

Belgium-Japan Association

& Chamber of Commerce ASBL- VZW



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EDITORIAL

Greetings from HE Ambassador Nobutake Odano

New Ambassador of Japan to the European Union

I would like to extend my warmest greetings to the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce and its members. I would also like to congratulate you on your recent Commendation from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the outstanding role the BJA plays in fostering relations between Japan and Belgium.

The economic ties between Japan and the EU have always been the cornerstone to our relations, and although we have now diversified our cooperation through dialogues on various global issues, trade and investment will remain of great importance. For this reason, it is crucial that we work to improve the relations between our private sectors. The implementation of EU legislation has a direct impact on Japanese business activity in Europe. Therefore it is important for Japanese and European business leaders and policy makers to ensure mutually beneficial outcomes to these and other legislative developments.

The Regulatory Reform Dialogue between Japan and the EU is an excellent example of our intensified efforts to improve the conditions for both Japanese and European companies to do business in each other's economy.

In international affairs also, Japan and the EU are playing ever more important roles. As global players, we must be prepared to together take the lead on global issues such as tackling climate change, energy security, development, and the more recent financial crisis. I am confident that in cooperation with our international partners, Japan and the EU will rise to meet the new challenges of the 21st century.

I would like to wish the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce every future success. The excellent work it does in promoting business and cultural relations between Belgium, Europe and Japan will surely contribute to what I hope will be our continued and deepened cooperation. For my part, I will do my utmost to assist in that goal.



HE Ambassador Nobutake Odano

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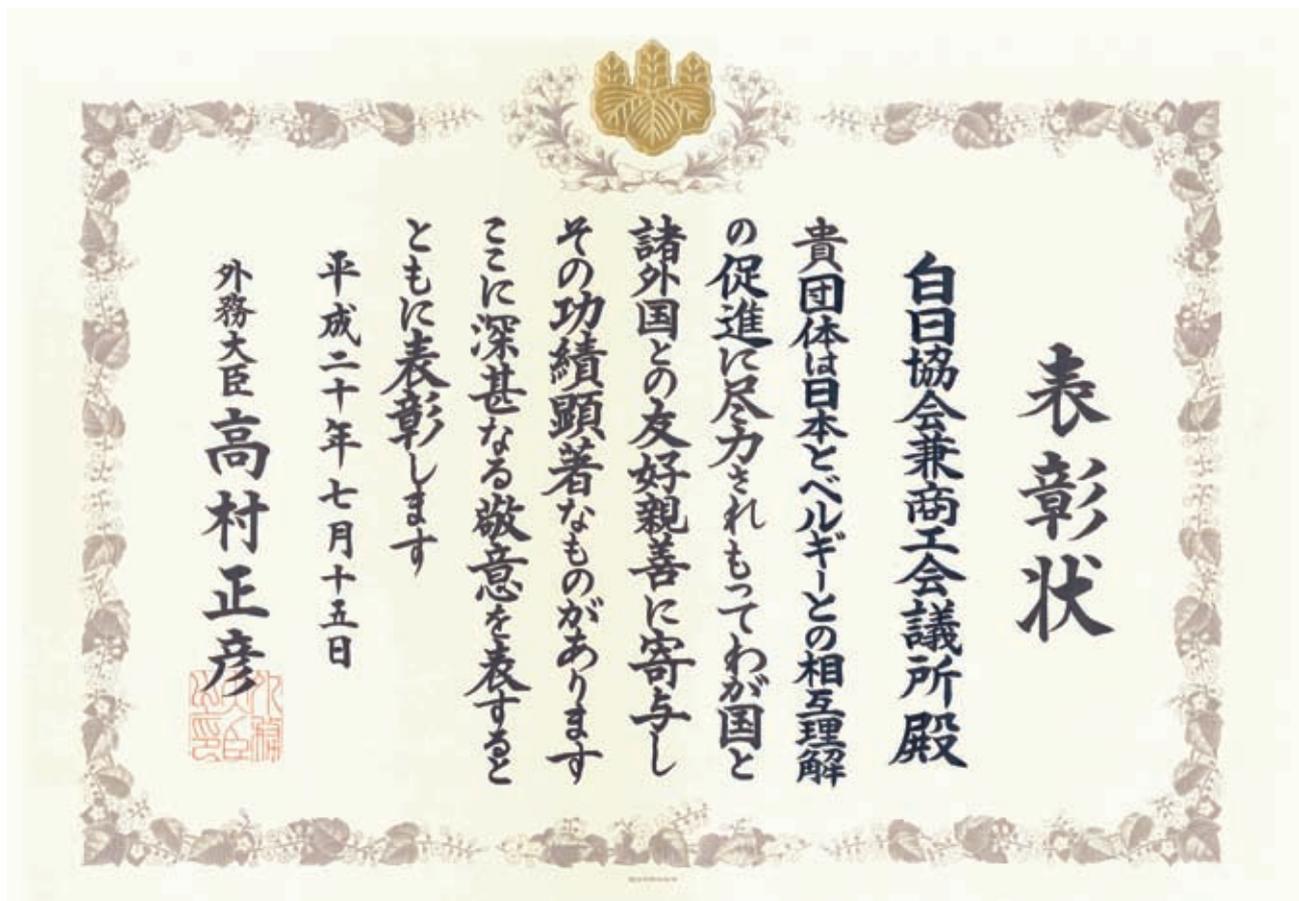
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Commendation from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan to the BJA BJA平成20年度外務大臣表彰受賞

Thursday, 2 October 2008, Residence HE Ambassador Hayashi, Brussels

The Japanese Embassy in Belgium officially informed the BJA that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan awarded in Tokyo on 15 July 2008 the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce a commendation for the outstanding role the BJA plays in fostering the relations between both nations. The certificate of commendation was bestowed upon the BJA during a reception at the residence of HE Ambassador Hayashi on Thursday 2 October in Brussels.

この度、BJAは平成20年度外務大臣表彰候補者団体に挙げられ、7月15日に行われた表彰式の席にて正式に受賞者団体の一団体に選ばれました。日本と諸外国との友好親善関係の増進に努め、その功績に称えるこの名誉ある外務大臣表彰は10月2日に林大使公邸で開かれたレセプションの席にてBJAに授与されました。





HE Ambassador Hayashi hands over the commendation from the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs to Mr Leysen, BJA President, who accepts on behalf of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce.



HE Ambassador Hayashi and Mr Leysen, BJA President, toasting to prosperous relations between Belgium and Japan.



The guests at the reception - deeply aware of a great moment in the history of the BJA.



BJA REPORT

Speech of HE Ambassador Azusa Hayashi at the Awarding Ceremony of the Commendation of the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs to the BJA

2 October 2008

Mr Thomas Leysen, President of BJA, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all present here for joining us this evening to congratulate the BJA who recently received the Commendation of the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs.

It is an award given as a token of his gratitude to persons or organisations that made a great contribution to foster good relationship between Japan and a foreign country.

Mr Thomas Leysen, and each of the staff of the BJA secretariat, first and foremost, let me express my heartfelt congratulations on BJA's winning of the Commendation of the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs awarded on recognition of its outstanding contribution to promote economic relations and mutual good understanding between Japan and Belgium over the last forty years. It is both a great honour and pleasure to address you and all members of the BJA on behalf of my country on this very special occasion.

It really is a special occasion because the BJA is the glorious first winner of this Commendation in Belgium and I am convinced that the BJA deserves it.

As you know very well, the BJA was founded in 1991, and was born from the merger of two formerly independent organizations, the Association Belgo-japonaise that was established in 1963 and the Belgian-Japanese Trade Federation that was founded in 1987. Since, the BJA offers a unique combination of business and cultural events to its more than 500 Belgian, European and Japanese members.

Their activities are very rich and various such as business seminars, musical concerts, exclusive visits to companies, YES study and training programs, etc. All these events reinforce the good relationship and mutual understanding of our two countries. At the same time, they also provide good opportunities for Japanese members and their family members to know better about Belgian society and integrate into it, and even to rediscover their own culture.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is no doubt that the extraordinary dedication of the BJA has been a contribution factor in the strengthening of economic and cultural relationships between Japan and Belgium. I greatly appreciate BJA's initiatives and energy, and I believe that these steady efforts will boost economic exchange both in Japan and Belgium. May today's occasion go a long way to strengthen the cordial bilateral relations between Belgium and Japan.

Thank you.



Acceptance speech pronounced upon the commendation of the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce

by Mr Thomas Leysen, CEO of Umicore and BJA President

Your Excellency, dear colleagues and friends, beste collega's en vrienden, chers collègues et amis, 御臨席の皆様 ,

Although it is undeserved, we are very pleased and gladly accept the commendation of the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs.

We are very pleased that the Japanese government has been so kind as to honour the modest efforts the BJA has made to promote and improve the relations between both our nations. If we have succeeded at all, it is certainly the work of many people.

The Belgium-Japan Association was founded in 1962-63, just after the return to Belgium of a Princely Economic Mission to the Far East.

Already at the time, the members of the mission had the opportunity to observe the strength of the Japanese industry and economy in general. Consequently they thought it would be a wonderful idea to create an association having as purpose to organize meetings between Belgians and Japanese living in Belgium (about 400 at that time).

This initiative was supported by HRH Prince Albert of Belgium, and Viscount Obert de Thieusies, Honorary Ambassador and Chairman of the Federation of Belgian Chambers of Commerce Abroad, took up the chairmanship of the new association. HRH Prince Albert accepted to attend personally the inauguration ceremony.

Thanks to this official start, His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan accepted to be Honorary member of the Association and it became a tradition for the successive ambassadors of Japan to the Kingdom of Belgium to hold this function. The BJA would like to express its gratitude to every ambassador of Japan in Belgium for all the support, comprehension and kindness extended since the beginning of the Association back in the sixties. Thank you very much, Your Excellency Ambassador Hayashi.

In the early nineties the Belgian-Japan Trade Federation (BEJAT) merged with the Belgium-Japan Association and hence the name became the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce. The aim of the new association was to develop not only cultural and social events, but to even

focus more on the promotion of the commercial, industrial and financial relations between Belgium and Japan.

Many honours and privileges have been given to the BJA, with highlights of being introduced to Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan and later on the Crown Prince and Princess.

Our publications, books on Japanese investments in Belgium and Belgian export to Japan, and our newsletters, our lobbying with regards to the Social Security Treaty, Visa and Immigration Procedure improvements, a direct flight between Brussels and Japan (being still high on our wish list), our support to trade missions and other visits to Japan, surveys conducted in the framework of improving trade, the YES Program, our many events – seminars, business luncheons, cultural visits...so many to mention succeed in their goals because of the people behind it and the people that connect all of us – our dedicated Japanese and Belgian members. Without the members there is no organization. Thank you for supporting the goals we share together.

We are deeply indebted to our networks of relationships between Belgium and Japan; the Belgian representations in Japan, the Japanese Embassy in Belgium, all Belgian, Japanese and EU-Japan organizations promoting trade, export and investment. They have given us the opportunity to move forward in our goals, as have our dear friends at the Nihonjinkai who have given us support along the way.

Although the occasion perhaps requires that I treat you to some insights of doing business in a Belgian-Japanese context, I would like to strike a more personal observation: our members have been touched by Belgium and Japan – the connection results in great commerce sometimes, and even in marriage – let it be between two companies or two people.

This commendation bestowed upon us brings us a further drive, Your Excellency, to work harder and strive higher for the benefit of our peoples.

I want to conclude with a dual wish: may business in Japan and Belgium flourish and the friendship between the citizens of our nations prosper with it.



BJA REPORT

Exclusive visit to JTEKT TORSEN EUROPE ジェイテクト・トルセン・ヨーロッパ社企業訪問

Tuesday, 16 September 2008, Strépy-Thieu & Strépy-Bracquegnies

Thanks to the generous support by Mr Etienne Bray, Director of JTEKT Torsen Europe and Mr Daniel Jordan, Networks Manager Investment of Wallonia Foreign Investment & Trade Agency (AWEX), the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce had the pleasure in inviting the company members of BJA to a special guided visit to the Barge Lift of the Strépy-Thieu, followed by a private visit of the JTEKT Torsen Europe facility in Strépy-Bracquegnies. On this occasion, AWEX also kindly offered the participants a coach transfer. At the Barge Lift of the Strépy-Thieu, the participants received a thorough explanation on the structure by Ir. Manpaey, a member of the Ministry of Equipment and Transport of the Walloon Region, and a thrilling experience to be on the lift with a barge while seeing the magnificent masterworks of this hydraulic lift so up close.

At JTEKT Torsen Europe, Mr Bray greeted the participants upon arrival. After his short welcome words and a presentation on the company, Mr Paolo Sacchetti, Product Promotion Manager, gave a detailed presentation on the company product before the visit inside the facility.

During the guided visit, the participants showed a great interest in discovering precise grinding process of metals, which mainly produce high quality driveline parts like gears at this facility.

After the visit, the members enjoyed a moment to gather and talk excitedly over the exclusive experiences of the day.



Ir. Manpaey, a member of the Ministry of Equipment and Transport of the Walloon Region, giving a thorough explanation on the structure of Barge Lift of the Strépy-Thieu.

The participants show a great interest in discovering precise grinding process of metals which used for bearings.

Mrs Anja Oto-Kellens, Executive Director of BJA joins a photo with Mr Etienne Bray, Director of JTEKT Torsen Europe (center) and Mr Daniel Jordan, Networks Manager Investment of Wallonia Foreign Investment & Trade Agency (right).



Business Luncheon on R&D tax incentives in Belgium ベルギーにおけるR&D要員に関する税制上優遇措置についてのセミナー

Wednesday, 17 September 2008, Hotel Hilton Brussels

AGORIA and the Legal & Tax Committee of the BJA organized together a lunch seminar to address payroll tax incentives for R&D personnel, the patent income tax deduction and the R&D investment deductions and tax credits. The seminar answered many questions: What qualifies as R&D activity for the payroll tax incentives? Can these be combined with the special tax status? How to benefit from the patent deduction? When can a patent be considered “new”? How to obtain patent protection from a legal point of view? How to choose between the R&D tax credit and the R&D investment deduction, and how to maximize your choice?

The speakers on Pay roll tax incentives, Mr Günther Boeyens of Deloitte; Patent income deduction, Mr Philippe Rens and Mr Pieter Van Den Broecke of Linklaters LLP; R & D Investment Deduction, Mr Thierry Vanwelkenhuyzen of PricewaterhouseCoopers, informed the participants in a very thorough manner with a dynamic interactive Q & A session.



Mrs Wang, Area Manager Asia of Agoria greets Mr Ramakers, Business Development Executive of IBM Benelux.



Mr Boeyens and Mr De Prest of Deloitte inform Mr Bowns of Toyota Motor Europe on Belgium's opportunities concerning tax and companies.



Mr de Crayencour of Dayco Sacic SCA, interested in R&D Investment Deduction speaks to expert, Mr Vanwelkenhuyzen of PricewaterhouseCoopers.



Mr Rens of Linklaters LLP holds the attention of the public.



Mr Van Den Broecke of Linklaters LLP points out the patent deduction opportunities in Belgium.



BJA REPORT

YES VI First Briefing Session – in presence of HE Mr Azusa Hayashi, Ambassador of Japan to Belgium

Tuesday, 30 September 2008, Kaneka Belgium, Westerlo-Oevel

Thanks to the generous support by Kaneka Belgium and several guest speakers, on 30 September, the YES VI First Briefing Session of the BJA was held at Kaneka Belgium to welcome HE Mr Azusa Hayashi, Ambassador of Japan to Belgium just before lunch time.

The session was opened by Mrs Ann Blondé, Chairman of the YES Committee with a short speech, followed by a welcome word from Mr Kazuo Kuruma, President of Kaneka Belgium and a brief company presentation on video. Then two former YES participants, Mr Jeroen Bastijns of Eucphar (participant of YES IV 2004 as Cardon Pharmaceuticals) and Mrs Myriam Schepers of Prefamac (participant of YES V 2006), introduced several important tips in doing business in Japan through their experience and testimonial presentations.

On this occasion, HE Ambassador Hayashi honored us with his presence during the cocktail during which HE encouraged all YES candidates to enter Japanese market despite the current politically and economically challenging situation in Japan. The participants were very much appreciative of the

ambassador's extensive personal conversations and his enormous support and deep interest in Belgian trade with Japan.

After lunch, Mr Olivier van Beneden, General Manager of Japan Consulting Office, gave a lecture on 'Doing Business with Japan' with some good advice on typical business situations in Japan. Following, Mr Satoshi Oyama, Director of JETRO addressed the audience with some insights on the Japanese market situation. To conclude this first briefing session, all YES VI participants enjoyed the Japanese language lesson by Mrs Kumiko Oshino from Association of Japanese Language Teachers in Belgium. They learned some basic Japanese greetings extremely important for the start of a good business relationship.

Through this session, the participants could deepen understanding of doing business in Japan and broaden the Japanese culture and language awareness.

Pictures: Courtesy by Mr J. Duquesne of E. & H. De Beukelaer



During the Executives' Meeting, Belgian and Japanese trade relations were discussed by HE Ambassador Hayashi, Mr Leysen, President of the BJA, Mr Smets, Plant Manager of Kaneka Belgium, Mr Kuruma, President of Kaneka Belgium, Mr Van Overstraeten and Mr Nishimura, Vice-Presidents of BJA.



The YES participants greet H.E. Ambassador Hayashi who honoured with his presence the cocktail.



Mrs Blondé, Chairman of the YES Committee, introduces Mr De Molenaer of Royal Boch and Mr Gehéniau of Viyo International to HE Ambassador Hayashi and Mr Van Overstraeten, Partner at Linklaters LLP and Vice-President of the BJA.



Exclusive Workshop Lobbying with the EU EU理事会へのロビー活動シミュレーション・ワークショップ

Friday, 10 October 2008, Toyota Motor Europe

Thanks to the generous support by Mr Willy Kempel, Head of Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Austrian Permanent Representation, the EU Committee of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce was pleased to invite the BJA company members to a simulation exercise of the Council working process based on the new EU treaty, at the beautiful premises of Toyota Motor Europe's HQ in Evere.

The members were divided into 3 groups with each a different subjects (e.g. Russia (energy issue and Georgia), Climate change, new EU Transatlantic Relations) and prepared a dossier as a Council Working Group. The results were presented by a rapporteur. The same groups were then transformed to Ambassadors and dealt with another of the three subjects, working on the basis of the results of a Working Group. Finally, the same groups became Ministers and dealt with the third item having been prepared by ambassadors.

The simulation was followed by a discussion on the future of Europe. This occasion provided a detailed insight into the EU Council working processes – an eye opener to many present.



(From right to left) Mr Vastano, Senior Solutions Provider of Culture Matters, Mr Collins, Vice President, European Communication Office of Bridgestone Europe, and Mr Cornil, Sales Manager Benelux of ANA Brussels Office listen intently to a report made by other group.



The participants are divided into 3 groups, each working on different subjects and preparing a dossier as a Council Working group.



Mr Willy Kempel, Head of Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Austrian Permanent Representation, explains the participants how the simulation exercise of the Council working process based on the new EU treaty works.



Mr Didier Stevens of Toyota Motor Europe, Chairman of the BJA EU Committee, thanks Mr Kempel for his outstanding lead in the simulation.

BJA REPORT

**Exclusive Visit to Van Den Broeke - Lutosa
ヴァン・デン・ブルク・ルトサ社企業訪問**

Tuesday, 14 October 2008, Leuze-en-Hainaut



Mrs Collet, Expert Asia of AWEX exchanges ideas on the current trade balance Belgium-Japan with Mr Dejager, CEO of Europal Group of Companies.



Mr Van den Broeke, CEO and Mr de le Court, Representative Lutosa Japan, explain with great passion the potato business in Belgium.



Mr Arnaud d'Haen of Vintage Productions tries to fully grasp the concept of "potato".



(From right to left) Mr Hayashida of Nippon Express, Mr Nishimura of Mitsui & Co. Benelux & BJA Vice-President, Mr Hakakku of the Information & Cultural Center of the Japanese Embassy and Mr Hashimoto of Kataoka & Co. Ltd..

Thanks to the generous support by Mr Guy Van den Broeke, CEO of Van den Broeke-Lutosa, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce took pleasure in inviting the company members of the BJA to a private visit of the Lutosa plant in Leuze-en-Hainaut.

Upon arrival at the plant, the participants were greeted by Mr Guy Van den Broeke, CEO and Mrs Ann Delesie, Sales Manager Lutosa Japan. Mr Desloovere, Sales Marketing and Logistics Director, followed with a detailed presentation on the company, after the refreshments. Mr Bernard de le Court,

Representative Director Lutosa Japan, made a thorough explanation on the activities of the company in Japan – many insights into the Japanese market and the specific needs of the Japanese customers were shared by the expert and appreciated by the members.

During the guided visit the participants were fascinated by the ultra-clean facilities equipped with the latest top technologies. The event ended with a tasting of all the crispy delicacies – hot fried potatoes in different forms and tastes. Delicious!





A brief history

For 30 years now, Lutosa has successfully acquired great skills in potato processing. This Belgian family business ranks among the worlds' top ten potato-processing companies. The group runs 3 large production units in Belgium, and processes 600.000 tons of potatoes per year. Lutosa's 2007 turnover amounted to 237.114.719 . A total of 91% of the production is exported to 89 different countries.

In 1981 already, the first shipment of "pom Parisienne", small round shaped potatoes that were quite exclusive in Japan, left our production site. For the next 24 years, Lutosa kept selling mainly "specialties" potato products instead of fries. It was a niche market, but in the potato industry, the core business is all about big volumes of straight cut. More than 95% of the straight cut fries consumed in Japan were imported from North America, and the image of white fries was also strongly linked with American culture and life. The Belgian fries had yet to be discovered....

By 2004, Lutosa, who in the meantime had grown into a major European player, felt that it was time to face this challenge. Japanese customers had gotten used to our European yellow potato varieties, and hence Lutosa took it to the next level. The agent who was fully familiar with the market as well as Lutosa's products, Mr de le Court, became a Lutosa representative for Japan and a 100% subsidiary was created in 2005. The biggest advantage was that the office was immediately operational.

Lutosa's position in the market

Thanks to the support from the Head Office and the know-how of Mr de le Court, sales immediately jumped, going from 300 tons per year in 2003 to more than 8000 in 2008. Lutosa decided to have a light structure in Japan for costs reasons, but realized that a strong back up in Belgium was

necessary. A "Japan team" was set up in both Belgium and Japan, to make sure that we could satisfy our very demanding Japanese customers. Recently, a Japanese assistant was hired for offering our customers extra support and service. People from the Head Office try to go to Japan at least twice a year.

Japan remains a market with a lot of potential. Our sales in Japan cover about 3% of the total import of frozen potato products to Japan, which leaves us a lot of room to grow. Most Japanese needs are covered by the USA and Canada. Belgium is number 4 after China. Thanks to Lutosa, Belgium became the biggest European exporter of frozen vegetables to Japan in 2007 and "Belgian fries" became more than just a puzzling meaningless word.

The difficulties related to the Japanese Market

Japanese customers are very demanding compared to European customers and we have to remain in close contact all the time. We focus on big users, family restaurants, supermarket chains and big distributors. We only have a few distributors, as we try to avoid competition between our sales channels. Our problem at first was a lack of recognition and knowledge about potato varieties and the fact that most importers did not have any serious problems with the American products. To position ourselves, we have played the quality card by offering a better product and a better service. Our first customers were therefore the most demanding ones. But they are also "opinion leaders" in the field, and the fact that we could gain the trust of respected players opened the doors of the market. We started selling to companies such as Nichirei, Ito Yokado, Aeon, who are very demanding and expect their suppliers to follow strict rules. We had to go through many audits and an incredible amount of questions, and still do. Japan needs and takes patience. Thanks to them, we are always one step ahead of the competition when it

SUCCESS STORY

Lutosa in Japan

comes to safety-related issues (GMO, traceability, trans-fat, etc.). Working with Japanese is a win-win situation on the long run. Very few claims come with a request for compensation, but all claims come with a request for improvement. Once the relation is established, we become partners, and a better product is in everyone's best interest. Lutosa always replies quickly and efficiently. We always discuss and try to find a way that can satisfy everyone. This attitude is very much appreciated in Japan.

Products & specifications for the Japanese market

As far as the products' specifications are concerned: the best is not good enough. A lot of extras are provided for Japan e.g. extra staff must do additional manual sorting to meet with the requirements, packaging sizes are smaller, packaging film is thicker, stickers in Japanese must be added on the boxes etc.

Product-wise, especially products for children must be cute. Not the "European kind of cute", but "kawaii". When developing new products we do take into account several aspects that are typical for Japan. Here are some elements: Where in Belgium, almost everyone has a fryer; this is not at all the case in Japan. Our retail products are therefore 3 way cook and can be cooked in the oven or oven-toaster.

We go for bite-size specialty products that can be easily taken with chop sticks.

We pay extra attention to texture when the products is hot, but also when the products has cooled down since Japanese mothers sometimes use our kids' products cold in bentou.

A coating technique has been developed that keeps our fries hotter longer, ideal when they are kept on buffets in restaurants or under a hot lamp in the konbini stores.

Convenience is also always a very important aspect. Products should be easy and fast to prepare.

Advices on how to succeed in Japan

- **Take Japan seriously:** succeeding here requires the full commitment of your company, from the very top to the factory floor.
- **Take your time:** it can be very long between your first contact and your first contract. Lutosa has approached some companies for 8 years before making a first sale ...
- **Keep very regular contact, and inform your customer** of everything that might concern them. Japanese customers dislike surprises. Any minor change must be properly advised.
- **Be flexible and ready to adapt your product.**
- **Explain.** Our product is a natural product. We take Japanese customers out to the potato fields and show them the process from the very beginning until the logistics' department. Do not assume too quickly that

something is obvious and think about what you would do if you'd have to purchase rice or soy sauce tomorrow.



Plans

At long term we would like to achieve brand notoriety in Japan as well.

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Friendship Café フレンドシップカフェ

In addition to the usual events organized by the BJA Friendship Committee, since August 2008, the committee decided to organize a small activity where everyone can enjoy in a relaxed atmosphere after work. For that purpose, “Friendship Café” has been set-up and the objective of the “Friendship Café” is to offer opportunities to simply “meet and talk”, with anybody without any constraints and to meet people interested in other cultures, in the setting of a typical Belgian style cafe.

The “Friendship Café” is open not only to members but also to their families, colleagues and friends to share a wonderful time together.

A few Friendship Café evenings have already been organized at different settings, with great success. Please feel free to join us the next time too!

The BJA Friendship Committee



Hanabi (Kites building and fireworks contest at Belgian seashore) 花火 (ベルギーの海辺で凧揚げと花火大会)

Saturday, 23 August 2008, Belgian coast

This time, the BJA-FC committee organized an event at the Belgian coast. The event started off with a slightly worrisome weather, some drops of rain, heavily cloudy, and windy but the over 35 participants joined together and prayed to the weather god for some improvement.

First the participants gathered at the seaside for a kite making. The committee had brought all the materials needed to make kites, including plastics, woods, pairs of scissor, and 'how to make' instruction manual! The participants learned how to make Japanese kites: a simple one to more difficult ones.

Once they started to work on making kites, the sunshine came back so that was just perfect timing.

Everybody enjoyed the course of making kites very much, and some of the great kites were about to fly higher than the highest buildings along the coast.

While the adults were making kites, the young participants

also enjoyed making castles with sand, playing balls, eating chocolate waffles, and testing out the kites that the adults made.

All Belgian and Japanese participants spent a great time together talking, making kites, and sharing the delicious food they brought. While drinking beers and eating tasty food, they enjoyed looking at the sun go down from the seashore. What a wonderful atmosphere that was.

Before moving on to see fireworks, the FC committee offered some prizes to reward those who made the best kites. The first prize went to the kite that flew the highest and landed on one of the buildings. But it was very difficult to decide on the second prize, so the committee offered everyone a bottle of Deus beer instead!

The evening ended with some superb fireworks annually organized at the beach of Knokke-Heist! Because of all these excitement, nobody noticed the air was getting chilly. It simply was a great day for both Japanese and Belgians to share wonderful time together!



Visit to Sint-Truiden and Walk under Autumn Leaves シント・トルイデン歴史地区めぐりと紅葉狩り

Sunday, 19 October 2008



On a beautiful, sunny Sunday, we all gathered at Sint-Truiden Station, where we took off for our BJA Friendship Committee autumn event. From the station, we headed to the city centre through the so-called 'Station street', where we could admire the old glory of the city. The guide pointed out to an old mansion, a good example of eclectic architecture, among many other interesting buildings.

We then walked to the market square where we had a look at the old city hall, before going to the abbey site. The guide first brought us to the Academy Hall. This is a recently renovated concert auditorium, built in the 19th century. It attracts many international artists, also Japanese musicians and it is known for its perfect acoustics. Then, the guide brought us to the abbey tower. We climbed the 196 steps of the tower and from the top we had a beautiful view of Sint-Truiden and the region around.

After bidding goodbye to the guide, we headed to "Het Speelhof", a park in Sint-Truiden. In the restaurant, right in the middle of this park, we could finally have a good talk over a cup of coffee, a delicious pancake or a waffle.

In the end, the BJA FCOM surprised us with a small gift from the Limburg region: a small pot of apple and pear syrup. A little tired of walking, but very satisfied after a day of pleasure, we all headed home.

Hanne Knaepen



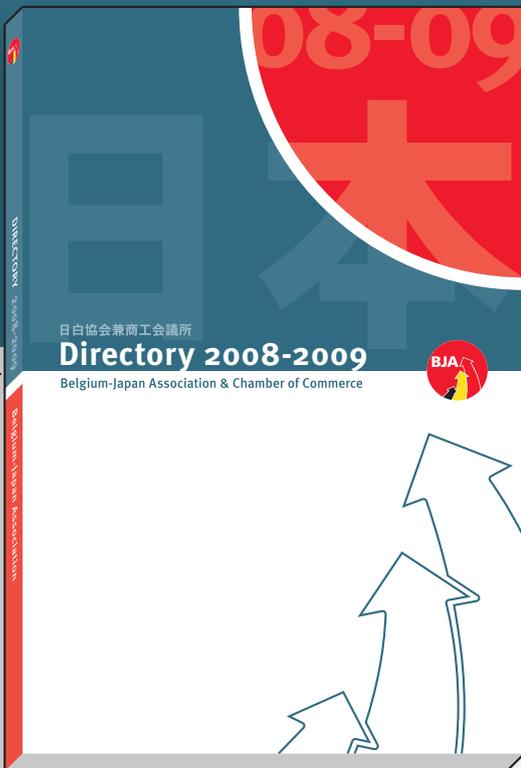


山寺や木がらしの上に寝るがごと

小林 茶

*mountain temple
like it's lying down
on the winter wind*

Kobayashi Issa



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The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce is happy to present you our fifth issue of the BJA Directory 2008-2009. The BJA Directory has the objective to be a comprehensive source of information on the BJA-members. In addition, a list of the data of 260 Japanese companies in Belgium is added as well. The directory is a handy reference on Belgian-Japanese business performance.

By introducing the members, it has the aim to be a powerful resource for building, managing and expanding networking and business opportunities, cultural exchange, finding jobs, evaluating goods and services, and

researching trends or publications. Our directory puts our members in direct contact with other members, and interested parties can easily locate and contact our members. It assists business expansion on a local, regional, national and/or international level, as well as it enhances the opportunities for fostering cultural and friendship relations between the citizens of the two nations. It offers an excellent view on the importance of the network of the Belgian and Japanese companies in Belgium, and therefore is a unique resource publication to identify "who is who" in Belgium with regard to Japanese business and vice versa.

A Japanese View of Belgium - Mr Shinichi Miwa, President of NGK Ceramics Europe

by Mr Kris Sierens, Managing Partner of BeforeTheHype and Editorial Committee Member

For somebody who likes to watch the stars, Belgium is hardly an ideal location. But many other great experiences more than compensate to make it great to live in the centre of Europe. Shinichi Miwa offers his views on Belgium as a country with great opportunities. And one with the ability to find its own style, because the 'smile' is already there.

As a child Mr Miwa was intensely interested in mathematics, science, and astronomy. By the time he entered university he had decided to become an engineer and specialize in material science. It is not so surprising then that today Mr Miwa works in the ceramics sector. On his first stint with NGK Ceramics Europe, he was part of the development team working to replace metal with lighter ceramic components. After moving up to become manager of design and subsequently vice-president, this year Mr Miwa became president of this company.



NGK started its European activities in 1986 with the development of advanced ceramics. Belgium was chosen as its headquarters because it was at the centre of Europe and – somewhat surprisingly – because it did not have its own car brand.

Right from the beginning, Shinichi Miwa's initial impression was that Belgium is a very kind country, something both he and his family experienced first hand. In many ways, living here proved to be not so different from his native Japan because both countries have deep roots tapping into a very long history. A special added value, he notes, is certainly the excellent food and a vast number of excellent restaurants. Another bonus in his eyes is that the driving manners here are much better than in his native Nagoya area.

The fundamental difference lies in his opinion with the fact that the typical Belgian knows the art of enjoying life. In Japan employees work much longer hours, but in Belgium they can stop promptly at five in the afternoon in order to enjoy a whole evening with their family and friends. That is certainly something Mr Miwa has learned to appreciate a great deal during his years in Belgium. It is his strong belief that it would be unproductive to attempt to introduce the entire Japanese working mentality in Belgium. 'I just don't think it will work here,' he says. His principal aim has been to find the right balance between the two cultures and to get his company

aligned with Belgian standards. That's also why he wants management to be handled primarily by Belgians, while new technology issues and the interface is the responsibility of the Japanese staff.

Mr Miwa lives in Overijse and likes old architecture, paintings, and sightseeing, when there is enough time left in his working day. Some of his favourite places are Durbuy for its many fine restaurants, Bruges for the medieval atmosphere, Antwerp as a fashion city, and Ostend for the seaside.

Opportunities still exist in Japan for Belgian companies, but it is important to focus on a particular area or specialty. A good Belgian restaurant will be successful there; that is something Belgian chefs excel at. Art and design also has good opportunities to thrive. Belgian ventures into industrial sectors have often suffered because their service standards are seldom as reliable as Japanese customers are used to. In conclusion, Mr Miwa believes that Belgian business can develop its own style and character, which is certainly something that can be successfully marketed throughout the world.

JAPAN-IMF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 2009-11

With financial backing from the government of Japan, the Japan-IMF Scholarship Program for Advanced Studies (JISP) is intended to train Japanese nationals as applied macroeconomists, developing skills that are essential for IMF economists. The government of Japan expects that all JISP scholars apply for IMF employment upon completion of their studies. Annually, up to seven scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis to students with a record of high academic achievement. The scholarship program is administered by the IMF Institute with assistance from the Institute of International Education (IIE).

Eligibility and Application Procedure

To be eligible for the JISP award, scholars must be admitted to a university that is located outside of Japan, and has a strong doctoral program in macroeconomics. Please note that the Scholarship Program cannot make exceptions regarding field of study, origin of scholar, or university location. Scholarships are awarded in the spring, for studies starting in the fall of that same year. Candidates

must apply directly to universities for admission.

Application Deadline

The deadline for receipt of scholarship applications is December 31, 2008. Academic Program and Benefits After being selected as Japan-IMF Scholars, students must continue an approved course of study and maintain high academic standards, passing all mandatory or qualifying examinations. Dissertation subjects should focus on macroeconomics and topics relevant to the work of the IMF, such as: international economics, international

finance, monetary economics, public finance, and labor economics.

Additionally, selected scholars must attend an orientation course in Washington, D.C., shortly before they begin their studies at their respective university. Scholarships cover all reasonable costs for the first two years of study. Scholars are expected to secure another source of funding to cover the remaining years of study. At the conclusion of their third or fourth year of graduate studies, scholars return to Washington for a summer internship at the IMF, lasting about 10-13 weeks.

Please see the Program brochure for further information and application form:

JISP brochure (English): www.imf.org/external/np/ins/english/pdf/japschol.pdf

JISP brochure (Japanese): www.imf.org/external/np/ins/english/pdf/japscholj.pdf

Contact Information For inquiries about submitting applications, general questions, and any other information regarding applications, please address the Institute of International Education (IIE) European Office:

Agnes Vajda, External Relations Manager, Tel. +361 472 2251, avajda@iie.eu

For more information on the International Monetary Fund and the IMF Institute, see the Fund's website at: www.imf.org

JSPS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

If you are interested in returning to Japan to continue your studies or research, why not utilize the following programs that offer support?

This is a program implemented by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). It provides an opportunity for young researchers from abroad to carry out joint research with and under the guidance of colleagues at Japanese universities and research institutions.

The Postdoctoral Fellowships for Foreign Researchers (Standard) is available to foreign researchers from any country that has diplomatic relations with Japan. The Postdoctoral Fellowships for Foreign Researchers (Short-term) and the JSPS Summer Program are available to foreign researchers of Canadian, American or designated European nationalities. Selection and awarding of the fellowship and

support is based on the academic value of the joint-research, regardless of the field of research.

For details, please refer to the JSPS website.

JSPS Fellows Plaza

www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-plaza/index.html

Postdoctoral Fellowships for Foreign Researchers (Standard) (Short-term)

www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-fellow/fellow.html

JSPS Summer Program

www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-summer/index.html

Source:

www.studyjapan.go.jp/en/ath/atho801e.html



EXTENSION OF BRIDGESTONE EUROPEAN LOGISTIC CENTER IN ZEEBRUGGE, BELGIUM

Bridgestone took the decision to further extend its supply chain operations in the North European Logistic Centre in Zeebrugge in order to support the growth of Bridgestone Europe and to further improve the service to its pan-European customers. The extension also includes the plan to provide valued added services such as tyre mounting in the future. The extension will be realised in two phases.

- Phase 1 involves the construction of a 18,000 m² warehouse on 3 hectares of land with an investment of 7 million. Depending on building permits and administrative procedures, the plan could be finalised as early as the third quarter of 2009.
- Phase 2, for which an option was taken on an area of 3.68 hectares of land, will involve the construction of an additional 20,000 m² warehouse and an investment of around 7 million.

On completion of both phases, and when operations are working to full capacity, the extension project will create 40 additional jobs at Bridgestone's ELC in Zeebrugge.

The Bridgestone facility has already been extended twice since its opening in 1998, in a continuous effort to streamline distribution to dealer networks in the Benelux, Germany,

France, the UK, Ireland and Scandinavia. The growing Zeebrugge shortsea network of both RoRo and LoLo services has been instrumental in Bridgestone's achievement of its growth ambitions.

The Bridgestone ELC in Zeebrugge currently employs 140 people and has a maximum storage capacity of 1.1 million tyres in the existing 9 hectares of warehouses.

In 2007, incoming and outgoing volumes represented 32,740 TEU (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units) from and to overseas and shortsea destinations, and 7,200 road haulage units from and to the European network.

Bridgestone Europe NV/SA - with European headquarters in Brussels, Belgium - is a key division of the Bridgestone Corporation. It develops and manufactures top-quality tyres in Europe which, through its 20 subsidiary sales companies and other channels, are distributed all over Europe including Eastern European markets. Products are also exported outside Europe, including to Japan.

Source : www.bridgestone.eu

MUTOH EUROPE EXPANDS

Sesoma and Sericomex Group to join Mutoh's European organization

Mutoh Europe, a business unit of Mutoh Holdings Co. Ltd., Tokyo, Japan, announced that it has reached a final agreement to acquire the company SE Group S.A., the holding company of the Sesoma and Sericomex companies. The Sesoma - Sericomex group (SE Group) will continue its activities as a subconcern of Mutoh Europe. This transaction is in line with the strategy of the Mutoh Group to accelerate its growth in Europe.

Headquartered in Luxembourg since 1995, the SE Group is a leading supplier of equipment and materials for the sign & display and industrial visual communication markets in Scandinavia and in the Baltic States. Having offices in Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the Group generates an annualized turnover of approximately € 24 million and currently employs 76 people. As part of Mutoh Europe, the Sesoma - Sericomex companies will continue developing their local markets. The existing local management teams and personnel will continue their good work.

"Consolidation of the SE group's activities within Mutoh Europe represents significant growth opportunities for both Mutoh and Sesoma - Sericomex," says Arthur Vanhoutte, President of Mutoh's European operations.

"We have been working closely together with the Sesoma and Sericomex companies since 1992, when they became authorized distributor for Mutoh CAD/CAS equipment."

"Our key goal in acquiring the SE Group is to accelerate Mutoh's growth in Europe. Apart from a recognized brand name and market position in Scandinavia and the Baltic states, the SE Group has an experienced management, excellent logistics, highly skilled personnel and last but not least a wide customer base. Their extensive field experience will also assist us further to develop future products meeting the needs of digital printer users." Vanhoutte concludes.

"In view of the rapid growth of the digital printing industry both in the conventional and industrial markets, the management teams of the Sesoma and Sericomex companies are convinced that a close co-operation with a leading equipment manufacturer will bring many benefits to our Group", says Samuli Vuorenhela, CEO of the SE Group. »

NYK EXPANDS STORAGE SPACE IN THE PORT OF ZEEBRUGGE

Japanese logistics group NYK is to enlarge its existing site for the transshipment of new cars in the port of Zeebrugge from 56 to 76 ha. This will increase the total annual capacity of NYK at Zeebrugge from 1.3 million to 1.7 million cars.

Nippon Yusen Kaisha (NYK) logistics group specializes in the transshipment and distribution of electronics and automotive parts. It is the biggest company for the transshipment of new cars in Flanders and also has a second storage center in Antwerp (with an annual capacity of 350,000 cars). Not

only are the NYK terminals equipped for transshipment, but thanks to the pre-delivery inspection center, it's also possible to prepare the incoming cars for display in showrooms all over Europe.

At the moment NYK has 700 Flemish employees, but this number will rise substantially when the new terminal becomes operational. The rapid expansion at Zeebrugge is a direct result of the good results NYK has experienced when working in Flanders in recent years.

The port of Zeebrugge is the world's biggest port for the transshipment of new cars, thanks to its central location and excellent handling facilities. It has proven to be very profitable for Japanese companies, with over one third of all cars handled in Zeebrugge coming from that country. Together with the ports of Ostend, Ghent and Antwerp, Zeebrugge forms the Flanders Port Area, a region highly dedicated to maritime shipment with each port having its own particular specialties.

Source: www.investinlanders.com

TOYOTA BOSHOKU TO ESTABLISH AN AUTOMOTIVE SEATING COMPANY IN FRANCE

Toyota Boshoku Corporation (Headquarters: Kariya, Aichi Pref., President: Shuhei Toyoda) will establish an automotive seating manufacturing company, Toyota Boshoku Somain

S.A.S., in Somain, Nord-Pas de Calais, France. The new company, which takes over the Sieto Plant of Faurecia S.A., a French automotive seating manufacturer, is scheduled to start producing seats around 2010. All employees currently working at the plant will be reemployed by the new company. In Europe, Toyota Boshoku has so far produced automotive seats and other interior parts in such countries as Turkey, Russia, and Slovakia. The new company will be its first seat-assembling base set up in a European Union country. It will also be the second manufacturing company that Toyota Boshoku establishes in France after an automotive replacement bumper manufacturing company.

» "Growth possibilities both for the SE Group and for our existing 4000 and many potential customers are much better and wider as part of the Mutoh group. The local Sesoma and Sericomex companies, which will keep their identity, will be able to increase their knowledge and service abilities to their customers' overall benefit" Vuorenhela concludes.

About Mutoh Europe nv

Headquartered in Oostende, Belgium, Mutoh Europe nv is a leading manufacturer of wide format piezo inkjet printers and cutting machines for the sign & display and graphic arts industries.

Founded in 1991, Mutoh Europe's activities encompass development, manufacturing and distribution of Mutoh products all over Europe, the Middle East and Africa, through a dedicated network of authorized and trained resellers. Mutoh Europe nv has an annual turnover of € 72 million and currently employs 280 people.

Source: www.mutoh.be

The outline of the new company will be as follows:

1. Company name: Toyota Boshoku Somain S.A.S.
2. Location : Somain, Nord-Pas de Calais, France
3. Representative: Atsushi Toyoshima, President & CEO of Toyota Boshoku Europe N.V., the Company's European headquarters
4. Establishment: August 2008
5. Products: Automotive seating
6. Production start: Around 2010
7. Number of employees: Approx. 300
8. Capital: 21 million Euros
9. Ownership: Toyota Boshoku Europe E.V. 100%
10. Investment: 24 million Euros
11. Site area: 74,000 m²
12. Building area: 18,000 m²

Source: www.toyota-boshoku.co.jp/en/index.html

Important

Upon a decision of the Board of Directors to enhance the communication via e-mail with the members (for example: sending of BJA invitations), the BJA Office would like to request you to inform us of any change in your private and/or company e-mail address to be used by us. Any changes or updates should be informed to info@bja.be.

ご案内

BJA では迅速且つ正確なコミュニケーション体制強化のため、今後、イベントの招待状等は主にEメールにてご案内申し上げます。その為、会員の皆様には各データベース内のメールアドレスに変更が生じた場合はお手数ですが、その都度 BJA 事務局、info@bja.be までご連絡頂きます様お願い申し上げます。

The BJA would like to extend a warm welcome to its newest members:

Corporate Member**CWT Belgium-Japan Express Travel**

ベルギー最大手旅行代理店のカールソン・ワゴンリー・トラベルが日本人及び日系企業専門部門を開設しました。大手旅行代理店の充実したシステムと日本人のニーズを知り尽くした経験豊富なスタッフのきめ細かいサービスにより、旅行に関するさまざまなソリューションをご提供いたします。企業の方のご出張手配のみならず、ベルギー及び欧州内の地上手配、インセンティブツアーの企画などご旅行に関するあらゆる手配を承ります。日本への里帰り、呼び寄せなどの個人旅行もお気軽にご相談ください。

Carlson Wagonlit Travel, the largest travel management company in the world launched Japan Express Travel for Japanese and Japanese companies. With fine-tuned service by experienced travel consultants who have know-how for Japanese market, we provide optimized travel solutions. We are specialized in not only business travel, but also leisure travel including tour operators like Club Med, Thomas Cook.

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japanexpress.bru.be@contactcwt.com

www.carlsonwagonlit.be

BJA Contact: Ms Rumiko SUZUKI, Division Manager

Dexia Insurance Services

Dexia Insurance Services is the insurance pool of DEXIA, operating in 5 countries: Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Turkey and Ireland.

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Avenue Livingstone 6, 1000 Brussels

Tel. 02 286 64 66

stephane.cuypers@dib.be

BJA Contact: Mr Stephane Cuypers, Press & Communications Manager

Press & Plat - Belgium

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www.ppb.be

BJA Contact: Mr Toshinori Hirose, CEO

PERSONALIA

Associate Member

Japan Consulting Office

Japan Consulting Office (JCO) specializes in training and consulting services for Japanese and European companies.

JCO can help you:

- Understand Japanese/European culture in the workplace
- Improve your communication skills
- Leverage cultural differences as strengths to benefit everyone

JCO differentiates itself through its ability to provide a practical approach to understanding and reconciling cultural differences, based on substantial work experience within Japanese companies, both in Japan and in Europe.



“After many years of personal involvement in the BJA, it was a natural choice for me to join as an Associate member. The BJA organizes interesting events and provides great networking opportunities.”

*Olivier van Beneden
JCO's Founder and Managing Director*

51, avenue de l'Opale, 1030 Brussels

Tel. 02 735 28 00

Fax 02 735 28 30

info@japanconsultingoffice.com

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BJA Contact: Mr Olivier van Beneden, Managing Director

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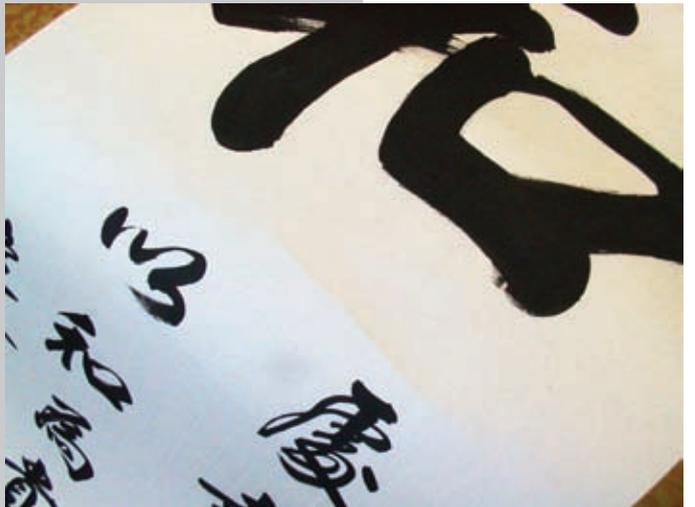
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Yamagata Europe: Manuals & More

Yamagata Europe was founded in 1998 as a subsidiary of the Japanese Yamagata Corporation to serve Yamagata's multinational clients in Europe. We offer a variety of team-based services for handling technical documentation and marketing communication projects from A to Z: desktop publishing, translation and localisation, terminology management, printing and logistics.

Yamagata firmly believes in the customer-oriented approach: years of experience gained in serving the documentation

divisions of our Japanese customers and striving for ever-higher levels of quality have resulted in our automation of the "human processes" wherever possible. Our drive to satisfy customers has accelerated the development of multiple tools that have proven to improve the workflow and reduce costs. These have now been assimilated into our integrated Total Quality Approach. This is what allows us to be successful in providing thorough and efficient services to a highly demanding market.

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