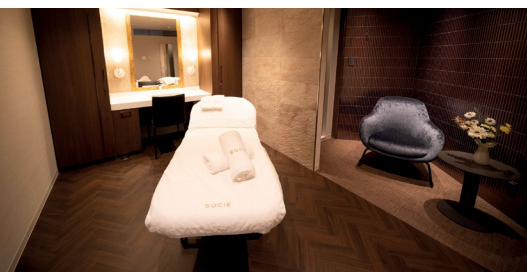


JAPAN'S ARTFUL APPROACH TO LIFESTYLE INNOVATION

THE HIDDEN GEMS OF JAPAN ARE REDEFINING MODERN LIFESTYLE WITH UNPARALLELED ATTENTION TO DETAIL AND ARTISTRY. *By Bernard Thompson, Daniel de Bomford and Megah Bintang*



From high-tech skin care rooted in dermatological science to century-old traditions reimagined for modern wellness, Japan continues to redefine what it means to merge beauty, innovation and sustainability. Across industries as diverse as biotech, lighting, fashion and eyewear, companies are elevating everyday life through craftsmanship, smart technology and personalized experiences. Whether it's pioneering algae-based solutions or crafting precision skin care with data-driven tools, these brands reflect a uniquely Japanese philosophy, where form meets function, and tradition fuels the future.

Revolutionizing Beauty and Skincare

Japan's beauty and skin care industry continues to lead in high-quality, innovative products tailored to individual needs. As beauty evolves, these brands focus on blending tradition with the modern to meet societal needs. Consider KOSÉ, a leader in the cosmetics industry, which combines traditional craftsmanship with cutting-edge innovation. President and CEO Kazutoshi Kobayashi champions a "3G" strategy that is global, genderless and generationless, stating, "We are not confining our products to only certain genders," shaping inclusive beauty standards for all.

Similarly, IPSA, a pioneer in Japan's beauty and skin care industry, places trust at the core of its approach. By prioritizing personalized skin care that nurtures both skin and emotions, IPSA embraces the concept of "Fullness of skin and mind." As President Jun Oda emphasizes, "Our greatest strength lies in the deep bond of trust we have with our customers," creating a foundation for enduring relationships and personalized beauty experiences.

DHC, a leader in Japan's beauty and health sectors, exemplifies the seamless integration of skin care and wellness. With science-backed formulations, the company combines beauty products with dietary supplements to promote long-term health. President Miyazaki Midori speaks to this, "For us, beauty is not just external, it is also internal," emphasizing DHC's holistic approach to well-being.

Pioneering Health and Wellness Innovation

While beauty and skin care dominate the market, a growing emphasis on health and wellness is shaping new trends. This shift has led to the adoption of sustainable solutions and ancient traditions to create products that promote well-being on both physical and emotional levels. A testament to this ethos is Euglena, a biotech company that brings its expertise in microalgae to skin care. Founder Mituru Izumo highlights the "unsaturated fatty acids, such as DHA and EPA," which the company harnesses alongside 59 nutrients, including vitamins, minerals and amino acids, offering a sustainable and science-driven approach to skin wellness.

Similarly, Nippon Kodo, a leader in the Japanese incense industry, blends centuries of tradition with modern innovation, sharing the cultural and spiritual essence of incense with the world. President Masayoshi Konaka emphasizes, "We also only make high-end incense during the winter, not the summer, so we are very particular about quality," reflecting Nippon Kodo's drive to maintain artisanal craftsmanship while promoting health, wellness and cultural outreach in an increasingly globalized world.

In the same vein, SOCIÉ WORLD, a Japan-based beauty care company, blends advanced skin care with Japan's *omotenashi* philosophy to offer personalized treatments. Expanding globally, the company adapts its services to meet regional preferences. President Shinsuke Nagami says, "Our greatest strength lies in embodying the Japanese spirit of *omotenashi* and delivering exceptional aesthetic treatments," showcasing SOCIÉ WORLD's dedication to health and wellness innovation.

Design, Technology and Manufacturing Innovation

Alongside the wellness revolution, the design and manufacturing sectors in Japan are also pushing the standards ever higher. Innovations in lighting and eyewear demonstrate how cutting-edge technology and timeless craftsmanship are merging to create the next wave of consumer-focused solutions.

ODELIC, a leading Japanese lighting manufacturer, stands out for its in-house production and innovation. By combining advanced technology with smart designs, the company ensures superior quality and reliability. Showcasing ODELIC's customer-first philosophy, President Masato Ito states, "For us, sales and profits are merely the result, our true goal is to continuously deliver maximum value to our customers."

Similarly, Tanaka Foresight combines tradition, innovation and sustainability to craft premium Japanese eyewear. The company prioritizes material innovation, including biodegradable plastics, and integrates advanced technology into its manufacturing process. President Kodai Tanaka states, "It's this integrated approach that allows us to consistently and successfully bring new concepts to life."

Japan's Uniquely Integrated Future: Craftsmanship Meets Technology

Such innovation and craftsmanship continue to redefine industries, blending age-old traditions with modern technology. From personalized beauty to sustainable design, the nation's approach elevates everyday life, creating products that seamlessly merge function and form. This unique fusion is shaping a future where art meets practicality in every aspect of life.

INSIDE SOCIÉ WORLD'S GLOBAL AESTHETIC VISION

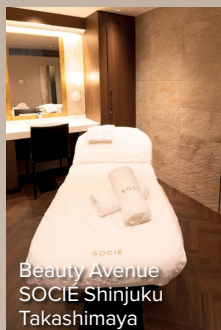
PROVIDING PERSONALIZED AESTHETIC TREATMENTS AND SERVICES IN JAPAN AND ABROAD.

By Daniel de Bomford, Cian O'Neill and Arthur Menkes

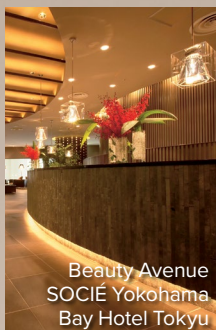
The skin is the largest organ of the human body—and one of the most delicate. Just as we consult ophthalmologists to protect our vision, maintaining the health and beauty of our skin requires expert care and guidance.

Enter SOCIÉ WORLD, a Japan-based beauty care company with a proven track record in the field. Through its network of aesthetic salons under the brand name “SOCIÉ,” the company offers an unparalleled blend of advanced skincare and the spirit of *omotenashi*—Japan’s unique philosophy of hospitality.

What sets SOCIÉ WORLD apart is its commitment to personalized service. Each treatment is tailored to the individual, using proprietary beauty care products developed to suit diverse skin types and lifestyles. From facials and body treat-



Beauty Avenue
SOCIÉ Shinjuku
Takashimaya



Beauty Avenue
SOCIÉ Yokohama
Bay Hotel Tokyu

ments that satisfy customers around the world,” says President Shinsuke Nagami.

SOCIÉ WORLD is also actively expanding its global footprint. After establishing a strong presence in Taiwan—where it developed operational expertise and a system for training Chinese-speaking staff—the company opened its first location in Vietnam. Its contribution to the local economy earned it recognition as an outstanding foreign direct investment (FDI) enterprise.

Domestically, the company is addressing Japan’s demographic challenges by focusing on increasing its foreign customer base. “We’re enhancing language support, especially in English and Chinese, to ensure that everyone can access high-quality services with ease,” Nagami explains.

Understanding regional preferences and cultural nuances is key to SOCIÉ WORLD’s strategy. “By adapting the intensity and style of our treatments to suit local tastes, we meet the expectations of each market while maintaining the high standards that define our brand,” he adds.

The rapid rise of e-commerce during the pandemic presented a new



“At SOCIÉ, we take pride in providing an exceptional level of service.”

Shinsuke Nagami
president, SOCIÉ WORLD Co., Ltd.



SOCIÉ Vietnam



SOCIÉ Taiwan

ments to slimming therapies and sports fitness treatments, the company provides a comprehensive range of services. These offerings are backed by the research capabilities of the TBC Group, ensuring that treatments are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all genders.

“Our greatest strength lies in embodying the Japanese spirit of *omotenashi* and delivering exceptional aesthetic treatments

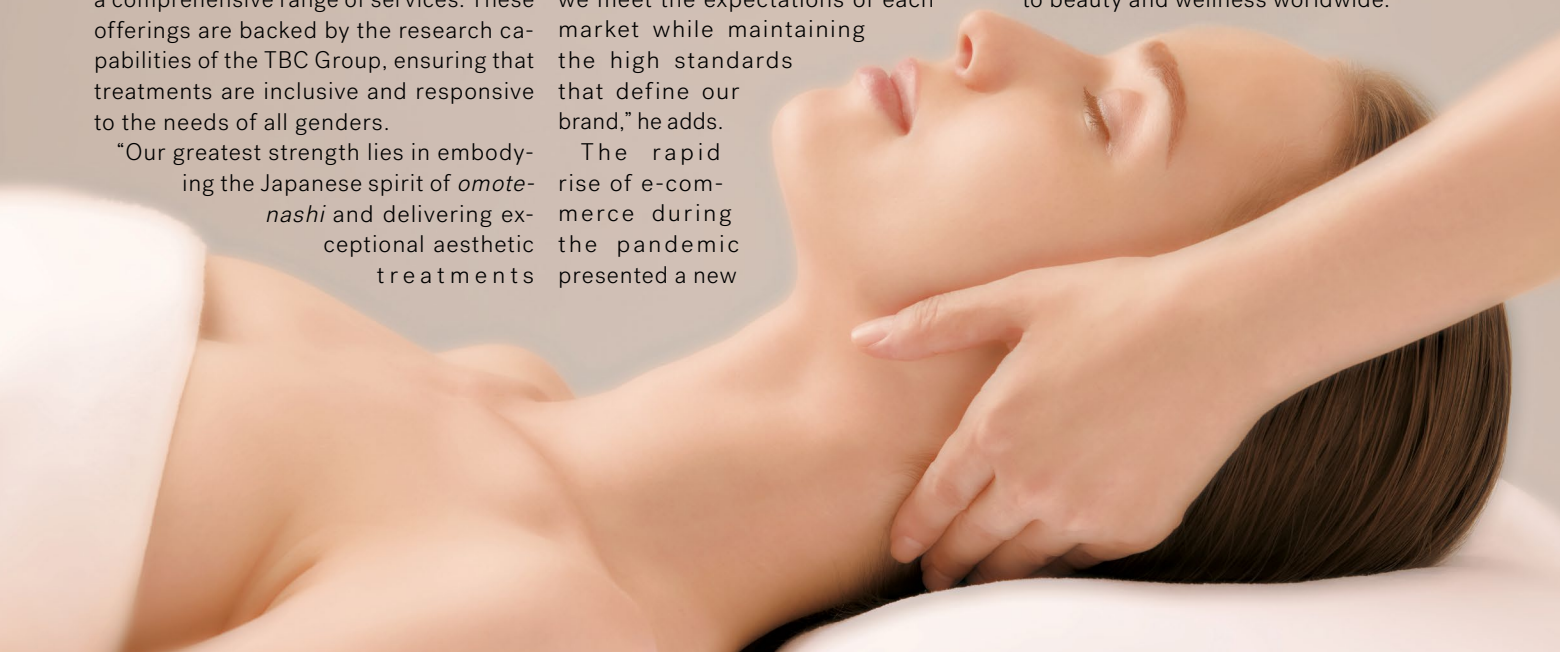
SOCIÉ



www.socie-world.co.jp/en/

challenge: how to replicate the intimacy of in-person care in a digital environment. In response, SOCIÉ WORLD is envisioning a system where expert staff provide online consultations.

By fusing tradition, technology and hospitality, SOCIÉ WORLD is rapidly emerging as a global leader in aesthetic care. With its personalized approach at the core, the company is solidifying its position as a flagship of J-Beauty—bringing new value to beauty and wellness worldwide.



ODELIC REVOLUTIONIZES LIGHTING WITH SMART DESIGNS AND CUSTOMER FOCUS

HELPING CUSTOMERS SEE THE LIGHT, WITH SMART DESIGNS PRODUCED ENTIRELY IN JAPAN. *By Daniel de Bomford, Bernard Thompson and Cian O'Neill*

Flicking a light switch is often cited as an example of faith. You trust that the room will be bathed in light, revealing the space and creating ambience. Light is such an integral part of modern life, yet few consider the manufacturer behind the bulb and the meticulous design and production required to make an aesthetically pleasing, reliable light. Masato Ito, president of ODELIC, recognizes that it can be challenging for customers to identify brands in such a vast market. “That’s why we are committed to innovation in manufacturing and technology—so we can continue delivering high-quality, affordable products that bring our customers the highest level of satisfaction,” he says.

ODELIC is one of Japan’s leading lighting manufacturers, whose success is owed in part to its drive to innovate through its in-house production facilities. Lighting requires small-lot multi-variety production with short lead times. Even with in-house facilities, many companies still need to outsource production to elsewhere Asia, unlike ODELIC, which keeps everything onshore. “We implement a unique production strategy by operating our own factories in Japan, ensuring superior quality control, flexibility and reliability,” the president explains.

Beyond its impressive production facilities, ODELIC offers products with advanced technology and outstanding designs—such as smart-home integration. Furthermore, its sales strategy is supported by 200 sales representatives, whom the president praises for the company’s meticulous and attentive service. “For us, sales and profits are merely the result—our true goal is to continuously deliver maximum value to our customers,” he says.

The company is targeting the mid-market, offering high-quality products at competitive pricing. Larger companies are expected to divest the shrinking Japanese market, while smaller players often rely on cheaper imported products. This positions ODELIC ideally to capitalize on that middle segment, with Ito foreseeing a market correction. To ensure that ODELIC remains competitive, the company is investing in strategies to mitigate the shrinking labor market, chiefly automation.

ODELIC’s diverse client base speaks to its success. When pressed about the strengths of the company’s products, Ito finds it difficult to point out any single thing; rather, he describes the company’s success as stemming from its holistic approach. Lighting requires comprehensive competencies across the manufacturing process, and the president succinctly summarizes it as “doing what others don’t.”

ODELIC is interested in taking this approach as it looks to break into the international market, though Ito is cautious. With big names delegating their production to local Chinese counterparts, there is too much competition in terms of price. Looking forward, Ito says the company’s goal is to reach ¥50 billion and provide more value to customers, and it doesn’t take much faith to believe it will succeed.



Masato Ito

President, ODELIC CO., LTD.



ODELIC

www.odelic.co.jp/index.html



DHC LEADS JAPAN'S BEAUTY-HEALTH REVOLUTION

DHC CONTINUES TO PROVE THAT HEALTH AND BEAUTY GO HAND IN HAND, WITH SCIENCE-BACKED FORMULATIONS. *By Daniel de Bomford and Cian O'Neill*



"For us, beauty is not just external—it is also internal."

Miyazaki Midori
president, DHC Co., Ltd.

Elevating Happiness Every Day

DHC

<https://top.dhc.co.jp/company/en>

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Beauty isn't just skin deep. What we put into our bodies is just as important as what we put onto our skin; a perfect complexion isn't born from skin creams alone. Few understand this truth as deeply as Miyazaki Midori, president of beauty and health titan DHC. As Midori describes, Japan's beauty industry has deep roots in the country's cultural emphasis on cleanliness and skin care. Around 30 years ago, DHC was among the first in the beauty industry to expand into dietary supplements, which, as Midori describes, was not widely understood at the time.

While DHC offers supplements like its Walking Power for individuals with preexisting health concerns, its broader strategy is to provide foundational support for basic health through products such as multi-vitamins. The company holds a top market share in this category, and its goal is to slow the pace of aging, allowing people to enjoy longer and more active lives. With approximately 450 of its 1,000 products being health foods, the company is driven by a commitment to meet the needs of its customers. It is sensitive to pricing to ensure accessibility without sacrificing quality or safety. "Everyone has different health concerns and skincare needs, and our philosophy has always been to offer something for everyone," Midori explains. To achieve its success, Midori says that it would not have been possible without the trust it has earned through consistent product quality and its reputation for safety.

DHC's product safety is backed by scientific research and evidence-based development. Whether natural or synthetic cosmetics, the company's products, Midori says, are formulated to the highest standards of safety and quality, guaranteed through scientific evidence. This is evidenced through the company's global expansion, where its R&D and Quality Assurance teams work closely with local authorities to obtain regulatory approval for each region.

Expanding its presence in overseas markets is a key part of its mid- to long-term strategy. To increase its brand awareness, the company has engaged in strategic branding efforts at Kansai and Haneda airports, and as a result, certain items, such as its medicated lipsticks, have become especially popular among inbound tourists. The



company also engages with customers when they return home: as Midori explains, "We have established local corporations in mainland China, the United States and Taiwan, allowing us to coordinate promotional efforts with our headquarters." Furthermore, it has partnerships with distributors in 10 additional countries. DHC analyzes each market individually and tailors its strategies to align with local preferences.

DHC's integration of science-backed beauty and health products continues to resonate worldwide, positioning the company as a global leader dedicated to wellness, quality and consumer trust across generations.



"I want Tanaka Foresight to be recognized as a go-to company in our industry."

Kodai Tanaka,
president,
Tanaka Foresight

Tanaka Foresight Eyes Global Growth

Blending tradition, innovation and sustainability, Tanaka Foresight crafts premium Japanese eyewear while expanding its global reach and redefining how we protect and express vision. *By Daniel de Bomford and Bernard Thompson*

Vision is inseparable from our experiences. Seeing the smile on a loved one's face or an unexpectedly beautiful vista on a morning stroll is defined by vision. For many, eyewear is a necessity for these moments—yet eyewear is also an expression of individual style and taste, while framing the visual world. It's in this space of functionality and form that Tanaka Foresight excels. The family-run business manufactures frames of unmatched craftsmanship that combine style, function and comfort. President Kodai Tanaka states that skilled craftsmen are essential, despite advancements in automation.

Japan's aging population has led to an increased demand for eyeglasses, presenting a significant growth opportunity for the company. "The senior generation in Japan tends to have greater financial stability and disposable income, and many are willing to invest in high-quality, domestically made eyewear," Tanaka says. However, it isn't just the elderly who require glasses. Data consistently shows that rising UV levels in the atmosphere and screen usage are contributing to eye strain and long-term vision damage. Tanaka believes it's critical to raise public awareness around the importance of eye protection. "Just as people brush their teeth daily to maintain oral health, we believe it's equally important to use sunglasses and eyeglasses to protect eye health on a daily basis," he says.

Working proactively, Tanaka Foresight prioritizes material innovation and comfort. The company has developed a biodegradable material that's gentle on human skin, initially for nose pads and eventually moving to full



frame development. Tanaka Foresight has been at the forefront of eyewear innovations for decades, having developed titanium pad arms in the 1980s. Tanaka explains that at the time, titanium was considered a magical metal due to its lightweight and hypoallergenic properties, but was notoriously difficult to work with. "Through continuous improvement and persistent trial and error, we gradually refined the process, elevated the product quality and overcame the technical barriers." The company has become adept at overcoming challenges through its planning division and product division, synergizing to develop innovative products. "It's this integrated approach that allows us to consistently and successfully bring new concepts to life and sustain our business over the long term," Tanaka explains.

Sustainable development also plays a vital role in the company's manufacturing and development processes. One of the company's key initiatives is to incorporate polylactic acid (PLA), a biodegradable plastic, into its products without compromising quality. PLAs are not toxic, skin safe, resistant to scratches, feature non-slip characteristics and release no CO₂ when incinerated. Despite its cost, Tanaka Foresight actively proposes PLA and other biodegradable materials to its OEM clients.

The bulk of Tanaka Foresight's business is predominantly B2B, through its brands like OTO and tsubura as well as OEM services. The company's brands are attracting international attention, particularly through its holistic service philosophy. "As a responsible eyeglass frame manufacturer, we are committed to delivering not just a product but a complete and high-quality service experience," Tanaka says. All of Tanaka Foresight's manufacturing is done in Japan, where over 50% of frame manufacturers use its parts, and it has built trust with internationally recognized brands.

Tanaka Foresight is leveraging this recognition to expand into new international markets, with a particular focus on Southeast Asia, where rising wages are fueling interest in its products. Tanaka says the company is seeking distributors who genuinely align with its values and appreciate its products and approach to development. "It's important to us that our partners share our commitment to quality and craftsmanship, as this alignment forms the foundation for a strong and lasting business relationship," he explains.

As it innovates with sustainable materials and expands globally, Tanaka Foresight continues to honor its legacy of precision and craftsmanship, redefining what eyewear means for future generations.

Nippon Kodo Brings Incense Global

With 450 years of history, Nippon Kodo Group is spreading Japanese incense culture throughout the world, with high-quality products and cultural workshops. *By Daniel de Bomford, Cian O'Neill and Paul Mannion*



"As a company, it's very important that we identify the issues facing society and find solutions for them."

Masayoshi Konaka,
president, Nippon Kodo
Holdings Corp.

Incense is deeply rooted in Japanese customs, entwined in spiritual and cultural traditions. The scent wafts through the air and envelops those within, evoking a stillness and peace. In prayer, it sanctifies the space and focuses the mind, while for a tea ceremony, it meanders through like a spirit, creating a harmonious atmosphere. For



Fragrant wood



Kodo (incense ceremony)



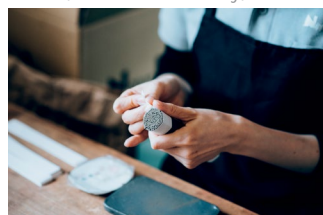
Furui (sifting ingredients)

450 years, Nippon Kodo Group has been supplying incense for spiritual products and home fragrances. President Masayoshi Konaka notes that the stick incense has traditionally been used for religious purposes, but as society ages, fewer people are practicing religion. The company has pivoted to non-religious, at-home and spiritual use of incense.

Incense remains deeply embedded in Japanese culture, and Konaka says that there are three core cultural elements or pillars: tea ceremony, flower arrangement and incense ceremony—or *kodo*. The company has offered incense ceremonies for foreigners in Japan, as well as in France, where they were very well received. With the company's mission to spread the Japanese scent culture globally, it established a nonprofit *kodo* association in France six years ago, hosting three-month *kodo* sessions. "This is a very popular program, so seats for each session sell out immediately," Konaka says. He describes the United States as a very attractive market, due to its growing population and pro-business attitudes. The company has operated a factory



Kodo (incense ceremony)



Maki (bundling incense sticks)

there and developed scents in the U.S.

Due to this international appeal, another key target for the company is inbound tourists, with the market expected to

quality," Konaka explains. The process is also heavily reliant on skilled craftspeople, and much of the process cannot be left to automation. The kneading process requires water, but excessive



CHIË Incense

Elemense
stone diffuser



continue growing as the country aims to welcome 60 million inbound visitors by 2030. "We have remodeled our stores in Ginza, Kyoto, Kamakura and other major cities, so we are trying to appeal to the inbound

tourists through these retail stores," Konaka states. The company hosts various workshops in Ginza and Kamakura of "The Koju," which he says he would like to make enjoyable for international visitors as well.

Japanese incense manufacturing is as much an art form as it is a production. Its complex, multilayered scents are created by combining powdered fragrant materials and liquid fragrances. Furthermore, the industry itself is extremely diverse as each company utilizes its own unique drying process. Drying the stick is a crucial factor in determining its quality, especially in Japan's four distinct seasons. "We also only make high-end incense during the winter, not the summer, so we are very particular about

amounts can degrade the quality and reduce productivity. Therefore, the craftsman is responsible for determining the correct ratio, which in turn affects the quality of the final product.



Kayuragi
incense

With centuries of tradition and a forward-thinking approach, Nippon Kodo Group is ensuring incense remains a living cultural expression. It bridges heritage and modernity through international outreach, artisanal quality and immersive workshops. The company's enduring mission is to share the serene essence of Japanese incense with the world.

 **NIPPON KODO**

www.nipponkodo.com

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