

Inside Korea's Rise in Industry, Lifestyle and Luxury Living

BY DANIEL DE BOMFORD

Custom solutions drive Korea's expanding role in global industry

Global industrial demands are shifting; the world requires more specialized infrastructure and custom systems, and a one-size-fits-all approach is no longer possible. Everything from the systems that govern day-to-day market transactions to aesthetic treatments demands reliability alongside the ability to meet their unique requirements. Korean companies are leveraging decades of internal expertise, the ability to collaborate and cutting-edge technology and working behind the scenes to ensure that tomorrow's world can be constructed today.

From its beginnings as a manufacturer of concrete pumps, construction machinery and special-purpose vehicles, KCP supplies custom solutions to infrastructure project challenges. CEO Young Gon Yun says that the environment and energy sectors are driving demand. "Our specialty vehicle business is aligned with these trends," he said, pointing to Multivac trucks that clean fine dust pollutants from urban areas. As AI technology develops, he said Korean companies must adapt to remain competitive.

Likewise, KOSCOM sits at the heart of Korea's capital markets, oper-

ating the IT infrastructure that keeps trading, market data and financial information systems running smoothly as markets become more digital by the day. "As technology increasingly determines how efficiently and reliably markets operate, choosing the right technology partner has become essential," said Chang Hyun Yun, chairman and CEO of KOSCOM. Behind the scenes, the company's systems help underpin the efficiency, stability and trust on which modern capital markets depend.

Pumtech Korea takes that philosophy and applies it to cosmetics packaging. President Dohoon Lee said that the nature of the cosmetics industry is that companies must work with a complex network of suppliers. Pumtech seeks to simplify that by becoming "a packaging partner that can provide a broad range of packaging types in an integrated way." That breadth of capability, Lee said, is what differentiates the company.

It's that same ability to innovate and adapt that differentiates Sewang Textile in the materials it uses. President Kook Lark Choi described that advantage as one of collaboration and integration. "Under a single brand or development initiative, material developers, engineers, and R&D teams work closely together," he said. Since the company's founding in 1978, it has accumulated experience across the R&D pipeline, from knitting to dyeing under a single integrated system. Korean companies back innovation with data, and as the Korean Wave continues to shape the beauty sector, it's data that builds trust. METABIOMED's 36 years of accumulated expertise in medical materials, which began in medical sutures and has expanded to skin fillers and medical devices, gives it the edge in the growing aesthetics market. "If the Korean Wave opened the door, what keeps it open is ultimately systems and data," CEO Jeesoo Oh said.

Korean brands turn cultural influence into everyday global demand
K-pop on the radio, K-dramas on screens, Korean sweets on shelves and Korean lifestyle dominating social media. The K-wave is an all-encompassing movement that is shaping global popular culture. It's a concerted effort by Korean brands that fuels the wave, providing new experiences to the adventurous and those looking to immerse themselves in daily Korean life.

Foodcore's snacks, such as its cream-filled buns, can be found on convenience store shelves at home and abroad. "Products such as our cream bread often serve as an entry point for people experiencing Korean desserts for the first time," CEO Junhoo Kim said. "Korean food is gradually evolving from something people try once out of curiosity into something that becomes part of the everyday lives of global consumers," he said.

Charmfre is positioning Korean chicken, from samgyetang to dak-gangjeong, as a category that can travel with the Korean Wave while meeting global expectations for quality, freshness and traceability. "For Korea, success is closely tied to exports," CEO Jaeyoon Kim said. "Without exports, there is very limited room for domestic industries to grow."

But it isn't just sweet treats gaining traction. Gim, Korean seaweed, is finding its way into the daily diets of people around the world. Among shifting global diets, Myoung-Choo Cho, president of Haenong, believes that plant-based Korean foods have strong potential. "Compared with products such as potato chips or popcorn, gim offers a lower-calorie profile and a healthier image, with the added benefit of being plant-based," he said.

Sangji's next phase will build on the same discipline, with a sharper focus on locations and lifestyles supported by long-term demand. CEO Young Shin Kim said the company is studying opportunities tied to senior living, pet ownership and high-net-worth households, as these groups shape Korea's future housing needs. It is also expanding within Seoul to districts such as Yongsan and Seongdong, as well as select regional hubs such as Haeundae in Busan. "We see this as an opportunity to take another major leap forward," Kim said. "Rather than remaining complacent with our current position, we are committed to continuous technological innovation and delivering high-quality results." For Sangji, that means using its experience to keep refining luxury homes for changing generations. Banyan Tree Club & Spa Seoul extends luxury lifestyle into hospitality, showing how Korea's cultural pull is translating into travel demand. "Korea offers a different kind of cultural experience," CEO Byeonyun Kim said. "It is close enough to feel accessible within East Asia, yet distinct enough to feel new." Its Namsan setting connects luxury, nature and Seoul's urban energy.



RENUVOL Premium PDO Booster



Foodcore Swelly Cream Bun



PUMTECH's Airless compact and auto dropper



KCP Concrete pump



Caelum Bamseom overlooking the Han River and Bamseom Island

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