

Oshika: The Japanese ethos behind the wood adhesive manufacturer's global success

How the leading wood adhesives and construction materials manufacturer has built one of the industry's most reputable brands.

Japan's *chukun kigyo* take "listening to the customer" to a whole new level. As champions of co-creation, Japanese SMEs' close collaboration with their clients is often essential to the development of their high-quality products.

"No matter whether we work in Japan or abroad, we make sure that we go to where the clients are in order to establish the right communication pathways to provide the most optimal services," says Kazuhide Horiguchi, president and CEO of Oshika Corporation, a top manufacturer of over 1,000 kinds of wood adhesives and general construction materials tried and trusted by satisfied clients in Japan and across the world.

What's more, a large number of *chukun kigyo* like Oshika not only supply their customers with the highest performing products, but also offer training to the customers on how to best utilize those products.

And this ethos of combining *monozukuri* (Japanese craftsmanship) and *Kaizen* (unrivalled Japanese customer service) forms the basis of the company's brand and success.



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Kazuhide Horiguchi,
President & CEO, Oshika Corp.

"Our job doesn't end with just selling the adhesives to our clients, we help them in the manufacturing process as well, supporting them on how best to utilize our adhesives. We also provide technical training to our clients, and can do so online in the case we are not

able to be on location," explains Mr. Horiguchi.

"For clients, we want the Oshika brand to represent 'a business partner who can solve any problems

with technology'. I heard that one of our clients said: 'If I leave our factory to Oshika, it can be operating without any worry'. Not being just a mere supplier, conducting our business by working closely with clients is the Oshika brand."

Having cemented its reputation in Japan as a leader in its field, Oshika now aims to become a flagship company and expand sales of core

products like its aqueous polymer isocyanate adhesive to a wider global customer base, while also investing in R&D to develop adhesives like hotmelt for other industries.

"We are also expanding Japanese high-quality adhesives internationally by promoting our 'world-quality adhesives for wood' to partners we can work with in the same sector, who, upon utilizing the license, can adapt the same strategy of technical and sales support to any region where we are trying to expand," Mr. Horiguchi adds.

As a sustainability-minded company, Oshika has also developed a breakthrough adhesive which utilizes a natural material called "lignin", which it aims to introduce in the future.

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