

TRANSFORMER EXPERT HIRAI DENKEIKI THRIVES WITH CENTURY-OLD EXPERTISE IN EPOXY MOULDING TECHNOLOGY

Almost 100 years ago, Hirai Denkeiki pioneered epoxy moulding technology for the manufacture of transformers. Today, the Kyoto-based company continues to thrive with its proprietary "super" technology that is relied on by an expanding customer base consisting of Japan's leading power generation companies and electric utilities along with prominent manufacturers across industries.

"The sustainability of our business is anchored in our century-old expertise," says Takaya Hirai, president. "We also attribute our success to keeping our company family-owned, which allows us to make quick decisions and focus more on ensuring customer satisfaction."

Starting in 1921 as a supplier of indicating instruments and meter transformers, Hirai Denkeiki has created a solid reputation for supplying high-performance current transformers that are noted for lasting 30 to 40 years as compared to traditional transformers' 15 years. After its release of Japan's first small-sized, high-precision wound magnetic core window-type current transformer in 1958, Hirai Denkeiki has progressively expanded its portfolio of ultra-precise current transformers and has also unveiled general-type voltage transformers, auxiliary current transformers, coupling transformers, and transformers for extra high voltage. Additionally, the company custom-designs transformers for any purpose,

such as for low and high voltage or frequency, for extra precision and for general use. "We see ourselves contributing to the safety and security of society by helping prevent electricity-related accidents in facilities where our epoxy mould transformers are installed," Hirai says.

Hirai Denkeiki continues to refine its expertise to create environment-friendly transformers that are lightweight and smaller in size, while delivering higher performance. The company has also begun exploring the possibility of incorporating light-emitting diode technology, and is open to joint research and development projects to develop new applications and products.

Domestic sales account for about 90 per cent of the company's revenues, with several big-name clients as part of its established customer base. Beyond Japan, Hirai Denkeiki has secured sizeable projects, including the supply of precise current transformers for an installation in Malaysia and the development of a zero-phase sequence current transformer for a project in Thailand. Hirai Denkeiki has also carved out a presence in China and South Korea through sales agents.

"Our goal is to increase the share of overseas sales from 10 per cent to 30 per cent," Hirai says. "We believe the opening of our new factory this year, which will increase our capacity threefold, will play a major role in achieving this target. We also hope to find more quality-minded distribution partners to help boost our sales and cultivate business opportunities abroad."



Takaya Hirai, president

SAKAE LACE, THE WORLD'S LEAVERS LACE MARKET LEADER, GOES BEYOND LINGERIE

There's a big chance that the lace one sees in lingerie shops is made by Sakae Lace. That's because the company makes 60 per cent of the world's Leavers lace, and is crafting more designs and making more innovations than ever before.

Sakae Lace started in 1958 with just two Leavers lace machines. It has nearly 90 machines today, maximised with a small lot production strategy that enables the company to create elegant lace designs. Each year, nearly 2,500 sketches are created in order to provide customers with 800 new sophisticated designs.

As much as 20 per cent of these new designs are results from collaborations with its clients. "The benefit of working

together with customers on design development is they can purchase directly from us," says company president Tetsuya Sawamura.

With output consisting of 80 per cent Leavers lace and 20 per cent Raschel lace, the company is the partner of choice for high-end European fashion brands such as Chantelle and Simone Perele.

According to Sawamura, Sakae Lace grew to market dominance because of several factors. The company started producing lace in China in 1992, long before outsourcing to China became a worldwide trend. Its Chinese employees soon became leaders as the company expanded into Thailand in 2003. Today, the company



Tetsuya Sawamura, president

has sales representatives in up to 14 countries, spread across the globe.

Beyond geographic growth, Sakae Lace also maintains partnerships that improve its product line. The company works with universities on using cameras to detect damage and leveraging artificial intelligence to explore ways to reduce labour costs.

While Sakae Lace draws most of its sales from underwear, it is using its lace expertise to expand sales to outerwear such as haute couture, wedding dresses and kimonos.

The next frontiers of growth, particularly for outerwear, are China and India, where the company seeks to expand its sales presence.

NICHIRYO MARKS 75TH YEAR WITH THE LAUNCH OF NEW NICHIPET MICROPIPETTE

Celebrating 75 years of innovation and dedicated work, liquid handling device manufacturer Nichiryo strengthens its commitment to meeting the utmost requirements of clinical laboratories and the life science sector worldwide. This is showcased by the continuous involvement of the company's flagship Nichipet series of micropipettes, which will see a new model unveiled within the year.

Based on a dispensing technology developed and refined since its establishment in 1944, Nichiryo offers a broad range of pipettes and dispensers for handling different liquids, including solvents and high-impact liquids. Its market-leading Nichipet Premium autoclavable model is noted for innovations in durability, precision, stability and comfort. To meet specific client requirements, Nichiryo also

supplies custom-made liquid handling products.

Three Nichiryo pipettes are on display at the Nobel Museum as commemorative gifts from Dr Shinya Yamanaka, the winner of the 2012 Nobel Prize for physiology or medicine. Yamanaka has been using the Nichipet EX micropipettes for a long time, including in his award-winning stem cell research – a testament to the quality of Nichiryo's products.

"We attribute our success to our unrelenting focus on delivering superior product quality and customer service," says Takayoshi Ito, president. "This has been key to becoming a trusted partner to our customers."

Nichiryo exports its liquid handling instruments worldwide, with international sales currently accounting for 20 to 30 per cent of the company's

sales. In 1996, Nichiryo established a subsidiary in the United States to better serve its expanding client base in the Americas.

Over the medium term, Nichiryo is considering opening local branches in Asia to provide genuine customer support. It also aims to work with quality-minded distributors and service partners who can offer the same top-notch, "super-express" calibration and repair services provided by its Japanese subsidiary Scimec.

"Asia is an important market for us," Ito says. "We see growth opportunities in China, India and Southeast Asia, and future possibilities in developing countries in other parts of Asia."



Takayoshi Ito, president

ANRITSU METER AFFIRMS NO BETTER WAY TO MEASURE SUCCESS THAN WITH UNQUESTIONABLE QUALITY

Since its establishment in 1949, Anritsu Meter has continuously proven that there is only one way to remain strong in business, and that is through delivering unquestionable quality.

Through the years, the company has created its mark as a leader in temperature measurement technology, and played an active role in the enhancement of measuring techniques in all types of industry, especially the semiconductor and automotive segments.

"Our competitive edge is rooted in our strength that comes from our long-term relationships with our customers, from our tailor-made and durable products, and our quick response time," says president Masatsune Senbokuya.

A pioneer in the field of surface temperature measurement, Anritsu Meter commits to producing high-quality products that answer the market needs and adapt to advanced technologies.

"We are proud to share that we're almost done working on new probes that are quite rare with the use of optical fibre technology," Senbokuya says.

While gaining recognition worldwide for producing more than 10,000 kinds of temperature probes, Anritsu Meter proves



Masatsune Senbokuya, president

to be a proud carrier of the Japanese stamp of excellence across its wide sales network in Asia. The company aims to grow its international sales, which currently constitute 20 per cent of its overall sales, by enhancing its steady presence in South Korea, Thailand, Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China, as well as expanding its distribution in Vietnam and Indonesia.

"We are open to partnerships," Senbokuya says. "But our focus is to educate the agencies about our products."

Anritsu Meter looks forward to further increasing its sales in the United States and Europe by leveraging its wide range of products, outstanding quality and remarkable 40 years of history. It aims to capture a slice of the global temperature sensor market, which is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 4.5 per cent to reach US\$6.26 billion by the end of 2022.

NEW TECHNOLOGY AND STRATEGY EXPAND HIGASHIMOTO KIKAI'S MEAT PROCESSING BUSINESS

Asia-Pacific's population of 4.5 billion people is driving the demand for food and food processing machinery – an industry expected to reach US\$93.5 billion globally by 2026. Celebrating its 50th year as Japan's leader in meat and ham processing technologies, Higashimoto Kikai is responding to this challenge with a new offering, an upcoming factory and robust plans for expansion.

Founded in 1969 as a business maintaining imported meat processing equipment, Higashimoto Kikai started manufacturing its own machines to answer Japan's growing market for ham and sausages at the time. It merged European-standard product technologies with its own know-how to provide customer-tailored machines.

Products range widely from vacuum mixers and cutters, meat tenderisers and grinders to frozen crushers, lift boys, smoke houses and super injectors. These highly durable and resilient processing machines offer unsurpassed food safety

standards for ham and sausage manufacturers, meat processing companies and frozen food brands.

Using its expertise, Higashimoto Kikai is developing an automated meat processing technology that will replace manual operations. It also plans to open a new factory in Vietnam in five years to boost production capacity, and aims to increase international sales to 10 per cent of its overall sales volume.

"We develop and manufacture new products based on requests from clients and with their collaboration," says Shinya Okada, president. "Our portfolio has expanded because we met customer needs of different periods over time. So we are still selling products that we developed 40 years ago as these represent our core technologies."

Present in China and South Korea through its clients, and targeting to expand into Thailand and Vietnam, Higashimoto Kikai aims to attract new clients and further grow its product



Shinya Okada, president

portfolio. It welcomes research collaborations with universities, and is interested in automation and internet-of-things technologies.

"Our company needs to be on the same trend as our customers five years from now," Okada says.

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Keihanna Office : 〒619-0237 1-4 2cho-me, HIKARIDAI, Seika-Chyo, Kyoto, Japan

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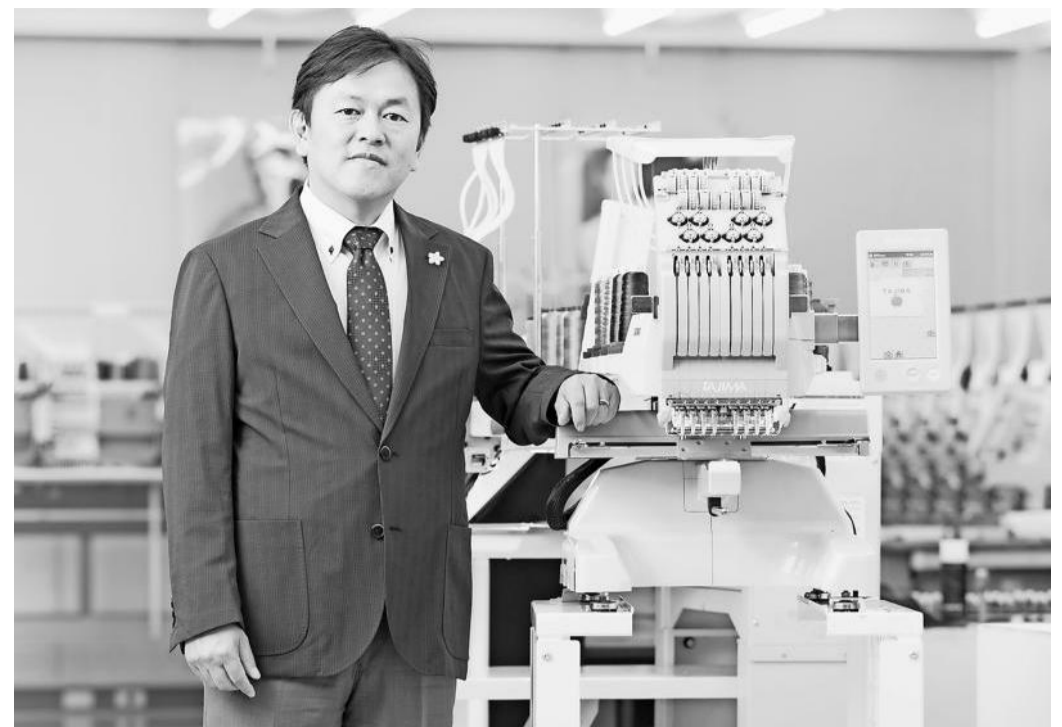
It is not easy to carve a niche in the dizzying industry that is fashion. Creativity becomes the key to distinguishing one designer from the next. However, concept and execution are two different things that can sometimes be conflicting. With its 75-year expertise in manufacturing embroidery machines, Tajima Industries has been a loyal partner of many companies in giving life to intricate designs and patterns. Tajima put a modern spin on needlework – mechanising the art of sewing to make many customised and original creations. Since its establishment, it has developed about 3,000 embroidery machine models used in many industries in more than 100 countries worldwide. It has become the partner of choice for embroidery

machineries by the apparel, technology, automotive, aerospace and medical industries. "As an embroidery machines specialist, we always stay on top of trends to adapt our products to client requirements. We add value by supporting the innovation of our clients in their exploration of new applications. Companies actually approach us to test-sew new materials such as sensors, carbon fibre, heater wire and other technical textiles," says president Hideki Tajima. One such product of the company's market intuitiveness is the Tajima SAI. The compact embroidery machine makes it easy for artisans and smaller businesses to benefit from the know-how and expertise of Tajima. Even with its compact

appearance, the Tajima SAI is equipped with the same features as the company's other flagship products such as durable mechanical and electrical parts, precisely adjusted components, easy to use for inexperienced operators, among others. With international companies making up almost 90 per cent of its customer base, Tajima has stitched together a strong support network with more than 60 distributors worldwide. Aside from manufacturing and distributing subsidiaries in Japan, it has established an assembling factory in Shanghai and representative offices as sales and technical service bases in the United States and France. Tajima envisions that its market share in Japan will increase in the future, especially as domestic sales in the apparel

We add value by supporting the innovation of our clients in their exploration of new applications

Hideki Tajima, president



Hideki Tajima, president

and automotive industries continue to rise. Outside its home market, the company sees great opportunities to grow its market share in India,

Bangladesh, Pakistan and Russia, as these countries are mass production hubs of many apparel companies. Tajima is also seeking partners such as sales

representatives who can help it navigate the African market. "Our customers invest in our products because they know they can

succeed with our technology. We will continue to develop new technologies to maintain the trust of our customers and gain new ones," Tajima says.

NITTO REINETSU SEEKS TO BRING OPTIMAL AIR ENVIRONMENT TO ASIA'S FACTORIES AND CLEAN ROOMS

Leading up to its 45th anniversary, air cleaning and cooling solution specialist Nitto Reinetsu is moving towards a stronger internationalisation strategy and opportunities to grow in Asia. "This expansion is prompted by our commitment to further serve our predominantly Japanese customers who have expanded their manufacturing presence across Asia," says CEO Eiichi Ichikawa. "We also aim to serve a wider market and help bring an optimal air environment to the region's factories and clean rooms."

Nitto Reinetsu specialises in the production of energy-saving heat and humidity control units, air purifiers and cooling devices. It has become renowned for its *monozukuri* approach to manufacturing – a guarantee that its products are made with the highest level of workmanship, manufacturing excellence and continuous improvement. The company is trusted to keep dust-free and sterile clean air at many food factories,

chemical plants, laboratories and hospitals, and manufacturing facilities with precision work spaces, including the semiconductor and automotive sectors.

Its flagship product, the eONE-A1W/A05 W super-energy-saving type precision temperature and humidity air conditioner, has won the grand prize for excellence in energy efficiency and conservation. Serving as a replacement for the air handling unit and external air conditioner, it cuts energy costs by up to 80 per cent. The eONE efficiently cools, dehumidifies, humidifies and heats the entire surface through which air passes.

Other key offerings from Nitto Reinetsu include various air showers and air curtains, fixed and easy-to-assemble clean booths, pass boxes and fan filter units. Nitto Reinetsu can custom-design its devices, in terms of dimension and functionality, to match specific client requirements.

"As we seek to expand our geographical footprint, it's vital that we



Eiichi Ichikawa, CEO

broaden our collaboration network," Ichikawa says. In Asia, Nitto Reinetsu seeks distribution partners, particularly in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, India and China. It is also looking for quality-minded subassembly partners and aims to expand its network for product development.

CHUKOH CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES MOULDS SUPER PLASTIC PTFE TO SUIT CLIENT NEEDS

When Dr Roy Plunkett was trying to invent a new refrigerant in 1938, he accidentally discovered the super plastic polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) or fluoropolymer. Surrounded by tightly packed fluorine atoms, PTFE can withstand extreme heat, ultraviolet (UV) light and critical chemicals while possessing superb non-stick and electrical-insulation properties. The same tough features, however, have made fluoropolymer difficult to process – an expertise mastered by Chukoh Chemical Industries to serve the specific needs of clients in architecture, medicine, food packaging, transport and electronics.

"By instilling in every employee the concept of *kaizen* or day-to-day improvement, we are able to develop core technologies that allow us to transform fluoropolymer into unique products for many modern industries," says Chukoh president Naoyuki Shono.

Chukoh allocates about 10 per cent of expenses to research and development while collaborating with partner

universities and companies. The company, for instance, has the technology to process PTFE into silicone resins and coat them onto airbags to prevent breaking or burning. Chukoh can also impregnate glass fibre yarn cloth with fluoropolymer to produce Skytop, a breakthrough architectural roofing membrane.

Stronger than steel, Skytop does not sag over time as it can withstand temperatures up to 800 degrees Celsius. UV light bleaches the roofing membrane pure white throughout its estimated 50-year life cycle without cleaning. As such, Skytop delivers significant energy savings by reflecting up to 85 per cent of the sun's heat while letting in as much light as possible. Chukoh has installed the innovation at the Bangkok Airport, the Beijing National Stadium also known as the Bird's Nest and several other stadiums worldwide.

"We are always looking for a chance to work with industry, academia and distributors, especially in the field of



Naoyuki Shono, president

semiconductors, medicine and food packaging in China and Southeast Asia," says Jinichi Komiya, operating officer

and general manager. "Together, we can provide customer-centric solutions the Japanese way."

CONSTANT INNOVATION PUSHES OHM'S GROWTH IN AND OUT OF JAPAN

Better futures through creation and development – this vision has always fuelled OHM Electric's drive to give life to unprecedented products and technologies that will transform and improve societies. As continued industrialisation sweeps the globe, OHM positions itself as the ideal partner of

manufacturing companies across many sectors with its revolutionary and environmental solutions.

"Our company is built on the principles of uniqueness and originality. We focus on making one-of-a-kind inimitable products. We have been doing this for 60 years, and we plan to continue doing so in the future," says OHM president Yoshiro Tozuka.

OHM is a renowned wiring solutions expert, as it is among the pioneers of the first cable gland CAPCON. It is also one of the go-to companies for climate control equipment that helps maintain optimal temperature and humidity conditions in an enclosure, and environmental equipment that eliminate oil mist and dust from production sites.

Making great strides in its environmental advocacy, OHM specialises in panel coolers and oil mist collectors. The non-fluorocarbon coolers launched in 2016 employ the refrigerant

R1234yf, which has an extremely low Global Warming Potential of less than 1. In the field of oil mist treatment, OHM has been focusing on non-filter type for waste reduction. OHM helps its clients protect human health and maintain a clean work environment.

Working closely with clients to understand their needs, OHM is expanding its business scope to include system integration. Backed by a robust research and development team, OHM aims to widen its scope to more industries, including medical, food and robotics, and more markets outside Japan.

OHM supports this geographical expansion by opening an oil mist collector and cooling system factory in Thailand that will serve as a distribution hub for the Asian region. Aside from serving important growth markets such as Southeast Asia and China, OHM seeks to reach new markets such as North America and Europe.



Yoshiro Tozuka, president

NSC SHARES SEWAGE AND WATER TECHNOLOGIES WITH REST OF ASIA

Leveraging nearly 60 years of expertise in water-related environmental projects, Nihon Suido Consultants (NSC) is giving central and local governments in Japan and elsewhere around the world a glimpse of the future. The company, for instance, wants to collaborate with appropriate experts in creating new technology such as a robot with artificial intelligence to investigate sewer pipes while developing special antennas that will allow sewer manholes to transmit water data using internet-of-things technology.

"We concentrate on our hi-tech expertise and excellent service to help local governments faced with shrinking budgets," says NSC president Yoshikazu Nomura. "We place emphasis on excellent design work at the very onset to ensure reliable operation and management throughout the project's life cycle. We always strive for the best total solution for our clients."

Adept across the whole value chain in



Yoshikazu Nomura, president

any project from water supply systems, waste water treatment and river engineering to flood control, NSC enjoys the top market share in Japan. The company maintains technological leadership, with eight of every 10

employees comprising seasoned engineers, while pursuing extensive collaboration with universities and industries across the region.

Focused on raising the share of overseas business from 10 to 30 per cent, the company is working with various types of companies in countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Indonesia. Moreover, NSC has opened branches in Singapore and in the Philippines as it pursues a leading role in public-private partnerships across Asia. Projects overseas include the Buaran Water Treatment Plant in Indonesia, the Chinamo Water Treatment Plant in Laos and the South Binh Duong Sewage Treatment Plant in Vietnam.

"Our clients' financial situation will not be an issue as we can customise our solutions to suit their budget while using local people and resources," Nomura says. "As such, the project benefits both the host country and NSC. This is our policy."

Sakae Lace Co., Ltd.
Leavers, Jacquardtronic & Raschel Lace
10-51 Miyuki-cho, Takarazuka, Hyogo, 665-0042, Japan
<http://www.sakae-lace.co.jp/en/index.html>
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Hong Kong Office: Room 105, 2/F, Hui Tsang House, 33 Hanoi Street, Central, Hong Kong
Phone: +852 0941 9070 FAX: +852 0941 9070