Dai Nippon Printing: making its mark on 4IR

Faced with the opportunities and challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), DNP has diversified into new business areas combining its traditional expertise in printing and emerging technologies.

Japan – renowned throughout the ages for its profound value and natural flair for craftsmanship, or *monozukuri* – has a long history in the art of printing. In fact, Japanese printing is so culturally influential that it has defined Japanese arts to this day; the aesthetics of both manga and anime are directly descended from woodblock prints. But printing has not only been used traditionally to create art, but also as a vital method of communication.

It was this very passionate desire to communicate, and to help raise the level of people’s knowledge and culture through letterpress printing, that explains how Dai Nippon Printing (DNP) came to be through its founders in 1876.

More than 140 years later, and DNP remains one of world’s foremost printing companies. It’s fair to say however that the company’s business model looks a little different now to how it did in the 19th century.

"Printing on paper is not such a big deal anymore – many companies can do this type of business," says Yoshinari Kitajima, President of DNP. "What distinguishes us from other companies is the diversification process that we are in right now."

From its base in Tokyo, the company now has a strong international presence in business segments that cover information communications, lifestyle, industrial supplies and electronics. With involvement in such a wide variety of processes, its products range from magazines through to smart cards, metal masks for the production of OLED displays, as well as battery pouches for lithium-ion batteries.

Employing nearly 40,000 people across its network of plants and offices across the world, DNP is not just a major printing player in Japan, but across the globe too.

"The main strength of this company is that we have transformed printing technology according to social needs," explains Mr. Kitajima. "Over our long history, we’ve been able to enhance each printing process such as plate-making and printing, and transform them into sophisticated technologies such as micro-fabrication and precision coating over this long period. We have also developed patented materials that other companies cannot copy. All of these combined merits accumulate to the overall attraction and benefit of DNP."

"Since its inception, our company’s major business has been based on a variety of technologies developed in the printing process," says Mr. Kitajima.

"Consequently," says Mr. Kitajima, "the introduction of new technologies has meant our company diversified and split into different segments of business. While our major business remains printing and packaging, we now have different segments of business such as life science and solutions for the automobile industry. All of this has been introduced via our new R&D force.

Empowering Dreams

DNP innovations are making tomorrow’s cars real. From lighter curved resin glass to more impenetrable information security, our advances evolved from printing and information technologies to realize a brighter, more sustainable mobile future.
Japan auto-part makers: the power driving the automotive industry

While Toyota, Honda and Nissan are just the visible tip of the iceberg, Japan’s automotive industry is driven by hundreds of smaller firms that build and supply pioneering technology and high-quality parts and components to automakers around the world.

8.7%
of Japan’s workforce are employed in automotive manufacturing and related industries

27
Number of Japanese firms in the Top 100 global OEM parts suppliers

18%
Automotive components and vehicles account for 18 percent of all manufacturing shipments in Japan

$18 billion
Annual investment in R&D by Japanese companies in automotive and related industries

They say a country's industrial and economic strength is reflected in the strength of its automotive industry. It is no coincidence then that the three largest economies in the world are also the three top manufacturers of automobiles.

The United States has the big three of Ford, GM and Chrysler; while China has a raft of domestic car companies and, perhaps unsurprisingly, produces more cars than anyone else, although many for international brands with manufacturing bases in the Dragon economy.

And while China has emerged as a major regional competitor in recent years, producing almost three times more vehicles than Japan in 2017, Japan’s automotive industry is still one of the most prominent, distinguished and technologically advanced industries in the world, reputed for high-quality and performance.

The automotive industry in Japan employs 5.5 million people, representing 8.7 percent of the workforce, and annual investment in R&D by automotive manufacturing and related industries is $18 billion, or roughly 21 percent of R&D spending in all of Japan’s manufacturing sectors.

Japan is the third largest producer of cars in the world after China and the U.S., and has been firmly placed in the top three since the 1960s. Of the top ten selling car brands in the world, three are Japanese companies. In the U.S., the top two selling brands between 2016 and 2017 were, naturally, GM and Ford; three of the following four top sellers were Japanese: Toyota, Honda and Nissan.

But Toyota, Honda and Nissan are just the visible tip of the iceberg. The nation’s automotive industry is also made up of hundreds of lesser known companies – from SMEs to multinationals – that build and supply the parts and components for these big car makers. And like Toyota, Honda and Nissan, these companies are also big exporters, supplying high-quality parts to carmakers in the U.S. and across the world.

Automotive components and vehicles account for 18 percent of all manufacturing shipments in Japan. Auto parts manufacturing accounts for over 600,000 jobs in the automotive sector, and another 390,000 jobs are allocated to the production of raw materials and basic equipment used in automotive manufacturing.

Take a look inside the hood, the door panel, underneath the steering wheel or inside the gear box, and the chances are you will find parts and components developed and built by these Japanese parts manufacturers, whether you’re driving a Chrysler, a Ford or a Toyota.

“If you drive a car such as a Toyota, Honda, Nissan, Ford, Volkswagen, Fiat or Chrysler, you probably use our products without realizing,” says Osamu Inoue, President and COO of Sumitomo Electric, a global leader in the manufacture of wire harnesses for automobiles.

A wire harness is an organized set of wires, terminals and connectors that run throughout the entire vehicle and relay information and electric power. They play a critical role in connecting a variety of components – a role which will become increasingly more important with the introduction of electric vehicles (E/Vs), IoT-connected smart vehicles and driverless cars that require more electronic wiring and components.

With more wires come more harnesses and thus, more weight. As such, Sumitomo Electric’s R&D department is constantly working to develop more lightweight solutions.

“In the area of wire harnesses for the automotive industry, we developed new aluminum-based products and they have been in widespread use across the globe. Since aluminum weight is half that of conventional materials, it has been used to create lightweight vehicles,” explains Mr. Inoue.

Yasuhiro Ogura, President of Ogura Clutch, the world’s largest manufacturer of electromagnetic clutches and brakes, also acknowledges that E/Vs are changing the demands placed on automotive components manufacturers, who must innovate and adapt to meet these new demands. Fortunately, thanks to their technological and R&D prowess, Japanese auto parts makers like Ogura are more capable of adapting to the major changes in the industry than many others.

“To increase the production of E/Vs, the market requires safer...
and more reliable devices. For example, as E/Vs become more popular, part-makers will have to produce the next-generation of air conditioning compressors to work with the many electrical and electronic devices present in electric cars,” says Mr. Ogura.

“At Ogura Clutch, what we are most concerned with is the decreased need for clutches in E/V coolant systems. To maintain our position as the market leader, we designed and introduced new styles of clutches approximately five years ago. One of the strengths of our company is our capacity to adapt, predict market trends and swiftly react to new demands.”

The company also develops micro-clutches that are used in copy machines and other electronic devices. As Mr. Ogura points out, when E/Vs begin requiring these types of miniature clutches, Ogura will be ready to offer theirs as a solution.

“These miniature clutches are small in size but produced in high volumes. Annually we produce 10 million micro clutches,” he explains.

Established in 1938, Ogura now employs 2,000 people worldwide and has capacity to build 30 million clutches annually in its manufacturing facilities located in Japan, South East Asia, China, North America, South America and Europe. Its total revenue comes from a diversified portfolio of approximately 7,000 various clutches.

“Despite having about 2,000 employees around the world and being a market leader with many of our products, we regard ourselves as a relatively small but strong company with a long history and experience in clutch manufacturing. That is our advantage over new competitors who will need experience and knowledge, as well as funds, which Ogura Clutch already possesses,” adds Mr. Ogura.

With its production sites located all over the world, Ogura has been exporting the “Made by Japan” technological prowess since the 1980s, which is used by carmakers internationally.

“Our company’s objective has, and always will be, to support the monozukuri of our customers thanks to our own high level of craftsmanship. For the next 20 years, we will continue our efforts in maintaining this approach to production,” adds Mr. Ogura.

Like many Japanese companies, Ogura was compelled to open factories in the U.S. in the 1980s when former president Ronald Regan introduced legislation that stipulated that 70 percent of all component parts had to be assembled at local manufacturing sites. Mr. Ogura points out the similarities between Reagan’s and President Donald Trump’s policies to promote local production.

“Like Mazda, we also have a long experience working in the American market. We already have manufacturing bases in the U.S. No matter how the situation fluctuates on the political sphere, we will find a way to connect to American customers. The growth of our company has reached countries, like Brazil, China, France, and more,” he says.

“Getting down to the nuts and bolts of the car is where you will find Yamashina Corporation, which manufactures a wide range of fasteners, bolts, screws, pins, resin, and thin plates, as well as offering testing and analysis services. Seventy percent of its customers are in the automotive industry, which depend on Yamashina’s light-weight and non-corrosive products to literally hold the vehicle together.

“The company may be more than a century old but it is still at the top of the game when it comes to the latest technology in the industry, investing heavily in innovation and R&D in order to develop high-quality, reliable and light-weight materials for its products. One of its latest innovations is carbon fiber reinforced plastic (CFRP).”

“We regard this need for lightweight material as a strategy for product development,” says president, Naoki Hori.

“In response to such demand for lighter material, we succeeded in developing the world’s first aluminum nut especially developed for CFRP, and we started selling it. This is one of our cutting-edge products for airplanes and automobiles. The developing process has been very challenging and required a lot of effort from our side: R&D and innovation played a key-role in achieving success.”

Like Ogura, another of Yamashina’s competitive strengths, and indeed Japanese manufacturers in general, is the ability adapt – to both changing customer and market needs.

“Our field of know-how can be defined as ‘suriaiwase’, or the ability to tune and tailor our products to fit certain characteristics. As a result, we are able to meet our customer’s needs and ensure client satisfaction.”

But, as Mr. Hori points out, it’s not just cutting-edge materials that define the quality and performance of Yamashina’s products, so too does the “know-how” and technology that go into the processing, manufacturing and the assembly-line. And it is this know-how that gives Japanese companies their competitive advantage.

“Even if competitors utilize the same structure, materials, raw materials and manufacturing processes, our know-how remains unique and superior; it cannot be surpassed by anyone,” explains Mr. Hori.

“This is especially visible in the automotive sector, where the meticulous, complex effort and competence that go behind the entire process represents our true advantage. We consistently aim for perfection.”
An unrivaled reputation for quality formed parts for over 60 years

Metal parts innovator Fukui Byora designs and manufactures almost all of its production machinery in-house and is a pioneer of cold forming, a manufacturing process that has many advantages over conventional machining.

How many parts are necessary to manufacture a modern car? As incredible as it may seem, present-day vehicles are composed of over 30,000 parts and components. The machines we casually utilize to take our children to school, meet a loved one or drive to our favorite restaurant, throughout time, grown into an astonishingly complex labyrinth of screws, cables, rivets and wires.

Should a seemingly microscopic component malfunction, it is the entire performance of the vehicle that is put in jeopardy. Through stringent quality control, automotive manufacturers require their suppliers to abide to the highest level of manufacturing precision.

Since 1959, Fukui Byora Co., Ltd. has been providing high precision cold formed parts to satisfy the rigorous demands of automotive manufacturers. After years of research, the company has developed its own unique cold forming technique, a manufacturing process that incorporates the extruding and upsetting of raw wire material into a finished part through a succession of punches and dies.

In comparison to hot forming, where the metal is heated before processing, cold forming shapes metal items at room temperature. By heading raw material wire under high forging tonnage, net shapes are seamlessly created and the finished item enjoys increased hardness. While this technique allows for complex designs to be produced accurately and precisely, it also contributes to reducing production costs.

Fukui Byora's high-speed process can produce up to 600 pieces per minute, depending upon size and configuration. Owing to its 1,200 units of cold forming machines, the company supplies around 12 billion component parts annually. Improved material usage, reduced forging energy consumption and the elimination of lengthy machining processes are some of the advantages that Fukui Byora's unique technique guarantees its customer.

To achieve such technological prowess, Fukui Byora invested in the creation of its own production system and machinery. "We have internally developed over 90 percent of our production equipment and 95 percent of our tooling items in-house," says Ms. Kanae Yamagishi, President and CEO of BYORA USA Corp. and BYORA International.

"This complete control over production allows us to react extremely quickly to emergencies."

As customer demand evolved, Fukui Byora combined its mass-production ability with a dedication to developing customized solutions tailored to the specification of each individual demand. "Our company puts value engineering at the center of our priorities. We focus on taking existing designs and analyzing how we can improve our customers' requests by manufacturing it more efficiently or reducing production costs," explains Mr. Yukio Uchimoto, President and CEO of Fukui Byora Group.

By virtue of its unique engineering capacity Fukui Byora produces over 8,000 varieties of parts on a year-to-year basis.

Strong of its 60 years’ experience in cold forming, the company diversified its product portfolio and ventured into new fields where precision and reliability are required. On top of miniature items used in electronic devices, the Fukui-based manufacturer supplies precision parts for the medical field, which are found in items such as syringes and pacemakers.

As global demand for automobiles increased, Fukui Byora expanded beyond the Japanese border and founded its first international base in Singapore in 1996. The company is today present around the world and utilizes its international sales network as a means to capture regional market-share. "With a distribution center in Europe, and facilities in the United States, Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand, we are able to meet the demands of clients around the globe," states Mr. Uchimoto.

Since their first appearance, the vehicles that pave our roads have been recognized as a symbol for technological advancements. And if today we are able to drive faster, more securely, while consuming less energy, it is because the 30,000 parts that compose our favorite machines are perfectly aligned and functioning; it is because dedicated part manufacturers have developed unique techniques to make our lives more comfortable.
High-quality cotton produced with the earth in mind

Thanks to its historical know-how and unrivaled dedication to quality, Marusan Industry has acquired expertise in the production of high-quality cotton, from unique nonwoven technology to high-quality medical products.

Cotton is the most cultivated profitable non-food crop in the world, and is responsible for employing 7 percent of the total workforce in developing countries. Around half of all textiles are made from cotton, 64 percent of which is used for apparel, 28 percent for home furnishings and 8 percent for industrial use.

‘Miracle Cotton’. With such a huge market share, it’s easy to see that its Japanese customers really value its high-quality cotton over that of its competitors. Leveraging on the sterling reputation that it has earned in Japan, the company is also expanding internationally, exporting its bleached cotton, non-woven cotton and cotton-based products around the world – to China, South East Asia, Europe and the U.S., where its products can be found in pharmacies and drug stores such as CVS and Walgreens.

Aside from bleached cotton, the company also produces non-woven fabrics for the medical and sanitary, construction material and agriculture industries, as well as finished products such as cotton pads, cotton swabs, tea bags, and oil absorbent sheets.

“Cotton is an essential material for human beings because we utilize it in so many different ways in our every-day lives, particularly for clothes. What our company tries to do is produce cotton-based products of high quality that can complement other products well,” says president, Motohiro Kikuchi.

“Today, we stand as a leading developer, manufacturer and distributor of cotton-based cosmetics, every-day household materials, and sanitary and medical products, not only domestically but around the world.”

Marusan is a vertically integrated company involved in every stage of the value chain, from importing raw cotton (it imports rigorously selected varieties of cotton from around the globe, including the U.S.), to the manufacturing of bleached cotton, nonwoven fabric, and processed products. And this is something which Mr. Kikuchi believes sets Marusan apart from its competitors.

“One feature that differentiates us from other companies within our sector is that all of our business segments provide the full chain of production. Many companies within our sector will focus on only one of these steps; we do everything and we do it all with the highest level of expertise,” says Mr. Kikuchi.

“For example, taking the case of the medical industry as mentioned before, we will try to manufacture cotton pads that are good absorbents and that will allow the solutions being applied to them to function at their maximum potential. We therefore approach different customers with cotton-based products that are tailored towards their needs or requirements – it really is a win-win situation.”

One of the main issues in the global cotton industry surrounds environmental concerns, from water and energy consumption to the use of pesticides. To produce the one kilogram of cotton needed to make just one t-shirt or a pair of jeans, a staggering 20,000 liters of water is required. As one of the world’s largest cotton companies, environmental sustainability is also a major concern for Marusan.

“We ourselves promote environmental conservation by practicing pesticide-free, eco-friendly farming of cotton, and by undertaking ‘safe’ manufacturing of products that aims to prevent pollution as much as possible,” says Mr. Kikuchi.

“All of our processes are designed so that we can remove all contamination from our products in an efficient and environmentally friendly manner, and provide our customers with the best quality of cotton-based products on the market”

Motohiro Kikuchi, President, Marusan Industry
Japanese SMEs: industry’s hidden innovators

Largely unknown to end consumers, Japan’s SME manufacturers are the hidden champions on which global industry depends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SMEs represent 70% of Japan’s total employment</th>
<th>SMEs represent 50% of Japan’s added-value manufacturing output</th>
<th>SMEs have overseas offices</th>
<th>SMEs plan to expand exports over next 3 years</th>
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<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
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Japan is best known for corporate giants like Sony, Toshiba, Honda, Toyota and Panasonic. However, the nation’s economic backbone is not made up of these large multinational corporations, but the small and medium-sized enterprises that represent 97 percent of all Japanese businesses.

Japan’s SMEs employ 70 percent of the total workforce and are responsible for 50 percent of total manufacturing output. And without them, companies like Honda and Sony could not exist—these SMEs are the manufacturers that supply these larger firms with the vital parts, components and machines needed to make their end products. And it’s not just Japanese firms that depend on them, but companies in the U.S. and across the world.

While their products are largely invisible to the general public, these SME manufacturers are the strength and hidden innovators of Japanese industry. It is for this reason they have been often called the ‘hidden champions’, pioneers of high-performing technologies and high-quality products on which their clients depend.

And while many Japanese SMEs are already serving clients around the globe, in recent years, these companies have undertaken ambitious internationalization strategies to boost their worldwide operations in response to Japan’s shrinking domestic market due to its aging population.

Japan’s hidden innovators are using their technological prowess to develop new applications for their products as they look to expand and diversify into new business segments—from lighting manufacturers developing award-winning indoor grow-light systems, to companies in the molding industry applying their technology to new areas and to address new challenges.

Plastic injection molding is the common process used to create plastic parts, from everyday objects like garden chairs and toys to more high-precision parts for the medical industry. As the name suggests, the parts are created by injecting molten plastic resin into a mold to create the desired shape. The part that distributes the molten plastic resin into the mold is called a runner, of which there are two types, cold runners and the more advanced hot runners, which came into use in the 1970s and 80s.

Hot runners, or “runnerless”, systems offer many advantages over cold runners, such as shorter cycle time, design flexibility, enhanced operational efficiencies, and plastic waste reduction. As hot runners are complex systems, most manufacturers depend on highly-specialized companies to design and make the equipment and components for these systems—and one such company which has been doing so for more than 60 years is Seiki Corporation.

Since its establishment in 1954 as a pioneer in the development of hot runner systems and runnerless equipment, Seiki has been committed to solving the major challenges in the plastic injection molding industry, helping its customers around the world to work more efficiently, and thus contributing to their profitability.

Seiki’s customers are spread across several industries (number one being automotives, followed by medical, packaging and closures, and OA system) and depend on the superior technology and quality of the company’s products—technology and quality that cannot be replicated by its competitors, as president Shuichi Kawabata stresses.

“We are looking at how we can continue to provide solutions in areas with different levels of complexity and a high-tech environment.”

Sanwa Shoko is another company involved in the molding industry—an industry, which president Kohei Hori acknowledges, is fundamental to manufacturing. As such the companies involved in the development, production and maintenance of molding systems like Seiki and Sanwa Shoko are hidden-champions whose existence and importance goes unnoticed by the general public.

“As Mr. Kawabata explains: ‘Within the last several years, we have established offices in Germany and the U.S. to get closer to our customers and focus on developing collaborative alliances with suppliers to the automotive market in order to strengthen our global position by introducing our hot runner system that will surpass any expectations.”

Looking ahead over the next decade, Mr. Kawabata hopes to develop the business on a global scale, by combining Seiki’s design skills and technologies for plastic molding and hot runners to solve future industrial challenges.

“The sky is the limit when it comes to manufacturing plastic products, which requires high-standard technologies,” he says. “We’re looking into how we can continue to provide solutions in areas with different levels of complexity and a high-tech environment.”

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“While molds support the international manufacturing supply chain, their importance is largely unknown to end consumers and even to certain manufacturers,” says Mr. Hori.

“The mold industry is fundamental to any country. More and more people should know about the importance and role of the mold industry. While many people know about Toyota, Nissan and Honda, they are unaware of the manufacturing process. Molds are at the basis of the cars and products they love.”

Sanwa Shoko manufactures washing, welding and polishing machines used in the maintenance and repair of equipment for molds, such as the its series of Wave Clean supersonic wave mold washers, and its most popular product, the ultra-precision mold polishing welder, SW-V02 – a tried, tested and trusted analogue machine that has hardly changed since it entered the market more than 40 years ago.

“On the one hand, we utilize sophisticated techniques and expertise when it comes to repair and maintenance. On the other hand, our hardware remains analogue,” says Mr. Hori.

“We have continuously sold the same machine for 42 years. Our end users call us a ‘big miracle’. Of course, it was updated from SW-V01 to SW-V02, but the basic function has not changed, which is why our customers consider it a miracle.”

Another popular Sanwa Shoko innovation is the supersonic lapping machine, which is used to polish molds with ultra-high precision using the power of supersonic waves. The latest in its series is the LAPTRON ALL III – hailed as the crowning work of the company’s reputation as “the pioneer in mold maintenance”.

With a sales network spanning Europe, East Asia, the United States and Mexico, the majority of Sanwa Shoko’s customers are in the automobile industry, with rest coming from electronics and home appliances. As it looks to expand its operations globally, Sanwa Shoko sees opportunities to expand the use of its machines and is partaking in exhibitions to demonstrate the exciting things it is working on outside the mold industry.

“We are currently exploring the possibility of entering new fields. We are certain that our products can be applied to other markets than molds,” he says. “For example, we believe that our welding machine can be applied to metal-working or tool processing. Slowly and with care, we are seeking new pioneers of growth.”

Whether they be in the molding industry or the lighting industry, one thing all Japanese SME manufacturers have in common is a deep commitment to monozukuri, the philosophy behind high-quality Japanese craftsmanship.

“What distinguishes Japanese monozukuri from manufacturing in other countries is the concept of craftsmanship. Japan’s way of perceiving monozukuri goes beyond the simple creation of an object,” says Junya Asano, managing director of Olympia Lighting Fixture Industries.

“We aim to systematically deliver high quality in order to fulfill the requirements and desires of our clients.”

As such, Olympia Lighting is renowned worldwide for its outstanding product quality and technological innovation. One of the company’s latest innovations is Akarina, a hydroponic indoor plant grow-light system with integrated LED technology that was voted a ‘Best Buy’ product by British newspaper The Independent in July, 2018.

Lighting for indoor plant cultivation is an area in which the company sees big opportunities. “At our Niigata Factory, we are pursuing plant cultivation experiments using LEDs, which has led to the accumulation of know-how. Olympia Lighting is one of the few companies in Japan with both LED lighting technology and cultivation technology,” says Mr. Asano.

As the company looks to expand in the B2B segment, a market in which Japanese SMEs have always been strong, Olympia Lighting is focusing on office and interior design. “LED has various business uses, and Olympia Lighting is a company that can explore all these different possibilities,” says Mr. Asano. “I think that this diversification will be the foundation for future developments.”

From Seiki and Sanwa Shoko, and onto Olympia Lighting, these relatively small and unknown companies will continue to diversify, find new applications for their technologies and play an increasingly bigger role in global industry. They are the hidden innovators representing the through strength of Japanese manufacturing.

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Half a century has passed since Asanuma Corporation developed the first ever cosmetic eyebrow pencil in Japan, and the Japanese cosmetics industry has risen to become one of the world's leading markets for beauty products, generating a revenue of over $36 billion in 2017.

Boasting long-established traditions in the use of cosmetics (Geisha), Japan has lived in the shadow of 'K-Beauty' – the phenomenally successful cosmetics business of its regional rival, South Korea. However, K-Beauty's older, more sophisticated sister, 'J-Beauty' (described by the Financial Times as “the sleeping giant of the beauty industry”) has awakened and re-entered the spotlight.

While K-beauty's success over the past decade has been driven by trends, J-beauty is considered something far more sustainable, authentic and timeless – characteristics that are now increasingly resonating with modern consumers, amongst whom the values of sustainability and authenticity are often top concerns. Indeed, Japanese beauty exports are expected to have tipped $2.75 billion in 2018.

A company that embodies the characteristics of J-Beauty, and mirrors its modern renaissance, is the aforementioned Asanuma Corporation.

"As an original design and equipment manufacturer (ODM/OEM) of make-up products, we strive to create high-quality products by placing our efforts into the development and advancement of our technologies," explains company president, Masaumi Asanuma.

Long practiced by Asanuma Corp. and other Japanese competitors, it is this commitment to technological innovation in the sector – as well as a determined internationalization push – that has contributed to the rise in popularity of J-Beauty products globally. Japanese cosmetics – as is standard across the manufacturing industry – are renowned for their high quality.

"Firstly, we decided to put extra effort to provide innovative solutions as an added value to Asanuma's expertise in the field. Technology and R&D capacity are fundamental for us in order to keep on innovating and responding to customers' demands in a constantly changing market.

"Secondly," Mr. Asanuma continues, "we decided to focus on our international strategy. Export and trading with cosmetics companies abroad have always been a priority. We proactively push for our business internationally, deciding to establish sales branches overseas, in China, in North America, and in Europe.

"We are constantly thinking how to ameliorate, working to provide the perfect solutions. Those are the strengths of the Japanese cosmetics industry that have allowed us to consistently provide reliable products."

"From a global perspective, with Japanese cosmetic products so well known for their high quality, there stands a brilliant opportunity for J-Beauty to continue expanding and to dominate the market in terms of exports."

"If we keep working in technological development and bringing innovative solutions, there are endless opportunities for Japanese companies in the industry," says Mr. Asanuma. "Not only for the Japanese brands, but also for OEM and ODM businesses like us to provide solutions for companies all over the world. We are constantly pushing for global market opportunities."