

**Executive committee for export promotion strategy**  
**Subcommittee for Sake**  
**【Sake Exporting Efforts】**

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**農林水産省**

(Contractor : Nomura Research Institute, Ltd.)

# Disclaimer

## Disclaimer

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## Introduction

In order to make a textbook for business groups who are interested in export of Sake making up promotion ideas, we hereby gather good efforts of Sake breweries and wholesalers.

Background	Organization Surveyed	Method	Related Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For both of the entities who has been in charge of Sake export and who are to begin export of Sake, there are certain needs for noting key points in export of sake. This is the first survey in Japan focused on export of Sake.</li><li>• The key factors should be organized along value chains in exports.</li><li>• Based on the key factors along value chains and noting promotion ideas, business entities can clarify their challenges for export.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 50 breweries of top export record in 2014</li><li>• Other Sake breweries with outstanding export efforts</li><li>• Wholesalers which are in charge of Sake export</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Via questionnaire and interview with breweries and wholesalers, pick up value chains each of them outstands.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Consumers’ mind survey on Japanese food and Sake in England”, JETRO, March, 2012</li><li>• ‘Survey for scaled-up promotion of Sake’, “Commissioned Project --Country based marketing survey for the export expansion” Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, March, 2015</li><li>• ‘Sake market overseas with expectation of expansion’, “The Beverage &amp; Food Statistics Monthly”, April, 2015</li></ul>

## Sake Exporting Efforts – Example 1 (Asahi Shuzo)

They are making efforts for the visualization of cultivation technology of Yamada Nishiki from a medium-to-long term perspective, in order to build a stable procurement system that supports increased production.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Asahishuzo Co., Ltd.
  - Iwakuni city,  
Yamaguchi Prefecture

#### [Main products]

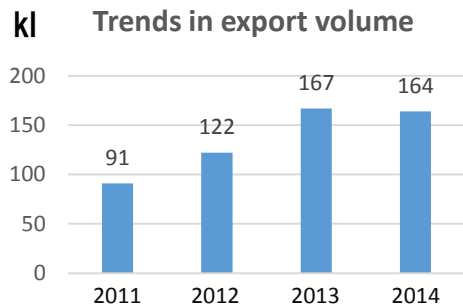
- Dassai

#### [Export results]

- 164 kl

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Taiwan
- China



(Source) The Beverage & Food Statistics Monthly,  
Apr 2012–14

#### [HP]

- <https://www.asahishuzo.ne.jp/index.php>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

(Procurement) • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- Stable procurement became difficult due to the limited number of producers of Yamada Nishiki despite the increased sales of Dassai.
- Meanwhile, visualization technology of agriculture has advanced such as seen in Fujitsu's "Akisai". They started the gathering and accumulating as well as visualization of cultivation work results information of Yamada Nishiki with two producers in Yamaguchi Prefecture.
- They aim to establish a stable cultivation technology of Yamada Nishiki based on the accumulated data, and they will strengthen efforts to provide cultivation know-how to producers who will newly start producing.

##### <Implementation results>

- Because this is a medium-to-long-term effort, it will not necessarily lead to immediate results. However, this is a necessary matter in order to maintain and expand the production of Dassai.
- The construction of a stable and high-quality procurement system will help Asahi Shuzo comprehensively achieve the production of sake that can compete with the higher price range wines overseas and they will be able to aim for 800,000 exported bottles.
- Furthermore, upon expanding sales, they will first launch the Dassai 23, which is a product targeting the wealthy clientele, and they will subsequently launch the Dassai 39 and 50.

Rice field for  
cultivating  
Yamada Nishiki



Multi-sensing network that  
accumulates environment  
information



They are making efforts towards stable procurement by co-founding a research society with local rice farmers in Shizuoka.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Hananomai Brewing Co., Ltd.
  - Hamamatsu city, Shizuoka Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Hananomai
- Hananomai Katana Junmai Ginjo Sake
- Puchi Shuwa Nihonshu - Chobitto Kampai

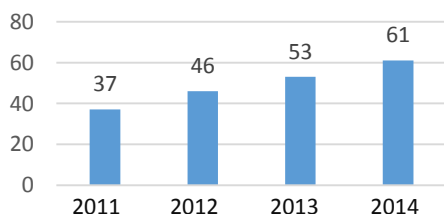
#### [Export results]

- 80 kl

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Hong Kong
- South Korea

kl Trends in export volume



(Source) The Beverage & Food Statistics Monthly, Apr 2012-14

#### [HP]

- <http://www.hananomai.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- They started a research society of Yamada Nishiki production (in 1998) together with local farmers cultivating brewer's rice with a particular focus on the local Shizuoka.
- In the research society, the chief brewer checks the quality by making rounds around all fields together with society members.
- The working status of the research society is regularly published on the website.

##### <Implementation results>

- The research society, which had 28 people initially, had 55 people in 2015. It has developed to encompass approximately 60 hectares of land.
- The society has opened up sales channels of Yamada Nishiki to rice farmers who struggled with production adjustments of non-glutinous rice, and now there are some members who have even increased their planted acreage.
- This, in turn, has led to Hananomai Brewing's stable procurement of raw materials.
- They developed Katana Junmai Ginjo Sake for export to the United States.
- They are exporting Puchi Shuwa Nihonshu - Chobitto Kampai mainly to Asian countries.

Chief brewer checking the research society's Yamada Nishiki fields



Postharvest compositional testing



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 3 (Hakutsuru Sake Brewing)

They established a research division in their company to develop new rice suitable for brewing sake, and they developed their original brewer's rice "Hakutsuru Nishiki". They are making efforts to realize stable procurement by carrying out self-cultivation of brewer's rice through the establishment of an agricultural corporation.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Hakutsuru Sake Brewing Co., Ltd.
  - Kobe city, Hyogo Prefecture

#### [Main products]

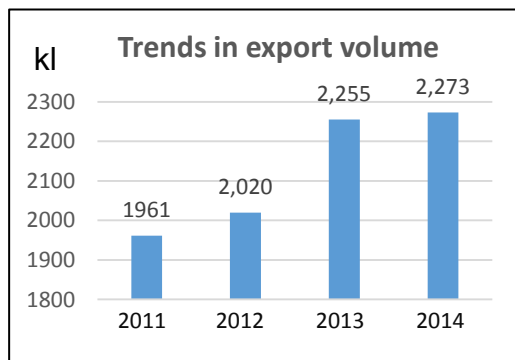
- Hakutsuru
- Yamada-Ho

#### [Export results]

- Annual export volume: 2,350 kl (2014)

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Canada
- South Korea, and about 40 other countries



(Source) The Beverage & Food Statistics Monthly,  
Apr 2012-14

#### [HP]

- <http://www.hakutsuru.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- In 1990, Hakutsuru Sake Brewing commenced research of breeding brewer's rice by themselves. They have focused on the development of brewer's rice that surpasses Yamada Nishiki, which is recognized as the highest quality breed of rice suitable for brewing sake.
- While getting cooperation from public authorities, they developed the Hakutsuru Nishiki in 2003. In 2004, they submitted quality registration of this product to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.
- From 2006, they started contract cultivation with farmers in an aim to carry out more stable procurement. Even now, they are expanding the cultivation area and making efforts to secure a stable procurement volume while scrutinizing the environment suitable for breeding Hakutsuru Nishiki.
- In recent times, against the backdrop of the aging of contracted farmers, they have been making efforts for self-cultivation in order to conduct more secure procurement of brewer's rice in the future. One unique example of their efforts is the cultivation of Hakutsuru Nishiki by creating the Hakutsuru Ginza Sky Farmstead in Ginza, Tokyo.
- Furthermore, in 2015, they established an agricultural corporation that produces brewer's rice, and they have made earnest efforts towards full-fledged self-cultivation.
- By making their workers engage in brewer's rice cultivation in summer and sake brewing in winter, they are planning the full-year employment of workers to also support the expansion of self-cultivation of brewer's rice from the aspect of human resources.

##### <Implementation results>

- The effort by a sake manufacturer to cultivate brewer's rice in Ginza has captured the attention of people around the world, which has incidentally led to the promotion of Hakutsuru Nishiki overseas as well.
- Self-cultivation of brewer's rice was started in 2010 as an agricultural corporation, and approximately 10 ha of farming land has been secured by 2015. They plan on expanding this land to approximately 30 ha by 2017, and they aim to supply about 10% of the annual usage amount of brewer's rice by self-cultivation.
- The results of these efforts would enable the secure procurement of brewer's rice, thereby leading to the reduction of production costs of the exported products; and they are also attempting to connect this to the expansion of export volume.

Left: Hakutsuru  
Nishiki  
Middle:  
Yamadanishiki  
Right: Wataribune 2



Traditional product  
Yamadanishiki



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 4 (Shiokawa Sake Brewery)

They are searching for new possibilities of Japanese sake that blends into local dietary life by developing sake that has acidity, umami and fragrance that match meat dishes, as well as labels that are more easily accepted overseas.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Shiokawa Sake Brewery Co., Ltd.
  - Nishi-ku, Niigata city

#### [Main products]

- Koshinoseki
- Koshi
- Cowboy Yamahai (export product)
- Fisherman Sokujo (export product), etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- United Kingdom
- Australia and more

#### [Company features]

- They are active in product development, such as by announcing the “Mori hikari Junmai Ginjo Sake”, a product developed in collaboration with the Niigata University. This product was awarded the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Prize in 2007
- Their website has both Japanese and English versions.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.shiokawa.biz/index.html>
- <http://www.shiokawa.biz/english.html>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

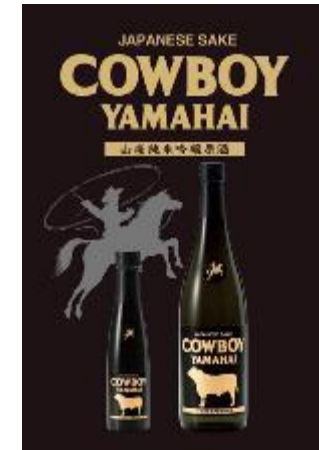
##### <Details and aim>

- They are making efforts to develop new sake so that local sake can be enjoyed by people around the world.
- The products they have commercialized include “Cowboy”, which matches well with meat dishes, “Fisherman”, which matches well with shrimp and crab, and “Shisui”, which focuses on the polyphenol content in the skin layer of rice.
- They made particular effort in terms of the packaging, which was developed in cooperation with external personnel so that the color and design directly convey matching dishes.
- The person who coined the name “Cowboy” is the owner of True Sake, which is the first local sake specialty store in the United States.

##### <Implementation results>

- Their products have been well-received in the United States, which is one of the exported countries, and the export volume has also increased.
- They are using many techniques to respond to new challenges that they face upon expanding exports.

“Cowboy”, a sake that goes well with steak



“Fisherman”, a sake that goes well with shrimp and crab



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 5 (Kinmon Akita Sake Brewery)

Not only have they won a prize at a competitive exhibition overseas, they have also been making specific efforts to match their own products with local cuisines around the world, helping them gradually reinforce their points of contact with overseas and leading to increase exports.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Kinmon Akita Sake Brewery Co., Ltd.
  - Daisen city, Akita Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Aged sake Yamabuki
- Yukyu no Ume Shizuku
- X3, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- France
- United Kingdom
- Sweden

#### [Company features]

- They introduced cuisines around the world that match Japanese sake in a tie-up project with the magazine “Shokuseikatsu”.
- In the International Wine Challenge (IWC), which is the world’s largest wine competition, they have won a prize in the Japanese sake section for seven consecutive years.
- They have English and French version websites in addition to their Japanese website.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.kinmon-kosyu.com/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- Initially, their aged sake didn’t gain a wide following in the Japanese domestic market, so they sought sales channels overseas and tested combinations of world cuisines with Japanese sake on a trial-and-error basis.
- During such efforts, they came to know about the international competition and they eventually became one of its winners.

##### <Implementation results>

- They mainly have two types of sake that are matched with world cuisines: “X3” and “Yamabuki Gold”.
- By considering how to match their sake with cuisines, it became easier for them to understand the needs and have discussion with chefs from overseas restaurants when they visit their brewery.

#### Aged sake Yamabuki Gold



This is a product that blends several types of 20 year old sake based on 10 year old sake. It combines a freshness on the palate together with the sweetness, giving it an original flavor that matches dishes ranging from seafoods such as shrimp and crab to dishes with more fat.



On their website, they share Sichuan dishes, western China dishes, French dishes and Peruvian dishes as dishes that match well with Yamabuki Gold.

## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 6 (Shiragiku Shuzo)

Amid promotion of business negotiations through top sales executives, they are expanding products with special specifications preferred by the local people such as drawing an ukiyoe on the label including gold leaf.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Shiragiku Shuzo Co., Ltd.
  - Ishioka city, Ibaraki Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Seisen Shiragiku
- Pure Ibaraki
- Hatsushibori Shikomi Ichigou, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- Vietnam, Singapore
- France, Germany, etc.

#### [Company features]

- With their eyes set on appealing to foreign tourists, they are also cooperating in the Sakagura Tourism Promotion Council, which aims to transmit the unique features of Japan and its regions and to revitalize the regions.
- They are participating in the NEC Paddy Field Development with Asaza Fund, which promotes the restoration of paddy fields in valley bottom where the ruin of Kasumigaura valley is advancing.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.shiragiku-shuzou.co.jp/index.html>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • **Development** • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- Their motto is “visible business” such as conducting direct trade with local customers without going through a trading company, and they are making efforts in export cherishing their relations with overseas locals.
- In Vietnam, where they plan on exporting their products to, they have participated in the Ibaraki Prefecture Vietnam Visitation Party with the Governor as party leader and they inspected local sites like departments stores and restaurants in an aim to increase exchange.
- In order to produce sake that matches the needs of the people in Vietnam, they are also developing products with detailed customization such as the production of ukiyoe labels including gold leaf.
- In terms of promotion, they are also carrying out activities such as putting up posters that appeal sake to local restaurants and the like.

##### <Implementation results>

- They understood the importance of carrying out business negotiations based on the decision of top executives when negotiating with overseas.
- They concluded a contract of exporting a total of 3,000 bottles of Japanese sake and liquor to Vietnam, and preparations are being made towards shipment.
- Their product also spread to other countries, and their sake products with ukiyoe labels were exported to European countries like France and Germany in the spring of 2015.

#### English label and poster



Since 1805  
Shiragiku Sake Brewery Co., Ltd

**SHIRAGIKU  
HONJOZO**

Ingredients: Yumehitachi  
(Ibaraki Prefecture, Yokota-cho)

Rice Polishing Ratio: 70%  
Alcohol by volume: 15.5%  
Yeast: Sake yeast kyokai No.7  
Sake Meter Value (SMV): +1  
Acidity: 2.0  
Amino Acid Level: 1.7  
Brewer in Charge: Keinosuke Hirose  
Suggested Serving: Chilled, room temperature, or heated.  
(Whichever you prefer)

Description: It is a full-bodied crisp sake with a rich flavor that you will not get tired of drinking. It has a strong acidity and mellow rich flavor.



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 7 (Nagai Shuzo)

They are making efforts in brewing sake by renewing their brewery and internal facilities so that they can develop products that are competent overseas. Their sparkling refined sake and other products, which have been developed in such environment, have been highly valued and ordered by restaurants overseas.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Nagai Shuzo Co., Ltd.
  - Tone Gun, Gunma Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Mizubasho
- Tanigawadake

#### [Main export destinations]

- Exporting to 18 countries around the world, mainly in Europe and US

#### [Company features]

- They started exporting overseas since 1997.
- They are making efforts in brewing sake with the wish to make sake that is renowned in the world.
- To this end, they have built a new sake brewery at their brewery by investing approximately 1.2 billion yen of funds, and they are making efforts to develop new products by introducing new internal facilities such as a bottle warming equipment and temperature managing system.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.mizubasho.jp/internal/top.html>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- They are focusing on efforts to create high added value so that they can brew sake that is accepted around the world.
- In 2008, they developed an original manufacturing method using secondary fermentation inside the bottle just like champagne, which allowed them to create their sparkling refined sake Mizubasho Pure. In order to complete this manufacturing method, President Nagai underwent training in France, and the product was finally realized after approximately 5 years of time.
- Furthermore, they have turned sake with flavors that match each dish, from the appetizer and main dish to the dessert of a course menu, into a series called “Nagai Style”, and they are conducting sales to various areas overseas including Europe.

##### <Implementation results>

- Mizubasho Pure is ordered by consumers both in Japan and overseas, and it has also been adopted by famous restaurants in many countries such as El Bulli in Spain which is said to be the most difficult to reserve in the world.
- Nagai Style has been highly valued in Paris and London, and it is delivered to famous restaurants in various areas leading to increased exports.
- Going forward, they plan to first establish their original brand as a high-class sake rather than be conscious of the sales volume overseas.

Provide Japanese sake that matches course dishes just like wine	
((1) Product name (2) Features)	
Aperitif Equivalent to sparkling wine	(1) Sparkling sake MIZUBASHO PURE (2) Effervescent sake with fine bubbles that burst on the tongue
Alcohol during meal Equivalent to white wine	(1) Junmai Ginjo Sake and Junmai Daiginjo Sake like Mizubasho and Tanigawadake (2) Light flavor that matches fish dishes
Alcohol during meal Equivalent to red wine	(1) Long-aged sake Mizubasho Vintage 2004 Junmai Daiginjo (2) Rich flavor that matches meat dishes
Digestif Equivalent to dessert wine	(1) Dessert sake (under development) (2) Sweet flavor used for refreshing the palate

Nagai Style



Mizubasho Pure

## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 8 (Homare Sake Brewery)

They are carrying out enhancement of their brewery with new refrigeration facilities and tanks as well as the implementation of a fresh rotation system, in order to create a sake brewery image filled with individuality and appeal and to efficiently conduct the manufacturing of various products.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Homare Sake Brewery Co., Ltd.
  - Kitakata city, Fukushima Prefecture

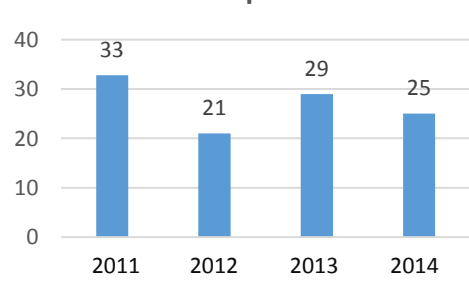
#### [Main products]

- Junmai Daiginjo Sake Aizu Homare
- Junmai Sake Aladdin Bottle, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Taiwan, etc.

kl Trends in export volume



(Source) The Beverage & Food Statistics Monthly, Apr 2012-14

#### [HP]

- <http://www.aizuhomare.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • **Production** • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- The Great East Japan Earthquake left significant damages on Homare Sake Brewery's exports, such as their export volume to some countries being cut in half.
- Consequently, they are currently making efforts to rebuild their brand image, such as by continuing to pursue the improvement of quality and exhibiting in overseas competitions.
- In order to improve quality, they have newly implemented a bottle warming equipment and refrigeration facility, as well as reinforced their tanks, and they have also carried out a review of their production line. In addition, in terms of brewing, they have downsized the preparation, focusing on the realization of a fresh rotation system that would enable them to deliver many new products with value add.

##### <Implementation results>

- With the United States as a foothold about 10 years ago, export results have currently increased to several dozen countries including Canada and Australia. The sales result overseas for fiscal year 2014 was approximately 50 million yen, which is equivalent to approximately 4% of the total shipped amount.
- The Aizu Homare Banshusan Yamada Nishiki Junmai Daiginjo Sake (bottle warming & storage in -5°C refrigerator), which they produced as a new value-added product by actively conducting capital investment, became a first prize winner at the world's largest competitive exhibition held in London in 2015, leading to visits to the brewery as well as inquiries from the United Kingdom and Malaysia one after another.
- The sales goal for overseas going forward is to reach 100 million yen within the next five years.

\*They expect the payback period for the initial investment they made for capital investment to be around 7 to 10 years.



Aizu Homare  
Banshusan Yamada  
Nishiki Junmai  
Daiginjo Sake

## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 9 (Sekiya Brewery)

Sekiya Brewery has achieved expansion in exports by utilizing two production bases, consisting of a brewery that improves productivity by advancing the mechanization of the production processes, and another brewery that serves the purpose of skilled brewer education and product development.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

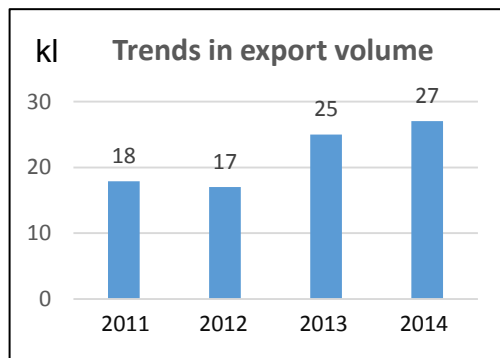
- Sekiya Brewery Co., Ltd.
  - Kitashitara District, Aichi Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Shusen Horaisen (export product)
- Junmai Daiginjo Gin etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- South Korea
- United States
- China, Hong Kong, etc.



(Source) The Beverage & Food Statistics Monthly, Apr 2012-14

#### [HP]

- <http://www.chikurin.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement · Development · **Production** · Logistics · Distribution · Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- They are making efforts in manufacturing sake by setting up two different breweries for production in which each of their roles are clearly divided.
  - 1) The “headquarters brewery” located in Shitara town is used as the production base. They have actively invested in the modernization and labor-saving of the manufacturing facilities inside it in pursuit of improved productivity.
  - 2) The “ginjo workshop”, which is the second brewery, was established in Toyota city in 2004. The purpose the brewery serves is the transmission of brewing skills to the younger generation, and it has been built around the concept of not letting the brewing skills become a black box. All manufacturing processes, from washing the rice to the final step, are done manually.

##### <Implementation results>

- Sekiya Brewery became capable of efficiently expanding production and conducting product development by dividing their production bases into two breweries, and these breweries are functioning as their two wheels that push forward their expansion of domestic sales and exports.
- The “headquarters brewery” has expanded the production volume of the existing core products, which has led to an increase in export quantity to overseas; meanwhile, the “ginjo workshop” has taken advantage of its characteristic of small lots enabling the manufacturing of made-to-order sake and new products that match overseas consumers on a trial-and-error basis.
- By leveraging their strengths consisting not only of “popular sake in Japan”, but also their ability to develop products with “sake quality matching local needs”, they will realize the expansion of exports.

Headquarters brewery



Ginjo workshop



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 10 (Fujii Shuzo)

As a result of introducing various kinds of IT systems and implementing the streamlining of production processes, Fujii Shuzo has created a system that is capable of developing personnel involved in the development of new products for exports.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Fujii Shuzo Co., Ltd.
  - Takehara city, Hiroshima Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Ryusei

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Taiwan
- China and 9 other countries

#### [Export results]

- Annual export volume: 2.5 kl
- Annual production volume: 116 kl

#### [Company features]

- They are one of Hiroshima's leading sake breweries, and they aim for traditional junmai brewing.
- Ryusei, which is their representative brand, won the award of highest excellence at the 1st National Seishu Competition in 1907, and it won the top prize at the 2007 IWC. It has also won high acclaim overseas.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.fujiishuzou.com/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

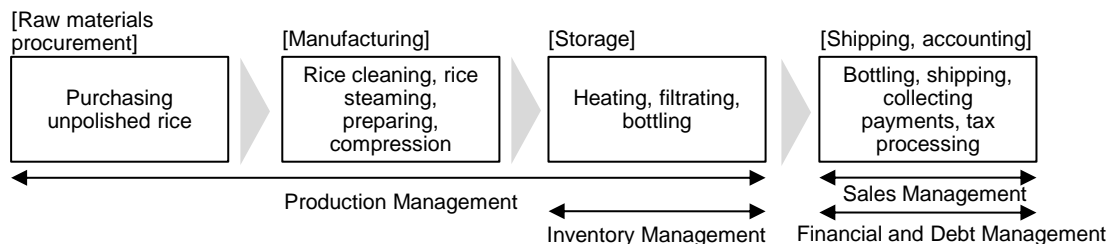
##### <Details and aim>

- Fujii Shuzo temporarily faced poor business results in the past, but through the business revitalization assistance by the Japan Food & Liquor Alliance (JFLA) they were able to carry through a management reform.
  - ✓ JFLA has six other refined sake manufacturers under its jurisdiction, promoting cost reduction through shared production facilities and unified procurement of raw materials between group companies.
- Fujii Shuzo has implemented the cost management system and inventory management system owned by the JFLA. In addition, they are implementing the efficient allocation of personnel, etc. during the busy season.
- They became independent of the JFLA in 2014, and they have improved the Alliance's production facility into one that is more specialized for their own company.

##### <Implementation results>

- The sharing of production facilities and unified procurement has enabled them to focus on sake brewing without struggling in terms of financing.
- Because the JFLA comprehensively manages the procurement and production status in their system, they can formulate a production and distribution plan based on those results, leading to efficient refine sake manufacturing and cost management.
- Through the above-mentioned efforts, they are able to allocate personnel to the development of new products for exports, and they have marked growth in export volume especially in the United States and China.
- Although their current overseas export ratio is approximately 3% of the total sales revenue, their policy is to increase the export ratio up to 10% by 2018.

#### Overview of each system



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 11 (Tenzan Sake Brewer)

They won a trophy in the sparkling division of the IWC 2014, and they are improving their name recognition overseas. In terms of production, they have realized improvements in their supplying ability by pursuing efficient operations through renewal of their facilities.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Tenzan Sake Brewer Company
  - Ogi city, Saga Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Jizake Tenzan
- Shichida Junmai

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Hong Kong
- United Kingdom

#### [Company features]

- They have formed an organization called "Tenzan Sakamai Saibai Kenkyukai (Tenzan Brewer's Rice Cultivation Research Society)" together with local producers, and they are conducting sake brewing with even better berwer's rice by starting research of culvitating Yamada Nishiki, which is rice suitable for brewing sake.
- They are aiming to increase their company's brand recognition by actively exhibiting in exhibitions in Japan and overseas.
- Since 1997, they have been making efforts to increase awareness and spread sake by holding a Japanese sake seminar & tasting session at the Japan Society in New York every year, together with brewers that are members of the Sake Export Association.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.tenzan.co.jp/main/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement · Development · **Production** · Logistics · Distribution · Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- In 2015, they made efforts in the renewal of their sake filling equipment, and they prepared a new filling machine in a new building that they established in their factory. In addition to preventing the deterioration of flavor, maintaining freshness and improving quality, this has also realized an enhancement in their supplying ability. The processed amount has also increase approximately 20% compared to the existing equipment.
- It is an Italian system that is delivered to wine manufacturers and the like in Europe and the United States, and the amount they invested was approximately 200 million yen.
- They streamlined the series of processes from cleaning of the bottles, filling the sake, pasteurizing with hot water, cooling, drying, labeling, to packing in cases, together with the renewal of the filling equipment.
- They have a history of winning many prizes at sake appraising fairs in Japan and overseas. Particularly, in 2014, they won a trophy in the sparkling division at IWC, which is one of the world's largest competitions.

##### <Implementation results>

- Winning big awards on the global stage has been a strong boost to the enhancement of their name recognition, and it has increased inquiries from stores overseas wishing to handle their products, thereby accelerating their move towards overseas expansion.
- Their overseas export ratio is approximately a little less than 10%, and they aim to increase this up to about 15% by 5 years later.



Filling equipment that they implemented

Source: November 12, 2015  
Nishinippon Shimbun



Tenzan Junmai Ginjo Origarami, which won the trophy of highest excellence in the sparkling division of the IWC

## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 12 (Kohku Shuhai Service)

By leveraging their ability to construct a system that can comprehensively conduct storage, transportation and distribution through establishing local sales and distribution channels, they are contributing to increased exports of brewing businesses.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Kohku Shuhai Service Co., Ltd.

#### [Main products]

- Sake

#### [Main export destinations]

- Shanghai

#### [Company features]

- Their main business services include fresh food freight transport and general freight transport. They are especially strong in storage and transportation service when handling fresh foods.
- Their core business office is at Narita Airport, and the size of their temperature-controlled warehouse, which handles fresh foods, is one of the largest in the industry.
- They also newly established a bonded shed dedicated for exports, which is equipped with freezers, refrigerators and regular-temperature storages, called KIX-Coolexp in the Kansai International Airport, and they are providing full support through the management of export items in three temperature ranges.
- Furthermore, as a transportation and delivery service, they also offer a one-stop-solution for transportation services of refrigerated cargo called Kcold. They are also capable of mixed pickup of refrigerated cargo.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.shuhai.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement ・ Development ・ Production ・ Logistics ・ Distribution ・ Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

##### Local relationship building is important.

- When they were making efforts in export services of fresh foods, they received a request from a restaurant in Shanghai that “they want to stock Japanese sake”. They therefore started to consider the export of sake.
- In order to implement control not only in terms of logistics but also over the sales channels on their own, they built an exporting scheme by acquiring a liquor license, purchasing sake from Japanese brewers and collaborating with forwarders.
- Furthermore, they made efforts in the visualization of local sales and distribution channels by carrying out direct communication with importers in China for import clearance.

##### <Implementation results and future plan>

- By establishing a system that offers a one-stop-solution covering not only procurement, storage and delivery, but also the various administrative proceedings, they are now able to eliminate the anxiety of business operators that want to export overseas.
  - ✓ They have also become able to give advice to businesses that have issues in customs clearance. They have made it possible to shorten procedures.
- In Shanghai, the volume that they handle has steadily increased, and their network for implementing the same model to other countries such as Singapore is also expanding.

Packaging the product



Controlling the temperature



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 13 (Marumoto Shuzou)

They are carrying out the development of sparkling sake, which can be distributed in normal temperature, in order to solve the issue of requiring low-temperature logistics amidst growing exports driven by organic sake.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Marumoto Shuzou Co., Ltd.
  - Kamogata town, Asakuchi city, Okayama Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Hou Hou Shu Stripe
- Chikurin Karoyaka Organic (export product), etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Europe (Germany, United Kingdom, etc.)
- China, Hong Kong, etc.

#### [Company features]

- Since 2003, the government recognized Kamogata town as Japan's special agricultural zone for brewer's rice, and Marumoto Shuzou is securing raw materials for high-quality rice suitable for brewing sake by cultivating Yamada Nishiki in their own company's rice fields. The cultivated area is approximately 11 ha.
- They have particularly focused on "purely domestic products" by centralizing all processes in Japan ranging from the cultivation of brewer's rice to brewing.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.chikurin.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • **Logistics** • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- They started making efforts in exporting business from 2004, and they analyzed the demand for sake in the United States, Europe and Hong Kong. After five years, they obtained certification of organic sake in the United States and Europe.
- Organic sake gained popularity in high-class restaurants in countries and territories such as the United States, European countries, China and Hong Kong, and sales has expanded to the point where exported products account for approximately 10% to 20% of total sales.
- However, they face the issue of requiring low-temperature logistics for the exports. In order to solve this challenge, they started developing sparkling sake, which can be distributed in normal temperature.

##### <Implementation results>

- In terms of gas filling technology and the like, which are necessary for manufacturing sparkling sake, they established technology for sake by seeking and applying technical advice from local beer manufacturers.
- Going forward, they plan on specifying their target customers and making efforts for new expansion of sales channels for products including sparkling sake.

"Organic Chikurin" is a Junmai Ginjo Sake manufactured with keen attention to organic manufacturing methods.



"Hou Hou Shu" matches well with ingredients that have an acidic taste, and it also goes well with various world cuisines including Japanese, Western and Chinese cuisine.



NPO certification, which is an organic certification in North America



Organic standard in Europe

## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 14 (WAJO Co., Ltd.)

They are carrying out comprehensive operations in China ranging from domestic procurement of sake to local sales promotion activities. In particular, in terms of sales promotion activities, they are making efforts in B-to-C sales targeting consumers, and one of their strengths is their know-how in market development.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- WAJO Co., Ltd.  
Fukuoka city, Fukuoka Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- General Japanese alcoholic beverages  
(refined sake, beer, liquor, etc.)

#### [Export results]

- Annual export volume: approx. 52 kl

#### [Main export destinations]

- China
- Hong Kong, etc.

#### [Company features]

- They conduct export of alcoholic beverages from Japan mainly to China, and they are exporting by buying products from breweries from around Japan and collecting the products in self-arranged containers.
- They have containers of three temperature ranges prepared within their company, and they also handle air delivery.
- In addition, they are making earnest efforts in sales promotion activities locally.

#### [HP]

- <http://wajo.biz/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement ・ Development ・ Production ・ Logistics ・ Distribution ・ Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- They are carrying out wholesale business of sake by developing a comprehensive system, which includes procurement from breweries → storage → export agency (transport, customs clearance, quarantine) → local promotion → local distribution.
- They are focusing their efforts on local distribution and, in particular, B-to-C sales promotion activities unlike the approach of other brewers, and they are carrying out active promotion activities to Chinese consumers. They are building up a branding strategy by launching “Toji Kura (chief brewer’s warehouse)”, which is a collection of luxury sake, in a department store in China. Furthermore, they are making efforts for sales expansion by conducting activities such as the introduction of sake through local media.
- Also, for restaurants and retailers, they are creating menus that match each store, and they are also holding events such as a sake training course (conducted in Chinese) and SakeDinner.

##### <Implementation results and future plan>

- By establishing a system that offers a one-stop-solution covering not only procurement, storage and delivery, but also the various administrative proceedings, they are now able to eliminate the anxiety of business operators that want to export overseas.

Toji Kura (chief brewer’s warehouse)



Sake featured in a Chinese magazine



They are raising local awareness and diversifying the export destination countries by carrying out product PR “directly” to consumers in local supermarkets and by holding displays with exhibits on sale for local restaurants.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Nihon Shurui Hanbai Co., Ltd.
  - Yokohama city,  
Kanagawa Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Shirakami Sanchi no Shiki
- Kyoto Gozan no Shiki, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Thailand
- South Korea

#### [Company features]

- They are carrying out awareness-raising activities for local sake and authentic shochu together with local trade partners by participating in exhibitions of overseas trade partners and in various tasting events.
- By inviting overseas trade partners to Japan, they are carrying out various exchanges of opinion through exhibitions held in Japan, visits to brewers, and market inspection.
- They are jointly developing export products with brewers while incorporating the requests from customers.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.nishuhan.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- They are carrying out activities to give information of sake at supermarkets, in countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand, at a frequency of several times per year.
- They are holding a display with exhibits on sale to local restaurants every year in May at a hotel in Bangkok, Thailand.
- They are dispatching employees to local distributors and making them conduct field work investigation of the situation overseas.

##### <Implementation results>

- In the past, their exports were mainly to the United States, but their exports to East Asian countries including Thailand and South Korea have made progress.

Local activities to give information  
including display with exhibits on sale



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 16 (Kikusui Sake)

They established a local subsidiary in Los Angeles in 2010, and they are carrying out the development of sales channels through sales activities of employees including local hires in neighboring countries such as Canada and Mexico.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

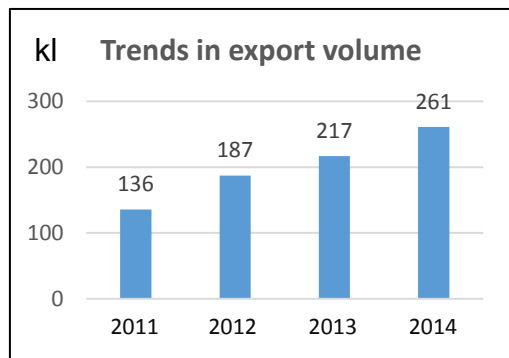
- Kikusui Sake Co., Ltd.
  - Shibata city, Niigata Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Funaguchi Kikusui Ichibanshibori
- Kikusui Karakuchi, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Canada



(Source) The Beverage & Food Statistics Monthly, Apr 2012-14

#### [HP]

- <http://www.kikusui-sake.com/home/jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • **Distribution** • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- In response to the lowering trends of sake consumption in Japan, Kikusui Sake established a local subsidiary in Los Angeles “Kikusui Sake USA” in 2010 as their sales office. Full-time sales staffs are stationed at this office, and they are reinforcing sales promotion activities to restaurants and retailers.
- Currently, in 2015, they also have a sales branch in New York where employees including local hires are carrying out sales in neighboring countries such as Canada and Mexico.
- In addition to establishing the 2-office structure in the United States, they have also set their sights on preparing a sales office network in Europe and Asia.
- In terms of human resources, they appointed a Director responsible for the International Division, and they also recruited a British staff to strengthen overseas sales. They have made particular efforts to have the British staff play the role of explaining about sake brewing to local customers properly in their native language.  
\*The sales revenue of Kikusui Sake is approximately 5.44 billion yen (FY2014).

##### <Implementation results>

- Export volume has more or less continued to grow and, currently, the ratio of overseas sales accounts for 4% to 5% of the company's total sales revenue.
- Director Kikuchi envisions the following strategy: “Based on an increase in sales in Japan, I want to raise awareness of the brand by increasing the ratio of overseas sales up to 10%”.

Display in a retail store in the United States



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 17 (Akana Sake Brewing Corporation)

They are striving to gradually expand sales contacts by specializing in products that can be differentiated from other companies who were in the market before them and by engaging in door-to-door sales to local restaurants and hotels overseas.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Akana Sake Brewing Corporation
  - Iishi Gun, Shimane Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Kinunomine
- Gohyakumangoku, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- Thailand

#### [Company features]

- They are a junmai brewer that uses brewer's rice from linan town, which is a producing center of high quality rice, to manufacture only Junmai Sake, Junmai Ginjo Sake, and Junmai Daiginjo. Their representative sake is Kinunomine, which is made from fine brewer's rice grown locally.
- They filed for bankruptcy in 2004, but after Takaaki Mishima was appointed as President and took over the business in October 2014, they embarked on the development of sales channels to Southeast Asia, and they are making active efforts for the expansion of sales by export.

#### [HP]

- <http://kinunomine.com/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • **Distribution** • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- After their business failure in 2004, Akana Shuzo restarted full-scale production in 2014 preparing approximately 8000 liters in FY2014. They planned to develop sales channels in Southeast Asia in the face of the contracting market in Japan. They are making efforts targeting customers in Thailand.
- They are implementing the strategy of exporting only their Junmai Sake and Junmai Daiginjo, which are in the higher price range, in order to differentiate with the products of other companies who were in the market before them.
- They are currently considering partnership with a local food distributor, who has know-how in controlling temperature and maintaining freshness in the distribution stage inside Thailand, in order to maintain quality.
- They are a case example of steadily conducting sales on a business trip basis despite the brewery's small size and financial difficulties. Although they cannot afford a local office, by conducting attentive market research through local visits, they are making efforts to learn the preferences of the Thai people and to develop products for export that adjust the sugar content and alcohol percentage.

##### <Implementation results>

- In 2015, they visited Bangkok in Thailand to have business negotiations with a total of 12 hotels and restaurants in the city. As of the end of September 2015, they have concluded contracts with 5 companies and 6 stores, and they have improved their export results.



Kinunomine

## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 18 (Sawanotsuru)

Sawanotsuru is making efforts to expand sales channels of sake by changing their overseas sales system from entrusting operations to an agent to establishing a dedicated system of directly dispatching a headquarters employee to the sales site in order to handle the demand for refined sake overseas.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Sawanotsuru Co., Ltd.
  - Nada ward, Kobe city

#### [Main products]

- Junmai Daiginjo Minume
- Tokubetsu Junmai Nadakimoto
- Junmai Daiginjo Zuicho
- Yamada Nishiki no Sato, Jitsuraku, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- South Korea
- Hong Kong

#### [Export results]

- Not disclosed
- Not disclosed

#### [Company features]

- They have experience winning prizes overseas, such as winning the gold prize at the world Monde Selection for their products including Minume, Nadakimoto, Zuicho and Jitsuraku. Zuicho also received the International High Quality Trophy.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.sawanotsuru.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- Sawanotsuru is making efforts to expand exports from the aspects of both product and sales system.
- In terms of product, Minume, Nadakimoto, Zuicho and Jitsuraku, which have been awarded the gold prize at the Monde Selection overseas, are handled as their core export products. In addition, they are focusing on developing products that are accepted overseas by taking into consideration features like label design.
- In terms of sales system, they have implemented a sales system where the development of sales channels, which they used to entrust to a Japanese trading company, is conducted through direct visits to local restaurants and retailers by a sales personnel in charge of exports at the headquarters, while collecting information from trading companies.
- The sales personnel conveys detailed information of sake to the employees of overseas distributors and people who are involved in restaurants.

##### <Implementation results>

- Communication between the headquarters and local parties has become smoother, and it has become easier for them to respond to the demands and the like of local consumers.
- Their products are well-received especially in the United States, South Korea and Hong Kong but also in the EU and Southeast Asian region.
- Sawanotsuru plans to focus on expanding their sales channels with an aim to reach 10% overseas sales ratio by the March 2018 term.



Zuicho

## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 19 (Watanabe Sake Brewery)

They are making active efforts in increasing exports not only to the Asian countries but also to the United States and European countries while strengthening their internal system of export initiatives such as by hiring an American brewmaster.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

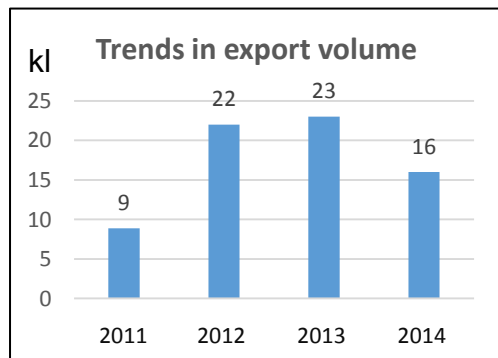
- Watanabe Sake Brewery
  - Hida city, Gifu Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Chogin Shizuku
- Daiginjo Gokui Den
- Kuramoto no Kakushizake, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- Hong Kong
- Singapore
- Taiwan



(Source) The Beverage & Food Statistics Monthly,  
Apr 2012-14

#### [HP]

- <http://www.watanabeshuzouten.com/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- Watanabe Sake Brewery employs an American brewmaster who helps on the front line at the time of closing contracts and distributing when exporting overseas.
- In addition to the American brewmaster who is in charge of exports, the company has a young worker who graduated from a university of foreign language studies as well as an employee who is proficient in PC skills, and they are carrying out the development of an internal system to increase exports.

##### <Implementation results>

- Their main export destinations used to be Asian countries such as Hong Kong and Singapore, but they are now carrying out product development and contractual procedures to export to the United States.
- They say that selling sake manufactured by an American brewmaster to the United States makes it easier for local people to accept it.
- In an aim to increase exports, they will make efforts in future recruitments as well by setting foreign language skills as one of the evaluation criteria.

Cody Braysford



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 20 (Toshimaya)

They created an “English brochure” with particular effort by cooperating with external parties. They built an overseas sales structure consisting of functions such as being able to provide information with an English version brochure even in response to inquiries from Asian countries.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Toshimaya Corporation
  - Okaya city, Nagano Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Onbashira
- Miwatari, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- Singapore
- Hong Kong
- Denmark
- India

#### [Company features]

- Miwatari is a refined sake in which young brewmasters are challenging themselves in brewing sake with new sensitivity, and the company is striving to brew sake with close relationship with customers by fusing tradition and trends.
- They use rice produced in Nagano Prefecture, Miyama Nishiki, Hitogokochi, Kinmon Nishiki, Shirakaba Nishiki and Yoneshiro for the rice, and they choose rice from the 5 or more types to use depending on the characteristics of the products. In addition, they use infiltrated water as the water source; thus, all of their products are produced from Shinshu ingredients.

#### [HP]

- <http://jizake.miwatari.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • **Distribution** • Export system development

#### [Key points]

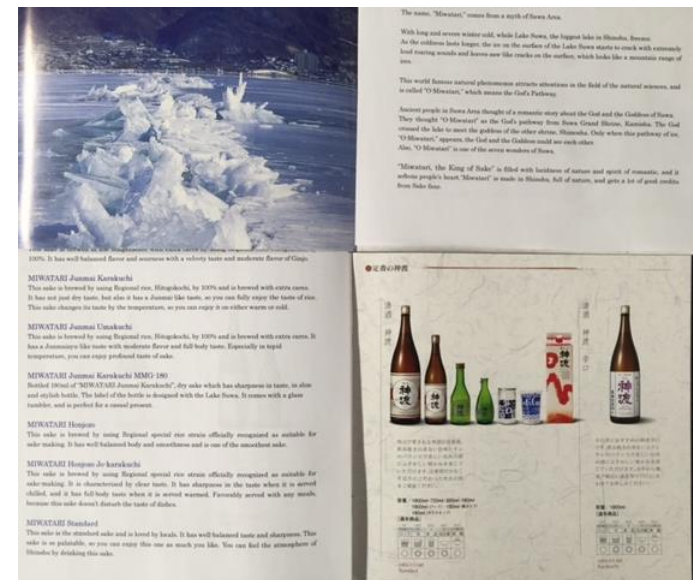
##### <Details and aim>

- Along with the growing recognition of Japanese sake overseas, Toshimaya has opened up sales channels for their refined sake overseas even though it is through importing businesses. They thought that creating an English version brochure would be necessary in order to prepare for global expansion, but preparations had stalled due to not being urgent at the time.
- However, they were requested by a customer from the Middle East to create “an English brochure”. They did not have anyone inside the company suitable for this task, so they decided to ask for help from an external party.

##### <Implementation results>

- When translating the catalog into English, the words were carefully selected so that Toshimaya’s intention for their products would not be skewed.
- Although it was different from a literal translation of the original catalog, precise efforts were made to select ways that would make it easier to understand the products, such as by using “charts” in expressing sweetness or dryness.
- Later, they were able to provide information in response to inquiries from Asian countries using the English version brochure. At business meetings and exhibitions, too, overseas participants take interest in the product while reading the English translation brochure.

#### English brochure



Taking the adoption of their sake as the sake provided on ANA international flights in 2014 as an opportunity, they are actively participating in a food exhibition in London and sake export consultation meetings in Japan aiming to further expand their exports.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Yukawa Shuzoten Co., Ltd.
  - Kisomura, Kiso Gun, Nagano Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Refined Sake Kisoji

#### [Main export destinations]

- Taiwan
- United Kingdom
- Singapore

#### [Company features]

- The Kisomura Journal, a history book of Kisomura where the company is located, describes an episode where the 12th president of the company considered expanding to the South Sea Islands in 1894. As seen in this example, Yukawa Shuzoten is famous among locals for being a vigorous brewer.
- The current 16th president continues to create changes in step with the times such as by introducing a rice washing machine and an advanced heating equipment.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.sake-kisoji.com/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • **Distribution** • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- In June 2006, as one of seven brewing companies located in Nagano Prefecture, they started exports of sake to Taiwan through a trading company that operates Japanese food supermarkets locally overseas.
- Later, while continuing exports to Taiwan, they strove for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of sake in Japan. In June 2014, their sake was adopted as the sake provided to passengers on ANA's international flights, which has taken them to a new phase of their overseas expansion.
- In September 2014, they participated in a food exhibition held in London. They learned the Japanese food restaurant trends in London. Furthermore, in 2015, they participated in an export consultation meeting on sake hosted by JETRO, where they had business negotiations with import distributors in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Thailand. Through such negotiations, they recognized the growing interest in sake overseas.

##### <Implementation results>

- ANA's adoption of the company's sake on their international flights was one of the elements that created new interest in the company to expand overseas.
- In addition, they have participated in business negotiations and exhibitions using the adoption of their sake on ANA's international flights as PR material, and this has started leading to new inquiries from countries like the U.K.
- Their goal for the next few years is to increase the ratio of exports out of total sales revenue to reach up to 5%.



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 22 (Senjyo)

They achieved increased sales through new product development (Doburoku, Smoothie, Amazake) in Japan. Going forward, they will advance the expansion of exports by leveraging the current president's experience of studying abroad as well as opportunities at various seminars and trade fairs.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Senjyo Co., Ltd.
  - Ina city, Nagano Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Kuromatsu Senjyo
- Yamamuro
- Yui, etc.

#### [Main export destinations]

- Singapore
- Hong Kong
- Germany

#### [Company features]

- Since the past, Senjyo has been a brewer that carries out innovative initiatives such as the mechanization of processes ranging from milling, rice washing, koji production to fermenting.
- They have published English and Chinese brochures on their website.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.senjyo.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • **Distribution** • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- Against the backdrop of warnings about the loss of interest in sake in Japan, Senjyo has actively carried out product development in order to make efforts while using the diversification of food and growing health consciousness as new opportunities.
- In 2004, they started selling Amazake with 100% malted rice using brewer's rice; in 2009, they released Amazake containing red buck wheat; in 2012, they developed Amazake and Doburoku with sprouted brown rice added; and in 2014, they announced a product prepared with white malted rice.
- Furthermore, starting in 2015, they added smoothies to their product lineup.
- Meanwhile, in terms of exports, they participated in an overseas export seminar for sake in June 2014. In November, they participated in an international trade fair for wine held in Hong Kong where they had business negotiations with over 30 companies in three days.

##### <Implementation results>

- By participating in export seminars and international trade fairs, they became aware of the importance of conveying the natural features of Shinshu as well as the necessity of making efforts in exporting and the future potential of Japanese sake overseas by getting a glimpse of other sake brewers' activities.
- In addition, their overseas network expanded while participating in events such as trade fairs, and this has led to specific business negotiations and exports.
- They have set the following items as the most important management areas in the future: (1) luxury alcohol market, (2) fermented rice beverages such as Doburoku and Amazake, and (3) retail sale division. In addition to these three, they have established (4) exporting overseas as their goal, and they are eager to expand exports by leveraging the current President's experience of studying in the U.K. for two years.
- Going forward, they want to further accelerate their exporting activities while collaborating with export promotion organizations (e.g. Japan Rice and Rice Products Export Promotion Association).



### 3. Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 23 (Yamatogawa Sake Brewery)

They are unique for their self-cultivation of brewer's rice at the Yamatogawa Farm and manufacturing of sparkling sake products utilizing the latest facilities. In terms of sales, they are making efforts in joint development of export products by inviting overseas agents to the brewery.

#### Corporate information

##### [Company name]

- Joint-stock company Yamatogawa Sake Brewery
  - Kitakata city, Fukushima Prefecture

##### [Main products]

- Junmai Kasumochi Genshu Yauemon
- Junmai Rashiku

##### [Main export destinations]

- Taiwan
- United Kingdom
- United States

##### [Company features]

- Their distinctive feature is the manufacturing of sweet-flavored sake, and their leading product "Kasumochi Genshu" is said to be "the sweetest sake in Japan", and it is popular as a very unique sake.
- They are making efforts with their sights set on opening up sales channels overseas, and they started exporting their products to Taiwan in 2000. Later, they exported their products to the United Kingdom and the United States; recently, they have also exported to Russia.

##### [HP]

- <http://www.yauemon.co.jp/>

#### Exporting efforts

##### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

##### [Key points]

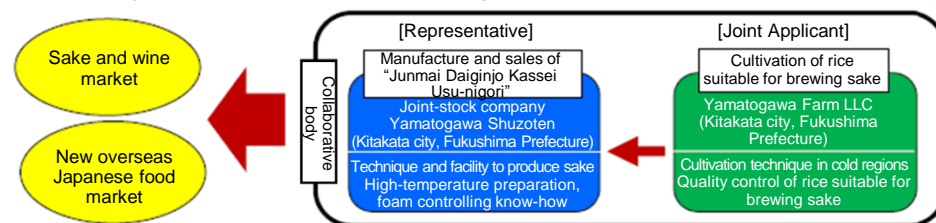
###### <Details and aim>

- Under the Agricultural-Commercial-Industrial Collaboration Business Plan, which is a government-run program to assist product development and the like, Yamatogawa Shuzo is carrying out operations to produce rice suitable for brewing sake at the Yamatogawa Farm, to develop sparkling sake and to make efforts in developing sales channels.
- They cultivate high-quality rice suitable for brewing sake at the Yamatogawa Farm, and by utilizing Yamatogawa Shuzoten's traditional fermenting technology and the latest facilities, they are making efforts to manufacture highly marketable sake.
- Recently, they have been actively conducting new product development taking into consideration consumer preferences by developing effervescent sparkling sake.
- In terms of sales channel cultivation, a distributor from the U.K. has visited the brewery to develop the European market. This distributor brewed sake while actually getting guidance from the chief brewer, and the distributor is proposing and selling their products to customers like Japanese restaurants based on their experience at the brewery.

###### <Implementation results>

- The export results of sake is steadily improving. The number of countries to which their products are exported have increased compared to the beginning, and the number of exported products has also increased. In addition to the backing of government-run export measures and the boost from the Japanese sake boom, the "sincere wish of brewers" arising from the sense of alarm after the Great East Japan Earthquake has had a strong impact.
  - \* After the earthquake, Fukushima Prefecture has won the most number of gold prizes at the Zenkoku Shinshu Kanpyokai (the National Bureau's Research Institute of Brewing), and Yamatogawa Shuzo has won the gold prize for five consecutive years.
- Going forward, against the backdrop of the spread of Japanese culture and excitement from inbound tours to Japan, they will accelerate their efforts of having their customers actually see, touch and taste their products, such as by attracting and receiving visitors from overseas at their brewery with "Japanese sake" as the keyword.

Partnership with Yamatogawa Farm



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 24 (Miyasaka Brewing)

In order to develop sales channels in Europe, they have been promoting greater awareness of their brand by exhibiting at Europe's largest trade fair VINEXPO since around 20 years ago. They have also placed emphasis on personnel, and they have strengthened their export structure by hiring a foreign staff.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Miyasaka Brewing Company, Ltd.  
Masumi
  - Suwa city, Nagano Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Junmai Daiginjo Yumedono
- Junmai Daiginjo Sanka
- Junmai Daiginjo Nanago

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Hong Kong
- Canada

#### [Company features]

- They are making efforts in sake brewing with a particular focus on self-milling all volume of rice using rice suitable for brewing sake.
- In response to the contraction of the sake market in Japan, they started making full-fledged efforts for exports since around 2000.
- With aspiration to transform sake from a beverage popular in Japan to a beverage popular around the world, they have actively promoted the development of sales channels in overseas markets.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.masumi.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- They participated in VINEXPO, a trade fair held in France every other year, for nine consecutive times since 1999. They were unable to achieve any results when first exhibiting in 1999 due to not knowing the language or culture. But, later, they made preparations by creating pamphlets in English and French, and they have poured their efforts in overseas expansion for full-fledged exports since their second time exhibiting in 2001. When doing this, they carried out the initiative while cutting down the exhibition costs by jointly making preparations for the exhibit with several other brewers in Japan.
- In addition, they consider “personnel” to be an important element in overseas expansion. Currently, the overseas expansion operations at the headquarters are conducted by an American person in charge, a French person in charge of Europe, and a Chinese trainee who is visiting Japan. These three personnel are engaging in sales activities as full-time staffs for their export business.
- Likewise, as a reinforcement measure of personnel, they are conducting training to local restaurant employees in order to firmly establish the brand overseas. They are holding such trainings periodically for the purpose of accurately transmitting information and raising brand recognition, such as by explaining the characteristics of the flavor, raw materials and manufacturing method while tasting each product.

##### <Implementation results>

- As a result of continuing to exhibit at trade fairs for overseas expansion and making efforts in reinforcing personnel, currently they have improved sales all over the world with 40% from the United States, 30% from Hong Kong, and 30% from Canada, United Kingdom, Northern Europe and Asian countries on an amount basis.
- At present, their overseas sales ratio to overall sales is approximately 7%, but they will actively make efforts for increased exports towards their goal of surpassing 10% in the future.

VINEXPO 2015



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 25 (Dewazakura Sake Brewery)

They place the greatest emphasis on strengthening their relationship with local partners in terms of both product development and local sales channel development, and they have leveraged these connections to achieve increased exports of their own products.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Dewazakura Sake Brewery Corporation
  - Tendo city, Yamagata Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Ouka Ginjo
- Junmai Daiginjo Ichiro

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Hong Kong
- United Kingdom and 25 other countries

#### [Company features]

- They started exporting to countries around the world in 1997 starting in Europe and then expanding exports to the United States and Asian countries.
- They have been praised for manufacturing sake that is rooted in the local people, and they have a history of winning numerous prizes at various competitions and sake appraising fairs both in Japan and overseas. The Dewazakura brand is well known overseas.
- Their overseas export ratio was approximately 6% in fiscal 2014.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.dewazakura.co.jp/index.htm>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- From the perspective of product development, they have partnered with the trading company World Sake Imports for sales to the United States and Europe, and they have made efforts to expand imports by increasing the ratio of Ginjo Sake and Junmai Ginjo Sake, which have high added value, instead of the conventional Junmai Sake.
- In terms of their efforts to open up sales channels, they not only conduct local research but they also place foremost importance on strengthening their relationship with partners (e.g. importers, distributors); in particular, they believe it is important to collaborate with partners specializing in Japanese sake in order to be successful in developing sales channels locally.
- They are also making efforts in building relationships by holding events such as regular tasting sessions with the managers of restaurants purchasing their sake. They plan to expand sales by continuing activities to first get the managers to like the Dewazakura sake, and then later to have them become the local hub to spread it to other restaurants.

##### <Implementation results>

- As a result of carrying out the above-mentioned efforts, they have steadily improved their export results ever since they started exporting in 1997.
  - 1997: 1,000 liters
  - 2002: 20,000 liters (20 times growth in 5 years)
  - 2012: 75,000 liters (75 times growth in 15 years)
  - 2014: 85,000 liters (85 times growth in 17 years)



Ouka Ginjo (Honnama)

Gassan Shuzo is striving to promote understanding of Japanese sake by holding tasting sessions with the sommelier and waiters/waitresses of local restaurants. They have realized robust growth in exports through the steady accumulation of such efforts.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Gassan Sake Brewery Co., Ltd.
  - Sagae city,  
Yamagata Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Junmai Ginjo Ginrei Gassan
- Gassan no Yuki

#### [Main export destinations]

- North America
- EU
- Singapore, etc.

#### [Company features]

- In addition to North America, they have exported to Asian countries such as Singapore and Thailand as well as European countries. Overseas export ratio is approximately 7% to 8%.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.gassan-sake.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement · Development · Production · Logistics · Distribution · Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- For the exported products, they basically export their own company's products, but they occasionally develop products that incorporate requests from importers while using their own company's flavor of local sake produced in Yamagata Prefecture as the base.
- Gassan Shuzo has two manufacturing breweries, including the Hitokoegura which incorporates modern elements such as the implementation of the latest equipment, and the Horyugura which conducts traditional sake brewing done mainly by hand. However, when developing private items such as the one described above, they often make the trial product at the Hitokoegura that has the latest equipment because of the rich selection of varieties.
- In terms of their efforts to expand local sales, a major feature is that they hold tasting sessions with the sommelier and waiters/waitresses of local restaurants overseas. By explaining and giving guidance on the characteristics of sake, features of flavors and Japanese dishes that match sake, they are placing greatest emphasis on the sharing of understanding and passion for their company's sake while also striving to deepen the waiter and waitresses' understanding of sake.
- They have started making similar efforts in non-Japanese restaurants.

##### <Implementation results>

- Their sake has come to be highly praised around the world, such as the brewer receiving the Great Value Sake prize at the IWC2015, and they are gathering the attention of overseas chefs and buyers as well.
- By holding tasting sessions with sommelier and waiters/waitresses, they are able to explain the sake they are providing in their own words, and this has also increased the variation of the services they provide.
- By continuing this effort, they have started to receive requests of similar initiatives from other restaurants, which is beginning to lead to increased exports as a result. This is an example of how steady local sales activities contribute to the robust expansion of exports.
- Going forward, they will aim to firmly establish sake as part of the local food culture rather than let the current sake boom pass as a temporary fad.



Ginrei Gassan

Considering it necessary to localize Japanese sake in order to expand exports, they have travelled to numerous countries abroad including the United Kingdom, and they have carried out marketing and the excavation of demand from early on.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- URAKASUMI Saura Co., Ltd.
  - Shiogama city, Miyagi Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Junmai Ginjo Urakasumi Zen
- Junmai Sake Urakasumi
- Yamada Nishiki Junmai Daiginjo Urakasumi

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- United Kingdom
- Australia

#### [Company features]

- With the principle to “provide a sense of wealth, comfort and richness to as many people as possible through the manufacturing and sales of sake” as their motto, they are making efforts for high-quality sake brewing.
- They are actively carrying out expansion overseas, participating in many sake seminars held in places like Paris and London. Based on the concept that sake is drunk during meals, they have made efforts in overseas sales while emphasizing the brewing of sake that matches the regional food cultures.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.urakasumi.com/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • **Distribution** • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- Urakasumi Saura has visited countries like the United Kingdom from early on based on the thought that localization is unavoidable in order for sake to spread overseas and has conducted sales and marketing activities.
- Efforts to spread sake have made progress in the United Kingdom, and they have even hosted an event involving the head chef of the British Royal Family hosted by Japan Sake Brewers' Association and others.
- When Mark Flanagan, the head chef of the Royal Family including Queen Elizabeth enjoyed a Japanese meal together with sake at the official residences of the Japanese ambassador in the U.K., Koichi Saura, the brewer of the sake, gave an explanation dressed in kimono, and he fulfilled the role of describing the combination of sake with meals as well as the cultural background.
- They aim to spread sake overseas and expand sales with the U.K. as their launching point.

##### <Implementation results>

- They feel a sense of confidence from diving into the local market and conducting marketing and product localization, and these efforts have also led to an increase in exports. Their goal for the immediate future is to increase the shipment volume, which remains at slightly over 1%, to above 3%.
- Their goal for the immediate future is to increase the shipment volume, which remains at slightly over 1%, to above 3%.



Party in the United Kingdom



Inside the brewery

(Source) Various public materials

They were awarded the Top Trophy in the Junmai Sake Division at the IWC2015. They are developing sake that is highly valued around the world through natural sake brewing.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Honke Matsuura Co., Ltd.
  - Naruto city,  
Tokushima Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Narutotai

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- United Kingdom
- Hong Kong
- Taiwan

#### [Company features]

- Taking advantage of their tradition of over 200 years since establishment, they have been attracting attention such as by holding events like drinking while standing in the brewery, visiting the brewery, and opening the brewery to the public. They are developing new clientele such as female and younger customers by increasing their opportunity to become familiar with sake.

#### [HP]

- <http://narutotai.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • **Distribution** • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- They were once asked, “Would you like to bottle the sake in aluminum can?” for the Japanese market, and they immediately commercialized it, but it never reached the market. At that time, they received an offer to export it, and ever since they started exporting it overseas mainly to the United States.
- Since the end of the 1970s, they advertised sake to regions such as the United States, Europe and Southeast Asia through the Japan Prestige Sake Association, but it was only in 1998 that they first travelled overseas on their own to conduct PR. While conducting PR for one week to restaurants and cooking schools in New York City, United States, they investigated consumer trends and promoted their Junmai Sake Narutotai by actually bringing it with them to restaurants serving dishes such as Japanese soba and seafood. They contacted via Facebook a sake coordinator living overseas who they found out about on TV, and this has led to increased sales locally.
- They received an inquiry to sell their Namacan, which was popular in the United States around 2014, from a restaurant business that entered the market in the United Kingdom from the United States.

##### <Implementation results>

- The success of their solo PR in 1998 has led to local chefs visiting from overseas who have decided to order their products. With the adoption of their Junmai Ginjo by a 4-star restaurant in New York as the trigger, their sales channels have expanded. Their “Narutotai Ginjo Shiboritate Nama Genshu” is sold in 13 states and is referred to familiarly by the nickname “Namacan”. Export destinations are continuing to increase outside of the United States such as the United Kingdom and Hong Kong.
- “Narutotai Junmai Mizu-to-Kome” was awarded the Gold Medal at the International Wine Challenge 2015. They are planning to create a label with kanji characters for exports.



They are carrying out creative marketing efforts such as being adopted as Germany's leading airline's inflight alcohol.

## Corporate information

### [Company name]

- Masuda Tokubee Shoten Co., Ltd.
  - Kyoto city, Kyoto Prefecture

### [Main products]

- Tsukino Katsura

### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Germany

### [Company features]

- By turning their current standing of being a small-sized brewery to their advantage, they have carried out sake brewing large varieties in small quantities specializing in sake with specific class names.
- While protecting tradition, they have challenged themselves in brewing original and unique sake such as sake with lower alcohol content than the usual sake and sparkling sake.

### [HP]

- <http://tsukinokatsura.co.jp/>

## Exporting efforts

### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

### [Key points]

#### <Details and aim>

- They have developed products with lower alcohol content than the usual sake and sparkling sake and are distributing them overseas.
- Ever since a chef from a famous French restaurant in New York visited the brewery, they started receiving more export orders to the United States since the early 2000s.
- In 2008, they exhibited at the German Sake Fair at the official residence of the Japanese Consul General in Dusseldorf, Germany hosted by the Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association, and they have developed sales channels in the German market basing activities in Dusseldorf where there are many Japanese resident employees. In 2010, they conducted a dinner party where they served Japanese dishes together with long-standing restaurants, as well as an event hosted jointly with a local ham manufacturer to enjoy sake with ham, thus periodically creating opportunities for local hotel employees and restaurant chefs to drink sake.
- They select and export products out of existing products according to local preferences, such as by selling well-cured sake in Europe, fresh and fragrant sake in the United States, and sake with gorgeous labels in China.

#### <Implementation results>

- The President of a German airline company visited their company upon reference by a Japanese logistics company, and after tasting their sake, the president decided to adopt their sake for inflight service on the spot. One of the 180ml brands out of their top-seller product Tsukino Katsura is currently the airline company's inflight alcohol.
- In terms of their effervescent products, they won a prize in the Sparkling Division for sake at the 2015 IWC, which has led to exports.
- In the United States, they have gradually gained acceptance from consumers each year and their products have penetrated the market. At events, they have received positive feedback from potential customers who will be target customers in the future, such as retailers handling wine and restaurants owners of Western food.

## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 30 (Nihonsakari)

They are carrying out sales mainly in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and they are making preparations to gain a foothold to develop sales channels in Southeast Asia and Europe as their future markets.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Nihonsakari Co., Ltd.
  - Nishinomiya city, Hyogo Prefecture

#### [Main products]

- Nihonsakari
- Souhana

#### [Main export destinations]

- China
- Hong Kong
- Taiwan

#### [Company features]

- They started exporting their products in 1965 and they boast a 50-year history.
- They also conduct exports of cosmetic products other than sake, which has increased their brand awareness.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.nihonsakari.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- In order to develop sales channels in the Eastern European and Russian markets where no other companies have stepped into yet, they established a representative office in Warsaw, Poland in 2014.
- Ever since 2014, they have promoted initiatives to increase trade by building partnerships with local distributors in each region.
- In 2015, they supported the sake specialty shop “Bar Ippudo”, opened by Chikaranomoto Holdings in Singapore, ever since the very beginning when it was opened.
- Their policy going forward is to develop and sell products that match the preferences of each market.

##### <Implementation results>

- Their export amount has gradually increased, and it has reached approximately 200 million yen on a shipment basis.
- They signed a written intent regarding distributor agreement, an OEM supply contract, and a memorandum of technical exchanges in the future with Taiwan Tobacco & Liquor Corporation (TTL). TTL exclusively sells Nihonsakari's products to restaurants and department stores. In terms of the OEM contract, TTL has started selling Junmai Daiginjo Sake manufactured and bottled by Nihonsakari in Japan as “Kikufuji” (720 ml bottle). They are considering to release various products under the “Kikufuji” brand also in the future. Their goal is to achieve sales over 100 million yen in Taiwan, combining agents and OEM, with 2020 as the target.
- Their exporting business is now supported by the Chinese and Hong Kong markets. Meanwhile, with regards to Taiwan and Europe, they have gained a foothold for development in the future.

**Junmai Sake  
only for  
overseas**



**Signing ceremony  
of memorandum  
with Taiwan TTL**



They are making efforts to expand into new regions such as Southeast Asia and to increase customers through the experience they accumulated in exports over many years.

## Corporate information

### [Company name]

- Konishi Brewing Company
  - Itami city, Hyogo Prefecture

### [Main products]

- Shirayuki

### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Hong Kong
- South Korea
- China

### [Company features]

- In terms of exports, they have a history spanning over 100 years since the Chicago Exposition (in 1893).
- While making efforts in exports, they developed a local production system and Manchuria in China during the war and in Austria in the 1990s.

### [HP]

- <http://www.konishi.co.jp/>

## Exporting efforts

### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

### [Key points]

#### <Details and aim>

- They started export activities mainly in the United States from the 1970s. They carried out sales activities to restaurants and other stores by cooperating with domestic wholesalers.
- In Australia, they implemented local production. Out of the products produced there, approximately 70% are exported to Japan, and then part of the exports to Japan are exported to the United States.
- They are carrying out direct exports, too. They pack the containers and export the products on their own.
- They have gradually strengthened an internal structure responsible for exports, and they also have staffs proficient in English.
- They have made efforts to provide the products, out of their wide variety of products sold in Japan, that match the local preferences such as by selecting a solid taste for the northern area of China and a sweet taste for the southern area of China as well as a fresh flavor for Southeast Asia.
- To make sure that transactions do not become complicated, they narrowed down their local partners in each country to about 1 to 2 companies per country, and they have offered support such as providing posters to facilitate the sales activities of these partners.

#### <Implementation results>

- As a result of sales activities in the United States over many years, the export ratio of their sales in the United States still accounts for about 30% of total exports, and the United States continues to be an important market for them.
- Meanwhile, they have expanded their export destinations including Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, part of South America and the EU. They are currently considering a cooperative structure or the like with local wholesalers in order to also place emphasis on Southeast Asia going forward.
- There are some products that did not sell very well in Japan that have enjoyed sales overseas.

### Bottle and box design of the exported product



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 32 (Orihara)

By establishing a subsidiary in Singapore, they built an exporting system that comprehensively covers the processes until local sales while maintaining quality. In addition, by holding large-scale tasting events, they have increased the presence of Japanese sake, aiming to expand exports.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Orihara Co., Ltd.
  - Toshima ward, Tokyo

#### [Main products]

- Various  
(Japanese and Western liquor export and alcoholic beverage wholesale business)

#### [Main export destinations]

- Singapore
- Thailand

#### [Company features]

- They have striven to grow out of a distribution business that simply buys and sells merchandise, and they have set the realization of sales tailored to each customer as the basic principle of their sales strategy.
- As a new initiative, they have aimed to build the Orihara brand in the East Asian market, and with their eyes set on the entire world, they are aiming to establish a structure by which Orihara can cooperate around the world through store operation.
- In terms of exports, they are focusing on how to maintain the quality of shipment from sake brewers and on conveying this quality to local customers.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.orihara-net.co.jp/index.html>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement ・ Development ・ Production ・ Logistics ・ Distribution ・ Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- They established a local subsidiary in Singapore in 2008 (Orihara Shoten) as an exporting base of Japanese alcoholic beverages in East Asia and started selling sake. They are exporting their products from Japan in reefer containers, and they also conduct temperature-controlled storage and delivery locally.
  - In addition, they opened Toritama (restaurant) as a model store to customers considering restaurant businesses overseas.
- Furthermore, they have single-handedly organized the Sake Festival Singapore held in August 2015 that had a total of approximately 1000 visitors with approximately 40 brewers participating from Japan.

##### <Implementation results>

- After establishing their Singapore office, they received more than 250 orders for business purpose, and they have even received orders from a famous local hotel.
- It has become possible for them to have more congenial trade relationships with local customers through initiatives such as inviting core local customers to a sake brewery in Akita Prefecture.
- Going forward, they are planning to open a store in Thailand, and they are aiming to expand their business in the ASEAN region as well as to further improve the presence of Japanese sake.

#### Sake Festival Singapore



#### Orihara Shoten Singapore Store



## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 33 (Okanaga)

While striving to create the value of sake and a market for sake by operating the Japan Prestige Sake Association, they started exporting to the United States early on. As a distributor, their strength is not only in logistics and sales but also in increasing the value add of products before offering them to customers.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- Okanaga Inc.
  - Chuo ward, Tokyo

#### [Main products]

- Various  
(Alcoholic beverages and food wholesale)

#### [Main export destinations]

- United States
- Europe (London, Paris)
- Asia (South Korea, Singapore)

#### [Company features]

- They operate the Japan Prestige Sake Association, and they aim to create new value and markets for Japanese sake by telling as many people as possible about Japanese sake, which is a world-class ethnic alcohol, and by delivering its quality, safety, trustworthiness and good taste.
- Their affiliated companies include Japan Prestige Sake International, Inc. (Los Angeles) and Okanaga U.S.A. (New York).

#### [HP]

- <http://www.okanaga.co.jp/>
- <http://www.meimonshu.jp/index.php>  
(Japan Prestige Sake Association)

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- Based on their know-how of distribution in Japan that they accumulated through launching the Japan Prestige Sake Association and carrying out activities, they have operated overseas exports and local distribution.
- After starting the Japan Prestige Sake Association by gaining the cooperation of brewers and liquor stores throughout Japan in 1975, they started exporting sake in earnest to the United States in 1984. Later, they expanded into EU and Asia one after another, and they advanced their overseas operations.
- With their wish to have customers enjoy Japanese sake even more, they have provided a wide variety of sake with added value, such as by jointly holding tasting sessions and creating menus with local brewers and agents rather than by simply “delivering products”.
- They have also built a reliable system in terms of their transportation system according to the brand, and they are implementing rigorous quality control.

Quality Control Committee  
(Japan Prestige Sake Association)



##### <Implementation results>

- By carrying out activities that aim to transform Japanese sake from just another exported product to a culture that is firmly rooted in the local area, fans of Japanese sake have increased locally and this has consequently led to increased exports and expanded sales channels.
- Going forward, they will strengthen their relationship with local partners and key players, and they will strive to further spread Japanese sake.

Tasting session and promotional activity of Japanese sake



They have established a cold chain while conducting strict product inspection, and they are implementing rigorous quality control.

They have built an export system that leverages their global group network.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- JFC Japan Inc.
  - Nihonbashikoami town, Chuo ward, Tokyo

#### [Main products]

- Japanese sake of various breweries

#### [Main export areas]

- North America, Central and South America
- Europe and Middle East
- Asia and Oceania

#### [Company features]

- Ever since establishing their predecessor company Pacific Trading Co., Ltd. in 1928 in Tokyo, they have exported food, alcoholic beverages and miscellaneous goods, created with heartfelt effort by vendors, to over 40 countries on 5 continents by leveraging the JFC Group network extending all over the world including the United States.

#### [HP]

- <http://www.jfcjapan.co.jp/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • Distribution • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details>

- They have partnered directly with breweries throughout Japan to introduce sake categorized into different types including Ginjo Sake and Junmai Sake while taking into consideration the needs of customers in each country.
- They have trained expert sake tasters and the like in Japan and overseas who propose products according to the clientele and ways of drinking that match the dish.
- Their sales representatives and experts in Japan and overseas visit each of the breweries to learn the sake brewing process so they can propose products by taking advantage of their product knowledge.
- By allocating a category manager specializing in selling alcohol, they provide focused, cross-sectional product information to customers.
- They conduct wide-ranging wholesale to restaurants according to the clientele, and they also deliver products to large supermarkets for retail.
- They have constructed a system and network that can respond to customers quickly while adhering to the laws and regulations such as the import regulations in each country.
- They have participated in exhibitions hosted by external parties and also held exhibitions planned on their own overseas.

##### <Procedural proposals and initiatives in which improvement results can be expected in the overall export structure>

- Smooth tax exemption procedures of brewers can be expected through the digitization of export tax exemption procedures, and it is hoped that customs clearance will become faster and simpler.
- In Japan, oftentimes there is no description of the volume on the front of the product label, but overseas there are some regions that require labels, which separately describe the volume on the front, to be attached. If the packaging and label for alcohol and general food can be changed in order to make them adhere to the world standard, it would also lead to cost reduction while greater efficiency and simplification of production can be expected, too. The appearance would also improve.
- When exporting overseas, oftentimes the products are provided by chilled distribution in the distribution stage, chilled sales at retailers, and in wine coolers at restaurants, so using a label made of material resistant to water drops and moisture would prevent any damages to the face of the product.
- In some cases, the products that should be refrigerated are transported in normal temperature in the distribution stage in Japan, so if each of the overall industry can recognize the importance of chilled transportation, they will be able to meet the international standards required in Europe.
- Because information is demanded during import customs clearance, it is necessary to know the bottling date and lot number at the brewery. Accurate and smooth communication saves time in customs clearance work.

## Sake Exporting Efforts - Example 35 (JAPAN AT UK)

They have expanded their sales channels through creative efforts such as bringing Japanese sake to restaurants and having the chefs and sommelier taste it, while also building a relationship with the UK Sommelier Association. They have also established an Internet mail order system in the United Kingdom.

### Corporate information

#### [Company name]

- JAPAN AT UK LIMITED
  - London
  - Tokyo

#### [Main products]

- Japanese sake of various breweries, focusing mainly on small-to-medium sized sake breweries

#### [Main export destinations]

- United Kingdom

#### [Company features]

- Based on the concept of promoting Japan's excellent "people, sensibility, service, technology and products" to the U.K. and European markets and transmitting them to the world, they operate a consulting, trading and PR business.

#### [HP]

- <http://japanatuk.com/>
- <http://japanfoodhall.com/>
- <http://www.sakeatuk.com/>

### Exporting efforts

#### [Areas with special technique]

Procurement • Development • Production • Logistics • **Distribution** • Export system development

#### [Key points]

##### <Details and aim>

- Rather than considering Japanese sake to be a niche product consumed only in Japanese culture, they are carrying out promotion by fusing it with local cultures through the proposal of ways to enjoy it in ways different from wine.
- In 2015, they established the Tsukumo Sake Agent Association specializing in sake, and they are providing support for exports to overseas markets such as the U.K. and Europe as well as local expansion, mainly for the products of small-to-medium sized sake brewing companies with an annual production volume of 5000 koku or less (900,000 liters or less). They are also involved in building sales channels that did not exist in Japan previously.
- With being entrusted the planning and management of an event in London for export promotion support businesses that are member companies of the Central Federation of Societies of Commerce and Industry (CFSCIJ) in 2014 as the trigger, they handled the sake and shochu of 58 brewers and 114 brands exhibited by the CFSCIJ at the Specialty & Fine Food Fair 2014 held in London in September of that year. While they continued promotion of sake in London even after the event, they found out that there is a great potential for sake in the European market and devised a strategy for spreading sake. Taking this as an opportunity, they newly entered the wholesale business of sake in March 2015.

##### <Implementation results>

- They built a full-fledged cooperative relationship with the UK Sommelier Association, which has a significant influence especially on restaurants located in London. As a result, they can efficiently conduct sales to sommeliers and chefs at restaurants. In addition, the Association has adopted sake as a subject in the sommelier certificate acquiring course, and the company is providing sake as well as assisting the lectures.
- In addition to being able to introduce sake at the annual dinner of the Cambridge University Wine Society in February 2016 for the first time in history upon invitation by the Society, they will be receiving opportunities to introduce sake at each of the events hosted by the Society in the future.
- Following the adoption of sake in a format of pairing it with non-Japanese course menu for the first time by a fusion modern British restaurant, they have received numerous inquiries from local, non-Japanese restaurants. Furthermore, there are increasing numbers of Japanese restaurants that are ordering their sake, and their view has expanded in line with the increase in their company's name recognition.
- Their product portfolio has currently increased to the point of handling 105 brands by 25 sake brewers.
- They are expanding their sales channel not only within the U.K. but also throughout Europe by having an Internet mail order function within their Group.

**Sake class conducted jointly with the Sommelier Association**

