiroyuki Kondo reflects on the company's strategic shifts, stating: "Approaching younger generations is a vital part of our strategy. Leveraging social media and digital marketing, the company curates exclusive experiences, limited edition releases, and strategic collaborations to resonate with modern consumers."



Must^a

OUR selection

1. Sora 2-way shoulder bag by Motherhouse.
2. A twin room by Seibu Prince Hotels Worldwide.
3. AOURE brand outfit by MASH GROUP.
4. ISEHAN'S MN eye shadow.
5. BCL COMPANY's ROAIÍv aromas.
6. Chemicos Creations' liquid eyeliner.

TUTUANNA: WHERE QUALITY MEETS COMFORT

Tutuanna specializes in high-quality women's underwear and socks, combining current trends with feminine touches to create a sense of *kawaii* (cuteness) and value for money. President Takaatsu Ueda emphasizes the importance of customer feedback in product development. "The company develops its products with a strong focus on customer needs, asking consumers what they require from underwear to start the design process," he says.

ISEHAN: SIMPLE, EFFECTIVE COSMETICS

In the realm of cosmetics, Japan leads the way with its commitment to innovation, effectiveness, and simplicity. Japanese beauty brands offer high-value products that resonate with today's consumers, emphasizing natural ingredients and minimalist aesthetics.

ISEHAN epitomizes the Japanese beauty philosophy, offering products that deliver potent effectiveness with minimal ingredients. Haruko Sawada, President of ISEHAN, explains: "We aim to provide products that offer high added value: fewer ingredients, but each with potent effectiveness. This approach not only aligns with the trend towards more natural-looking and minimalist cosmetics but also offers practical benefits, allowing consumers to save both time and money."

LOFT: JAPAN'S HOTTEST RETAIL EXPERIENCE

Amid Japan's bustling retail scene, stores like LOFT stand out for their immersive experiences and curated product offerings. With a focus on lifestyle trends and personalized interactions, LOFT captivates customers, inviting them on a journey of discovery.

LOFT revolutionizes the concept of a specialty store, curating a collection of products that mirror evolving lifestyles and trends. President Koki Ando shares his vision, stating: "LOFT is more than a store; it's a journey through the trends of the times, a place where customers come not only with a purpose but with the hope of discovering something special."

Japan's renowned consumer lifestyle brands, fashion houses, and cosmetic products embody the nation's spirit of excellence, innovation, and tradition. Whether exploring the streets of Tokyo or browsing online, there has never been a better time to discover the essence of Japanese lifestyle.



MASH GROUP: Revolutionizing Fashion, Beauty, and Lifestyle

MASH GROUP develops fashion, beauty, and lifestyle businesses under the slogan "Wellness Design." Through sustainability, digital transformation, and global expansion, the company aims to break new ground, create high-impact experiences, and open up the future of the global fashion industry.

In the vibrant tapestry of Japan's fashion and lifestyle landscape, one company stands out for its innovation, vision, and commitment to holistic wellbeing: MASH GROUP. Established in 1998 as a graphic design firm, MASH GROUP swiftly evolved into a multifaceted conglomerate, encompassing fashion (which started with SNIDEL and gelato pique), beauty, sports, food, and more. Through a lens of "Wellness Design," the company has redefined luxury rooted in everyday life, sustainability, and consumer engagement, earning global recognition for its transformative approach.



FRAY I.D

Navigating the Changing Tides: Adapting to New Consumer Paradigms

As the global fashion and apparel market surges towards a projected \$2 trillion industry, MASH GROUP remains at the forefront of the Japanese fashion industry. Hiroyuki Kondo, President of MASH Holdings,



AOURE



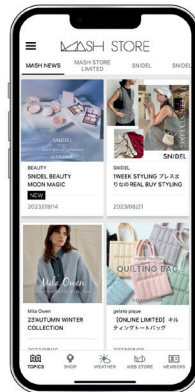
"We continue to take on the challenge of gradually changing the world's senses to create a better future."

Hiroyuki Kondo,
President,
MASH Holdings Co., Ltd.

reflects on the company's strategic shifts to cater to the dynamic demands of younger generations like millennials and Gen Z. "Approaching these younger generations is a vital part of our strategy," says Mr. Kondo. Leveraging social media and digital marketing, the company curates exclusive experiences, limited products, and strategic collaborations to resonate with modern consumers.

And in an era where sustainability is at the forefront of the corporate social responsibility and ESG agenda, MASH GROUP has also made substantial strides towards environmental stewardship. "Reducing our CO₂ emissions is paramount," affirms Mr. Kondo, highlighting the company's initiatives to minimize its environmental footprint. From sourcing sustainable materials used in their fashion stores, to implementing eco-friendly practices in production and distribution, MASH GROUP's sustainability ethos permeates every facet of its operations. The company's commitment to longevity and responsible consumption extends to product design,

fostering a culture of reuse and conscious consumerism.



MASH STORE

Digital Transformation: Seamlessly Blending Physical and Virtual Realms

The digital revolution has reshaped consumer behaviors, prompting MASH GROUP to embrace a seamless blend of physical and virtual experiences. The launch of the MASH STORE app, Instagram Live sessions with designers, press representatives, and

personalized customer interactions exemplify the company's digital prowess. Despite the e-commerce surge, MASH GROUP strategically expands its physical footprint, recognizing the enduring allure of immersive retail experiences. Mr. Kondo elaborates: "We want to create a personalized experience similar to what one could experience in a real store using digital means to reach out to the younger generations."

MASH GROUP's corporate philosophy is "Giving shape to our ideas and bringing people happiness." The group slogan is "Wellness Design," which goes along with the core of the phi-

losophy. The company's evolution from graphic design to fashion, beauty, and lifestyle reflects a holistic approach to well-being. Mr. Kondo emphasizes: "Our interpretation of 'Wellness Design' is creating smiles across all generations." This commitment manifests itself in product innovations, such as transitioning to eco-friendly materials and promoting durable, long-lasting designs that resonate with conscious consumers.

Expanding Horizons: A Global Vision

MASH GROUP's global footprint continues to expand, fueled by strategic partnerships and a forward-thinking vision. The recent collaboration with Bain Capital underscores the company's growth trajectory, propelling international expansions and innovative ventures. With eyes set on diverse markets, including North America, Asia, and beyond, MASH GROUP envisions a future where its transformative brands redefine luxury in everyday life, sustainability, and lifestyle across borders.

From AOURE's functional men's apparel and FRAY I.D's fashion-forward office wear, to emmi, which has been encouraging women to use sneakers instead of heels for commuting, MASH GROUP's diverse portfolio mirrors its commitment to inclusivity and innovation. Mr. Kondo elaborates on the



Celvoke

strategic expansion into kids and babywear and organic cosmetics, each venture underpinned by a relentless pursuit of redefining norms and enhancing lifestyles. "We are creating new trends and opening new pathways in changing the standard of Japanese fashion," says Mr. Kondo, highlighting the company's pioneering spirit.

Innovative Partnerships and Collaborations

MASH GROUP's success is intricately woven with its ability to forge innovative partnerships and collaborations. The company's licensing business plays a pivotal role in this realm, acting as a distributor for foreign brands in Japan, while



MUCHA

also launching its own brands and planning and developing Japan-originated designs. "Our licensing business is a unique model that bridges international brands with Japanese consumers," explains Mr. Kondo.

The strategic collaborations extend beyond traditional boundaries, encompassing diverse industries and creative endeavors. MASH GROUP's foray into the beauty segment with original organic cosmetics brands like Celvoko and SNIDEL BEAUTY has been met with acclaim, catering to the growing demand for natural and sustainable beauty solutions. The company's ventures in kids and babywear also demonstrate a keen understanding of evolving consumer needs, offering stylish yet functional options for young families.

Empowering Consumer Experiences

At the heart of MASH GROUP's success lies its unwavering focus on empowering consumer experiences. The company's retail initiatives, both online and offline, are designed to create immersive and

personalized journeys for customers. "We want every interaction with MASH GROUP's brands to be memorable and impactful," states Mr. Kondo.

Innovative retail concepts, such as the SESAME STREET MARKET, the world's only official Sesame Street store that combines merchandise sales, a café, and workshops, exemplify MASH GROUP's commitment to fostering meaningful connections with its audience. The company's loyalty programs and exclusive events further enhance the value proposition, cultivating a loyal customer base that spans generations. "Our goal is to enrich lives through our products and experiences," affirms Mr. Kondo, encapsulating MASH GROUP's customer-centric ethos.

The Road Ahead: Pioneering New Norms

As MASH GROUP embarks on the road ahead, Mr. Kondo reflects on the company's journey, a testament to resilience, innovation, and customer-centric excellence. With a keen eye on evolving consumer landscapes and global trends, MASH GROUP stands poised to lead, inspire, and transform the future of fashion, wellness, and lifestyle design.

In recent years, MASH GROUP has accelerated its international investments, strategically expanding its presence in key markets. The company's subsidiaries in Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Taiwan serve as pivotal hubs for its global operations. The launch of gelato pique USA marked a significant mile-



gelato pique



SNIDEL



emmi



Sustainable Design Store (SNIDEL)

stone, showcasing MASH GROUP's luxury loungewear in the North American market. Additionally, the company's licensing business has flourished, expanding Mash Group in a unique way, bringing renowned foreign brands like SESAME STREET MARKET and Barbour into the Japanese market.

The partnership with Bain Capital further amplified MASH GROUP's international reach and synergies. "Working together with Bain Capital was a strategic decision to bolster our global initiatives," remarks Mr. Kondo. The collaboration has facilitated access to specialized resources, scouting networks, and strategic expertise, propelling MASH GROUP towards new horizons of success.

Looking ahead, MASH GROUP remains committed to its three core strategies for overseas expansion. The first strategy focuses on exporting Japanese brands to international markets, leveraging the allure of Japanese craftsmanship and innovation. The second strategy entails

importing overseas brands into Japan, capitalizing on the country's vibrant consumer base and diverse market preferences. Lastly, the company is keen on creating new brands centered around its Chinese production base, tapping into emerging opportunities in Asia and beyond.

As MASH GROUP continues to innovate, expand, and redefine industry norms, its legacy of excellence and innovation remains a beacon of inspiration. The company's journey from a graphic design firm to a leading player in the Japanese fashion market and then to a global company is a testament to resilience, vision, and adaptability. "We are not just shaping trends; we are shaping lifestyles," concludes Mr. Kondo, underscoring MASH GROUP's pivotal role in shaping the future of fashion, wellness, and lifestyle worldwide.



KUIPO



www.kuipo.co.jp

Fashion Must Be Fun

THE KUIPO WAY

IN AN INCREASINGLY FAST-MOVING INDUSTRY, THE ECO-FRIENDLY BAG MANUFACTURER PRIDES ITSELF ON ITS RESILIENT PRODUCTION BASE AND ABILITY TO REACT FIRST.

Founded in 1965, Japanese bag manufacturer Kuipo first entered into licensing agreements with major companies such as Benetton and Moschino in the 1980s and is today regarded as a global industry player.

Known for its flexibility and ability to adapt, Kuipo's private label 'genten' has always been ahead of the curve when it comes to promoting sustainability, with its low-impact vegetable-tanned leather bag being a case in point.

Besides a renewed focus on luxury goods, other recent changes have seen the company taking advantage of the growth in e-commerce.

As President Satoshi Okada explains: "We are trying to integrate a combination of both physical stores and our e-commerce platform together in order to provide customers with a unique experience."

Above all, however, Mr. Okada is keen that the industry should retain its sense of fun.



Satoshi Okada
PRESIDENT



Seibu Prince Hotels' Century-Old Legacy

At the heart of global hospitality, Seibu Prince Hotels Worldwide redefines Japan's allure, blending luxury with cultural heritage.



Beautiful powder snow at Furano Ski Resort

Seibu Prince Hotels Worldwide, under the visionary leadership of Yoshiki Kaneda, has established itself as a frontrunner in Japanese hospitality. With a history spanning over a century, the company's dedication to embodying *omotenashi* (distinct Japanese hospitality) is evident across its vast network, from Sapporo to Okinawa, as well as iconic cities around the world like New York and London.

Japan's rich history, vibrant culture, and breathtaking landscapes

"Our strategy centers on promoting our group both domestically and internationally by emphasizing our ability to provide guests with genuine Japanese hospitality."

Yoshiki Kaneda, President, Seibu Prince Hotels Worldwide Inc.



continue to enchant visitors globally. Seibu Prince Hotels exemplifies these qualities, offering an immersive experience of the essence of Japan. Mr. Kaneda's insight into Japan's unique position in the tourism sector, despite challenges like COVID-19, underscores its resilience and the company's foresight in capitalizing on the country's tourism revival.

With ambitious governmental targets to boost visitor numbers,

Seibu Prince Hotels is crucial in promoting tourism, thereby contributing to local economies. The company's strategy includes enhancing attractions like the beautiful ski resorts with powder snow in Furano, and the hot springs in Hakone, offering unique experiences beyond the urban allure of Tokyo and Osaka.

Distinguishing itself amongst the competition, Seibu Prince Hotels boasts a unique portfolio spanning luxury



Onsen with view from Ryuguden (Ryokan style) of Mt. Fuji in Hakone



Grand Prince Hotel Hiroshima, main venue for G7 Summit

to specialized accommodations, underscored by expertise in MICE operations. Hosting part of the G7 Summit highlights its capability and reputation on the international stage.

Looking forward, Seibu Prince Hotels is not just expanding its luxury brand, The Prince Akatoki, internationally but also innovating with digital technologies to enhance guest experiences. This blend of traditional hospitality and modern innovation positions Seibu Prince Hotels as a beacon of Japanese culture and luxury hospitality worldwide.

SEIBU PRINCE
HOTELS & RESORTS

www.seibuprince.com



LOFT: THE EPICENTER OF *Japan's Trendsetting Lifestyle*

KOKI ANDO, THE PRESIDENT OF JAPAN'S PREMIER LIFESTYLE AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS SPECIALTY STORE, LOFT, SHARES INSIGHTS ON HOW THE COMPANY CAPTIVATES CONSUMERS WITH ITS UNIQUE BLEND OF PRODUCTS, AIMING TO ENRICH LIVES AND SET TRENDS IN THE RETAIL LANDSCAPE BOTH DOMESTICALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.



"We aim to be a store where adventures await, offering unique gifts and personal shopping experiences."

Koki Ando
PRESIDENT

Amid Japan's bustling retail scene, LOFT stands as a beacon for shoppers seeking an immersive experience in trendsetting household and lifestyle goods. With its roots dating back to 1987, LOFT has revolutionized the concept of a specialty store, growing to 161 branches nationwide. As Koki Ando, president of the retail chain, shares, "LOFT is more than a store; it's a journey through the trends of the times, a place where customers come not only with a purpose but with the hope of discovering something special."

LOFT's innovative approach, focusing on an edited assortment of products that mirror evolving lifestyles and trends, has resonated with a wide audience. The company's philosophy, "Showcase of the Times," aims to present a curated collection of items that not only fulfill needs but also inspire new ways of living. For example, the company is working to create a new business model in collaboration with manufacturers and IP rights holders such as Japanese musicians, and manga, anime, and video game creators. This ethos has propelled LOFT into the hearts of consumers, offering an experience that extends beyond mere shopping.

In an age where digital interaction is paramount, LOFT's strategies, LOFT WAY and LOFT NEXT, emphasize the importance of connecting with customers both in-store and online. "Our goal is to enhance the joys and solve the problems in our customers' daily lives through our products and services," explains Mr. Ando. The LOFT app and social media platforms serve as crucial channels for sharing information and engaging with consumers, ensuring a seamless and enriching shopping experience.

A testament to LOFT's success and appeal is its expansion beyond Japan, with a strategic focus on East Asia, especially mainland China, and the establishment of franchise stores in Bangkok, Thailand. Mr. Ando is optimistic about the future: "We are exploring new markets, balancing between directly managed and franchise stores, to bring the LOFT experience to a global audience."

LOFT's unique selling proposition lies in its ability to create an entertaining shopping environment, one that invites exploration and discovery. "We aim to be a store that is strong in personal gifts, targeting women and the younger generation," Mr. Ando remarks. This differentiation strategy has enabled LOFT to carve out a niche in Japan's competitive retail market.

As LOFT continues to grow, it will continue to adhere to its purpose of creating new value in lifestyle through the power of "Zakka," curating everyday lifestyle goods that complement contemporary living. Mr. Ando adds: "LOFT aims to be a century-old company that realizes our vision of being the No. 1 corporation producing 'Zakka' culture."



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Yukihiro Yoshida
PRESIDENT, YOSHIDA & CO.



Crafting Timeless Quality WITH PORTER BAGS

THE LEGACY OF PORTER BAGS BLENDS TRADITION WITH INNOVATION, ENRICHING LIVES THROUGH HIGH-QUALITY CRAFTSMANSHIP WITH A COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY.

Since its inception, Porter Yoshida has stood as a beacon of craftsmanship, blending tradition with innovation to produce high-quality bags that stand the test of time. Company president Yukihiro Yoshida shares his insights into the brand's philosophy, partnerships, and commitment to sustainability.

"Our foundational philosophy revolves around preserving craftsmanship," Mr. Yoshida says. "This commitment has guided our collaborations in production, distribution, marketing, and fostering partnerships with various other parties that enable us to consistently produce and sell high-quality bags."

The company's daily interactions with craftsmen are not solely driven by a focus on maximizing business or increasing sales. Instead, passion lies in the creation of high-quality, unique, and exclusive bags that no other brand can match. Along with its craftsman partners, Porter Yoshida finds satisfaction in producing products that users can enjoy for an extended period. This philosophy has been the cornerstone of its approach since the beginning and is a shared ethos among its manufacturing partners.

"We recognize that we cannot accomplish everything independently, so our success is intrinsically tied to our partners," adds Mr. Yoshida. "The strength of our partnerships goes beyond local knowledge, expertise, or reputation. What unites all our partners – whether in manufacturing, sales, or logistics – is a shared passion for Porter Yoshida's bags. They are driven by a genuine love for our products such as PORTER and a desire to contribute to the creation of quality bags that stand the test of time."

"Our primary focus is centered on crafting high-quality bags that resonate with people and become cherished items in their lives."

ALL NEW TANKER
— Everything has changed, and nothing has changed —

"TANKER" was born in 1983.
The timeless materials and appearance are the precious heritage of YOSHIDA & Co. What should we do to ensure that TANKER continues to be TANKER in the future?
The answer is "ALL NEW TANKER".

NEW TANKER will be made of 100% plant-derived nylon.
We have developed an innovative yarn together with Toray Industries, Inc. and succeeded in mass-producing it for the first time in the world.

This is the challenge of "Made in Japan" for the future.

YOSHIDA & Co.



Moreover, the company offers repair services, and it's worth noting that the same craftsmen responsible for crafting its bags also handle repairs. This hands-on involvement in repairs allows them to identify areas for potential improvement and refinement.

Central to Porter Yoshida's success are its partnerships, driven by a shared passion for the brand's products, with the president believing that the strength comes from an expectation that the partners bring a similar level of passion and commitment. There is also an emphasis on the importance of direct experience in conveying the quality of the company's products.

"Allowing people to experience the difference for themselves is key," Mr. Yoshida states. "Our craftsmen continuously strive for excellence, ensuring our products maintain their quality and improve with time."

In a new and ground-breaking initiative, Porter Yoshida collaborated with Toray Industries, Inc. to develop 100% plant-derived nylon made from 60% castor oil and 40% corn for its signature series, Tanker, which is the first in the world ever to be successfully mass-produced.

"This environmentally conscious material presents a more eco-friendly alternative without compromising quality," Mr. Yoshida explains.

Despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Porter Yoshida has remained committed to delivering exceptional service, diversifying customer transactions across both offline and online channels, with a goal of fostering lasting relationships.

When it comes to the prized Tanker series, it is particularly significant for the president, given that they share the same year of birth, and he believes that a key mission of the brand is to connect emotionally.

"I vividly recall buying a Tanker bag for a trip. It has stayed with me, evoking countless memories, and I hope our customers experience the same, cherishing our bags as lifelong companions."

Through its blend of tradition, innovation and new sustainability, Porter Yoshida continues to preserve Japanese craftsmanship, enriching the lives of customers worldwide.





MOTHERHOUSE: HIGH-QUALITY PRODUCTS CRAFTED WITH “TRUE COLLABORATION”

MOTHERHOUSE CREATES HIGH-QUALITY LEATHER PRODUCTS WITH A UNIQUE COMBINATION OF JAPANESE DESIGN SENSIBILITY, MATERIALS UNIQUE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND THE HANDIWORK OF SKILLED CRAFTSMEN. LOVED BY FANS WORLDWIDE, MOTHERHOUSE CONTINUES TO SHOWCASE THE LIMITLESS POTENTIAL OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THROUGH BEAUTIFUL ARTISANAL PRODUCTS.



Eriko Yamaguchi
CHIEF DESIGNER & FOUNDER



Ms. Yamaguchi works with local craftsmen to create products at the same table

MOTHERHOUSE

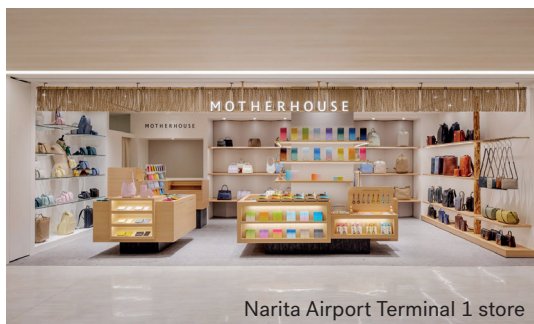


Go to MOTHERHOUSE website



Find details of above products

Japanese bag and fashion brand MOTHERHOUSE manufactures leather products in partnership with developing countries. Eriko Yamaguchi, chief designer and founder, personally visits these countries to discover materials that they can proudly showcase to the world. While creating unique designs, she works with local craftsmen to produce high-quality products at brand-owned and managed factories. Ms. Yamaguchi emphasizes that MOTHERHOUSE’s products are “a true collaboration” between Japan and developing countries through craftsmanship and manufacturing.



Narita Airport Terminal 1 store

What first changed Ms. Yamaguchi’s life and kick-started her founding of MOTHERHOUSE was a comment from a Bengali classmate in graduate school: “What we need are jobs, not aid.” To transform reality in developing countries where jobs are scarce even after graduation, she started a business to create a place where local people can work, utilizing their talent and vision while taking advantage of the country’s best indigenous assets. The company’s first product was a bag made from Bengal leather and high-quality jute (a natural material from Bangladesh). Today, the company manufactures more than 13,000 bags monthly, including one of its top sellers, the Kazematou Backpack.

Ms. Yamaguchi emphasizes that MOTHERHOUSE products incorporate three unique features of Japanese design: minimalism; colors of the seasons and nature; and “You-no-bi” (the beauty of use). For example, MOTHERHOUSE’s 2-way bags are simple, beautiful, and practical, being able to instantly transform from a formal shoulder bag into a backpack.

Today, MOTHERHOUSE operates in various countries such as Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Nepal. In 2022, Ms. Yamaguchi launched ERIKO YAMAGUCHI, an apparel brand that uses materials from these Asian countries, such as khadi, a traditional Indian hand-spun textile. “There is a prejudice in the world that developing countries are poor, so they can only produce low-quality things. I want to prove them wrong,” Ms. Yamaguchi says. As the next step, she plans to expand MOTHERHOUSE into the United States.

QUALITY UNDERWEAR AND SOCKS

Focused on Customer Needs

CONTENT BY W



TUTUANNA'S STYLISH UNDERWEAR AND SOCKS ARE CREATED FOR WOMEN TO FEEL POSITIVE ABOUT THEIR BODIES.

Underwear is an area where quality, comfort, and style must come together perfectly for consumers to be happy with a product. Japan's Tutuanna specializes in creating high-quality women's underwear and socks in a variety of designs, from basic to contemporary, at reasonable prices.

The company develops its products with a strong focus on customer needs, asking consumers what they require from underwear to start the design process.

Tutuanna has approximately 260 stores, reflecting customers' desire to feel the texture of underwear before purchasing.

As company president Takaatsu Ueda says: "Humans cannot perceive texture over the internet." In addition, the company's seasonal and trend-conscious products are created to adapt to customers' changing needs.

Tutuanna's leading Bra of Destiny line combines current trends with feminine touches to create a sense of *kawaii* (cuteness) and value for money. This combination of quality and pricing has enabled

Tutuanna to expand internationally, and it now has a retail presence in China. The company is set for further development in South Korea and Southeast

Asian countries, where it aims to work with like-minded partners with a knowledge of the local market.

tutuanna®



"In our manufacturing philosophy, the key is that good products must come first."

Takaatsu Ueda
PRESIDENT



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CHEMICOS CREATIONS

Cosmetics Companies' Perfect Partner

FOUNDED IN 1996, THE TOKYO-BASED MANUFACTURER HAS ESTABLISHED A WELL-EARNED REPUTATION AS A TRUSTED OEM SUPPLIER OF WORLD-CLASS EYELINERS.

A Japanese company approaching its 30th anniversary, Chemicos Creations crafts pen-type liquid eyeliners of the highest quality, specializing as an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) for major cosmetics brands.

A customer-centric approach is at the heart of everything Chemicos does – as is the technical expertise passed down the firm from the top. "Before I started this company, I worked for a raw material company," explains CEO Katsutaka Hattori. "So I know how to make good formulations from chemical compounds."

Such is Chemicos' technical prowess, indeed, that it boasts several patents – both in the composition of the ink itself, and the design of its eyeliners' easy-application pens. "No matter how great our formula is, it's nothing without the right container to allow users to put on the eyeliner," Mr. Hattori says.

Chemicos' leading-edge creations are typical of the pioneering spirit that underpins manufacturing in Japan, the CEO adds: "We're often the first to adopt technologies or techniques. Being first in line: that sums up Japanese companies."

The firm's commitment to delivering safe, dependable products is likewise characteristic of the country's manufacturers. "Rigorous testing and strict safety standards are the keys to gaining customers' trust," Mr. Hattori stresses.

Leveraging such strengths, Chemicos is targeting overseas growth – particularly in the U.S. Ultimately, Mr. Hattori declares, the company aims to become a dominant global force in cosmetics: "In the same way that Intel is synonymous with CPU chips, we'd like to be associated with eyeliners."



BCL COMPANY: Leading the Charge in Japanese Cosmetics Innovation

A Japanese cosmetics leader, BCL COMPANY innovates rapidly to stay ahead, targeting global expansion and tapping into emerging beauty trends.

Within the global cosmetics industry, Japanese beauty products have long been revered for their safety, reliability, and exceptional quality. Among the frontrunners in this domain is BCL COMPANY, a pioneering firm that has consistently pushed the boundaries of innovation while staying true to its core values.

With the emergence of competition from K-beauty, the Japanese cosmetics industry has faced new challenges; a shift that Kazushige Omura, Company Executive President of BCL COMPANY, acknowledges.

"The biggest rival to J-beauty is K-beauty, which has been gaining momentum due to the increased popularity of Korean culture, such as K-dramas and K-pop," he says. Despite this, many Japanese firms, including BCL COMPANY, have maintained their leadership positions, leveraging their strengths to navigate the evolving landscape.

One of the key strengths of J-beauty lies in its meticulous attention to detail and commitment to quality. Mr. Omura emphasizes this, noting that while Japanese companies ensure safety and quality, they sometimes adopt a cautious approach to product development. However, BCL COMPANY has been quick to adapt, embracing a more assertive development pace to meet the demands of younger consumers.

"Our group company, PLAZASTYLE COMPANY, predominantly attracts the 19-21 age group, where Korean cosmetics



Saborino facial sheet mask

enjoy immense popularity. In response to this trend and to compete effectively, we are expediting our development process," says Mr. Omura. This strategic move has allowed BCL COMPANY to reduce product development timelines significantly, from over a year to just three months.

Demographic shifts in Japan, including a declining population and an aging society, have presented both challenges and opportunities for BCL COMPANY. Mr. Omura reflects on this, stating: "Our target audience ranges from millennials to people in their 50s, with the majority of our customer base falling within the age range of 30 and 40." To counter the impact of Japan's demographic changes, BCL COMPANY has prioritized expanding overseas, recognizing the direct correlation between domestic success and strong international performance.

Mr. Omura elaborates on their global expansion strategy, mentioning: "Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, half of our international sales originated from China.

However, we are now strategically diversifying our sales channels to include South America and the EU, while focusing on Southeast Asia." This strategic approach aligns with market research collaborations, such as the one with MITSUI & CO., LTD, which indicated strong performance for BCL COMPANY's flagship product, Saborino, paving the way for potential entry into the Brazilian market.

The rise of J-beauty over K-beauty in certain regions, particularly in Eastern Europe, has been a notable trend. Mr. Omura attributes this to consumer preferences for long-term usage and consistent results. "K-beauty initially pioneered the market for Asian cosmetics, characterized by its dynamic and rapidly evolving pop culture. Now that consumer resistance to Asian cosmetics has waned, many industry insiders believe that the next trend is J-beauty," he says. This shift in consumer behavior has created a significant opportunity for BCL COMPANY to capitalize on emerging markets.



"We are now strategically diversifying our sales channels to include South America and the EU, while focusing on Southeast Asia."

Kazushige Omura,
Company Executive President,
BCL COMPANY

BCL

Beauty Creative Life

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As part of its product lineup, BCL COMPANY offers a diverse range of brands catering to different needs and preferences. Mr. Omura highlights Saborino and ROAÍv as flagship offerings poised for international success. Saborino's unique morning facial sheet mask has disrupted traditional beauty routines, while ROAÍv's genderless cosmetic line appeals to a wide audience.

Looking ahead, the firm's vision extends beyond cosmetics. Mr. Omura envisions doubling profits and expanding product offerings to include food, aesthetic electronics, beverages, and more. With a focus on innovation and quality, BCL COMPANY continues to redefine the beauty industry and set new standards for excellence.



ISEHAN: 200 Years of Craftsmanship and Pioneering Spirit



"Our craftsmanship spirit has been passed down the generations and is still alive in us today."

Haruko Sawada,
President, ISEHAN Co., Ltd.

A leading cosmetics company that is preparing to celebrate its bicentenary in 2025, ISEHAN started out as a manufacturer and seller of Komachi-beni – a traditional Japanese rouge made from Beni, a red pigment extracted from safflower petals. "200 years later, we are the only company in the world where craftsmen still handcraft Komachi-beni using the same methods employed during the Edo period between the 17th and 19th centuries," says the firm's president, Haruko Sawada.



"Komachibenii", Japanese traditional rouge

It is this commitment to expert craftsmanship, allied with the innovative mindset of a company that isn't afraid to take on new challenges, that has seen ISEHAN thrive over

A Japanese cosmetics company that allies its pioneering spirit with a 200-year-long tradition of expert craftsmanship, ISEHAN has set its sights on global expansion.

the past two centuries. From its beginnings as a rouge maker, the Tokyo-based firm has blossomed into one of Japan's major general beauty companies, manufacturing a wide range of world-class cosmetics products.



ISEHAN conducts R&D at its own laboratory

Now, with the company's KISSME brand at the forefront of the drive, ISEHAN is working to bolster its global presence – prompted, in no small part, by a domestic market that is shrinking amid Japanese demographic decline. "This is a grave issue experienced across all industries – and our strategy is to expand," Ms. Sawada explains. "We see regions like the United States and ASEAN as holding the greatest potential; we then plan on expanding beyond. With our current plans, we are expanding to 15 countries and areas, as of April 2024."



KISSME Mommy uses food-derived ingredients

Whether in Japan or abroad, customers can expect Japa-

nese cosmetics characterized by three key features. "Beauty is defined by quality and functionality," Ms. Sawada declares. "And on top of these two elements, safety is also fundamental. Within our product portfolio, for example, we have our KISSME Mommy skincare brand, which can be used with very small infants. I feel that not only the quality but also the safety we provide distinguishes us from our rivals."

As ISEHAN works to grow its sales beyond Japan's borders, it does so in the knowledge that its expertly made KISSME products, especially Heroinemake, are already earning rave reviews in foreign markets. "Overseas, the

brand has been widely recognized for its quality, particularly where the climate is hot," Ms. Sawada notes. "People appreciate the fact that our offerings are sweat and sebum resistant. This type of functionality has been well received by international clients, which is why we have put a particular emphasis on our KISSME brand."

Hand in hand with its long-standing commitment to quality, functionality and safety, ISEHAN has put its focus on "playful" branding. For example, it has been utilizing anime-like characters such as "Himeko", an original character of its Heroinemake brand, thus creating packaging that leaves a strong impression on Asian customers.

With global trends in makeup now shifting towards more natural-looking colors, hues, and lines, ISEHAN'S mascaras are the ideal option. "Our mascaras are long-lasting and create a delicate lash and I think

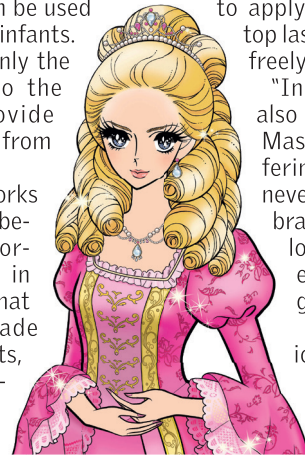
this lends itself well to a more natural look that people are looking for these days," says Ms. Sawada. "To cater to this natural trend, we have our KISSME Heroinemake Micro Mascara, which can be applied to the bottom eyelashes easily with a fine brush. I believe that the ability to apply both bottom and top lashes allows users to freely enjoy this makeup."

"In March 2024, we also launched Real Lash Mascara in Japan, offering a natural finish never seen before in the brand, which makes it look as if your own eyelashes have grown longer."

ISEHAN's cosmetics reflect the company's commitment to cutting-edge research and development. For example, this pioneering spirit

has spawned the firm's HEAVY ROTATION eyebrow mascara – a ground-breaking product that has been a hit domestically and is central to ISEHAN's designs on international growth. "Our company is actually responsible for creating the culture around coloring with eyebrow mascara," Ms. Sawada says. "We have the biggest market share in this segment in Japan, and this is one of our key products that we export overseas."

Ms. Sawada concludes: "On the occasion of our 200th anniversary, we would like to go forward with a playful spirit that excites users, in addition to our strengths in quality, functionality and safety, so that we can further enhance our presence in the global market in the future."



"Himeko", the original character of Heroinemake



KISSME

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