

EURObiz JAPAN

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Straight to the heart -
Spread of AEDs, plus training, saves lives

All kinds of energy -
Q&A with Total's Luigi Colantuoni

Fans of all ages -
Character licensing thrives on novelty and nostalgia

Roundtable -
Grab the spotlight

Proof positive -
EU takes the lead in regulating health claims

03 2013



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Publisher **Vickie Paradise Green**
paradise@paradigm.co.jp

Editor-in-chief **David C Hulme**
hulme@paradigm.co.jp
Senior Editor **David Umeda**

Creative Director **Paddy O'Connor**
Designer/Illustrator **Iree Torii**

Advertising Sales
Hélène Jacquet Akagawa, Tapo J Mandal
advertising@paradigm.co.jp

Production and distribution
Yumi Mitsuyama Herman
eurobiz@paradigm.co.jp

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EUROBiZ Japan welcomes story ideas from readers and proposals from writers and photographers. Letters to the editor may be edited for length and style.

Contributors

Alena Eckelmann
meets European
characters that charm
Japanese consumers,
page 12



Alena underwent business training in Tokyo on the EU Executive Training Programme (ETP) and then began writing about business

Paul is a recent returnee to Japan, after having spent the past six years as a TV current-affairs reporter in Ireland. Before that, he worked as a copyeditor for the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* and as a business reporter for *The IHT/Asahi*. He now writes from Japan for the *Irish Independent* newspaper and reports for Irish radio and TV.

"Food industry margins are famously tight, so it's easy to see the attraction of functional foods, such as omega-3 eggs or xylitol chewing gum, which are significantly more profitable than mere vegetables or

and people in Japan. A business and market researcher by profession, she enjoys observation and investigation. Her articles appear in magazines and websites in Japan and Europe.

"Cute sells in Japan – that much I knew. European characters, while not an obvious export item, turn out to have carved a lucrative niche in the crowded Japanese licensing market. It was surprising to learn that adults, rather than children, are the main drivers of the market."

Paul Murphy looks
into the science of
functional foods,
page 24



milk. Still, it is striking that in just a few years many global brands have switched their new-product development energies towards functional foods."

Andrew Staples is
EUROBiZ Japan's
new Executive Notes
columnist. See page 17



Andrew is the incoming director of the Economist Corporate Network, Japan. As an associate professor at Doshisha Business School, Kyoto, he was instrumental in the launch and development of the university's

flagship Global MBA programme. His publications include *Responses to Regionalism in East Asia: Japanese Production Networks in the Automotive Sector*, and he recently contributed a chapter to a popular textbook on business and management in Asia designed for practitioners and MBA students.

Andrew has conducted field research and travelled extensively in Asia. His areas of expertise include Japan's political economy, the globalisation of Japanese companies and the foreign firm in Japan.



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Keep the spotlight on Japan

This month, we welcome Andrew Staples, the incoming director of the Economist Corporate Network Japan, as Executive Notes (page 17) columnist. Andrew is well qualified to leverage his new position to the advantage of our readers.

Based in Japan for a cumulative 12 years since the mid-1990s, he has conducted extensive field research in his particular areas of expertise. These areas include Japan's political economy, the globalisation of Japanese companies and the successes and failures of non-Japanese businesses in Japan. He holds a Master's degree in East Asian Business and a PhD in International Political Economy from The University of Sheffield's School of East Asian Studies.

Andrew's predecessor, Dan Slater, can be credited for coming up with the topic for this month's Roundtable (page 18). It was he who reported that Japan-based

CEOs deserve to get more attention and funding from their European headquarters, and listed a number of arguments they could be using in order to get it.

Japan, he stated, is more ethical and better run than China or India, and it is protected by a thick layer of financial muscle. Japan has low individual and corporate debt. Its companies have reoriented towards Asia "with amazing speed". In Slater's view, also, Japan itself is changing unbelievably fast, and it has technologies that many foreign companies need.

Roundtable participants, touched on several of these points and added some powerful new ones. In particular, global companies must be active in Japan because this is where Japanese companies – whether they are customers, suppliers or rivals – make decisions about their own global strategies. Japan is also a gigantic case

study for demographic change. The key for local CEOs is to keep educating headquarters. Many industries should be taking careful note of how Japanese markets and businesses adjust to the steadily increasing average age of the population. The same change has begun in many other markets.

Healthcare is one industry most obviously affected, as our story on the spread of automated external defibrillators (page 8) illustrates perfectly. Less obvious is the business of character licensing, yet writer Alena Eckelmann finds (page 12) that older people here form a major part of the customer base for European licensed products in Japan. [e](#)

David C Hulme
Editor-in-Chief

hulme@paradigm.co.jp



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Straight to the heart

Spread of AEDs, plus training, saves lives

Text DAVID C HULME

If you were to suffer a sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) at the office, how long would it take your colleagues to bring an automated external defibrillator (AED) and attempt to get your heart pumping again?

If they call 119 the average time in Japan for an ambulance to arrive is 8.1 minutes, with your chances of survival dropping as much as 10% per minute. The Japanese Circulation Society recommends that an AED be made available within five minutes of an attack.

"You might think this is a long time," says Shin Nishio, AED/ECS (emergency care and safety) business manager in the healthcare marketing division of Philips Electronics Japan. "But within that time someone must recognise the problem and fetch an AED."

Philips has set the example by installing AEDs on every floor of its buildings, and others are following suit, says Nishio.

A defibrillator works by delivering an electric shock to a heart that has stalled. The muscle is shuddering – in a state called 'ventricular fibrillation' – rather than pumping. The shock depolarises

a mass of heart muscle, enabling the rhythm controller of the heart to resume its normal function.

It is the "A" in AED that places the external defibrillator in a growth market. In 2003, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare announced that paramedics could use an AED without oversight by a doctor. The following year the ministry stated that use of an AED by non-medical individuals does not contravene the Medical Care Act, provided it is administered in conjunction with a call for an ambulance and the proper performing of CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) techniques.

Once the AED is turned on, it provides voice guidance every step of the way and repeated analyses of the heart rhythm. The device also will instruct rescuers when to use CPR and when to use the AED. If defibrillation is indicated, voice instructions are given, such as "Stay clear of patient"; "Deliver shock now"; and "Press the flashing orange button now".

Intense media coverage of several unfortunate heart-failure incidents has boosted public awareness and spurred

government action. In 2002, Prince Takamado, 48, collapsed due to ventricular fibrillation while playing squash, but an AED was not available.

"Sometimes a tragedy is a driving force," observes Nishio.

In 2011, former Japan national team footballer Naoki Matsuda, 34, died of a similar cause after collapsing during practice. No AED was available, even though the football governing body had recommended it.

"Hospitals and clinics installed AEDs from 2002 to 2005," says Nishio. "Then the government decided they should be in schools and on intercity trains." Now 90% of Japan's high schools have at least one AED, and the nationwide AED awareness rate is about 90%.

As awareness expands, so does the market for makers, including Netherlands-based Philips, Medtronic of the US and Japan's Nihon Kodan. Producers typically team up with distributors that have experience and reach in the medical industry, and strong ties with the construction or security sectors. Philips partners with Tokyo-based distributor Fukuda Denshi, which is best

known in Japan and overseas for its electrocardiograph systems. Fukuda Denshi, in turn, cooperates with security services group Alsok.

Akira Hayashida, senior manager of the Fukuda Denshi AED department, explains that his company had distribution contracts with Philips for other equipment even before the AED partnership was formed a decade ago.

"We had our own manual AED, but when Philips gave us the opportunity to be involved in importing the automated model, we chose not to develop our own," he says.

Naoki Hisano, senior manager of Fukuda Denshi's business planning department, adds: "We chose the Philips model because recovery rates were higher than for other models."

Statistics show that AED use could save many of the 50,000 or so people who die each year in Japan of SCA. According to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, when a non-medical individual becomes aware of someone having a heart attack and then uses an AED, the survival rate after one month is 45.1%. This is approximately four times the 10.3% recovery rate in non-AED-use cases.

Prof Hiroshi Noguchi, executive director of the Aichi Emergency Medical Information Center, is recognised as a leader in the field of emergency care in Japan, and has a lot of clout with the relevant government bodies when it comes to getting AEDs more widely distributed. He wants to see AEDs in every major commercial and residential building, in public phone boxes and public toilets, on every street corner and in every shopping mall, school, police box, railway station and subway station. He wants them in places where many people congregate and wherever people are exerting themselves, such as at sports clubs and during footraces.

"On average, one in 15,000 marathon runners suffers a heart attack while racing, and a Tokyo City marathon has had five or six SCA cases," he says. "There should be an AED every 500 metres along a marathon course."

Last year, Philips provided 119 AEDs, plus volunteers, for the Nagoya Women's Marathon in Aichi prefecture. This year,

when the race begins at 9:10 a.m. on 10 March, there will be 134 of the Philips Heartstart AEDs along the course, according to Nishio.

Also, AEDs incorporated into vending machines are gradually spreading, placed in corporate offices and factories.

Training in AED use is now quite widespread in Japan. CPR/AED training is a mandatory part of acquiring a driver's license. About one in three people here know how to use one. According to Noguchi, children should receive basic instruction twice during the six years of primary school and once during high school. Those levels have yet to be reached.

“THERE SHOULD BE
AN AED EVERY 500
METRES ALONG A
MARATHON COURSE”
Prof Hiroshi Noguchi

"But, even if I know how to use it, I have to know where it is," says Nishio, who recommends installation of AEDs in highly visible locations, such as the hallways by lifts and in school canteens, rather than in the principal's office or a back room of a medical centre.

"We are encouraging our customers to install signage to indicate the location of the AED," adds Nishio.

Kazuo Kawamura, deputy director of Fukuda Denshi's AED department, sees yet another market with huge potential.

"So far, AED distribution is concentrated in commercial and business districts," he says. "There should be more in residential areas as well."

Of the approximately 400,000 AED installations so far in Japan, 75% are classified as PADs (public access defibrillators), located in public spaces, schools and corporate facilities; 20% are in medical organisations; and the remaining 5% belong to fire departments.

Philips has provided nearly half the total so far. The message to buyers is that the purchase is part investment, part public service.

"This is not easy marketing," says Nishio, noting that the AED is "not a consumer product, but demands

consumer consciousness". The answer is a two-pronged approach to growing the market. One part involves relationships with non-profit organisations and key opinion leaders, such as Noguchi, who have the ear of government. The other part is activities that raise public awareness.

"There is still a lot of potential in the market," says Nishio. One of his top current priorities is wider coverage of sporting venues. "The professional level is already covered, but the amateur leagues are not."

Fukuda Denshi supports the nationwide PUSH Project of the Osaka Life Support Association. The project encourages people to remember three "pushes" after dialling 119: Push the chest, push the AED buttons, and push yourself.

First, pushing the chest is basic CPR – manually pumping the heart to keep blood flowing until an AED is available. Second is to push the AED buttons, carefully following the recorded voice instructions. Third is to push yourself, and not let shyness cost a life. The programme urges people to be brave and immediately overcome any reluctance to approach a person suffering from an SCA.

The government's role, Noguchi says, is in education as well as regulation.

"Instruction in AED use should be on the curriculum. Most schools have a single AED. There should be more," he says.

So far, he adds, the government merely recommends the installation of AEDs.

"We need AED installation to be mandatory, just as it is with fire protection equipment." 

Laerdal Medical Japan

Laerdal Medical Japan is a subsidiary of Laerdal Medical Norway, a world leader in resuscitation training solutions. The company stresses that CPR is important even in cases where an AED is available, and that everyone should receive training in CPR in order to help save lives.

Laerdal Medical Japan campaigns to increase the number of trained "bystanders", meaning anyone who may be present when someone suffers SCA.



“ MEETING
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CAPITAL INVESTMENT**
IN SECTORS
EXPECTED TO
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AND GAS ”

All kinds of energy

*David C Hulme talks to
Luigi Colantuoni*

Luigi Colantuoni, chief representative for North-East Asia for oil major Total and president of Total Trading International, Tokyo Branch, has been in Tokyo since 2009. He serves on the board of the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan and is active on the French Foreign Trade Committee in Japan. Colantuoni talks to EURObiz Japan about his views on Japan's energy future and his company's role as a supplier.

How do you think Japan's energy policy will develop from now on?

It is not the first time that Japan has to rethink its energy policy. Imports represent 96% of its energy supply. Since the oil shocks of the 1970s, high dependency on Middle East oil has forced both the government and the industrial sector to diversify supply. Nuclear energy and liquefied natural gas (LNG) were identified as the best fuels for diversity and security of the energy supply. Therefore, Japan has for many years been the world's largest LNG importer.

I believe that over the coming two years, some of the 48 nuclear reactors currently off-line will be restarted, while Japan pushes investment in renewable energies. However, as the restart of nuclear power plants will be gradual and the construction of significant power-generation capacity from renewable energies will take time, LNG will continue to fill the gap as a preferred fossil fuel, considering that the emissions from LNG combustion are only half those of coal and one-third less than oil per unit of power produced.

What are the main considerations that should drive that policy development here?

The same that all governments with no domestic sources of energy currently face: stability, security and sustainability. Delivering a stable and affordable energy supply is a key factor for the recovery of the economy and for its future growth. Securing this supply means both diversification of products [fossil and renewable] and diversification by source. A sustainable price, acceptable to both buyers and sellers, is necessary when developing new projects that are increasingly difficult from a technical viewpoint – and hence more expensive. In terms of sustainability, we should also never forget to consider any environmental impact.

From the viewpoint of Total, what are the trends in crude oil and LNG?

As a global energy company, we agree with the International Energy Agency, which forecasts that by 2030 the global demand for energy will still be fulfilled at 75% by fossil fuels (oil, gas and coal). We strongly believe that the use of natural gas will increase at a faster pace, mainly due to the need to reduce emissions.

How would you describe the role of Total in Japan's energy sector?

Total is an historic partner of the Japanese companies, locally and abroad. We have enhanced the partnerships built over the years by the three companies that became the Total Group in early 2000: Total, Elf Aquitaine and PetroFina. We started shipping crude oil from the Middle East to Japan in 1953, and our first liaison office opened in Tokyo in 1957. Today, our clients and partners in Japan include all the major electricity and gas companies, trading houses and oil companies.

What is the role of LNG for Japan and for Total?

LNG is a vital energy source for Japan. It is the world's largest consumer, accounting for roughly one-third of total world demand. Since March 2011, power companies have extensively used this fuel to fill the gap caused by the shutdown of nuclear power plants. Demand for LNG in Japan rose from 70 million tons in 2010 to 78.5 million tons in 2011. The estimate for 2012 is close to 87 million tons, meaning an increase of almost 25% in two years.

Total has a diversified market presence all along the LNG supply chain worldwide, with interests in major projects and a broad trading portfolio. The market share of our group in Japan is estimated at around 7%, which makes us one of the most relevant suppliers.

What is the policy of Total regarding renewable energies?

For Total, meeting energy demand in the decades ahead also means stepping up our capital investment in sectors expected to complement oil and gas, and promoting cost-effective, environmentally efficient alternatives.

Oil and gas will remain central to our operations for many years to come. Our involvement in renewable and other alternative energies that are greenhouse gas-neutral is not a recent development. Now we want to step up our efforts to promote the emergence of a more innovative, diversified, sustainable energy supply, to develop new solutions and bring them to maturity more quickly. This commitment is reflected in our R&D priorities and spending, which has been boosted, and in a stronger emphasis on partnerships leading to long-term investment projects. We are

leveraging recognised expertise to apply our financial, management and innovation capabilities, and our knowledge of global marketplaces to the booming solar — especially photovoltaic — energy field.

In which business areas do you expect to see the strongest growth for Total from now on?

Total has been active in solar energy for more than 25 years. In addition to the long-standing experience in traditional energy fields, our company has the capabilities and resources to become a key player in the solar energy industry. Of course, it will still take substantial human, financial and technological resources for the photovoltaic business to live up to its promise. Challenges include improving efficiency, cutting costs, and developing next-generation cells and systems to broaden the range of applications.

In June 2011, through a friendly takeover, Total acquired a 60% interest in the US company SunPower, a global leader in the PV solar energy market. The acquisition was a major milestone in the implementation of our solar energy strategy. SunPower designs, manufactures and installs the world's most reliable, efficient solar panels. Its products average 22.6% in efficiency compared to 16-17% for most of its competitors. Leveraging our financial strength and international reach, Total is making SunPower the cornerstone of our solar-energy activities.

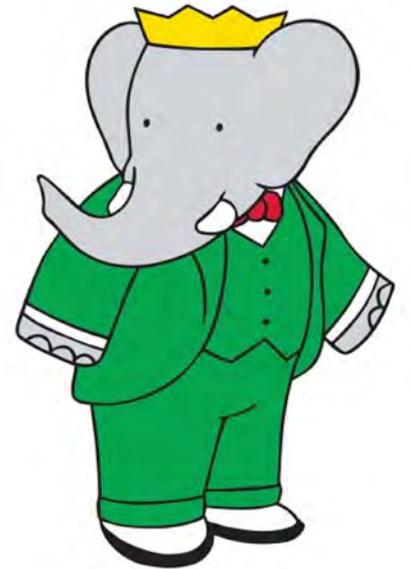
Is Japan a potential renewable-energy market for Total?

Certainly. Feed-in tariffs for electricity produced from renewable sources makes PV solar energy projects especially attractive for investors. The existing residential PV solar market will have renewed growth, while the industrial segment and large-scale solar plants will develop quickly.

Since 2010, SunPower has enjoyed a strong partnership with Toshiba, and in Japan has delivered more than 150 megawatts of its high-efficiency solar panels for the residential market. In December 2012, SunPower extended its partnership and, through 2018, will provide Toshiba with more than 100 megawatts of solar panels annually. SunPower also intends to supply panels for new plants built by the utilities. 



Fans of all ages



*Character licensing thrives on
novelty and nostalgia*

Text **ALENA ECKELMANN**





“HERITAGE, A STRONG STORYLINE AND A TRACK RECORD, IN ADDITION TO CUTENESS, ARE PREREQUISITES FOR THE SUCCESS OF CHARACTERS IN JAPAN”
Roger Berman

Merchandising of licensed goods is a thriving global industry, with fast growth in the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) in recent years, while mature markets, including the United States, the UK and Japan, have been slowing down.

The worldwide market for retail sales of licensed merchandising was worth \$150.8 billion in 2011, up 0.7% from 2009, according to *The Licensing Letter's International Licensing: A Status Report*, published by EPM Communications in December 2012. North America, the leading market in licensed goods, accounted for \$97.01 billion in sales, followed by Europe with \$24.44 billion, and Asia with \$17.37 billion. Japan, one of the world's oldest licensing markets, still led the Asian market with \$10.30 billion (57.3% of the total, but down from the 67% in 2009), followed by Greater China with \$5.43 billion (30.3%).

Licensing properties cover a range of fields, from entertainment/characters, trademarks/brands, fashion, sports, art, music to celebrities and toys/games. Advances in digital technology over the past few years have given birth to new properties to license, such as mobile apps and online virtual worlds.

In Japan, characters still rule the licensing landscape, with a 38.2% share

of all retail sales, followed by fashion with a share of 27.8%, and trademarks/brands with 10.0%, according to EPM Communications.

“From a future market perspective, there are fewer opportunities here for licensing that caters to children – simply because of the changing demographics. The declining birthrate and increase in the ageing population foster a demand for ‘adult properties,’” says Roger Berman, owner of Tokyo-based licensing consultancy ZenWorks.

Licensing in the field of home furnishings/housewares/domestics is doing well, and entirely new merchandising categories like electronic accessories and digital content have entered the licensing market.

“Zakka, small and stylish everyday items that young women buy for decorating their rooms, and eclectic fashion items for demonstrating an individualistic lifestyle are sought-after licensing products, many of which are sold at select shops now,” explains Berman.

“The boom in character apps, software and accessories for mobile phones is slowly coming to an end, but licensed characters in high fashion or in young ladies’ fashion are very trendy in Japan right now,” says David Buckley, president of Copyrights Asia, a licensing consultancy with over 50 years of experience in the Japanese market.

While all things kawaii seem to sell

well in Japan, there is more to it than a cute face and soft shape.

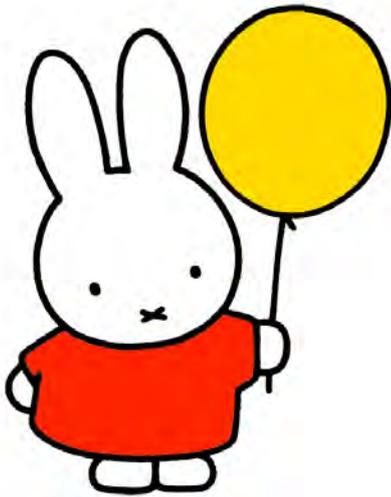
“Heritage, a strong storyline and a track record, in addition to cuteness,” are prerequisites for the success of characters in Japan,” says Berman of ZenWorks.

Buckley’s first question to a newcomer with a property to offer is whether anyone in Japan already knows the character and, if not, what support will be given to make it popular, such as a strong publishing programme, a marketing campaign or a series of events.

“If the look and the design are right, if there is a strategy for supporting licensees of the property, and a commitment to the Japanese market, then there is still a chance for brand-new properties to enter this mature market,” adds Buckley.

Copyrights Asia represents, among others, a number of European properties with a long history here, including British properties Peter Rabbit, Paddington Bear and Maisy; German property MAUS; and French property Babar.

Peter Rabbit celebrates its 110th anniversary in Japan this year. The character appeared here first in 1906 when a Japanese newspaper featured a translated version of a picture book soon after Beatrix Potter, creator of Peter Rabbit, had published her first children’s book in England in 1903. The first merchandising products entered Japan



during WWII, and localised manufacturing started in 1976.

MAUS, a matter-of-fact looking mouse character that teaches children how things work, has turned 40, and Japan remains the only non-German-speaking country where MAUS is successful.

"We are lucky with European properties. The European embassies and chambers of commerce in Japan tend to be very supportive. MAUS, for example, is invited to Oktoberfest and many other German embassy and chamber events," says Buckley.

Copyrights Asia is approached every week by licensors looking for an agent in Japan, but Buckley won't sign a contract unless there is an evident commitment to the Japanese market of at least 10 years. There also must be an understanding that this market is quite different from others.

"We can do a lot more adult products in Japan than we could in the United States or in England," says Buckley. Bedding, household items, jewellery, tableware and silverware are just a few of the product categories in which Japanese adults buy for themselves, rather than for their children or grandchildren. Most of the merchandising activity in Japan for mature properties such as Peter Rabbit and MAUS are now concentrated on adult consumers rather than children.

"Mature, classic characters will continue to grow and lead the market, as they are supported by three generations of fans," says Sachiko Imaizumi, managing director of Plus Licens & Design Tokyo, a licensing agent for Scandinavian characters, including Swedish Pippi Longstocking, and Lilla Anna & Laban. One that has enjoyed increased success recently is Little Pink



MIFFY © DICK BRUNA JAPAN

& Brokiga, a little girl character created by Stina Wirsen, one of Sweden's most renowned artists and illustrators.

"The character is not only cute, but also has a strong concept. The message is that 'everybody is different, having their own will and value', which is attractive to a lot of parents in Japan," says Imaizumi.

The character market took off in Japan in the 1970s and boomed in the 1980s and 1990s. People who were children then are now in their thirties and forties, so are attracted to merchandise produced through collaboration with fashion brands and famous artists.

"These collaborations enable us to expand from the inexpensive fancy gift market for kids and teenagers to high-end channels that attract trendsetters," adds Imaizumi.

"Japan is one of the most developed licensing markets in the world and one of the most competitive. More than 1,000 new characters appear and disappear every year," says Shogo Tetsuda, president of Dick Bruna Japan, the licensing agent for Miffy, the girl bunny-rabbit from the Netherlands. Miffy will celebrate its 60th anniversary in Japan in 2015. There are over 130 licensees, both for merchandising and for advertising, covering a wide range of industries.

Miffy is a good example of how long-term partnerships, investing in new sales channels, and taking advantage of digital technology pay off. In 2006, when the Lawson convenience store chain celebrated its 30th anniversary, it used a new slogan: "gentle to all families caring and bringing up their kids". Miffy was adopted as mascot of choice to represent the new concept. Since then, Lawson and Miffy have

been cooperating continuously on many in-store, online and mobile-phone promotions featuring the Dutch character.

Speciality shops and e-commerce are expanding the market, and retail channels are on the rise. Miffy merchandise is sold at Miffy Style by Kiddy Land stores in Tokyo and Osaka, and at Tokyo-based flower store and web shop Flower Miffy, as well as through the Dick Bruna web shops that include bruna x bruna and miffyhouse.

Thousands of Miffy products and promotions are released every year, and the Miffy market value exceeds ¥10 billion, according to Dick Bruna's Tetsuda.

Japan has become a litmus test for new products.

"If agents in Asia look at a new character, they want to know first whether it is big in Japan. They are not as interested how the character is doing in Europe or the US. If it is doing well in Japan, they take it on," says Buckley of Copyrights Asia.

The numbers show how far Japan is ahead in terms of the licensing market.

Per-capita retail sales of licensed merchandising here in 2011 was \$80.84, while for Greater China it was just \$3.95, according to EPM Communications. Figures for other Asian countries were even lower.

"The Japanese are very cosmopolitan in their purchasing behaviour. They like domestic brands, but also foreign brands. They like Japanese food and fashion, but also foreign ones. The same applies to foreign licensing properties. If you have a unique property and marketing support behind it, there is always room to enter the Japanese market," Buckley concludes. 



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Saving 10,000 – Winning a War on Suicide in Japan

13 February, Ireland House, Tokyo

Text **DAVID C HULME**

“Rene’s documentary is extraordinary. It has touched a nerve in all of us,” said Sophia University professor emeritus Fr Donal Doyle, S.J. “He has started from the grassroots level and introduced us to genuine people, from various walks of life in Japanese society, who are sincere human beings and who want to contribute towards reducing the number of suicides in Japan.”

Doyle’s comment followed a screening of “Saving 10,000 - Winning a War on Suicide in Japan”, a film created by Rene Duignan and Marc-Antoine Astier. Astier (his alter ego Boomachine) shot the video of Duignan’s interviews for the film and wrote the gentle, beautiful musical score as well.

“I interviewed 96 people. Ridiculously too many,” says Duignan, who is an economist for the Delegation of the European Union to Japan, a lecturer at Aoyama Gakuin University, and adjunct fellow at Temple University, Japan Campus.

“I spent a year studying the topic. It took a year to film. Then the editing took a year, getting 100 hours down to 52 minutes. Now I am halfway through a year or so of promoting the film,” he says.

At the outset, he had an economist’s approach to the issue of more than 30,000 suicides per year in Japan, correlating it with such factors as economic decline and unemployment trends.

“Looking back, I realise that was rubbish,” he says now. “The underlying factors are social and much more personal.”

The film deals with these factors in a chapter-by-chapter format that is effective and easy to follow. Often the theme is a taboo – untouched within the superficial, and even exploitative, coverage of suicide itself by Japan’s media.

“How can we get people to talk about the underlying problems – gambling, alcoholism, indebtedness, the sex industry, domestic violence?” Duignan pleads.

He points to Finland’s outstanding success in lowering its suicide rate by tackling alcoholism. Japan, on the other hand, appears to be in denial about any possible link.

“Another thing you never hear about is suicide by women, including the hidden alcoholics and victims of abuse, yet the suicide rate for Japanese women is sixth in the world, compared to 11th for men,” the filmmaker notes.

Duignan is currently sending free DVD copies in response to requests from experts, NGOs, local governments and universities across the nation, but soon the film will be even more accessible.

“I want to give it away online as soon as possible, because otherwise I can’t cope with the demand,” he says.

In fact, the film has gained traction with blinding speed. Yukio Saito, interviewed by Duignan as CEO of the Japanese



ERI KAGEYAMA

Federation of Inochi-no-denwa (Lifeline), publicly described the film as “exciting, poetic and attractive”. “Saving 10,000” then got the attention of a state minister and a vice-minister, who both requested DVDs. Duignan was subsequently invited to hold a screening, scheduled for 6 March, in the upper house of Parliament.

Separately from the film, but implicit in its content, he has 10 recommendations, including one for you.

- 1: To the media, with its “perverse love affair with suicide” – Stop spreading the suicide virus.
- 2: To the authorities – Ban suicide manuals, of which millions of copies have been sold. Countless websites deal in the same gruesome fare.
- 3: To life insurance companies – Stop paying out the life insurance claims of suicide victims when it is clear that the policy has been purchased for that purpose.
- 4: To mental health professionals – Less medication and more therapy.
- 5: To schools – Zero tolerance on bullying.
- 6: To office managers – Stop working people to death.
- 7: To Japanese society – Break down the taboos concerning suicide.
- 8: To hospitals – Help, in a comprehensive way, those who attempt suicide, since a large percentage of serious cases handled by hospital emergency rooms are failed suicide attempts and each suicide is preceded, on average, by about 10 attempts.
- 9: To anyone who cares about the high rates of suicide among the elderly – Put a lot more energy into depression-awareness campaigns.
- 10: To everyone – Take the time to listen.

“Loneliness kills,” states Duignan, who knows well that a single kind word can change the trajectory of a human life.

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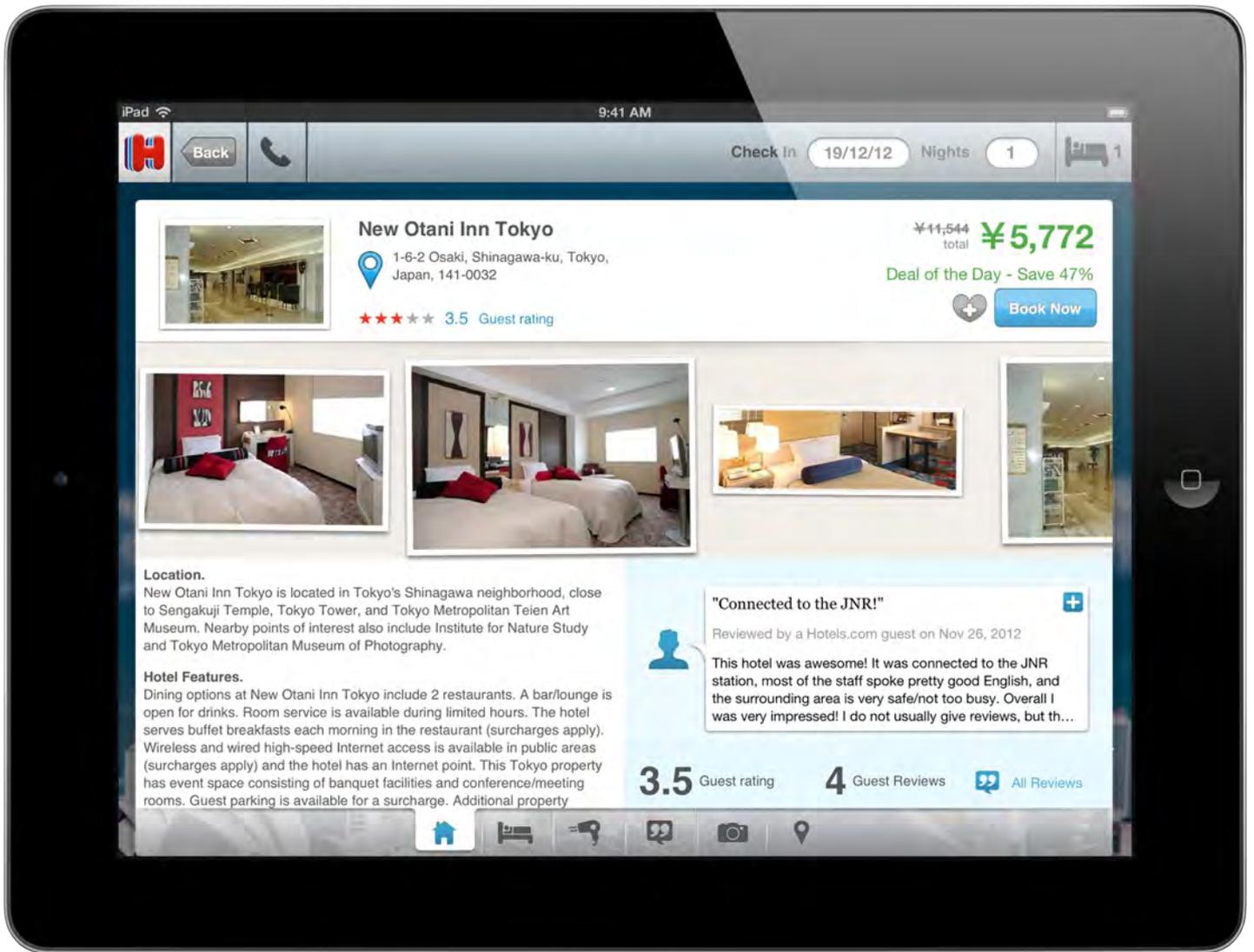
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FDI-led revitalisation

Quality means much more than quantity

Ten years ago this past January, the then-prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, unveiled a policy designed to double the cumulative amount of Japan's inward foreign direct investment (FDI) within five years. In 2006, this goal was redefined as an increase to 5% of GDP by 2010, but by 2011 inward FDI stood at only 3.9% (for reference, in 2011 the average figure in developed economies, according to the UN's World Investment Report, was 30.1%). Koizumi's policy was premised on the notion that FDI would revitalise the economy, yet with FDI inflow for 2010 and 2011 showing a *negative* trend, the likelihood of revitalisation through FDI is low, and probably always was.

I don't propose to explain here why Japan receives such relatively low levels of FDI – a proper examination would require an extended essay at least – but it is useful to consider the ideology behind Japan's FDI policy in the context of an economy that is still crying out for a dose of revitalisation. Was it ever the case that FDI would promote structural reform and thus revitalise the Japanese economy? Where did this thinking come from, and what should be informing policy today?

Starting in the mid-1990s, as the domestic economy stumbled and financial crisis loomed, a consensus began to emerge among policy makers and academics of a certain bent – as well as neo-liberal cheerleaders from the private sector – that FDI could, and should, be used as a tool to inject some oomph into the economy. FDI would, so the thinking went, bring fresh managerial concepts and methods, create jobs, force Japanese firms to focus on better rates of return and, in general,

introduce more competition to liven things up a bit.

While looking forward to a revitalised Japan, some of those behind this consensus were looking back to the UK experience of attracting Japanese FDI throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Back then, the Thatcher administration actively courted FDI as a way to revitalise depressed regions, notably in Wales, the Midlands and the North of England, where economies had been based on heavy industries such as coal mining, steel production and shipbuilding that had atrophied in the 1970s and 1980s due to global competition, mainly from East Asia. Nissan's auto plant in Sunderland, a former coal mining and shipbuilding region in the northeast of England, is regularly identified as the most productive plant in Europe and acts as a poster child for such FDI-led regeneration in the UK. The thinking was that if FDI could revitalise parts of the UK, and certain industrial sectors, then why not Japan?

Well, for one thing, Japan is unlikely to attract the kind of large-scale investments required in the mass-manufacturing sector that had typified Japanese FDI to the UK. The idiom "carrying coals to Newcastle" explains why. (Just up the road from Sunderland, Newcastle was once famous for exporting coal.) Not many firms have anything to teach the home of the Toyota Production System. Indeed, most foreign-affiliated firms in Japan tend to be in wholesale, retail and services, have less than 100 employees, and are clustered in the already humming economy found in and around Kanto (Tokyo, Kawasaki, Yokohama).

While many of these foreign-affiliated firms no doubt have some positive

“IF FDI COULD
REVITALISE PARTS OF
THE UK, THEN **WHY**
NOT JAPAN?”

effect on their customers and suppliers, it's a bit of a stretch to imagine that this would lead to the wholesale revitalisation of the Japanese economy. Yet, I would suggest all is not lost, and policy makers would be better advised to move away from headline-grabbing *quantitative* targets (percentages of GDP or billions of US dollars) and, instead, refocus on *quality*. A modest research lab chock full of PhD-holders and highly talented engineers may not add much to employment figures or FDI as a percentage of GDP, but it would have a deeper and more developmental impact on the economy as a whole.

As the yen weakens from its post-Lehman shock highs since 2008, Japan may reasonably expect to see an uptick in inward FDI – the yin to the yang of recent record highs of outbound FDI by Japanese firms. It is unlikely that FDI will ever play the part that Koizumi et al had written for it, but if policy is focused on attracting high-quality investment rather than simply investment per se, Japan will be better placed to benefit from all that the world has to offer. ☺

ANDREW STAPLES

Incoming director of the
Economist Corporate
Network, Japan





“ WE NEED TO **EDUCATE OUR STAFF**
ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE
COMPETITIVE ”

Danny Risberg, CEO,
Philips Electronics Japan



“ THE PROBLEM IS THAT
JAPAN DOES NOT ADVERTISE
ITSELF VERY WELL ”

Philippe Fauchet, President,
GlaxoSmithKline in Japan

Grab the spotlight

Moderator **DAVID C HULME**
Photos **BENJAMIN PARKS**

When comparisons are made between Japan and markets such as China, Japan is often described as more attractive in terms of business ethics, genuine financial muscle, low individual and corporate debt, cutting-edge technology. Yet a number of CEOs here report, informally, that the attention of their European headquarters tends to drift off to regions perceived as more exciting. We discuss the issue with Christian F Mancini, CEO, Savills Japan; Bernard Delmas, president, Nihon Michelin Tire; Philippe Fauchet, president, GlaxoSmithKline in Japan; and Danny Risberg, CEO, Philips Electronics Japan.



“ I AM **ALWAYS AMAZED** TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR TOP MANAGERS AFTER JUST A FEW DAYS IN JAPAN ”

**Bernard Delmas, President,
Nihon Michelin Tire**

EURObiz: How does the Japan-based CEO attract appropriate levels of attention and funding from headquarters in Europe?

Christian F Mancini: That is an enormous question. It would depend, for example, on whether you are in services or manufacturing, and whether your customers are consumers or professional investors. Japan is attractive for its stability and the ease with which investors can enter and exit the market. It has a robust and relatively impartial judicial system, and a very developed financial sector. As long as Japan is attractive to investors, it will remain attractive to us as a company.

It has never been much of a strain for me to go to London and get resources allocated to Japan. The stability and lack of excitement sells itself quite easily. I don't have to do much as its champion.

Philippe Fauchet: I agree. Predictability is a good thing. Cycles are quite long here, changes are done in an organised way, so it is possible for CEOs to predict the level of return on their investment. It is a society that values innovation and does not abruptly interrupt all your plans because of a change of government or something like that. We also recognise the innovation. This is a relatively profitable market in comparison to big emerging markets that receive attention due to a focus on the top line.

Bernard Delmas: Japan is important to Michelin for its size, and because in many respects Japanese carmakers lead the car industry. Also, market maturity is becoming very attractive for

“ YOU NEED TO WORK TO **GET PAST THE SENSATIONALISM** IN THE WESTERN MEDIA ABOUT JAPAN'S DEMISE ”

**Christian F Mancini, CEO,
Savills Japan**



us, because our customers will show us the direction of a mature market. If you are in the car industry, you must be in Japan.

The question is what kind of presence you want. Today, we also have to be close to the Japanese carmakers because decisions are made here about how they develop their global strategy. We need a strong technical presence. R&D has been the core of our effort in recent years.

Danny Risberg: To get attention and investment, you have to deliver in terms of performance and make it sustainable. This is a very sophisticated market, and it is such a homogenous market, so once you have figured out the key to your business and established your brand, it is very sustainable. Japan is a premium market for any company.

You have to educate your counterparts outside Japan, because they read about the negatives on Japan, and about how difficult it is. When you are

here, you see the positives, so you have to take the time to educate people about that. Then you have to deliver results. If you do that, getting attention is not difficult.

We also really need to educate our staff in Japan about what it means to be competitive, and to want to win at whatever the cost.

EURObiz: What's the process of education?

Mancini: There is a tendency to think of Asia as a large, homogenous, single market. You have to get people to see the distinctions. Then you sing about the relative merits. You need to work to get past the sensationalism in the Western media about Japan's demise, then present facts.

Delmas: There is much to do. We spend a lot of time explaining. Also, have top management come here. I am always amazed to see what happens to our top managers after just a few days in Japan. They shift their

“ WE CAN TRAIN PEOPLE AND GIVE THEM VARIOUS SKILLS. WE CAN INVEST IN YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE LEADERS ”

Philippe Fauchet

views. If you take them to the right places and introduce the right colleagues and customers, and share some key facts, you can help. It is up to you to organise those visits and make them valuable for the visitor.

Fauchet: You need performance to get attention. You need to demonstrate the potential. From there, in the pharmaceutical sector, there is no need to educate management, because Japan is the number-two market in the world. You have to be there. The problem is that Japan does not advertise itself very well. Politicians default. It is not an outgoing culture.

Risberg: For larger companies, there is a lot between the Japan-based CEO and the global CEO. For me, it is a whole chain of education. We have to show our counterparts that giant Japanese companies no longer control everything here. Today there are many, many successful foreign companies here. Some of our counterparts don't see that. Show them proof. Educate them on what other companies are achieving here.

Delmas: We should also be sending Japanese staff abroad, including senior people who have achieved something already. They are greatly respected. My colleagues are impressed with the Japanese whom they meet. With the development that we have in Asia, I am asked to send Japanese managers to other countries, because they are so reliable. Japanese managers can help a lot if you put them in the right places to promote the strengths of Japan.

Fauchet: That is an issue of leadership for advertising Japan. The 3/11 disasters showed that the Japanese are resilient and can be independent. The people are very courageous. But leaders, political or otherwise, are not sufficiently visible or are lacking.

We can train people and give them various skills. We can invest in young people to be leaders.

EURObiZ: Beyond doing things company by company, can more be done by groups in the broader business community?

Risberg: We are able to use the chambers of industry. The embassies are advocating.

We get a great deal of leverage out of the EBC committees.

Together, we can help set future policy. A single company cannot achieve that. It is a long-term activity, but you must make sure the issues are in the government's eye. It is hard work, but there is huge value in those activities. Once the embassies know you are not just trying to sell something short term, they are more than willing to knock on doors for you, make introductions and represent your concerns. The chambers and committees can do that, too.

Fauchet: We need to produce data that shows not only the top line, but also the bottom line, compared with competing countries. I believe we will discover that we have to talk about Japan today and tomorrow. Today Japan is a big contributor to investment in the rest of the world. It makes sense to

maintain the machine that delivers profitability long term.

Risberg: Great point! My counterparts think of Japan as a mature market. I call it an opportunity market. Companies that figure out how consumer requirements are changing can develop those growth opportunities.

Over time, the Japanese will not be able, by themselves, to look after the population. At some point, something will break, and they will have to fix it. Something will happen. So find out where you can play, then play where you can.

Mancini: Maybe I am overly cynical, but I don't see the Japanese government being wholly receptive to foreign businesses. Over the years, some regulations have been eased, but it only opens up a tiny part of the market. If foreign companies show signs of being too successful, I think the Japanese government would begin setting up impediments.

Fauchet: There may be a way to gather Japanese people who have been through business schools in Germany, France and so on. They become world citizens, but they get swallowed by the system back home. There may be a way to create advocates and spokespersons, and make new leaders of them.

Otherwise we have the situation of defending Japan because Japan cannot defend itself. We should try to help develop Japanese people who could take up that kind of challenge.

Delmas: Also, we must communicate with the younger generation, because their views are completely different from those of older generation, and very different from those of senior managers in our company. As foreigners in Japan a long time, we can tell them the message that globalisation is their responsibility, not their parents' responsibility.

Mancini: Unfortunately, there seems to be a new wave of nationalism among the young. They are reluctant to go overseas. It is almost as if Japan is re-isolating itself.

Risberg: Young people are becoming disconnected. But still, we should try to reach out and say that they can make their own future. We have to reach out to them and give them a chance to get involved. I encourage our staff to make Japan better for themselves. As part of Japanese society, we have to participate.

Delmas: Because Japan has no choice but to go global, it is more important to get a message to young people that isolation and nationalism is not the right approach.

We need to encourage them.

If you make some effort, they do respond. They are ready to listen.

Fauchet: Is the education system appropriate for creating citizens of the world? Is it possible for motivated businesses to provide free lectures from time to time? Could we do it like an EBC initiative, or as a group of chambers or companies, or embassies? It could be a chance to raise the flag of internationalisation and give them something they don't necessarily get from their teachers. ☺

Japan: The recommended choice for international property investors

Since its landslide victory in December 2012, Japan's new Liberal Democratic Party government has initiated a raft of assertive measures to stimulate national GDP, refocusing global attention on the world's third-largest economy. Within this backdrop, international property investors are increasingly asking 'why Japan?' and 'why now?'. The answer, as ever, is multi-faceted. However, simply put, the major themes fall within three categories:

1) Liquidity and transparency

Japan's real estate market is the second largest in the world after the U.S., accounting for an estimated \$28 trillion in assets. The country has an active real estate investment market, with transactions totalling in excess of \$26 billion in 2012. Liquidity is supported by a robust political system and strong, transparent rule of law. Following dramatically increased levels of securitisation over the last decade, the government and central bank are actively promoting expansion in the listed REIT sector. This is further enhancing levels of disclosure across the market and creating viable new exits for holders of institutional-grade property.

2) Attractive pricing and stable returns on investment

With real estate pricing currently at its cyclical nadir, Japan's low-interest environment provides some of the most attractive yield spreads in the region. Strong occupier demand, buoyed by continued in-migration to the major cities, has maintained comparatively high occupancy rates. Meanwhile, downwards rental adjustments have, for the most part, been priced into the market since the global financial crisis, mitigating downside risk to NOI (net operating income). This makes Japanese real estate particularly suitable for core and core-plus investors seeking stable cash-on-cash returns.

3) Growth potential

Government-led efforts to revitalise the economy have had tangible results to date, particularly on the strength of the yen and in lifting public equities. Anticipated improvement in the economic climate in the short- to mid-term will likely enhance business and consumer sentiment, bolstering property demand in turn. A gradual recovery in the rental market is expected to be led by Tokyo's prime office sector, supported by a significant reduction in new building supply. Improved sentiment among domestic investors – combined with expansion in the listed property sector – should bolster transaction volumes and maintain pressure on cap rates. Moreover, increased activity by overseas open-ended funds may be recorded, as they hunt for durable yield in the region and reallocate away from certain markets – namely Singapore and Australia – which enjoyed significant attention over the past three years.

"Recovery in the rental market will be led by Tokyo's prime office sector"



Christian F Mancini, CEO - North East Asia
Representative Director, Chief Executive Officer
Savills Japan Co., Ltd.

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Savills Japan Co., Ltd
CR Kamiyacho Building 10F
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Peter Aldrian

President, Austrian Business Council

www.abc-jpn.org

Text and photo **DAVID C HULME**

When asked about the highlights of the year for the Austrian Business Council (ABC), the organisation's president, Peter Aldrian, mentions charity work first.

"We continue with relief activities for people affected by the Tohoku earthquake. The ABC is helping to finance a community centre in the Fukushima area so that the local people have a place to meet and discuss how to move forward," he says, adding that these activities will certainly be maintained. Activities in the quake-affected region so far have been focused on encouraging those residents who have chosen to stay and rebuild their lives. The ABC is also involved with assistance to an orphanage in Tokyo's Shinagawa.

"We give the presents at Christmas time, and there is a picnic. Their relatives and our families join in as well," says Aldrian, who is president of Plansee Japan, a branch of the Austrian powder metallurgy specialist.

One new item on the ABC agenda is the development of business contingency plans, or disaster management.

"We want to give our members a platform to communicate in case of emergency. We learned from the disaster that communication can be a challenge, so we will set up that platform within this year," he says.

Aldrian succeeds Japan veteran Kurt E Sieber, who headed the ABC



The ABC and social services provider **Hilfswerk Austria** co-fund this multipurpose community project near Kamaishi city in Iwate prefecture.

for more than four years. He lauds Sieber's achievements, but as a relative newcomer to Tokyo (he arrived in 2009) will not seek to emulate Sieber. With the ABC infrastructure now well established, Aldrian wants to progress by making the organisation more open, having more interaction and offering more events.

"I also hope to be able to communicate more information to the members. I like the information that I get from the EBC," he says.

Membership is steady at around 80 (50 corporate, 30 individual members), with several new members having joined in recent months.

"In Japan there are about 400 Austrians, and fewer than 100 Austrian companies are based in Japan," Aldrian explains. Most of the members are Austrian.

The ABC, however, also has a close relationship with the Japan-Austria Society for Cultural Exchange, most of whose members are Japanese with connections to Austria. So it is about half Austrian and half Japanese for joint activities, such as this winter's ski weekend, which was attended by more than 50 people.

The ABC is also close to the Austrian Embassy's Commercial Section, and commercial counsellor Martin Glatz takes the role of ABC executive director. The Austrian ambassador to Japan, Dr Bernhard Zimburg, serves as honorary chairman. Since 2010, the ABC has been a member of the Japan Market Expansion Competition.

Aldrian sees the business climate in Japan changing for better and for worse.

"Japanese companies with purely domestic supply chains are being forced to open new supply chains, and diversify to reduce risk. This opens opportunities for foreign companies to bring more products into Japan," he says. Against this, for technology providers at least, the



“Railway equipment is developing very well now”

general trend is toward lower revenues.

A few sectors are in very good health. Austrian companies produce advanced construction materials for eco-friendly housing.

"Companies supplying materials for reconstruction definitely benefit," notes Aldrian. "And railway equipment is developing very well now." Austrian technology is advanced in the field of laying railroad tracks, as well as in the maintenance of existing railways. Organic foods and beverages are another area of strength.

There is plenty of activity in the year ahead. The ABC will be improving its system for providing members with relevant information about businesses, industries and the market in Japan. There are joint networking and business luncheons and discussion events, particularly with the Swiss and German chambers. And the core mission of the ABC is still to develop and promote trade between Austria and Japan.

Among the eagerly anticipated social events is Austria Bussan Ten, a day of box cart racing for children at Tokyo's Kasai Rinkai Park, on 17 March and co-sponsored by Red Bull.

Aldrian concludes on one of his favourite themes. 



Proof positive

EU takes the lead in regulating health claims

Text **PAUL MURPHY**

It's called intelligent milk mining. Scientists systemically break down milk in the search for proteins, fats, carbohydrates and vitamins. If they discover a new nutrient with a provable health benefit, and that can be blended with foods or drinks, the milk mine could be a gold mine.

"Eighty per cent of milk is water, 20% is proteins. From the solids you have whey powders and casein powders, and that is where the money is," says Eddie Hughes, veteran food expert and Japan director for Enterprise Ireland.

Milk mining is part of the drive for new functional foods, which are generally foods that have been altered or augmented to gain extra nutritional value – everything from omega-enriched

cooking oil, to collagen-enriched "beauty drinks" and other beverages that induce satiety to combat obesity.

According to data from research firm Euromonitor, the global market for functional foods is thriving, having increased 16%, to \$162 billion, over the two years ended in 2012. Dairy foods make up about 40% of that figure.

The functional food market is highly developed in Japan which, over two decades ago, was the first country to legally define functional food. And there is a niche for foreign dairy suppliers. Whey, once considered a low-value by-product of cheese, is now a prized ingredient in protein-packed energy powder used by athletes.

However, Japan does not produce large amounts of cheese, so it lacks

sufficient opportunity to experiment with whey, explains Yoshihiro Shigeta, commercial director of Japan for Irish dairy and ingredients multinational Glanbia.

"In terms of value-added whey products, we have much better technology than Japanese companies because they can't improve the technologies for using whey," he says.

Glanbia's whey goes into products such as the popular Meiji Savas protein powder line for athletes and bodybuilders. But it's not all for muscular men. One Glanbia customer in Japan is the women-only Curves gym group (unofficial motto: 'No men, no makeup, no mirrors'), which sells to members its own line of protein drinks.

Glanbia sells mainly in the sports

nutrition area, but the amino acids in whey are also of use, Shigeta says, in fighting locomotive syndrome, which gradually robs some elderly people of the ability to walk.

In terms of volume, nutrition is a minor business for Glanbia in Japan, comprising only about 5% of sales, but it is lucrative.

"The quantity is really small, but profit-wise the area is good," says Shigeta, though he declines to provide details.

"Food companies are very coy about their margins. Most food products are very low-margin, anything from 2% upwards. However, functional foods carry margins of up to 30%," says Hughes of Enterprise Ireland.

The lure of potential profit, and public and governmental pressure to make food healthier, has persuaded corporations in and outside the food industry to take a punt on functional foods. A stream of related acquisitions in recent years shows no sign of letting up. In October, ingredients firm Nexira bought fellow French company Tournay, which produces plant and fruit extracts, for an undisclosed sum. A month later, German chemicals behemoth BASF announced the €664m purchase of Norway's Pronova BioPharma, renowned for its patented Omega-3 drugs and know-how. In December, Dutch giant Royal DSM paid \$634m for US nutrients firm Fortitech, bringing the value of DSM's nutrient-related acquisitions since late 2010 to around €2.4 billion.

"Major companies such as Nestlé, Danone, Kraft and Unilever have changed their portfolios for new product development towards health and wellness," says Rao Sanaullah Khan, a doctoral research student from Massey University in New Zealand and lead author of a new study published in the *Trends in Food Science and Technology* journal. Khan argues that companies entering the functional food sector need to imitate the product development patterns of the pharmaceutical industry with its long lead times and great volumes of research, rather than the speed-to-market ethos prevalent in the food industry.

"The whole food industry has a very high failure rate compared with other manufacturing industries. More than 90% of newly launched food products

fail, and those that succeed typically have a life of around two years," says Khan. "If companies want to compete in this environment, they need unique product features."

Beyond boosting corporate profit, functional foods could also save lives. The Philippines-based International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) is currently growing strains of vitamin A-enriched rice, called Golden Rice, in Bangladesh and the Philippines on a trial basis. The World Health Organization estimates that up to 250 million pre-school children worldwide suffer vitamin A deficiency, and the United Nations Children's Fund reckons that up to 2.7 million children die annually because of it.

The Golden Rice project, because it involves genetic engineering, is somewhat controversial, but Bruce J Tolentino, IRRI deputy director-general for communications and partnerships, dismisses any concerns.

"Genetically modified [GM] crops have been grown commercially since the 1990s, with a global coverage of 160 million hectares in 29 countries in 2011. GM crops being consumed by people across the world include soybean, potato, papaya, tomato and canola. All of these have been demonstrated to be as safe as their non-GM counterparts for human consumption by national regulatory bodies, based on scientific evidence," he explains.

The Golden Rice project is over 10 years old, and it will be at least two more years before trials are finished, and possibly another two years before the rice clears regulatory barriers and gets to market.

According to Natasha Telles D'Costa, a New Zealand-based food analyst with research firm Frost & Sullivan, caution is appropriate. Even in developed markets with clear regulations regarding health benefit claims, there is evidence that the blizzard of claims causes consumer confusion.

Japan has long been considered the toughest regulator of companies wishing to label their products with health improvement claims. However, that now belongs to the EU's food regulator, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Last year the EFSA announced that it had thrown out over 90% of almost 3,000 health claims that its scientists examined, including claims by Japan's Yakult

and France's Danone about the benefits of their popular probiotic dairy drinks. The EFSA doesn't say that the beverages are not healthy, just that the companies had not supplied enough scientific data to prove they were.

The EFSA published detailed guidelines for clinical trials, essentially compelling firms to provide unequivocal scientific proof that their claims are valid. Accordingly, since December, with the exception of some yoghurts that improve lactose digestion, products sold in the EU have had to drop the term "probiotic" from their labels.

“MAJOR COMPANIES SUCH AS **NESTLÉ, DANONE, KRAFT AND UNILEVER** HAVE CHANGED THEIR PORTFOLIOS FOR NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS HEALTH AND WELLNESS”

Rao Sanaullah Khan

The change was needed, says Telles D'Costa, because some manufacturers were taking advantage of a loophole.

"Rather than say this is good for your heart, they'll make a softer claim. They will say it is good for your triglyceride level or your cholesterol, so they are not actually making a valid health claim, but rather giving the impression that it's good for your heart," she explains.

Some in the industry welcome the new rules.

"At the end of the day, the consumer will be better protected because the science will be stronger and more validated," says Aine Hallihan, head of R&D with Irish functional food ingredients maker, Carbery.

Hallihan says that the new rules should not overly burden companies applying for approval of their new health claims.

"The EFSA is not looking for hundreds of studies. They are looking for one or two studies done properly. When people start to run clinical studies in the way that the EFSA has said they should be done, I think you will start to see an increase in the number of [health claim] approvals that the EFSA will give," she says. 

Change really is

Robert Walters Japan

Text **GAVIN BLAIR** Photo **BENJAMIN PARKS**

Since its establishment in 2000, Robert Walters Japan has grown to become the second-largest business of the global recruitment firm Robert Walters, which operates in 24 countries and is biggest in its UK home market. While financial sector recruiting remains the core business in Japan, the company has adapted operations to meet the changing needs of clients as the Japanese economy shifts to new directions.

Japanese firms, driven by a stronger yen and weakening domestic demand, have gone on sprees of record-breaking overseas acquisitions in recent years. Their need has grown for personnel who can carry out such transactions and manage the targeted foreign companies. The sustained offshore migration of production by domestic manufacturers is also requiring staff who can work internationally.

"It's great for us. Japanese companies moving overseas need people who understand foreign markets and speak other languages, most often English," says David Swan, managing director of Robert Walters Japan and Korea.

"This is what we do best, finding multilingual, mid-career professionals with specific skill sets," says Swan, who became Japan managing director in November 2009, adding South Korea to his responsibilities a year later.

Robert Walters established a new team last year specifically to deal with the international operations of Japanese companies.

"We thought we'd be dealing mostly with big corporations, but actually a lot of small and medium-sized Japanese companies are using our services as well," explains Swan.

In addition to the increased need for multilingual personnel, Japanese companies are facing a shrinking domestic

labour force and shortages of skilled workers in key areas.

The generally low level of English ability in domestic companies means that Japanese-language skills are often a prerequisite, further narrowing the available talent pool.

"If you're in Singapore, for example, you can recruit globally because workers can function in English. For Japan, you're looking at recruiting domestically, or from very small pockets of Japanese working overseas," says Swan.

The low passing rates for qualification in professions such as accountancy and law in Japan mean that there is an acute lack of these skills in the domestic market. All of this is good news for the recruitment industry, as the simple law of supply and demand pushes up the premiums companies will pay to attract the right candidates.

There are other positive side effects, such as Japanese companies moving away from their notoriously rigid employment systems and becoming more willing to consider accepting women returning to the workforce, mid-career hires and foreigners as candidates. Non-Japanese candidates make up around 20% of Robert Walters' placements now, still highly concentrated in finance and IT.

A trend towards more use of temporary contracts for professionals, a practise that was previously restricted to junior and administrative positions, is providing another boost for recruitment companies, though placing permanent workers is still the mainstay of the business.

As Tokyo's financial sector has been hit by the double whammy of the Lehman shock (2008) and the continued rise of Asian rivals Hong Kong and Singapore as regional trading hubs, Robert Walters has also strengthened its recruitment capacity in sectors such as manufacturing, retail, supply chain and healthcare.

One of the ways that the company

differentiates itself from others in the recruitment business is its strong focus on team-based work and remuneration. According to Swan, this means that candidates each have an entire team working for them, and pulling in the same direction, rather than recruiters competing against each other, and chasing individual commissions and bonuses.

Swan came to Japan in 1994 to study karate, initially working in a Japanese restaurant to pay his way. It was an experience, he says, that enabled him to "get all the culture shock out of the way early on." He went on to spend a year working as a financial trader before returning to his native Australia and beginning his career in recruitment. He returned to Japan and joined Robert Walters in 2002.

"The Japanese recruitment sector was, back then, very different from Australia's, which is a very mature market. I would make a lot of calls to get people to meet me and then realise that a lot of them just wanted to practice their English or meet a foreigner," he recalls.

Headhunting has since become a more accepted practice in Japan, candidates have become more savvy, and domestic firms have started up international divisions to compete with foreign recruiters, notes Swan. Nevertheless, differences remain.

"In other countries, when you speak to a candidate, you're usually talking to the decision-maker; in Japan, spouses, and even mothers-in-law, can have a lot of say, too."

Despite the challenges, Swan remains bullish about Robert Walters' future in Japan, as well as in the nascent recruitment sector in South Korea, which he describes as being "like Japan was 10 years ago." 



opportunity

“ JAPANESE
**COMPANIES MOVING
OVERSEAS** NEED PEOPLE
WHO UNDERSTAND
FOREIGN MARKETS ”

David Swan



Sustainable Development //

Raising awareness

Text **GEOFF BOTTING**

The Sustainable Development Committee is unique within the EBC: it's the only one that is not industry-based. Rather, the committee is rooted in a concept – one that encompasses a range of different industries.

That concept involves carrying out practices that are sustainable: that don't compromise society's ability to meet its needs well into the future. It is no surprise that when Dylan Scudder talks about the committee he chairs, he talks mainly about concept.

"One idea that's interesting to me is stakeholder theory," he says, citing a concept first expounded by the philosopher and business ethics professor R Edward Freeman. "You make complex themes more relevant by highlighting their impact on real people. So you don't have a 'social issue', but [rather] you have people who are liberated from a thing called 'poverty'.

"So you work at that level. Who are we really dealing with? What are these people's needs? Where do their needs

Sustainable Development Key advocacy issues

→ **Raising awareness** – The government should do more to tell people and businesses about the benefits of sustainable development, while more collaboration in this field is required between the EU and Japan.

→ **Organic food** – A supplementary organic certificate from EU embassies should be removed.

Tariffs on organic food should be abolished.

→ **Building construction** – The government should offer incentives to make sustainable construction more attractive to construction companies and consumers.

The government should look to European technology to help meet its greenhouse gas emission targets.

line up, and where would more alignment leave everyone better off?"

The committee has been keen to raise such questions since it was founded in 2010. As a committee that can be said to be idea-based, rather than

industry-centric, raising awareness is a key activity.

In April last year, the committee organised the provocatively titled conference, "The End of Business as We Know It – Perspectives on Sustainable Development", which was attended by over 300 people. Several committee members spoke, in addition to keynote speaker Paul Roberts, author of *The End of Oil*.

The committee has since received requests to help promote similar conferences in the future. Scudder, who has been chairman for just over a year, also envisions hosting intensive seminars for small numbers of invited guests.

"I'm not interested in hosting formal meetings that just take up people's time," he says. "I would like to present case studies of companies that have succeeded – and some that have failed – at 'doing well by doing good'."

He wants participants to walk away saying: 'That was an hour well-spent'.

Scudder, who is also a doctoral candidate at the University of Tokyo, where he researches corporate sustainability strategies, is well qualified to handle



such events. He has carried out extensive fieldwork in Colombia, and delivered presentations and training programmes at the United Nations, where he worked for some five years. He has also worked with businesses and universities on topics related to conflict resolution and corporate social responsibility (CSR).

In the wake of Japan's 2011 earthquake and tsunami, he began working with Unilever Japan in coordinating its relief response, which involved numerous visits to the disaster-struck areas in the Tohoku region as part of the company's CSR initiatives. He continues to represent Unilever in its collaboration with the EBC.

As for its future events, the committee aims to target more Japanese business people, to give them a good idea of some of Europe's sustainable technologies and products.

A case in point is construction materials and methods. Compared to their European counterparts, many Japanese buildings lack the latest eco-friendly materials, such as energy-efficient glass, and as a result they leak plenty of precious energy.

Such a theme would be a logical choice for a future committee event, according to fellow committee member John Mader.

"For obvious reasons: A, because as we know from the statistics, buildings account for 40% of greenhouse gas emissions, so [making them more sustainable] would make a huge difference; and B, because we all work in buildings, so that would be something that people could get their heads around," says Mader, a senior project manager at Lend Lease Japan.

In the EBC's White Paper 2012, the committee calls on Japan to introduce incentives to make the construction of eco-friendly buildings more attractive to developers and construction companies.

Organic food is another area cited by the committee. Only about 0.2% of all the food consumed in Japan is organic. This is "possibly the lowest level amongst developed countries", the white paper states.

The committee is calling for a reduction of Japan's tariffs on organic food, the promotion of sustainable farming, and the abolition of an additional

“ YOU MAKE **COMPLEX THEMES** MORE RELEVANT BY HIGHLIGHTING THEIR IMPACT ON REAL PEOPLE ”

Dylan Scudder

organic certification that must be acquired from EU embassies.

Topping the committee's list of key issues and recommendations, though, is "Improved sustainable development awareness and behavior". To a large extent, this topic involves the kind efforts mentioned above.

"The issues are increasingly acute," Scudder says. "Sustainability confronts us with tough dilemmas around reconciling profit-making with broader social environmental concerns. But it is precisely by working through these dilemmas that managers develop the intangible assets of sharp decision-making that bolsters the bottom line through reputation, talent attraction and retention and, yes, sales." 



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Inquiries

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 Email: frontdesk@azabucourt.com
 4-5-39 Minami Azabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0047



Toto on show

Technology, trickery and smart materials

Text **ROB GOSS**

Eco-Products 2012, an exhibition held at Tokyo Big Sight in December, saw 750 companies and organisations showcase the best and most innovative environment-friendly products and initiatives in Japan. Some 185,000 visitors to the annual three-day expo had the opportunity to learn about everything from hybrid cars and biomass fuels to municipal recycling efforts. Anyone who dropped by the booth of Toto, the world's largest maker of toilets and Japan's leading producer of sanitary ware, also learned something about the latest in water-saving technology. The most prominent in this line is the Air-in Shower, first released in 2010 and now a standard feature in Toto's bathroom suites.

The technology involves trickery. By mixing air into each water droplet passing through the showerhead, the volume is increased, creating the sensation that you are using more water than you are. The result, says Kenji Fujita of Toto's public relations department, is a 35% reduction in water usage compared with conventional showers, without compromising comfort. There are further benefits beyond saving water.



Air-in Shower

"For a family of four, we estimate savings from the Air-in Shower of about ¥15,300 annually in utility bills [¥9,900 for gas and ¥5,400 for water], along with a reduction in the family's CO₂ emissions by approximately 146 kilos per year," Fujita says.

"We have a strong track record with water-saving products, such as our showers and toilets, but we are not focused only on water-saving. By the end of fiscal 2017 for all our products, we are targeting a 50% reduction [from 1990 levels] in CO₂ emissions during use."

In fact, Toto's R&D efforts are not only focused on bathrooms. In August of last year, the company unveiled a not-for-market 250cc motorcycle — fitted with customised toilet-shaped seat — that had been developed to run on livestock waste to underline Toto's environmental aims.

“WE ARE TARGETING A 50% REDUCTION IN CO₂ EMISSIONS DURING USE”

Toto also developed eco-friendly photo-catalyst technology called Hydrotect. Applied to materials such as tiles, glass and certain kinds of stone — and even mixed into paint — Hydrotect provides an invisible coating that has air-purifying, self-cleaning and antibacterial properties.

The air-purification mechanism is triggered when the Hydrotect coating on a building's exterior wall is exposed to the sun's ultraviolet rays, resulting in activated oxygen. As a result, nitrogen oxides — harmful pollutants in the fumes discharged by manufacturing plants and vehicles — are oxidized and converted into nitrate ions.

"A building with an exterior surface area of 1,000m² that utilises Hydrotect has the same air-purification effect as an area of green land roughly equivalent to 25 tennis courts," Fujita says. "That [process] removes the same amount of nitrogen oxide as is emitted over the



Hydrotect

course of a year by 80 cars."

The self-cleaning mechanism of Hydrotect relies on its hydrophilicity. As it rains, a fine film of water forms over the Hydrotect coating, but under any dirt. As it continues to rain, the dust and other particles are washed away. One of the environmental benefits, Fujita says, is the reduction in the amount of detergents and cleaning water needed for building maintenance.

The antibacterial mechanism is also rooted in activated oxygen being produced when the Hydrotect coating is exposed to sunlight. In the case of Hydrotect-coated tiles in public urinals, for example, the activated oxygen breaks down bacteria and ammonia in urine, thereby eliminating bad odours. Fujita hopes Toto will be able to find more applications for its coating.

"To date, we have been able to apply Hydrotect to many materials and products, such as glass, metal, and for construction, for example. But the technology isn't really widespread yet," he says. "Our mission going forward is to increase the material's use in housing and public facilities in Japan and overseas, as well as licensing the technology more to other major manufacturers." 

World citizen

Text **JUSTIN MCCURRY** Photo **EL-BRANDEN BRAZIL**

A childhood interest in Zen Buddhism brought El-Branden Brazil to Japan 17 years ago, but disillusionment awaited on his first visit to Engaku-ji temple in Kamakura.

"I walked in, just glazed over by the majesty of it all," Brazil, 41, says. "I walked up the path and saw a sign in English saying 'Please come in'. So I opened the door, and the next thing I knew, a Zen monk came charging towards me, shouting 'Get out! Get out!'" In retrospect, he describes the episode as the "perfect Zen moment" for instantly disabusing him of the "false, exotic image" some Westerners have of Buddhism.

He did not return to serious Zen studies until five years ago, in the unlikely setting of a bar in Shinjuku's Golden Gai district. A monk walked in, inviting taunts from tipsy American tourists who asked him to demonstrate his kung-fu moves, the Briton recalls. "I walked over to him and bowed, and it turned out he was this incredible Zen teacher. He invited me to his temple for lunch, and he's still my Zen master today."

Brazil's interest in the discipline stretches back to an early fascination with Japanese culture. As a child, he had a black-and-white image of the

Daibutsu statue in Kamakura on his bedroom wall, devoured books about Buddhism, and later joined a Tibetan Buddhist group on meditation retreats in Yorkshire and the Lake District.

Born in Eastbourne on England's south coast, he grew up in the historical city of Bath. His first name, he says, was the choice of "theatrical parents from the '60s generation who were convinced that an unusual [first] name would lead to great things", while his surname derives from his Portuguese ancestry. "Both names were a nightmare for me at school, but I soon appreciated them."

He was introduced to practical photography at the age of 12, when his grandmother gave him a vintage 1930s camera, but never seriously considered a career in photography until his first visit to China in 1998.

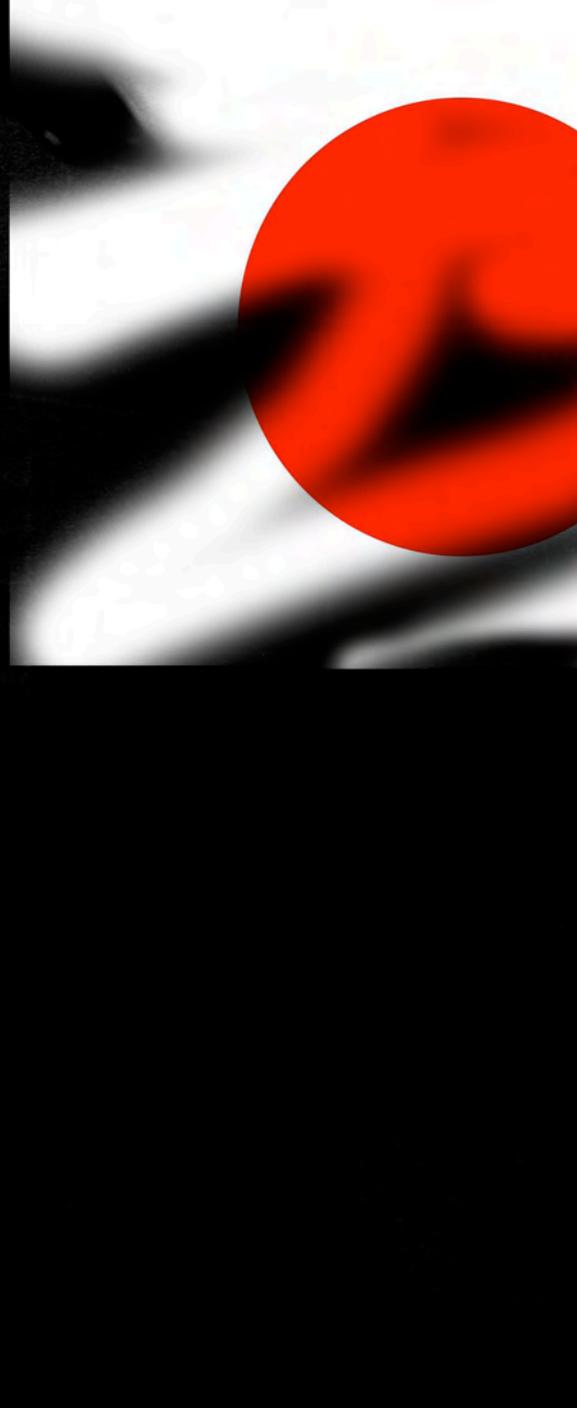
"When I got back, people looked at my photos and said they were good," he recalls.

Using Tokyo as his base, Brazil taught English to fund trips, camera in hand, to other parts of Asia, where he quickly found the third element of his triumvirate of passions: political activism. He describes his interest in Myanmar politics as "frighteningly obsessive". His Zen master even warned him to take a step back and establish a better balance between his activism

and meditation. He is not sure he has succeeded.

"In pure Buddhist practice, monks shouldn't be involved in politics, and I think most of them understand that," he says. "But when you live in an environment where people are so desperate, and being mistreated and tortured, there is a breaking point. The [Myanmar and Tibetan] monks represent the spiritual and moral fabric of those places, and they can't just stand back. Even if it means perhaps sacrificing some of the purity of their own practice, they have to do something."

Brazil credits Buddhism with inspiring his involvement in the monk-led democracy and human rights movements. "I use my photography as a voice for people who often don't have a voice," he says. "It doesn't mean I earn





a lot of money, but if my photographs can help people, then I've succeeded."

He is unnecessarily modest about his achievements as a photographer. Aside from being used in human rights campaigns, his images have been widely exhibited – most recently in Berlin – and he has won several awards. He can draw on a huge inventory of images from his travels throughout the world. "The relationship between my Buddhist practice, my activism and my photography seem unrelated, but actually they're all related," he says.

But it is activities in Myanmar that clearly give Brazil the most satisfaction. When in Tokyo, he uses his blog [*themystictraveller.org*] and social media to explain political developments there, and works closely with Myanmarese refugees in Japan.

Given the chance, he would move to Yangon (which he refers to as Rangoon) "in a heartbeat", but concedes that being newly wed to a Japanese wife makes that unlikely to happen soon.

"I see a lot of bad things there, a lot of poverty and suffering, but even so, there's a certain inner strength and resilience in people there that you don't see in Tokyo. That's an inspiration. That's why I can't give up," he says. Still, his enthusiasm for Japan has not diminished.

"Japan is one of those places where you can live in many different worlds," he continues. "You can live in the foreigners' bubble and be quite isolated. I do that at times because you need that foundation, but if you step out of that comfort zone and forge genuine friendships with Japanese people, then what

you find is a completely fascinating and stimulating world."

While he admits to occasionally being flummoxed by the "incomplete jigsaw puzzle" of life in Japan, Brazil believes his peripatetic existence has taught him that there is more uniting people than dividing them.

"With my photography, I try to celebrate the diversity of cultural expression around the world, but also to bring attention to our shared humanity," he says. "People need food, family, education and a place to live.

"Too much obsession with the differences between people is the festering place of nationalistic mythology, and that's where dangerous patterns of behaviour begin to evolve. In that sense, I'm happy to be a citizen of the world." 

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Staying relevant

University programmes are integral to globalisation

Text **DAVID UMEDA**

There are reasons why the private business sector values educational institutions. For one, schools are a wealth of information, not only about the world of business, but also who should lead in the near future.

The process starts with making choices. For Philip O'Neill, Director of the McGill MBA Japan Program – Desautels Faculty of Management of McGill University, “Applicants should consider the reputation of the school, and should meet with students and alumni before making a decision.”

In particular, he urges candidates to consider schools that have a very wide reach. “That is to say, they are well known not only in Japan, but in North America, Asia, and the rest of the world,” says O'Neill. “This will be very helpful in your career.”

At Lakeland College Japan (LCJ) campus, students are offered a unique two-plus-two plan, where they can complete the first two years of a Liberal Arts programme in Japan, then transfer the credits to the home campus in Wisconsin – or to other US or Canadian schools.

“Students can earn an Associate of Arts Degree in this programme that is accredited by the US North Central Association of Schools and Colleges, and sanctioned by the Japanese Ministry of Education, while living in the safe environment of Tokyo,” says Dr Alan Brender, Associate Dean at Lakeland College Japan.

“Students often can be accepted more readily by competitive universities overseas as Associate of Arts

degree holders than they could as ‘unproven’ high school graduates,” he continues, “provided they earn high grades.”

LCJ offers the same courses and syllabi – and uses the same textbooks – as the main campus. Currently, former LCJ students are enrolled at over 60 different universities in the US, Canada and Europe. Students who choose to study in the US at the main campus automatically receive a scholarship of between \$4,000 and \$7,500, depending on their GPA (grade point average), after they succeed in obtaining an Associate of Arts degree.

“Long after you have graduated,” says O'Neill of McGill MBA Japan, “it will be the reputation of the school that you attended that will help you.”

Internationalisation

Approximately seven years ago, the student body of Lakeland College Japan was virtually 100% Japanese, with occasional students in an American study abroad programme. Now, approximately 30% of the students are from outside the host country, representing 25 different countries, including the UK, France, Spain, Russia and Poland, as well as the US and Canada.

“There are positive and negative considerations when internationalising a branch campus,” explains Brender, “but without a doubt, at Lakeland College Japan, it's a win-win outcome.”

Internationalisation has helped boost recruitment of both local and international students. It has changed the dynamics in the classroom. It has created greater, broader global awareness. And it has spawned new courses.

“At the same time, a number of challenges have evolved that didn't exist when the campus catered almost exclusively to host nationals,” confides Brender. “International students require much more administrative time and suffer more psychological problems because they are living outside their home environment. Financial difficulties, cultural clashes, immigration infractions and other issues have also evolved.”

Despite these problems, the benefits far outweigh the drawbacks, he adds, “and better prepare our graduates for a globalising society”.

Up ahead

In regards to key focuses of an MBA programme in 2020, O'Neill thinks that the big ones in Japan are going to be entrepreneurship, technology transfer from research institutions to industry, and diversity.

“Entrepreneurship and technology transfer seem obvious to me,” he observes, “but organisations in Japan are going to have to diversify their ‘organisations’ along a number of parameters, in particular gender.”

O'Neill points out that women are remarkably under-represented in business and government in Japan, adding that this is true in a lot of countries. “But there are ways to make economic life less difficult for people with families to continue to work and advance their careers,” he believes.

“The sustainability of the country is going to rest on making the employment market more equitable, not simply equal, for women with children,” he concludes. 

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To join the EBC visit

www.ebc-jp.com

For more information please contact the EBC Secretariat.
Alison Murray, EBC Executive Director.
Tel: 03-3263-6222. E-mail: ebc@gol.com



EUROPEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL IN JAPAN
THE EUROPEAN (EU) CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN JAPAN



Danny Risberg

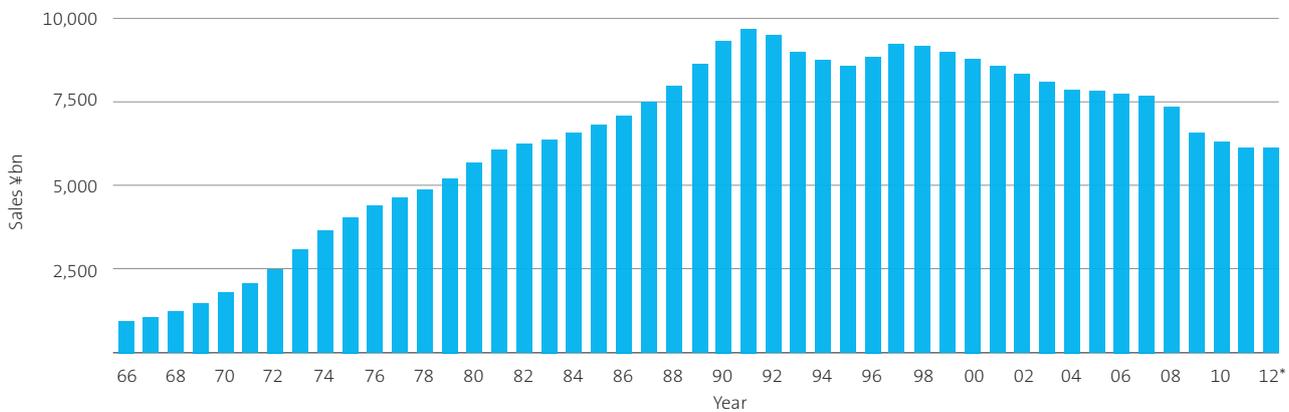
President & CEO,
Philips Electronics Japan

reads

eURObiZ JAPAN

Department stores end 16-year slide

JDSA same-store sales



JDSA: JAPAN CONSUMING *CALENDAR YEAR (PREVIOUS YEARS FY)

Same-store sales at department stores within the Japan Department Stores Association rose for the first time in 16 years in calendar year 2012. Although overall sales fell 0.1%, same-store sales rose 0.3% to ¥6.14 trillion.

The slight rise was the result of some recovery from the 3/11 triple disaster, but all the major chains have worked hard to achieve it. New levels of consumer spending on premium products, as well as a general rise in consumption, also helped boost the numbers. Retail sales rose 2.2% in 2012, the second-highest increase in more than a decade.

Apart from Sendai, where same-store sales rose 7.7%, Tokyo led with sales rising 2.1%, followed by Kobe up 1.4% and Yokohama up 1.3%. Figures for all other major cities were negative. Hiroshima was down 2.7%, while Osaka and Kyoto declined 0.8% and 0.3%, respectively. By category, menswear sales rose 1.5%, womenswear 0.9%, accessories 1.0%, cosmetics 2.5% and art/jewellery 3.4%.

Overall department store sales are expected to decline further in the coming years because the sector built up excess capacity in the 1990s, and more stores must be closed or converted into shopping buildings. Most analysts expect combined sales to drop to ¥5 trillion in the medium term – it is significant that this number is the current total for the top seven chains alone.

Much of the pain is being felt in the regions where

the bridge zone shops that sit uncomfortably between GMS's (general merchandise stores) and department stores are being hammered from all sides. Meanwhile, leading chains and some redoubtable regional fiefdoms are fighting back through more imaginative store investment, expansion of own brands, diversification and overseas expansion.

For years, the outlook for the sector was bleak, but always with the proviso that, because of the latent value of the brands, the fantastic locations and ongoing demand for premium shopping in Japan, an opportunity existed if only management would grasp it. There are bound to be years of negative same-store sales growth ahead because of the format's sensitivity to macroeconomic trends, but the relentless decline of the last 16 years for the better chains may well be over. ☺



ROY LARKE

JapanConsuming is the leading provider of intelligence on consumer and retail markets in Japan. The monthly report provides news about, and in depth analysis of, current trends.

JapanConsuming

For more information, please see www.japanconsuming.com or contact Sally Bedown at subs@japanconsuming.com

Upcoming meetings

→ Animal Health

30 May, Thursday, from 15:00, off-site

→ Asset Management

22 March, Friday, from 12:00, EBC

→ Automotive Components

14 March, Thursday, from 16:00, EBC

→ Energy

14 March, Thursday, from 14:00, EBC

→ Legal Services

16 May, Thursday, from 18:30, off-site

→ Logistics and Freight

21 May, Tuesday, from 17:00, EBC

→ Materials

4 March, 10 June, Monday, from 17:00, EBC

→ Medical Equipment

28 March, Thursday, from 14:00, off-site

→ Telecom Carriers and Equipment

14 March, Thursday, from 10:00, EBC

Committee meeting dates are subject to change. Please contact the EBC secretariat for confirmation.

Tel: 03-3263-6222. E-mail: ebc@gol.com



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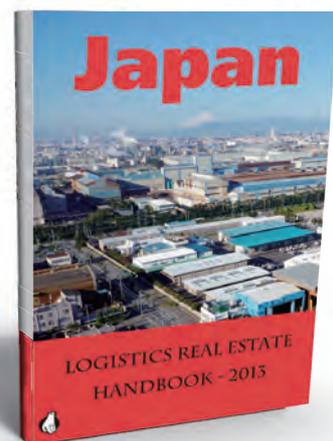
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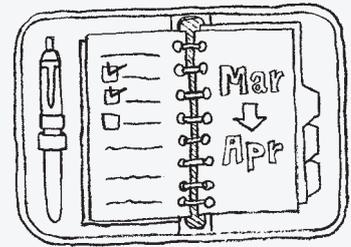
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Upcoming events



► **Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Japan**
www.blccj.or.jp

Monthly Belgian Beer Gathering

18 March, Monday, 19:00-23:00
Venue: Antwerp Six, Ginza
Fee: Pay for what you drink (1 free beer for members)
Contact: info@blccj.or.jp

► **Finnish Chamber of Commerce in Japan**
www.fcc.or.jp

Stora Enso Cup – Sweden-Finland Golf Challenge

19 April, Friday
Venue: G.C. Narita Hitree, Chiba prefecture
Fee: ¥16,000
Contact: fcj@gol.com

► **Ireland Japan Chamber of Commerce**
www.ijcc.jp

The Emerald Ball

16 March, Saturday, from 18:30
Venue: Conrad Tokyo, Shimbashi
Fee: ¥25,000, ¥23,500 (until 21 Feb), ¥22,500 (per person at 8-10 table booking)
Contact: www.emeraldballtokyo.com

St. Patrick's Day Parade

17 March, Sunday, from 14:00
Venue: Omotesando Dori, Harajuku
Contact: secretariat@ijcc.jp

Third Thursday Networking

21 March, 18 April, Thursday, 19:00-21:00
Fee: Buy your own drinks.
Contact: secretariat@ijcc.jp

► **Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan**
www.iccj.or.jp

Japan Olive Oil Prize & Italian Olive Oil Day

18 March, Monday, 10:00-21:00
Venue: Shinjuku Park Tower
Contact: iccj@iccj.or.jp

ECO-TOWN: Italy vs. Asia – on the occasion of the annual meeting of Italian Chambers of Commerce of the Asian/South African Area

5 April, Friday, 15:00-18:00
Panelists: prominent names from renewable energies sector/representatives from 12 Italian Chambers
Venue: Italian Institute of Culture, Kudanshita
Fee: free (Advance booking required)
Contact: iccj@iccj.or.jp

► **Swedish Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**
www.sccj.org

Sakura Hanami

3 April, Wednesday, from 19:00
Venue: Happo-en, Shirokanedai Station
Contact: office@sccj.org

► **Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**
www.sccij.jp

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31						

SCCIJ March Luncheon

14 March, Thursday, 12:00-14:00
Speakers: Representatives from new member companies
Venue: Grand Hyatt Tokyo, 2F Basil Room
Fee: ¥8,000 (members and non-members)
Contact: info@sccij.jp

Joint Networking in Japan: Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce, Italian Chamber of Commerce and Swiss Chamber of Commerce

15 April, Monday, 18:30-21:00
Venue: Oakwood Premier Tokyo Midtown, Lounge
Fee: ¥1,000 (1st glass of wine and finger food; next beverage at ¥500 per beer, wine, soft drink)
Contact: info@blccj.or.jp, iccj@iccj.or.jp, info@sccij.jp

Compiled by **DAVID UMEDA**

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The Chef's Table
BUENA COMIDA



A pragmatist

Drawing the curtain on a decade in Japan

Text and Photo **DAVID C HULME**



Paolo Mattioli's new employer asked: "Are you willing to be posted outside Italy?" Indeed, he was! "In my university years, during holidays, I travelled first to India, then Indonesia and then Mexico," says Mattioli. "I chose places with very different cultures."

This was not an escape. Mattioli has fond memories of his birthplace, Bologna.

"From the first years of high school I had complete freedom. I could stay out with my friends until late, because our parents knew there was no risk," he says. It was a lively town, as well, and the only place in the region with restaurants and discos open all night long.

The nearby Apennines meant a lot of hiking, mountaineering and free climbing. In addition, Mattioli shared with his parents a love of the sea, swimming and diving that has evolved into a passion for scuba diving.

At 16, the athletic youth was introduced to boxing.

"They told me I was a natural," he recalls. His 13 amateur bouts culminated in winning the Italian junior amateur tournament. "My trainer wanted me to go to the Olympics, but I did not want a career as a boxer."

It was a typically pragmatic decision for Mattioli, who had plenty of other interests. At school, he was comfortable with science and mathematics, and Bologna was home to a well-reputed university of electronics. He obtained a degree in electronic engineering, specialising in bioelectronics, in 1992.

He immediately joined Marposs, a family owned manufacturing company founded in Bologna in 1952. After five years there, he was posted to Coventry, England.

"English people deride Coventry because it was completely rebuilt after the war, in a style now considered very ugly," he says. "But I enjoyed Coventry a lot."

It is easy to explain. The posting, and the house that came with it, meant that Mattioli could wed Isabella, his girlfriend of several years. The young couple enjoyed jaunts to London and treks in the Cotswolds.

"For us, it was a very nice time," he says.

It was in 2002 that Mattioli was offered the opportunity to move to Japan, accompanied by Isabella and one-year-old daughter Camilla. His acceptance meant enrollment in the EU Executive Training Programme (ETP).

"Marposs Japan was established 42 years ago," he explains. The third president joined ETP1. I am the sixth president. The ETP is long, but it makes sense for a 10-year posting."

It is also tough, as Mattioli recalls. "In the first year you have intensive study and tests. You are with about 40 other young people, and it is like being back at school, being treated as a little boy. It gets a bit tiresome and stressful." The next step, a six-month internship with a Japanese company, was much more enjoyable.

Mattioli, president of Marposs Japan since 2004, has now been in Japan with his family for 11 years. The time for return to Italy is drawing near, and for this reason he resisted the notion of acquiring a dog. He was overruled, even to the extent of having to welcome a toy poodle, named Oscar, into the household, which already includes two cats.

"I wanted a Jack Russell terrier, because I like a dog with a strong character," he says. "But there are two things about the poodle that I did not expect. First, it is bigger than I thought it would be, and it is not like a doll or a toy at all. It's really good fun."

It will be sad to leave Japan, Mattioli says, but again he is pragmatic.

"It takes time to get used to Japan, but the learning curve eventually flattens out and the motivation fades slightly. Then you bring in someone new," he explains. "Also, you have gained experience in Japan that will be useful at headquarters."

Meanwhile, the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan board member plans to learn everything he can about the craftsmanship of Japanese swords. This interest originates in a longstanding fascination with blades, combined with a passion for all kinds of crafts.

"While in England, I did a furniture restoration course and a blacksmithing course," he relates.

Mattioli owns one sword, an entry-level item, slightly flawed, which he purchased in order to learn correct handling. It will not turn into a collection.

"Rather than the object, I am

i Do you like natto?

Title: President, Marposs Japan

Time in Japan: "11 years"

Career highlight: "Coming into this position"

Career regret: "When I started here, I did not have a completely clear picture of HR management"

Favourite saying: "Just be yourself"

Favourite books: *Moby Dick*, *Heart of Darkness*, and *Slaughterhouse-Five*

Cannot live without: "My family"

Lesson learned in Japan: "Despite cultural differences, commonsense is still commonsense"

Secret of success in business: "Delegate to good people"

Do you like natto?: "It's okay, but I don't go out of my way to get it"

interested in how they are made," he states.

To do this, he visits the Society for Preservation of Japanese Art Swords (Nihon Bijutsu Touken Houzon Kyoukai), in Tokyo's Yoyogi district, quite near his home.

"I have also been to the Bizen Osafune Japanese sword museum, south of Kobe, where artisans work in the traditional way," he says, "and I visit a sword maker in Kamakura."

Mattioli expects to continue his career with Marposs, which produces precision measuring devices used mainly for quality control in the production of mechanical parts and has branches all over the world.

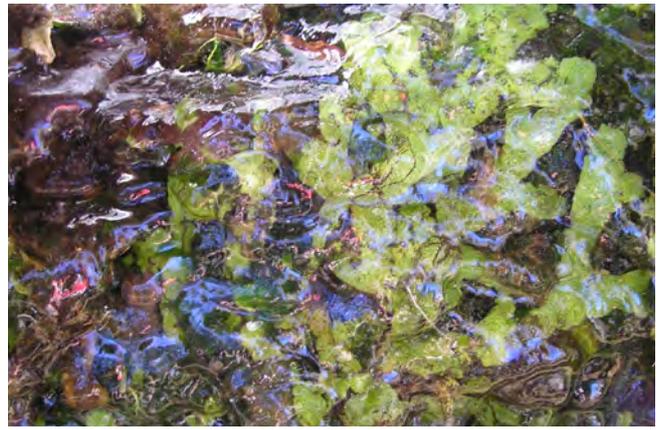
"We have around 130 employees in Japan, with sales, service, engineering, assembly and inspection departments, and we have a certain level of local production," he explains.

Asked to name his favourite book, Mattioli names three works of fiction. The first is Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. "It was translated by a famous Italian writer. It is a masterpiece, even in Italian."

The second is the novella, *Heart of Darkness*, by Joseph Conrad. "It is set in the Congo in late 19th century, and is the basis for the movie *Apocalypse Now*."

The third is *Slaughterhouse-Five*: "A beautiful book and critique of war, by Kurt Vonnegut."

Not bad for someone who in school was more interested in science. **e**



Freeze frame

Photos and text **DAVID C HULME**

In the hills of western Tokyo, dead, dry leaves blown by a chill wind rattle against the bare rocks of Kawanori valley. Steep hillsides show only the grey of bare deciduous trees and dark green swathes of conifer. Only a few hardy mosses and ferns remain vivid as the icy grip of winter tightens. These waters are frigid even in summer. Soon the 40-metre Hyakuhironotaki (Hundred-fathom falls) will freeze from top to bottom and the stream may even cease to flow. Here, every season has its own invigorating beauty. 







François Audrin

Chef de Cuisine

From Nantes, in France, François Audrin spent several years honing his culinary skills by moving from one Michelin-starred restaurant to another, throughout Europe and Central America. Then, in 2008, he became head chef, leading a team of six, aboard the luxury yacht *Christina O*. Since 2011, he has been responsible for fine dining hosted by the Ambassador of the European Union to Japan, at the ambassador's residence as well as at Europa House.

"A good knowledge of both French and Japanese styles of cuisine, very different and both very complex, is now fundamental for the constant evolution of our work."



Photo **BENJAMIN PARKS**



♥ Earthquake Restoration Support Project

CPR & AED Challenge - ALL HEARTS FOR JAPAN

—Something Each of Us Can Do—

We at Laerdal Medical Japan K.K. express our heartfelt sympathy to everyone affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

With the deep desire to assist those affected by the earthquake, we have launched the Earthquake Restoration Support Project in May 2011, with the "MiniAnne CPR Training Caravan" .

As reported by the Japanese Government on November 2, 2012, as many as 2,303 died from stress caused by the disaster and life as evacuees. We are keen to increase the number of competent bystanders (discoverers, companions and emergency personnel) and use CPR to decrease the number of "earthquake related deaths" . We started the Earthquake Restoration Support Project because we would like as many people as possible to know the correct CPR procedure.

Through this project, we will match your purchases of the MiniAnne (Personal CPR Training Kit) by donating the same number of MiniAnne kits to schools and evacuation centers in the affected area. We provide CPR training with each unit purchased or donated.

We would like as many people as possible to take CPR training, and to share the training with their families and friends. Your cooperation and support in helping to reduce "earthquake related deaths" is deeply appreciated.

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469908-JYE

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(Protection sheet for CPR)

♥ CPR Training Schedule (as an example)

60
minutes

- Greeting by Facilitator (5 minutes)
- Can you save your dear person? (10 minutes)
- MiniAnne CPR Training (40 minutes)
 - * Each person uses MiniAnne for training
- Q & A (5 minutes)
- Questionnaire (5 minutes)



* After training, the trainee will take MiniAnne home and will be able to review the training and tell someone how to do CPR.



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