

The magazine of the
British Chamber of
Commerce in Japan

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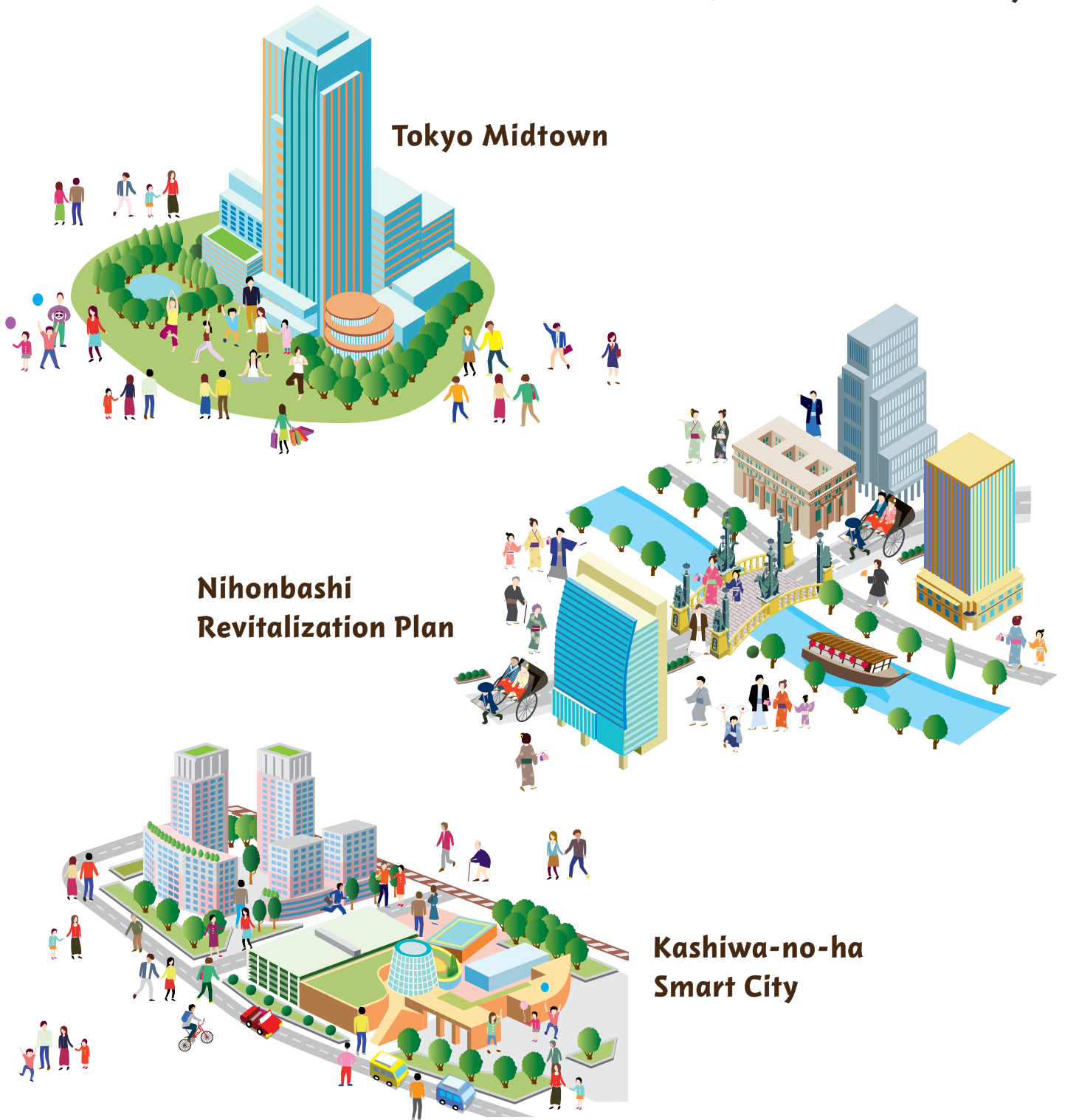
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The British Chamber of Commerce in Japan

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To strengthen business ties between Britain and Japan, promote and support the business interests of all our Members, and actively encourage new business entrants into the Japanese market as well as Japanese investment into the UK.

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As mentioned on pages 11 and 15, the BCCJ will hold its annual general meeting on 23 April, at which time the new executive committee—including the president—will be announced.

One new rule worth noting this year is that no canvassing is allowed before or during the e-voting period from 9–21 April, other than a brief message from each candidate on the voting website.

This effectively means you should not be targeted, as some of you were last year, by emails from excom hopefuls outlining how and why they would help the BCCJ and other members.

Sweet spot

Many British football teams have official supporters' clubs in Japan, with loyal members enjoying matches and quiz nights at pubs and in homes. As the top of the 2013–2014 English Premier League season (last game 11 May) battles to a closer climax than usual, it seems to be drawing more interest in Japan and elsewhere.

Perhaps the newest such fan club here is the Tokyo Toffees, which follows the often hapless adventures of Merseyside's "other" half, Everton.



Kaizen in practice

Election reforms, ACUMEN redesign and even Everton show ongoing improvement

SIMON FARRELL
simon@custom-media.com

Whether you prefer the traditional tag of "School of all Soccer Skills and Sciences", the rather defeatist "People's Club" or last season's battling "Dogs of War", Everton have recently hit top form and, for the first time in several years, have a real chance to qualify for the UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) Champions League next season.

If you have a sweet spot for the Toffees and would like to share it with a friendly bunch of lads bedecked in blue and white at a Footnik pub in Tokyo, please see the club's Facebook page (Tokyo Toffees: Everton Supporters' Club Japan; 160 likes) or email BCCJ member Dominic Ashton: tokyotoffees@domashton.com

Language barrier

One of the nicest compliments I have received for *BCCJ ACUMEN* was from a Japanese gentleman who had lived in Wales for many years. He said he was absolutely delighted that we use real British English spelling and vocabulary, which is so hard to find in Japan and, indeed, almost anywhere else.

So I had to stifle a laugh when I read the marketing claims of a members-only business magazine published in Tokyo: "The only English-language magazine in Japan". Perhaps our native tongue is harder to follow than we think.

To the publisher

"I should have expected it from you guys, but the last issue just blew me away. I love the new design, but even more I love the approach you and Cliff [Cardona] used in approaching the redesign. You asked the questions I wish more organisations would ask: 'How can this product look, feel and read better?' It's *kaizen* and 'If it isn't broke, break it' at its best. You had a very good publication; your willingness to examine and redo the design is making it a great one" 🇯🇵

-Dr Bob Tobin, author and emeritus professor of business and commerce, Keio University



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MEDIA



The newest range of vehicles is priced between ¥2.66mn and ¥3.32mn.

Mini launches new cars

The newest Mini range, launched in Japan on 12 April, has undergone a complete redesign, according to a recent press release.

This is the first revamp of the brand's core product line in seven years. The interior boasts exciting technological advances and safety features, including a warning system to decrease the risk of collision.

The speedometer has been moved to the steering column to improve visibility, and all new models are equipped with a cutting-edge navigation system. In addition, fuel consumption has been reduced by about 15%–30% and torque has been improved by about 40%.

The new line includes four different models priced from ¥2.66mn to ¥3.32mn. Mini is a BMW subsidiary made in Cowley, Oxfordshire.

Swindon car plant to cut costs

Honda Motor Co., Ltd. is slashing production at its UK factory due to sluggish sales in Europe, the just-auto.com website reported on 25 March.

The Swindon plant will move to two shifts instead of three, which could lead to 340 assembly line staff being fired. A proposal has also been put forward to consolidate production to one

line, following a similar move by Toyota Motor Corporation at its Derbyshire facility.

Most vehicles built at Swindon are exported, and sales abroad have not been as strong as in the UK. However, Ian Howells, senior vice president, said that Honda was confident about the long-term future of the Swindon facility.

Airlines start shared flights

British Airways (BA), Japan Airlines (JAL) and Finnair officially started joint operations on flights between Japan and Europe at the beginning of April, *Business Traveller* reported on 27 March.

The three airlines are members of the Oneworld alliance. BA and JAL established a partnership

in 2012, and Japanese regulators approved the inclusion of Finnair in October 2013. The three firms will share revenue and cooperate on scheduling and pricing on joint routes.

Finnair CEO Pekka Vauramo said the alliance would constitute "the single largest player in Europe-Japan traffic".

New dog in town

Scottish brewer BrewDog launched its first Asia outlet in Tokyo's Roppongi district early last month, *The Japan Times* reported on 18 March.

BrewDog is the largest independent craft brewery in Scotland. It is known for pulling stunts such as introducing a beer with a label depicting Vladimir Putin wearing makeup. The brewery also has made a name for itself with the strength of its beer, one of which—named Tokyo*—notches an alcohol content of 18.2%.

The Roppongi outlet serves 20 beers on tap, 10 of its own and 10 from guest breweries around the world.



BrewDog serves 20 beers on tap.

Washoku cuisine getting popular with British chefs

Many British chefs are introducing traditional Japanese cuisine—*washoku*—on their menus, *The Guardian* reported on 5 March.

Washoku was added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list in December 2013, and since then, star chefs such as Satwant Singh "Sat" Bains have crafted tasting menus around the theme. Chocolatier William Curley has even integrated Japanese tastes into his creations. Bite into one of his chocolates and you might find Japanese black vinegar or cherry blossom ganache.

Ambassador of Japan to the UK Keiichi Hayashi has declared that 2014 is "the year of *washoku*".

Pharma firm opens first Tokyo branch

A Northern Ireland pharmaceutical firm has opened an office in Japan, the BBC reported on 11 March.

Almac Group Ltd., which specialises in drug testing and development, is one of Northern Ireland's major exporters. About 95% of its revenues are earned outside the UK. The firm currently employs about 3,300 staff.

The foray into Japan is intended to boost Almac's business in the Asia-Pacific region.

Wind farm investors

UK Green Investment Bank plc and Japan's Marubeni Corporation have jointly invested in wind power, *The Telegraph's* Energy Live News website reported on 31 March.

The bank and Marubeni have purchased a 50% stake in the proposed Westernmost Rough offshore wind farm. The site should generate enough power for about 200,000 homes.

According to Energy Secretary Ed Davey, "The UK is number one in the world for investment in offshore wind".

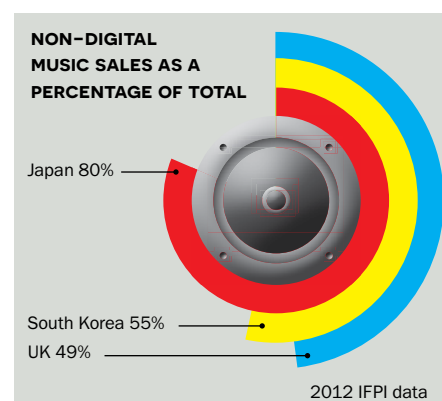
Japan lag weighs on music market

Waning music sales in Japan dragged down global sales totals in 2013, while music consumption in the UK remained upbeat, the BBC reported on 18 March.

According to figures from the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), the 16.7% drop in Japanese sales caused global results to fall 3.9%. Japan is the world's second-largest music market, but still relies on CDs and lacks user-friendly music-download programmes.

In Europe's five major markets—the UK, France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands—digital music downloads rose 13.3%. Excluding Japan, the world music market

remained stable with 0.1% growth last year. Vinyl records are also enjoying a resurgence.



J-pop teen trio crosses genres

A teenage girl band that combines the sounds of death metal with J-pop has made the online top 10 songs list in the UK, *The Guardian* reported on 16 March.

Babymetal has three members, aged 14 to 16, whose musical mission is to fuse thrash metal with the sugary sounds of J-pop.

The band was recently confirmed to make their UK debut at the Sonisphere music festival in July, to be held at Knebworth House in Hertfordshire.

Chocolatier offers new twist on classic

Nestlé Japan has launched an oven-bake version of one of the UK's iconic chocolate bars, the *Daily Mail* reported on 31 March.

The Kit Kat Bake bar, available only in Japan, can be eaten "raw" or cooked for two minutes to yield a browned, biscuit-like snack. The firm worked with local confectioner Takagi—also its partner for the Kit Kat boutique launched in Tokyo this year—to come up with the new product. Its slogan is "Have a bake, have a Kit Kat".

Pizza chains Napoli no Kama and Strawberry Cones decided to use the new sugary treat on dessert pizzas; Napoli no Kama sold its first Kit Kat pizza on 28 March.



"Have a bake,
 have a Kit Kat"

Long history of rugby

Rugby was introduced in Japan decades before most people and official records recognise, *The Japan Times* reported on 15 March.

It all began with the founding of the Yokohama Foot Ball Club in 1866, as printed in a *Japan Times* article that year. George Hamilton and Evan James Fraser, both Scots who had studied at England's prestigious Rugby School, deserve much of the credit. The strong military presence in Yokohama at that time helped boost the team's numbers.

In 1884, the rugby club organised and led the initiative that merged the cricket, rugby, athletics and baseball clubs to form the Yokohama Country & Athletic Club, which still exists today. 🇬🇧

These companies join the global British community in wishing HM Queen Elizabeth II a joyous 88th birthday.



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At our extraordinary general meeting (EGM) on 5 March, BCCJ members unanimously agreed on amendments to our constitution, which included: direct elections for the position of BCCJ president, a provision for electronic voting for the executive committee (excom) and presidential elections, and new rules for electioneering.

On 13 March, we opened the nomination period for excom seats in the forthcoming chamber year. By the nomination deadline (26 March, 5pm), we had received a record 27 names; 25 candidates agreed to proceed with a contested election.

Under our constitution, excom is run by a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 15 members. At this year's annual general meeting (AGM), to be held on the evening of 23 April at the Shangri-La Hotel Tokyo, there will be 25 qualified and approved candidates competing for excom seats, creating the most competitive election in our 65-year history.

Since 9 April, BCCJ members with voting rights have been asked to vote in the online election, which will run until 21 April. Under the BCCJ's one-member-one-vote framework, votes should be submitted by one nominated



Good governance; going to the polls

Most competitive election in history of the BCCJ

LORI HENDERSON MBE

representative from each member company, as well as from all individual members.

Via our secure voting platform, voters can select from one to 15 candidates. Each candidate has written a pledge of up to 100 words, outlining how they plan to serve the BCCJ. These pledges along with candidate photos can be viewed on the election website.

In previous years, votes have been cast on paper and ticks counted by the eagle eyes of our Operations Manager Sanae Samata; I'm sure you can imagine her relief at having moved to e-voting!

In a further win for good governance, the results of the election can be seen only when the voting period closes, which means

the outcome will be a complete surprise to everyone, including the secretariat.

This year, we have a diverse spread of candidates.

- 13 members from current excom; 12 "new" candidates
- 18 men; seven women
- 20 non-Japanese; five Japanese
- 19 corporate members (11 "big biz"; eight SMEs); six individual members

Of all candidates, David Bickle, a director at Deloitte, has raised his hand to serve for one year as president of the BCCJ and chair of excom.

David, who joined excom in 2013, is therefore nominated to serve as president in the forthcoming chamber year, while Sue Kinoshita, director of UK Trade & Investment at the British Embassy Tokyo, and Jeff Streeter, head of the British Council, will continue to serve as our ex-officio excom members.

The excom election results will be announced at our AGM in the presence of British Ambassador Tim Hitchens CMG LVO. I encourage all members to attend this event, to bid sayonara to another fruitful year at the BCCJ and to welcome your new excom. It looks to be a nail-biting evening. 🍷



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MEDIA

NEW PRODUCTS FOR NEW MARKETS

Manufacturers and retailers must find new ways to do business in the wake of economic and demographic changes across the country, according to *Shukan Diamond* (22 February).

One such change is a decline in average annual incomes, which, in 2012 fell ¥590,000—equivalent to roughly one month's salary—from a peak of ¥4.67mn in 1997. Another is a drop in the number of “standard families”, in which parents and children live under one roof. Compared with 1980, when 42.1% of all households fit this category, the figure dropped to 27.9% in 2012, and is projected to decline further to 23.3% by 2035.

Major shifts such as these are forcing firms to innovate.

In 2010, hosiery manufacturer Naigai Co., Ltd. threw caution to the wind and introduced tights for men. The firm's inspiration was an email it received from a man who said the cold weather had led him to try wearing his wife's tights under his business suit. Yuta Koyama, who devoted eight years to developing the product, said that various problems had to be overcome to launch the item. These included the need to design an aperture in the front of the tights to facilitate use of urinals.

Koyama persuaded Nagai to produce a test lot of just 1,000 pairs in 2008. By the winter of 2012, sales were up to 15,000 pairs, and the following winter the total hit 20,000 pairs, at ¥1,575 each. Clearly, a willingness to think outside the box paid off.

Hosiery manufacturer Naigai Co., Ltd. threw caution to the wind and introduced tights for men.

Another trend shows people in their twenties are imbibing considerably less alcohol than they did a decade ago. According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the percentage of men describing themselves as regular drinkers plummeted from 35% in 2003 to 15.7% in 2011. Among women, the corresponding figures were 14.3% and 8.3%, respectively. Along with quasi-beer (beerlike beverages that have little or no malt content and, therefore, are taxed less than real beer) and non-alcoholic beverages, the search continues for innovative drink products.

Global Tastes

Shukan Diamond also reported that the number of legal foreign residents in Japan has roughly tripled over the past three decades, a rise of 300,000 in Tokyo alone. While the number of Japanese residents in four of Tokyo's wards—Arakawa, Kita, Shibuya and Shinjuku—have declined, the foreign population has increased.



People in their twenties are imbibing considerably less alcohol than they did a decade ago.

These foreign residents tend to be young and earn comparatively low incomes, but they represent a new market for goods and services that should not be overlooked.

Information Overload

A 2012 survey conducted by Nomura Research Institute also found that 70% of Japanese consumers felt troubled or confused by information overload, rendering product-purchasing decisions more difficult.

“Before the internet, businesses controlled most of the data”, said management consultant Hiroyuki Nitto. “While one might assume that consumers would become more savvy by obtaining information from the internet, that's not the case. Since there's an excess of information, it's become necessary for consumers to integrate the data they obtain”.

In some areas, such as fashion and cosmetics, consumers are more inclined to follow the opinions of “experts”. In other categories, such as food, alcoholic drinks, TVs, appliances and home computers, they tend to make personal selections, which are factors that firms must consider in their marketing.



Men's Panty Hose

POOR POSTURE HURTS JOB HUNT

A *mensetsukan* is an interviewer, usually an employee present during the initial stage of job screening. *Nikkan Gendai* (11 March) reports that candidates' grooming and posture are increasingly important factors for *mensetsukan* evaluations. In fact, certain lapses in etiquette tend to be considered so outrageous they can result in an applicant being summarily dropped from further consideration.

Omron Healthcare Co., Ltd. and Wacoal Corporation collaborated on the "Female Posture Improvement Project", surveying 109 corporate staff about their perception of job applicants. Nearly all the respondents (96%) said they often felt "concerned" when they observed candidates slouching. Of these, 57% said such behaviour appeared *darashinai* (sloppy or undisciplined). This was followed by the responses, "The person appeared poor at dealing with stressful situations" (48%) and "appears undisciplined" (39%).

Kozo Kanno, a human resources consultant, said perhaps due to lapses in upbringing—particularly parents' inability to instil proper manners—today's young jobseekers lack good posture.

"The first thing we observe at the interview is whether a candidate leans back in the chair", says Kanno. "Applicants are not visitors, and



Women's shoes should be touching, hands flat against their thighs during interviews.

the proper posture is for them to sit erect, with a space between their back and that of the chair about the size of a fist.

"For men, their shoes should be flat on the floor, parallel and two to three centimetres apart. Women's shoes should be touching, and their hands should be flat against their thighs. If they carelessly make gestures with their hands, evaluators will probably think they have difficulty verbally expressing themselves".

The standard time for an interview is said to be 30 to 45 minutes. Interviewers watch for any slouching or changes in posture as indications of a weak physique or lack of mental fortitude. And it goes without saying that candidates are carefully

observed when they give an *ojigi* (bow), both upon their entry and departure, at the proper 45-degree angle. The ones who don't bow properly are inevitably dropped from further consideration.

Kendo practitioners are reportedly noted for their ability to maintain their posture over a prolonged period, so taking up this activity may be beneficial.

"More than entry into the room, departure from the interview requires more caution", said Kanno. "A candidate should stand up straight, return the chair to its original position and march out of the room with a straight back. These kinds of movements are not something that can be quickly mastered, so I suggest plenty of practice at home".

TAX HIKE SPURS SPENDING CUTS

In the run-up to the consumption tax increase, the Japan Tourism Marketing Co. conducted an online survey of 1,260 consumers in the greater Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka metropolitan areas.

As reported in the *Nikkei Marketing Journal* (24 March),

44.4% of respondents expressed concern that the tax hike would negatively impact their lives. And 49.6% said they would "continue to buy the same goods and services as they had in the past, while cutting back slightly on consumption".

So where will the budgetary axe fall? The top reply (68.3%) was home utilities. This was followed by dining out (51.5%), domestic travel (37.6%) and regularly consumed food items (30.2%). Outlays for petrol and fashion were also cited. 🇯🇵

44.4% of respondents expressed concern that the tax hike would negatively impact their lives.

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It is incredible to think almost 12 months have passed since I made my inaugural comments at the 2013 annual general meeting (AGM). The BCCJ has had a busy year, one in which we celebrated 65 years as well as the 400th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the UK and Japan.

I'm very happy to say that both membership and event attendance have continued to grow and we're enjoying more member engagement, proof of which is the number of people interested in standing for executive committee (excom) positions in the upcoming elections—an unprecedented 25 nominations!

The chamber's success is all down to the companies and individuals involved. Attending events, suggesting speakers, contributing to *BCCJ ACUMEN* magazine, sharing a post on Facebook or retweeting about news and events—it is all these actions undertaken on a daily basis that ensure the chamber is a dynamic and valuable organisation.

I'd like to pay particular tribute to the energy and enthusiasm of Executive Director Lori Henderson MBE and the BCCJ secretariat, as well as the excom.



A privilege and a pleasure

An outstanding year of growth and achievement

ALISON JAMBERT
@BCCJ_President

The contributions of these individuals and groups in steering the chamber, as well as adopting hands-on taskforce duties, keep the chamber punching well above its weight.

It has been a privilege to represent the BCCJ in the local business community, which on many occasions took me to the British Embassy Tokyo.

The chamber has always been lucky enough to enjoy a close working relationship with the embassy. I would like to say a special thank you to Ambassador Tim Hitchens CMG LVO and his wife Sara, for their hospitality and continued support of the chamber.

Kudos is also due to Sue Kinoshita, head of UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) Japan.

Our relationship was further strengthened last November with the chamber partnering in the creation of the Export to Japan programme and website, a not-for-profit partnership led by UKTI Japan that was set up to help British firms get a head start in the Japanese market.

There are still plans to move forward later this year to fully examine whether and how the chamber might best join the UK government's Strengthening Overseas Business Networks Programme and develop a more formal relationship with the British Chambers of Commerce in the UK. This could potentially be a critical step for the BCCJ and the services it provides.

The chamber's excom election period will be closing soon, and if you haven't already done so, I strongly encourage you to place your vote. I would like to say a special thank you to my fellow board members for their hard work, advice and encouragement over the past 12 months and to the membership for your trust and support.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM on 23 April for my final comments on the state of the chamber, and for the handover to the newly elected BCCJ president. 🇬🇧



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CSR initiative exceeds goals, promotes young people's career development

- Books for Smiles has raised over ¥8.5mn since campaign start
- More than 50 BCCJ member companies donated
- Four care-leavers supported in multi-year programmes

CUSTOM MEDIA



Many firms set up on-site donation boxes.



Oakwood Tokyo was a key contributor.

The Books for Smiles programme has proved a brilliant success since its inception at the end of 2012, as the brainchild of former British Chamber of Commerce in Japan's (BCCJ) executive committee member Yayoi Sogo. More than 50 member companies and individuals have pledged support, and the total amount raised is now more than 14 times the original target.

The programme invites firms of all sizes across all industry sectors to support the professional development of Japan's disadvantaged youth by donating books. All proceeds from the sale of second-hand books are used to provide tuition for young people leaving welfare facilities in Japan.

Books for Smiles is run by the BCCJ in partnership with Bridge for Smile (www.b4s.jp/en/), a certified non-profit organisation that teaches care-leavers how to build social skills, manage a budget, find accommodation and get a job.

Oakwood Tokyo was a key contributor to the campaign.

"When I introduced this project to all of Oakwood's eight properties in Tokyo, I was not expecting that we would receive and donate so many books, not just from our residents, but from our staff as well. I realised that many of our employees wanted to do something for charity. We were

always concerned about throwing away books guests had left in their apartments, so some of our employees suggested this would be a great opportunity to recycle these items," said Executive Assistant Manager Tamaki Okoshi.

After putting up posters about the project, Oakwood received a strong response from residents. Many of them commented on how they were happy to lend non-monetary support to those in need, even in a small way.

The most significant outcome has been "helping give positive career opportunities and a brighter future to children and teenagers," Okoshi said.

David Bickle, a director at Deloitte and member of the BCCJ Community Taskforce, said, "By involving as many BCCJ member firms and supporters as possible—especially those with limited access to corporate social responsibility [CSR] opportunities—Books for Smiles leverages our combined effort to reinforce the position of British business as a stable and committed partner of the local community in Japan".

BCCJ member firms have also contributed resourceful ideas and boosted project funding by matching book donations with cash from staff, donating gift vouchers that have lain dormant at their offices, and hosting fundraising events. Such events

Books for Smiles has proved to be a springboard for BCCJ members to customise their own CSR initiatives.



Walk for Smiles raised ¥170,000 for Books for Smiles.

have included a book rally at an art gallery in March 2013, a Drinks Night at the residence of Unilever Japan CEO Ray Bremner in June 2013, as well as Walk For Smiles, a tour run by Walk Japan this March.

Paul Christie, CEO of Walk Japan, commented, “We became involved because we could use our skills to do something interesting for participants, while also allowing the BCCJ to raise money for its charity.

“Walk Japan has its own CSR programme [the Community Project in Kunisaki, Oita Prefecture], where we are helping to revive a hamlet suffering from the two serious problems of a declining and an ageing society. Walk for Smiles has allowed us to contribute to society outside our usual CSR activities”.

The day out raised ¥170,000 to benefit Books for Smiles.

“I hope we have also proved that Tokyo is a much more interesting city than most residents of the capital may realise”, Christie added.

The original Books for Smiles target was ¥600,000. Now, the total exceeds ¥8.5mn, with sufficient funds to cover three to four years of higher education expenses for at least four care-leavers.

Pearson Japan K.K. has also been an exceptionally generous supporter of the project. In line with its mission to help people make measurable progress in their lives through learning, Pearson donated



A thank-you note from Sara, Grand Hyatt intern

over 200,000 books to Books for Smiles. This alone helped generate ¥6.5mn in funding, helping to facilitate vocational training for the recipient care-leavers.

When choosing projects with which to become involved, Pearson looks to work with organisations that have a strong focus on educational outcomes.

“As the Books for Smiles programme has very clear goals with regard to helping disadvantaged youth improve their lives through education, we felt that this was an initiative to which we should give our full support”, said Brendan Delahunty, president and representative director.

The CSR programme has been extended to support care-leavers in not only Tokyo, Saitama, Chiba

and Kanagawa, but also the Tohoku region.

Atsushi Kamata of Bridge for Smile said, “Books for Smiles donations from BCCJ members enable us to focus on not solely fundraising, but also prioritising our core mission: supporting those leaving care to establish independent living and working arrangements”.

Books for Smiles has proved to be a springboard for BCCJ members to customise their own CSR initiatives in line with their business. Grand Hyatt Tokyo organised an internship for Sara, who came from one of the care-homes supported by the programme. The hotel was happy to help by providing hands-on training and experience.

During her internship, Sara learned the basics of hotel operations, including daily briefings, the Hyatt mission and vision, the importance of personal grooming, interacting with guests, and housekeeping standards.

Christiane Ferger, executive assistant manager, rooms division, said, “[Sara] was particularly interested in seeing how we organise the back-of-house operation. For Grand Hyatt Tokyo, it is important to assist young people with figuring out what career they would like”. Ferger believes the experience and relationships developed, as well as the exposure to a working hotel to gain a wider understanding of its structure and organisation, were significant outcomes of the internship.

As Books for Smiles continues to grow, special thanks go out to Yayoi Sogo for her devoted efforts as the catalyst for this initiative. In her words, “The key to the long-term success of this project is to garner support from as wide a base as possible—it’s easy to participate, and a steady stream of small and large donations from individuals, SMEs and large enterprises will provide the stable pool of funds needed to support tuition fees going forward!” 🌸

Get involved!

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As safe as houses?

Investors show rising interest in London and Tokyo property

- Government stimulus having positive effect on Japan market
- New buildings in fringe areas of Tokyo becoming attractive
- Leasing of central London offices rose 46% in 2013

BY JULIAN RYALL

The latest addition to Tokyo's ever-changing skyline will formally open on 11 June, when Mori Building Co. will unveil the 52-storey Toranomom Hills complex a couple of blocks to the west of Shimbashi Station.

Designed to appeal to global firms seeking a prime urban location, the structure uses cutting-edge pillar-less office spaces. It will incorporate one of Tokyo's largest conference facilities, luxury residences, no fewer than 25 restaurants and a 6,000m² pocket of open space and greenery in the heart of the metropolis. The sleek steel-and-glass structure will also house the Andaz Tokyo, a Hyatt-

branded boutique hotel aimed at international business and leisure travellers.

The multi-use tower also fits in with the government's plans to enhance the infrastructure of Tokyo, a campaign that has taken on added significance since the city was selected to host the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and signals a broader resurgence of the property sector in Japan.

The renewed optimism is mirrored by similarly positive sentiment in Britain, particularly in London.

The events of a troubling couple of years certainly cast something of a pall over the opportunities in



This rendering shows the newly designed area surrounding Toranomom Hills.





The 52-storey Toranomon Hills complex (centre) will open on 11 June.

Japanese commercial property for foreign investors, but there is a renewed sense that the low point has been consigned to the past and that new opportunities in what has long been considered a safe and reliable market are once more on the horizon.

Japan is back

The market is entering a positive new cycle: banks are lending again, and sellers are making optimistic moves, as are those buyers with a track record of being among the first to take action.

The Liberal Democratic Party's efforts to stimulate the national economy have also been greeted warmly by the market, while economic growth forecasts for the next 15 years converge at the 1.5% to 1.8% mark.

"The stimulus measures of [Prime Minister Shinzo] Abe appear to have reinvigorated the Japanese economy and have stoked investor sentiment", Will Johnson, of Savills Japan, told *BCCJACUMEN*. "Japan's total property transaction volume was up more than 70% in 2013 compared to 2012".

"A trend towards centralisation and smaller household sizes is supporting occupier demand for mid-market rental apartments, which offer landlords a steady, low-volatility income stream", said Johnson. That means high-quality, multi-family residential assets in Tokyo and the other

major Japanese cities have continued to see strong interest from domestic and overseas institutional investors.

When it comes to the office sector, investors are additionally attracted to Japan for its large stock of investment-grade real estate, a mature legal structure, transparent and established business practices, and a lack of restrictions on foreign ownership, according to Andy Hurfurt, head of investment consulting for CBRE K.K.

The Tokyo property market is also faring well in comparison with other key cities in the Asia-Pacific region, with Hong Kong and Singapore showing signs of rental decline.

Another factor has been a hangover—the positive kind—from the worst natural disaster to strike Japan in living memory.

"After the quake it was not feasible for tenants to suddenly relocate to new properties, as it takes a great deal of planning", Hurfurt said. "What we have seen more recently is an increase in emphasis among occupiers for quake-resilient buildings and, in the case of banks and financial trading companies in particular, for power resilience in their buildings.

"Occupiers are moving up but, given the broader economic environment, they are also looking to do that with limited impact on the cost side", he said.



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That has led to a number of new buildings in less central locations becoming more attractive, such as Nakano Central Park South, where Kirin Brewery Company, Limited has opted to consolidate its multiple offices that were spread across the city. And while the complex is slightly further out of Tokyo's traditional business hub, it nevertheless has good transport links.

"Medium-sized Japanese companies have a preference for buildings with good earthquake resilience, but they know they do not need to be in a brand new skyscraper", he said, pointing out the growing reputation of Shibuya as a sub-market among trendy web design firms, app developers and online retailers.

Meguro, served by the Yamanote Line, is another borderline central district that is rising in popularity, while Ueno and Akihabara also have some high-specification structures.

"These spaces will not suit everybody, and you will not see a major domestic bank, for example, relocating to Ueno, but for medium-sized Japanese companies, these places can be attractive", Hurfurt added.

UK firms want in on the action

The new opportunities that exist in Tokyo have not been missed by UK firms, with the Grosvenor Group announcing plans to double its assets in Japan in the coming years to ¥120bn, primarily through investments in residential and office properties.

The London-based firm has already purchased a 99-unit luxury apartment complex in Roppongi for ¥2bn, invested in renovation work and is selling the units for ¥7mn per 3.3m².

Grosvenor began investing in residences in Tokyo in 2001, with one of its flagship developments—the Grosvenor Place Kamizonocho

flats near Yoyogi Park—completed in 2008.

UK-based Aviva Investors has teamed up with Secured Capital Investment Management to purchase the 55,000m² Riverside Yomiuri Building, a mixed-use office and residential property that is the former headquarters of the *Yomiuri Shinbun* newspaper.

Similarly, in December, M&G Real Estate, the property management arm of UK insurance giant Prudential plc, acquired a 14,521m² retail and office complex in Kobe, the first foray by its Asia Fund into the Japanese market.

There are, however, challenges to British firms building a presence in Japan, according to CBRE's Hurfurt.

"It can be quite difficult for overseas firms to compete with local companies, although there is clearly an interest in the market here, even if many have not been able to complete an acquisition yet", he said.

Gateway city to Britain

London, meanwhile, has long been an attractive and lucrative destination for Japanese firms.

Trading house Mitsubishi Corp. teamed up with Swiss banking group UBS in January to announce a real estate fund targeting UK properties. The two firms intend to expand the fund to a value of £500mn over the next 18 months by soliciting investment from pension funds in Japan, Asia and Europe, as well as from financial institutions.

Advised by Savills, Mitsubishi Estate Co. snapped up 1 Victoria Street in November for £180mn, making the office complex the seventh addition to its portfolio in



London. Hulic Co., Ltd. made its first overseas investment in 2012 by purchasing 103 Mount Street, an office property in Mayfair.

In addition, NTT Urban Development has put down £77mn for 265 Strand, its fourth office property in London, with Mitsui Fudosan completing construction of 5 Hanover Square in mid-2012 through its UK subsidiary. Mitsui Fudosan was also involved in the redevelopment of the BBC's iconic broadcasting centre in central London, acting as part of a consortium to buy nearly six hectares of land for £200mn and constructing broadcasting studios with adjacent office, residential and leisure facilities.

"Japanese investors in the UK are heavily focused on high-quality London office investments and development opportunities", said Savills' Johnson.

"The London property market is now in the third year of recovery from the global financial crisis", he said. "Total leasing activity in the central London office markets rose 46% in 2013 ... while vacancy

The new opportunities that exist in Tokyo have not been missed by UK firms.

"Japanese investors in the UK are heavily focused on high-quality London office investments"

—Will Johnson, Savills Japan



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“Part of the reason that Japanese developers have been looking overseas is diversification”.

–Andy Hurfurt, CBRE K.K.

12 months,” said Hurfurt. “Many are looking at ‘gateway cities’ to another country, like London.

“And while Tokyo is the most familiar and comfortable market for Japanese investors, we are seeing a clear expansion into new markets,” he said.

In Japan, analysts believe the consumption tax increase—from 5% to 8%—that occurred on 1 April will only have a “temporary dampening effect on domestic consumption”.

“However, improving macro-economic conditions, along with a stated government objective to increase household incomes, should help to support market fundamentals,” believes Johnson.

And with just six years to go before the Games arrive, there is huge optimism that the property market here will be able to sustain its recent good form for at least that long. 🇯🇵

Analysts believe the consumption tax increase ... will only have a “temporary dampening effect on domestic consumption”.

levels are falling, with the West End in particular facing a sub-4% vacancy rate.

“This has combined to drive up office rental growth, with the average prime office rent rising 20% last year, compared to a 6% recovery in central Tokyo”, he said.

Across the board in London, investor demand for commercial property assets reached a new

high in 2013, with over £20bn transacted. Fully 70% of those purchases were made by non-domestic investors, with Asia-Pacific buyers accounting for 29% of total acquisitions.

“Part of the reason that Japanese developers have been looking overseas is diversification of assets. It’s also due to the strength of the yen, even if that has declined a little in the last



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Saving national assets

Trusts protect natural and historic places

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Britain's National Trust (the Trust) is credited with protecting over 300 buildings, 250,000 hectares of countryside, 1,127km of coastline and more than 200 historic parks and gardens across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is one of the world's largest non-governmental organisations, and has inspired the creation of similar groups around the world.

The Association of National Trusts in Japan (ANTJ) shares the British body's goal of protecting natural and historic places, to pass them down to future generations.

However, according to the ANTJ, the groups have one major difference. Whereas the Trust places equal emphasis on preserving historic properties and landscapes, the ANTJ is a land trust organisation, its efforts focusing primarily on the conservation of natural environments. The ANTJ has no historic buildings, and mainly acquires land with high natural value. It manages 26 sites that are important habitats of rare flora and fauna such as the Amami rabbit and Tsushima leopard cat.

In the UK, strict principles are adhered to when the Trust acquires a historic property.

Tredegar House in South Wales is an example of a recently acquired, strategically important property. South East Wales has 1.5mn inhabitants, representing almost half of the total Wales population. Tredegar is situated two minutes from the M4 motorway, about halfway between London and the coast of West Wales. It has the potential to become one of the Trust's most visited properties, as it also has development capacity across the site for new attractions.

When it comes to sustainable urban development, the Trust and ANTJ each have their own approach. The ANTJ encourages

the government to create or restore green spaces along streets, rivers and even in the corners of car parks and factories. In this way, it hopes to create an ecological network connecting natural with urban areas.

The Trust's work in London focuses on engaging Londoners in enjoying and appreciating the "unique historic and natural delights of the capital and all that they offer", including activities that span the arts, culture and the urban green environment. In this way, the group aims to treat the whole of the capital as a conglomeration of "special places." 🇬🇧



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OLD AND NEW



Architect Tomomi Araki weighs in on urban development

CUSTOM MEDIA

As a registered architect in both the UK and Japan, Tomomi Araki has developed a distinct view on the evolution of cities and the buildings that populate them.

Her portfolio encompasses high-profile projects such as the Ansaldo City of Culture museum in Milan, Barcelona's City of Justice court buildings and the John Rylands Library in Manchester, all completed while she was working for David Chipperfield Architects, Austin-Smith:Lord and other renowned firms in Britain. She now runs Tomomi Araki Architects and teaches at Shibaura Institute of Technology in Tokyo.

BCCJ ACUMEN: HOW DOES YOUR JAPANESE BACKGROUND INFLUENCE YOUR PROJECTS?

Araki: A focus on sunlight characterises my projects abroad. Following my exploration on how sunlight determines a space and, consequently, how that affects people's feelings, we used sunlight reflected on and filtered through materials to design the Ansaldo museum and Barcelona courts. An appreciation for subtlety and the fragile glow of sunlight seem to be recognised as Japanese design elements.

HOW DO JAPANESE AND UK APPROACHES TO ARCHITECTURE DIFFER?

The Japanese have always wanted to improve the earthquake and fire resistance of their buildings and cities, and the Building Standards Act has been amended after every big earthquake. As a result, when people want to extend or refurbish existing buildings and fit them to new standards, it often costs more than simply demolishing them and starting over.

Here, society places more importance on safety issues than notions about what architecture should look like. The exception to this is those people who have a high regard for the contribution their buildings make to the beauty of a cityscape, and who can afford to take great care of their property over the long term.

Like Europe, Japan is starting to find more value in the historical elements of its cities, and more people are willing to spend money on refurbishments or alterations.

WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE WORKING ABROAD?

In Japan, building regulations have been quite strict, leaving little room for exceptions. This has led to swift property developments.

In the UK, however, each application is considered as a separate case, with reasonable time allocated for a project. Also, ordinary citizens get involved with the planning process and carefully consider the potential outcome of proposed developments.



The John Rylands Library shows how new buildings (left) can complement historic ones.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION AND MODERN AESTHETICS?

I find cities more attractive when they have a stark contrast between old and new, like London.

With our projects in Europe, we tried to incorporate new buildings—with contemporary design and the latest technology—into historical surroundings, and improved access to existing buildings for elderly and disabled visitors. We hoped this would help people rediscover the value of old architecture. Our goal was to draw people's attention to these areas, which would, in turn, help revitalise the cities themselves. I am also trying to do this in Japan.

I don't think we should build lookalike Victorian buildings next

to real ones. New buildings should reflect current aesthetics. If each building reflects the aesthetics of its era, cities will have a rich history and intricate beauty.

An architect should create a design only after carefully considering the context of a place. Nevertheless, a building only truly becomes architecture over time, once people start using it.

WHERE ARE YOUR FAVOURITE CITYSCAPES IN TOKYO AND LONDON?

I like the view of London from Primrose Hill, where I used to go every weekend. In Tokyo, I like the view of cherry blossoms on the banks of the moss-covered Imperial Palace moat, with a view framed by ordinary modern buildings. 🌸

THE HOME LOAN MAZE

Buying property in Japan can be daunting yet profitable

BY TONY COLLINS

Whereas headlines in the UK highlight the difficulty borrowers are having qualifying for loans, Japanese banks are struggling to find sufficient numbers of potential borrowers, or at least those who fit their criteria.

According to the UK's Council of Mortgage Lenders, the average loan-to-value ratio is currently 80%. This figure has increased over the last 12 months, with many people attributing the strength of the London property market to demand from overseas buyers (page 23). In contrast, residential property in Japan is largely driven by internal demand, although there is now considerable interest from overseas investors.

Some Tokyo investors are eyeing potential opportunities in preparation for the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The market seems to place a premium on property with views, or in the vicinity, of famous landmarks. Discerning investors who find good locations with improved infrastructure will no doubt be rewarded.

Among the benefits of property investment in Japan are greater choice and quality than the rental market. Mortgage repayment costs are also usually 5%–6% less than rental rates. This allows the borrower to steadily reduce their mortgage and build up equity.

Many potential investors are concerned about the consumption tax increase implemented at the end of March, but the fixed asset tax (*koteishisanzei*) levied on property is distinct from consumption tax. Fees for legal registration are set to rise, but consumption tax is not expected to have a significant effect on prices, even if investor sentiment may suffer.

Most Japanese investors prefer to minimise lending and pay back loans early. According to an official at Mizuho Bank, 80% of Japanese applicants select variable interest rate loans. Current rates are 0.775% variable and 1.45% for 10 years fixed.

My assessment is that it is reasonable to take an aggressive approach to the loan size, but to be conservative with the interest rate. This could mean taking a 100% loan, even

capitalising loan costs, but fixing the interest rate for at least 10 years or the full mortgage term, which frees up capital for other investments.

Buy-to-let mortgages exist in Japan, but are less widely used than in the UK, where private investment in a second property is common. Reflecting the greater risk of mortgage delinquency, there is a mortgage

- Permanent residents have greater choice of mortgages
- Banks often reluctant to lend to foreigners
- Most loans in Japan are flexible and include life insurance

mortgagee has resident status in Japan.

A permanent resident's visa increases lending options. The most attractive rates are offered by high-street banks such as MUFG, Mizuho, SMBC and Shinsei.

Flat 35 products are very reasonable long-term fixed-rate loans subsidised by the government. These mortgages can only be used for property that satisfies certain criteria, such as energy efficiency, durability and earthquake-resistant construction. Sample rates for these loans are 2.01%–2.09%, fixed for 35 years, and are offered by lenders such as Resona and SBI Mortgages. Rates are similar to regular long-term rates, once arrangement fees and life insurance premiums are added.

Group credit insurance, ie life insurance, is included in the interest rate for most mortgages, but not for Flat 35 loans. This is a valuable benefit that, in other countries, represents an additional personal expense. In Japan the cost is built into the interest rate. This means the loan will be paid off and the unencumbered asset passed to the spouse should the applicant pass away within the loan term.

Lending options for non-permanent residents also exist, but rates are typically higher or require a larger down payment. Borrowers must usually make a minimum

The market seems to place a premium on property with views, or in the vicinity, of famous landmarks.

premium for Japanese investment property with variable rates at 2%–4%.

It is fair to say that lenders are nervous about providing loans to foreign nationals, which makes it essential to take great care with the loan application.

An important factor in borrowing is residential status, or the willingness of a Japanese spouse to act as guarantor (*rentai hoshounin*). This is because repossessions are easier if the

“Despite what the Abe administration is trying to achieve, it’s still oddly inconvenient to invest in Japan”

down payment of 10%–20% of the purchase price. Real estate fees add up to 7% of purchase value, so this can translate into a total outlay of 27% of the purchase price.

Some people may argue that a traditional portfolio lending approach has allowed Japan to avoid the problems associated with lax regulation and mortgage innovations, such as mortgage-backed securities. On the other hand, lending innovation and differentiated products would boost lending and cash flow from non-resident foreign investors.

A Singapore-based investor recently elected to fully fund

his purchase of real estate in Daikanyama due to “a lack of attractive funding opportunities”, saying that, “Despite what the Abe administration is trying to achieve, it’s still oddly inconvenient to invest in Japan”.

Anecdotally, banks have been cautioned only to lend to customers when the reason for lending can be clearly demonstrated. The interpretation of this guidance has made investments by non-resident foreigners more difficult. Lenders such as Orix Trust, NAB Asia and the Bank of China offer loans to non-residents, although

restrictions or lower lending ratios apply.

Understanding the requirements, underwriting processes and lending criteria of banks, as well as the reasons for rejections, can be frustrating. This is particularly so when rejections are communicated as *sougoteki na handan*, which can be translated as a general assessment or, perhaps more accurately, as a decision without explanation.

The experience, knowledge and ability to interpret cultural passwords, as well as a long list of contacts at financial institutions,

are invaluable advantages a mortgage advisor can bring to the table.

Even if the application process is arduous, those who get approved for a mortgage can benefit from low fixed interest rates, marginal fees for non-scheduled prepayments and affordable life insurance included in the interest rate, as well as other banking benefits.

A recent client described closing on a 30-year loan with a 15-year locked rate of 1.65% for a second property. “For Westerners, that’s pretty much free money”, he said. 🍀

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HAVING A BLAST

British School in Tokyo marks quarter century

BY JULIAN RYALL • PHOTOS BY BST YEAR 12 STUDENTS AIHAM AL MUSALHI AND HIROKAZU KATOROI

The celebrations to mark the 25th anniversary of the opening of the British School in Tokyo (BST) went with a bang—quite literally—at the British Embassy Tokyo on 19 March, with students showing off their prowess in the sciences, debating, technology, music and singing.

And while the occasion was primarily to congratulate the school for providing a British education to thousands of pupils over a quarter of a century, it also served as an opportunity to recognise the work of British firms across Japan and the commitment they and their staff have made to this country.

“Three years since the terrible triple disaster of 11 March 2011, it is a good moment to reflect on what the word ‘community’ means”, British Ambassador Tim Hitchens said in his welcoming address, after guests had arrived to a spirited version of The Beatles’ “All you need is love” from the school choir.

“In the immediate aftermath of the March 11 disaster, members of the British community, like so many others, came together to support each other and to support their Japanese and other friends.

“Those were difficult times, but the British community turned out to be pretty resilient. Far less British residents left Tokyo than most other foreign communities. Perhaps it was down to Sir John Beddington’s science-based advice, or the famous British ‘stiff upper lip’, or simply the commitment of the British to Japan.

“Whatever it was, many Japanese people and organisations have thanked us for it”, Hitchens said. “It has left a lasting impression”.

The ambassador then paid tribute to the 450 British firms with a presence in Japan. He also singled out the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan for “providing a dynamic network



Members of the Rocket Club with their creations

which supports the British community and multiplies our joint impact in Japan”, as well as all the charity work and volunteering that goes on among our numbers.

Those comments were echoed by representatives of UK firms attending the event. Fergus Stewart, chief executive officer of IHG ANA Hotels Group Japan LLC, told *BCCJ ACUMEN* that the tragic events of three years ago merely served to underscore Brits’ commitment to this country.

“We helped and supported each other and I think that’s a unique feature of our community here”, Stewart said. “We couldn’t just get up and leave; that’s not in the British psyche”.

BST plays a hugely important role in the community here and, as education is a key concern for parents considering a posting to Tokyo, remains one of the reasons for the strong British business presence in the city.

- Ambassador salutes 450 UK firms in Japan
- Students’ programming project “put the fun back into computer science”
- Rocket Club presented first night-time launch

Principal Brian Christian said, “It would be very difficult for British firms to send their best people overseas if they did not feel there was a good school for their children to attend”.

Set up in December 1988 as a charitable trust, BST was officially opened by the then prime minister, Lady Margaret Thatcher, the following year, and still occupies the same site in Shibuya. It has since added a second campus.

The school’s 800 students are drawn from 58 nationalities. Many of these young people were keen to demonstrate what they have been learning.

One group of pupils demonstrated the capabilities of the Raspberry Pi low-powered computer, which runs a free, open-source operating system and is designed to provide low-cost computing applications. Students have been using the system to carry out their own



programming projects, such as making a film using time-lapse photographs of the school's most recent ski trip.

"We are aiming to promote the study of computer science and related topics, and really to put the fun back into computing", said science technician Ryan van Loh.

The pupils of the school's Programming Club are equally enthusiastic about their project, creating their own version of the Visit UK website using eye-catching images and messages.

"Usually the children are more interested in playing games on their computers, but we have been able to show them how those games are actually made and how much effort goes into them, and that has really made them more interested in learning the skills required to do their own programming", said Nino Popa, the school's data manager and web master.

The students' showpiece demonstration took place on the ambassador's lawn. It required the embassy to warn the neighbouring fire station and local police that sparks were going to fly.

The Rocket Club is one of the school's most popular, with science teacher Tom Harris using homemade, air-powered water rockets to teach the fundamentals of physics.

"They work on the same principle as the Space Shuttle and apply Newton's principles. We're trying to use the club to create a different way of learning because space is such a major industry in the UK", Harris said. "It's great to be able to use this to inspire young people about their futures, as well as having a lot of fun in the process".

A dozen or more of the club members' rockets were launched into the night sky, some with lights attached to them so their trajectories could be followed.

"This is the first night launch we have tried and I'm excited about that", said 11-year-old



Charlie Wiggins. "We can't fire them as high as we know they can go here, but if we used full power we could get them up to about five stories high".

Wiggins, who said he wants to be a scientist or "pyrotechnics expert" in the future, confirmed that the rocketeers were being careful to avoid going through the ambassador's bedroom window with one of their projectiles.

Fellow rocket fan Ian Wang said, "The best bit is when we do succeed in launching them and they fly in the direction we want them to go". 🇬🇧

- 1 From left: Deeanne Bell, BST deputy head of primary; Lowly Norgate, BST communications manager; Muriel Moorrees Braat, BST trustee
- 2 The Primary School choir
- 3 Music teacher Louisa Danmeri leads students in a performance.
- 4 The Rocket Club is one of the school's most popular activities.
- 5 Nino Popa, BST data officer and webmaster

STOP DESTROYING YOUR BUSINESS

Careers are cut off at the knees and businesses destroyed when people problems are allowed to fester. Getting the people part right is not just fundamental, it is critical in any business. Ironically, we are all taught to believe that “hard skills”—our technical expertise—is the main requirement for success. The reality is that if the people skills part is not working well, no amount of technical expertise will compensate for the damage being done to the business. Poor, mediocre or uninspiring leadership is easy to spot. However, there are other types of problematic leadership which are not so immediately obvious, but which must be fixed.

Smart, capable people get promoted and are given responsibility for others. This is usually because they have demonstrated a mastery of the “hard skills” areas of the business. The challenging part is that often these admirable and highly evaluated skills are individual to that person. Those working for them, by definition, do not possess the same capability level. Also, individual expertise may not be replicable or transferable to others. Another additional problem is that having the requisite hard skills is not enough. You can’t do it all yourself and so leaders need to be able to delegate, to leverage the capacity and ability of others. This requires expertise in the soft skills—particularly leadership,



Leadership “cancer” is quietly killing organisations

communication and people skills.

As famous baseball coach Yogi Berra wryly noted, “Leading is easy. Getting people to follow you is the hard part”. The vast majority of companies mention they need more out of their people. They especially look to the leader groups, particularly middle management, to provide this capability. Most often they complain that those responsible for others are not getting sufficient leverage from the whole team and are not producing sufficient outcomes.

Global Research Reveals Surprises

The breakdown occurs when individual technical expertise does not provide enough of what followers want from leaders. Recently, global research was conducted on what drives followers to be loyal, motivated and engaged about their organisations. This research was duplicated in Japan and the three key factors were found to be same:

1. The quality of the relationship with the immediate supervisor
2. The employees belief in the direction the senior leadership were taking the organisation
3. Their sense of pride in working for the organisation

All three pivot points refer to “soft” not “hard” skills. They are indicating issues about communication and people skills. This is often the weak point for technically oriented people. They are often very detail driven, high “task focus” individuals. Communicating with, leading, enthusing and motivating others are expertise areas where they struggle.

If the lynchpin for engagement and motivation hinges on expertise in these areas and those given responsibility for leading are underperforming, then the full potential of the team will never be realised. If the full potential of the people is not being realised (and given people are usually the biggest

expense line in any organisation), the “opportunity cost” is very, very high. This is like a leadership “cancer”, quietly killing the organisation.

Engagement Levels Count

If your competitor has a more engaged team, then the outcomes, the quality of idea generation, teamwork, accountability, coordination, attention to quality, and going the extra mile for the client will be superior. They outperform you in innovation, because they are getting more people to care more. They are inspiring them to want to be an integral and valued part of the improvement process. They will soon be eroding your market share and will ultimately destroy your business.

The four major business skills of leadership, communication, sales and presenting are all soft skills. Hard skills alone are just not going to do it. Companies and individuals who want to succeed need to invest to completely marshal the full power of all their potential—their “people power”.

By the way, don’t talk to anyone about training until you read: *Stop Wasting Money On Training: How To Get the Best Results From Your Training Budget.*

To receive your free report, pick up your phone now and call 0120-948-395 (or 03-4520-5469) for a free 24 hour recorded message.

The Royal Harpist

BY JULIAN RYALL

The unmistakable and deeply Welsh sound of the harp resonated throughout the official residence of British Ambassador Tim Hitchens to mark St David's Day.

Held shortly after 1 March, the day honouring Wales' patron saint, the celebrations coincided with a delegation of representatives of some of the nation's top food and drink producers arriving in Japan to take part in the Foodex 2014 trade show.

Hannah Stone, who in June 2011 was appointed the official harpist to HRH The Prince of Wales, performed a series of recitals, including two Welsh compositions.

Bugeilio'r Gwenith Gwyn, which translates as "watching the white wheat", was written by

award-winning harp player John Thomas, and is based on an 18th century traditional Welsh love song. *St Asaph's Dance* was a more contemporary composition created by Karl Jenkins.

To complement the Welsh music, Stone also performed Claude Debussy's *Clair de Lune* and *Scintillation*, by the French harp composer Carlos Salzedo.

"I am delighted to be here this evening to celebrate St David's Day with you all in Japan", said Stone. "This is my first visit to Japan and I am only here for a short time, but I have nothing but good things to say about everything that I have been shown so far".

Stone's performance was followed by a food reception showcasing Welsh delicacies. 🇬🇧



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Passing the torch

Retired Olympian conveys value of sport to young women and children

After seven years of intense training, early alarms, strict diets and a mountain of pressure, Mara Yamauchi is finally enjoying morning lie-ins and the occasional piece of cake. Yamauchi is Britain's second-fastest female marathon runner in history, finishing sixth in the women's marathon at the 2008 Beijing Olympic and Paralympic Games, and second in the 2009 London Marathon. The former diplomat hung up her trainers in 2013 and now has a new ambition.

"I want to use what I learned as an athlete to inspire people to reach their goals and potential, and to get more out of life," Yamauchi said. She joined the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) after finishing her studies, and was posted to the British Embassy Tokyo from 1998–2002. After announcing her retirement as an elite athlete, she returned

to the FCO in London, but soon changed course due to a strong desire to stay in the world of running.

Transitioning from full-time athletic life had its challenges. Many athletes, she said, struggle with identity concerns after leaving competitive sport.

"When I was an athlete, I had a single-minded pursuit in

life. Suddenly that goes and you wonder why you're here. Many athletes go through this; what you're doing is who you are—it's 24/7, not a 9 to 5 job", she said.

Now, Yamauchi dedicates her time to motivational speaking and running-related activities. Among other aspirations, Yamauchi hopes to encourage more young women to participate in sport. She believes active lifestyles are cultivated during childhood, and children must "embrace exercise" to make it a lifelong habit.

Many athletes struggle with identity concerns after leaving competitive sport.

- Left racing world in 2013 to pursue career in coaching, speaking and writing
- Paralympians' involvement in London 2012 a good example for Tokyo 2020
- Japan's athletic support system is rare

BY BRANDI GOODE





Mara Yamauchi • ASICS

Though Yamauchi now lives in London with her husband and coach Shigetoshi, she recently visited Japan for the Tokyo Marathon, in her capacity as an ambassador for Japanese athletic apparel firm ASICS. Just as she wishes to be a role model for young women, Yamauchi was joined on stage at the Tokyo Marathon Expo by Yuko Arimori, one of her own role models and a two-time Olympic medallist.

"Arimori-san still has this burning desire and is a very positive person who motivates those around her. I admire people like her who have the skills to inspire others," she said.

The Tokyo Marathon is certainly the "blue-riband event" of Japan's running calendar, Yamauchi commented. It is 10 times oversubscribed, while London is three to four times oversubscribed.

In addition to Tokyo, Yamauchi has enjoyed running in plenty of other races around Japan. Topping the list is the Hagi half-marathon, in Yamaguchi Prefecture. This race, held in December, runs through a scenic, historical town that has been beautifully preserved and boasts traditional samurai houses known as *buke yashiki* as well as hundreds of fragrant *natsu-mikan* (summer tangerine) trees.

The Kumejima half-marathon is another of her favourites. This small tropical isle in Okinawa treats participants to a fabulous

"One really positive thing that came out of London is ... how the Paralympians and Olympians were treated equally"

post-race party, complete with *awamori* (a potent traditional alcohol), foot baths, folk dancing and plenty of other entertainment. "I have a feeling that most people go for the party rather than the race! About 90% of the runners are repeaters," she said.

Lessons for 2020

When it comes to the Olympic Games, Yamauchi feels London can provide a few lessons for Tokyo 2020.

"One really positive thing that came out of London is the profile of the Paralympics, and how the Paralympians and Olympians were treated equally," she said. She also highlighted how the stadiums were full for many Paralympic events, even selling out for the first time ever. The Team GB parade included both Paralympians and Olympians, all of which contributed to a better understanding and appreciation of disability and disability sport, she added.

"Before London 2012, I went on a UK Athletics training camp for both able-bodied and disabled athletes. Seeing the disabled athletes training was so valuable for me. They have a very positive attitude and just get on with the hard work. I learned so much on that trip," she said.

The business of elite sport

One of the primary concerns of elite athletes who devote their lives to sport is ensuring financial stability. When Yamauchi chose to leave her job at the FCO in 2006 to pursue training full time, she faced the same issue.

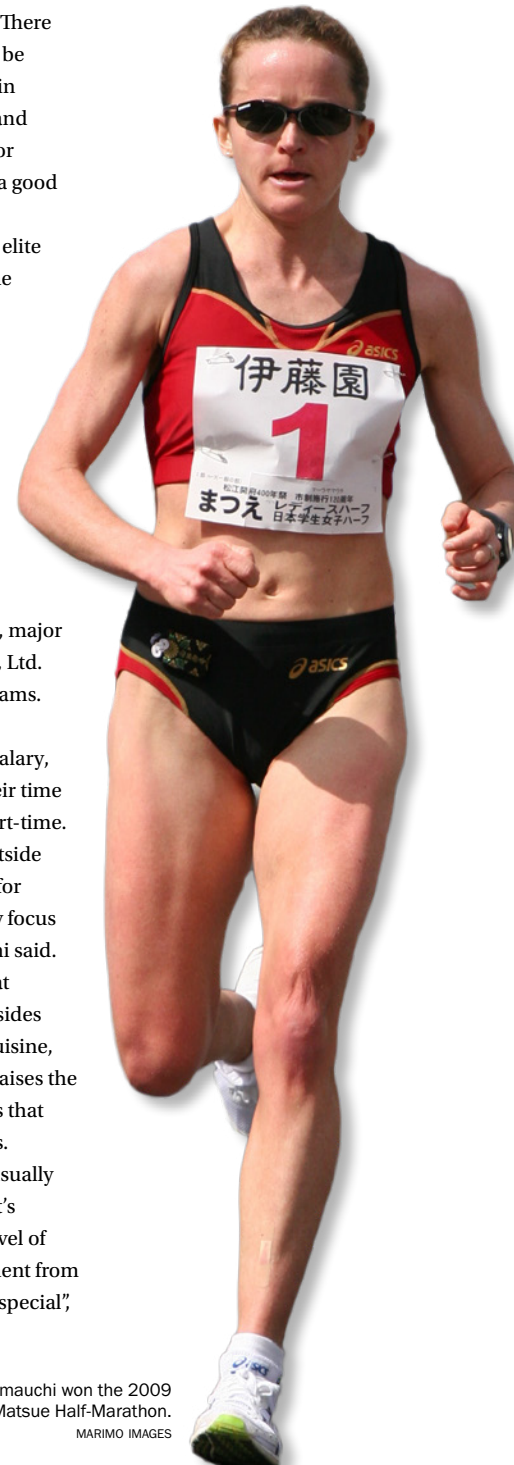
One of the primary means of support is through sponsorships, with some companies giving funds directly to athletes and others donating products. There is typically prize money to be won in high-profile races, in addition to time bonuses and even appearance money for competing and putting in a good performance.

In the UK, the national elite athlete support programme provides medical and nutritional aid, as well as physiotherapy and paid training camps for those who qualify. Top athletes may also be invited to special events as guest speakers, for which they are typically paid a fee.

Japan's system is completely different. Here, major firms such as Shiseido Co., Ltd. have their own athletics teams. Athletes are employed by companies and receive a salary, but they spend most of their time training, while working part-time. This system is very rare outside Japan, but very beneficial for athletes who want to really focus on their training, Yamauchi said.

When asked about what she misses from Japan, besides nutritious and delicious cuisine, Yamauchi emphatically praises the blue-sky, crisp, sunny days that characterise Tokyo winters.

"Training in winter is usually quite tough, but in Japan it's perfect for running. The level of enthusiasm and commitment from runners here is also really special," she said. 🇯🇵



Yamauchi won the 2009 Matsue Half-Marathon.
MARIMO IMAGES

A WOMAN'S JOB?

Remove gender labels for a happier home

BY GINKO KOBAYASHI



Surely, no one in Britain today would dare say housework is a woman's job. If they did, they would run the risk of being called gender-biased or simply old-fashioned.

And yet, various surveys have shown that women in most countries engage in housework much more often, and for longer, than men. For example, a report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, released in early March, states that, "In virtually every country, men are able to fit in valuable extra minutes of leisure each day while women spend more time doing unpaid housework."

In Japan, working women's situation seems grievous at best. I've lost count of the number of stories I've read about working mothers (why not working fathers?) who are struggling to keep up with their domestic and job commitments, without much support from their (working) husbands. According to them, their husbands "cooperate" by putting out the rubbish bins.

Childrearing is also considered the exclusive responsibility of women in Japan. According to Osamu Sakai, a blogger at Huffington Post Japan, "Companies have been totally dominating men's lives since the rapid economic growth of the 1960s, and it has been a point of pride for these men not to care



In most countries, housework and childrearing are relegated to women.

about their home lives" (article from 23 January). Sakai believes that the tendency to assign the role of childrearing to only mothers is one of the major reasons behind the nation's declining birth rate.

For many years, he says, "The portrayal of women as simply dutiful wives and devoted mothers has been impressed upon them".

The fact that society views childrearing as the sole responsibility of women has made Japan a harsh country in which to raise children, he argues, citing examples of insufficient government support and train passengers looking vexed when they hear babies' cries.

Sakai's article, roughly translated as "The number of babies will never increase in a country where society is intolerant of children", received more than 160,000 Facebook likes. It garnered a huge outpouring of support

from mothers, who agreed with his points. Some of them told stories of how passengers had treated them rudely when they brought prams or pushchairs onto public transport.

Removing the gender label from housework and childrearing can be liberating. I haven't produced a child, but as far as housework is concerned, I've personally experienced great freedom.

About 30 years ago, when I met my British husband in Japan, I noticed that I was not expected to do or say anything just because I was a woman and he was a man. I didn't have to fill his glass of beer, iron his shirt (unless I wanted to), cook for him or the family, tidy the house ... the list is endless. Of course I can work if I want to, but I don't have to ask his permission to do so, and I surely don't have to rush home to prepare his supper.

At the same time, I quickly discovered that I cannot expect him to behave in a certain way just because he is a man. My mother often used to complain to me, saying, "Oh, as the man of the house he should make a firm, final decision, not asking your opinion first".

There is no "man of the house" concept in our household, as I am not "the woman of the house". We are who we are.

Now that I live in the UK, my views on housework have evolved. Over the years, having seen how the British live, I consider housework as part of a bigger picture.

Anything that has to do with smoothly running the house is included. Making social plans such as holding parties or going to the cinema, coordinating the gardening, fixing holiday schedules, designing the bathroom layout, planning for retirement ... these are all important life activities in which family members all participate. Doing the dishes as well as bringing home money are only parts of the greater household operation.

So, is housework a woman's or a man's job? In this modern world, it's a job for everyone, and should not fall singularly on a person of a particular gender—especially if that person is unhappy. It's much more fun this way.

Now, the trouble is getting the people in your household to agree. 🇬🇧

HERE'S TO A SAFE HAVEN FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



Tokyo must embrace D&I to avoid a bleak future

BY IAN DE STAINS OBE

In recent years, diversity has become a buzzword. Barely a day goes by without some mention of it in the media. As in many other areas, Japan is noticeably behind in embracing the concept. For this reason, the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan has made a point of promoting it in speeches and seminars as well as in this very magazine. But what exactly is meant by the term?

One of the best definitions I have come across, from a website hosted by the University of Oregon, reads as follows,

“The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual”.

I particularly like the reference to “a safe, positive, and nurturing

Japan is only slowly beginning to recognise the need to bring more women into positions of power.

environment” because it seems to underscore just why diversity is so important in our schools, workplaces and communities.

It is important in our schools because this is where values are inculcated and prejudices that may be encouraged (albeit unconsciously) at home can be challenged and set in perspective. Young children are naturally free of prejudice; hatred and bigotry have to be learnt, as must the fear of those who are different.

It is argued that a diverse workforce is likely to be more creative and productive. A staff member who feels included (regardless of, say, ethnicity or sexual orientation) is likely to be happier and more committed. Increasingly, astute firms are learning how best to recruit an increasingly diverse workforce and, more importantly, how to retain them.

Firms with more sophisticated approaches to recruitment and retention pay particular attention to the communities in which they operate; does the internal population reflect that on the outside? Some HR departments offer managers training that is

designed to build awareness of how to handle diversity across the board and how to manage potential conflict that can sometimes arise.

Of course, in some countries there are laws that oblige employers to ensure the rights of the disabled, or make it illegal to discriminate against women and people of colour. But there are other minorities who may not enjoy such strong legal protection. Members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities frequently fall into this category. That said, an increasing number of enlightened employers identify LGBT-friendly managers and HR personnel.

In the community as a whole, the importance of inclusion of the diverse cannot be underestimated.

Take, for example, the years of hostilities in Northern Ireland between Catholics and Protestants. Even today, across the world ethnic and religious intolerance results in a heartbreaking loss of life and the suffering of countless innocent men, women and children who are persecuted simply for who and what they are.

It is equally important, of course, not to allow political correctness to develop to the point where it makes a mockery of diversity and inclusion. In UK schools these days, I am told the term “blackboard” is frowned on (though for some reason, it is still alright to refer to a “whiteboard”). Some people have suggested the term “brainstorming” should be avoided for fear of offending those who are afflicted with conditions such as epilepsy. We can perhaps live with the need to refer to a “spokesperson”, but when local councils debate the political correctness of manholes, I suggest we are in danger of losing the plot.

Which brings us to Japan. There are a variety of reasons why this country lags behind the West in embracing diversity, and there are those who say that the relative safety we enjoy is a direct result of that. But how long can it last? Japan is only slowly beginning to recognise the need to bring more women into positions of power. It is Neanderthal in its attitude to its LGBT population (which is significant and economically important), and it has until very recently refused to even contemplate the obvious need to open its doors to more foreign workers. The need could not be greater here for “a safe, positive and nurturing environment” if the country is to avoid a bleak future. 🇬🇧

Japan fails to achieve diversity at the top

China leads the pack in the Asia-Pacific region for women in management

JONATHAN SAMPSON, REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Jonathan.Sampson@hays.co.jp

Just 15 percent of management positions in Japan are held by women. This figure is well below the average found across Asia, according to a survey of employers by recruiting expert Hays in Japan.

The survey of 2,600 employers, conducted as part of the *2014 Hays Salary Guide*, found that across Asia, 28 percent of management roles are held by women. Leading the region for the development of female talent is China, where 36 percent of management positions are held by women. China was followed by Hong Kong (33 percent), Malaysia (29 percent) and Singapore (27 percent).

"Japan is falling behind in the diversity stakes", said Jonathan Sampson, regional director of Hays in Japan. "This is happening despite Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's commitment to tapping into Japan's 'most underutilised resource: Japanese women'".

These findings are supported by a report released by Grant Thornton International Ltd. in March 2013, which said that mainland Chinese women topped the world in terms of holding senior management roles in business. Japan was far behind, in 44th place.

A separate survey by MasterCard, also released in



March last year, further supported the finding that mainland Chinese women were well represented in business, with 40.9 female business owners to every 100 males, higher than in Japan (21.2 women to every 100 men). In addition, according to McKinsey & Company Inc.'s report titled *Women Matter: An Asian Perspective*, released in June 2012, Japan has one of the lowest levels of female representation on boards and executive committees in Asia.

"Diversity is increasingly on CEOs' agendas, as it is seen as a

way of improving attraction and retention of staff. It also seems to better reflect a company's customer base and boost productivity, innovation and financial results", Sampson said.

"Despite the compelling business case for diversity in the workforce, the number of women participating in management is still relatively low compared to men. We will continue to monitor this trend in future years and it will be interesting to watch how quickly organisations come

around to developing female staff to expand their talent pool", he added.

Below is Hays' advice to employers who are looking to develop their female staff so they are ready for management roles:

- Measure and report on the proportion of women in your workforce, including at senior levels.
- Enable both women and men to balance their work and home lives by embracing flexible working at all levels, and train managers to manage based on results, not hours spent at a desk.
- Encourage an attitudinal change towards working flexibly, remotely or part-time: these different ways of working do not indicate a lack of commitment.
- Create supportive networks and encourage mentoring opportunities for female managers.
- Prepare future female leaders by providing management training and qualifications early in their careers.
- Act on the evidence to ensure that women throughout your organisation are given the same opportunities to progress as men.

THINK SLOW

How unconscious bias impacts the workplace

BY SUZANNE PRICE

Many human resources departments work hard to remove intentional bias from the workplace, yet unconscious bias is rife. Mostly because, well ... it's unconscious.

Since I spend a lot of time talking with senior managers about diversity and inclusion, I often hear them claim they are doing just fine. "We choose the best person for the job regardless of diversity", they say; or, "We promote a respectful work environment and treat everyone equally".

The mistake with this belief is that there is no such thing as a meritocracy in the workplace. There is never a level playing field and we do treat different people differently.

Consider this: while 58% of Fortune 500 CEOs are 180cm or taller, only 14.5% of the male population measure up to that height. Most of us see tall men as leaders, giving them opportunities to demonstrate their leadership ability and offering all the resources and support needed. These men succeed and become more confident, and we say, "see, natural leader!"

The reality is that people belonging to dominant societal groups, ie tall men, experience micro-advantages in their careers. People belonging to minority groups, such as women, are likely to find either they need to work harder for the same rewards, or

that the process of promotion will be slower.

We believe we are making decisions logically; however, behavioural psychologists have shown that intuition is often at the root of our choices.

TYPES OF BIAS

More than 150 biases have been given names so far. Here are a few to think about:

- Being subjective, human beings have a natural predisposition to **affinity bias**. People warm to others like them and have a tendency to hire and develop people in their own image.
- The **halo effect** occurs when you like someone and are biased to think everything about that person is good.
- **Perception bias** such as stereotypes and assumptions about certain groups can obstruct objective judgement of certain groups. For example, since the 1970s, the percentage of women, compared with men, who have been selected for the world's most prestigious orchestras has increased from 5% to 25%. What has made the difference? Blind auditions preventing assumptions such as "women musicians have less technique and produce poorer sound".
- **Confirmation bias** can occur when people have a certain belief about their own social identity group. You may tell yourself that members of your group will be denied or fail in leadership roles. Even if you are not aware of such messages running in the background of your psyche, the stories you tell yourself do affect your success or failure.
- **Group think** and the need for group acceptance: Neuroscientists using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) have shown that when we are excluded from a group, the same parts of the brain become activated as when we feel physical pain. If people try too hard to fit into a group, mimic others, or hold back on contrary opinions, they lose part of their identity. The organisation loses out on their creativity and innovation.

So, what exactly is unconscious bias?

A bias is the result of a mental process by which the brain uses associations that are so ingrained that—since we are not aware of them and, thus, cannot control

- Tall men are often perceived as natural leaders
- Bias can serve a positive as well as negative function
- Neuroscientists: feeling left out is akin to physical pain

them—they play no part in our intentional behaviour.

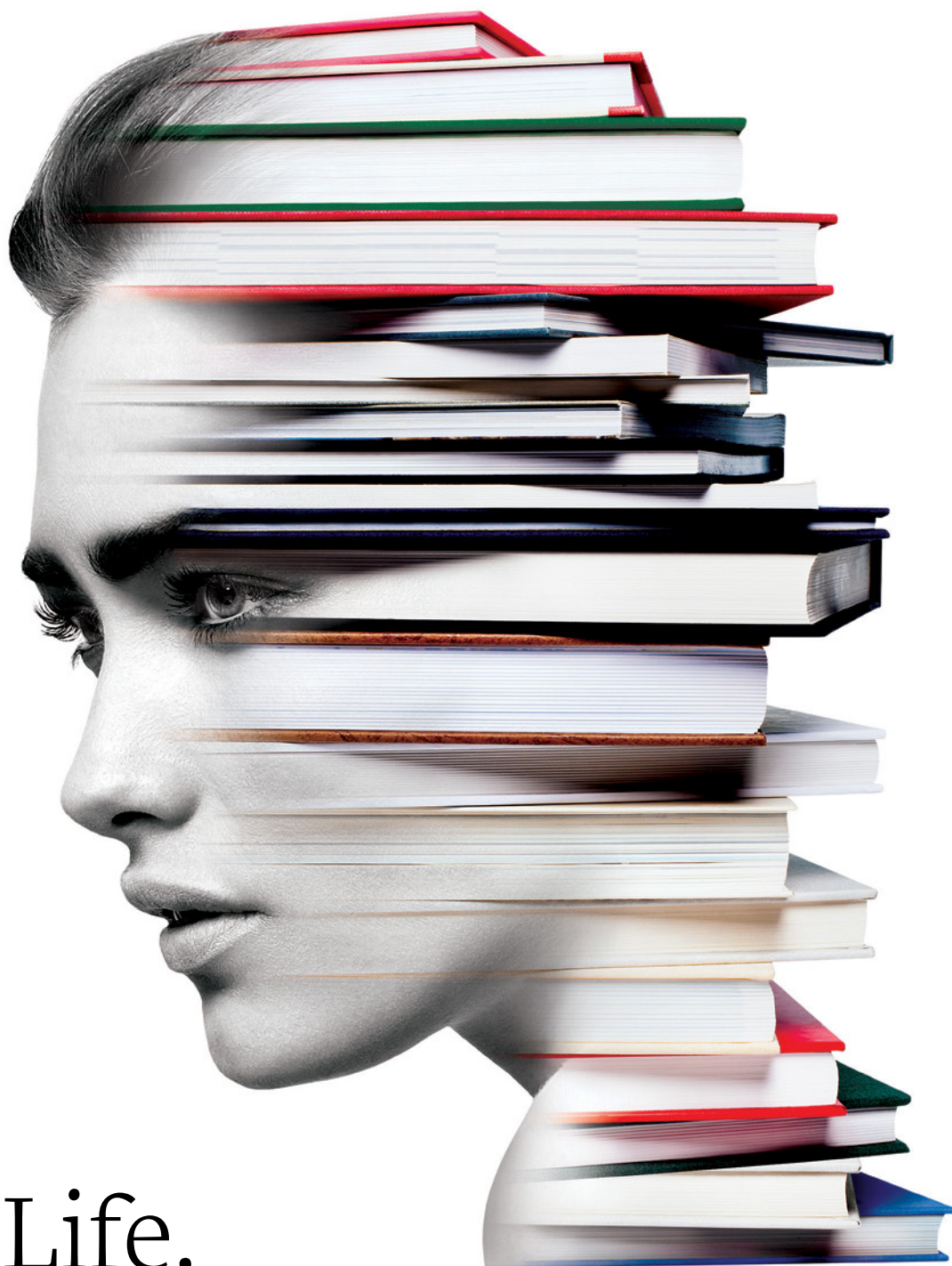
That said, despite biases having a negative connotation, they do serve an important function. They help us "fill in the gaps", by looking for patterns and making assumptions, enabling us to act quickly and make sense out of vast amounts of information. We could say bias is "fast thinking".

The issue is, we often use fast thinking when we should be using slow thinking—in other words, be deliberate, rational and logical. Organisations making great strides in their diversity and, more importantly, inclusion strategy work with their leadership teams to address unconscious bias. They also try to mitigate this during their selection and decision-making processes.

Diversity is the presence of differences that make everyone unique.

Inclusion is the full engagement of all, and includes leveraging diversity.

We cannot eliminate bias. However, we can acknowledge that bias does exist and that various types of bias clearly have an impact on decision-making. People and organisations that honestly try to understand their attitudes and behaviours will be able to cultivate a working environment in which individuals can bring their best and most authentic selves to the table. 🌸



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YOUR PARTNER IN PROPERTY AND PROFITS

How to navigate complex housing market and new regulations



BY LIINA KUUSIK

In a property market typically dominated by men or large corporations, Miyuki Kanda, female entrepreneur, has broken the mould.

Back in 2000, Kanda, the founder of Axis Point Co., Ltd., started the journey into the accommodation rental business by subleasing a two-bedroom apartment to foreigners who were visiting Tokyo. That crucial first step was a jumping point for creating an easy and affordable property rental website for foreigners coming to and living in Japan.

“Over time, our website has grown dramatically. We now have a database of more than 6,000 rooms for rent all around Tokyo. There are even some spaces for rent in the Osaka/Kyoto area, and we are constantly looking for and uploading new properties to our portal”, Kanda commented.

“The Axis Point site connects potential tenants with guesthouses large and small, and with shared or private furnished apartments being let by both Japanese and foreign owners based in Japan. Our goal from day one has been introducing the right property to the right prospective tenant”, she explained.

It has traditionally proved difficult for Japanese property owners to introduce their flats to foreign prospects, due simply to the language barrier. However, this

problem is eliminated with the Axis Point portal.

Nevertheless, the language barrier is only one of the issues facing landlords in Japan. Opening a guesthouse or some other type of shared accommodation in Tokyo might appear easy but, without the proper research, you might end up illegally opening a guesthouse or renting out property or rooms.

“With the right management, it is just a matter of time before you can make your property work for you”

The laws regarding apartment rentals for shared premises in Japan have become increasingly complex and have been revised considerably even in 2014. Many current and prospective property owners do not know about the amended regulations.

For example, the Building Standards Act and various fire safety ordinances require ceilings to be a minimum of 2.1m high, and rooms must have a minimum floor area of 7m² in Tokyo.

As a board of directors member for the Japan Shared & Guest House Organization (JSGO), Kanda advises current and future owners of shared housing. During JSGO’s monthly meetings and seminars, members—who are property owners—discuss safety guidelines and management

support, with occasional presentations by legal advisors, fire department personnel and others. Kanda shares the organisation’s goal of persuading the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism to incorporate proposed guidelines into the growing body of laws governing shared premises.

“At Axis Point we are constantly looking for new owners and

subletters who wish to rent out or open new, shared rental premises, but only those who do so according to the established guidelines. This ensures that the accommodations we offer are safe and decent places to live. When owners follow the guidelines, we will reward them with a certificate to ensure prospective tenants an accommodation is safe and well managed.

“Many people may not realise that simply subletting an apartment without the consent of the owner, via one of the several famous international flat rental sites, is actually illegal. Therefore, before posting your apartment or house for rent on some website, why not first make sure that doing so is legal and consult us about how to earn

maximum profit from a deal?” Kanda encouraged.

“Sometimes people are not aware of the rates and possible profits that can be earned when leasing property. For example, one of our clients sublet a one-bedroom apartment with a three-year contract for ¥60,000 per month in the Harajuku area. However, when they converted the arrangement and leased the place out as a fully furnished private apartment, they were able to charge ¥150,000 per month. The person subleasing the apartment already started making a profit in the seventh month of the rental period”, she said.

“With the right management, it is just a matter of time before you can make your property work for you.

“Our next challenge at Axis Point is expanding our business model to include private apartment letting with full relocation services, through our new website [<http://www.ofjapan.jp/>], she said.

“Are you considering buying property in Japan and turning it into a shared rental? If so, be sure to contact us first. We will assist you with buying, setting up, leasing and turning a profit as quickly as possible.

“Our extensive knowledge of clients’ needs, location specifics and management practices ensure we can be a solid bridge between you and your new home in Japan”, Kanda said reassuringly. 🇯🇵

CONNECT AND ENGAGE

Educational, entertaining and relevant content are more important than ever

BY KEI SAKAGUCHI

In 2014, content marketing is considered a very important method for connecting and engaging with your target social community. The central goal of this method is to create content that people want to share with their networks of friends, colleagues, family members and followers. This form of “connect & engage” marketing is nothing new to seasoned marketers, as it is a well-documented truth that the best ads are spread among trusted friends.

In this social media-centric world, “content is king” is becoming a more significant theme to all marketers. As a core strategy, content marketing emphasises achievement of marketing goals through a firm’s delivery of entertaining, educational and relevant content on the company website, as well as in blogs and newsletters—not with products and services themselves.

When I worked at Sony Corporation, the era was still analogue, and our PR and marketing communications centred on conventional channels such as press releases and print ads. However, Sony’s legendary chief executive and master communicator, Akio Morita, taught us the crucial marketing imperative of incorporating a wow factor in communications with target consumers. Morita was also a strong proponent of the idea that “everything communicates”.

The Sony Building in Tokyo’s Ginza district was his brilliant idea, intended as one of the first comprehensive corporate showrooms in Japan to deliver various brand messages directly to consumers. He orchestrated a wide variety of marketing campaigns utilising live events that created waves of consumer buzz.

A typical example of such methods was the launch in 1979 of the first-generation Walkman cassette tape player. To ensure maximum appeal to music-loving teens and 20-somethings, he gathered a group of young, fashionable roller skaters in Yoyogi Park and had them cheerfully skate in front of TV cameras, each with a Walkman. Morita was also present, cruising through the park hand-in-hand with a young girl. Before the emergence of digital and social communication platforms, Morita knew the power of word-of-mouth and buzz in marketing.

Decades later at Coca-Cola Japan Co, Ltd., I learned the impact of being viral and of having owned media (channels owned and controlled by a firm, such as websites or blogs) in marketing communications, particularly in this digital and social communication era.

Coca-Cola’s “happiness vending machine” video on YouTube is one major example of effective use of viral messaging. Coca-Cola Park, the firm’s online portal where

visitors can engage with a variety of brand and campaign event-related information, games and quizzes, eventually grew into powerful owned media, with over 12mn registered members acquired over several years.

In essence, the most critical takeaways from these corporate campaigns were the importance of: (1) knowing and understanding your target community, (2) connecting and engaging with them using relevant content, and eventually (3) acquiring earned media (publicity gained through non-direct advertising methods such as word-of-mouth) and brand advocacy through your owned media efforts.

In fact, these are the core marketing communications strategies that have long been deployed by leading global brands, and that have proven effective in both the analogue and digital communication eras. What clearly differentiates content marketing in the analogue age from that of the social age is that the latter is supported by many digital tools, which are used to gather and analyse raw customer conversations and identify target social communities and potential influencers.

Further, current marketers are equipped with far more channels to disseminate fun, educational and relevant content to their target audience, such as social

- The best ads circulate among networks of trusted friends
- Wow factor a critical part of targeted communications
- Sony was an early leader in word-of-mouth marketing

networking services, company websites, emails, blogs, online videos, webinars and e-books. These channels also expand the potential reach of every message, as users have multiple mediums by which to share content with their networks.

Many experts are offering advice on this evolving topic. Digital advertising and media analyst Rebecca Lieb said in her book, *Content Marketing: Think Like a Publisher—How to Use Content to Make Online and in Social Media*, that once you own a company website, Facebook page or Twitter account, you are already a publisher. It is then critical, she argues, to have a clear media strategy and be meticulous about the appropriateness of your content.

At my current employer, we are now carrying out a content marketing strategy especially focused on thought-leadership blogging. Even in the business-to-business space, the end goal of creating valuable content that people want to share with their associates remains the same.

Thus, in today’s age of viral tweets, Yelp reviews and Facebook fan pages, when a simple post can reach millions of viewers, the connect & engage marketing mantra (generating widespread word-of-mouth recommendations) holds even more weight. ❀

www.meltwater.com

The A-List of Communications & Media



Business in Japan Television (BIJ.TV)

Daiwa Azabudai Bldg 6F
2-3-3 Azabudai
Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0041

Sam Bird, client services director

03-4540-7730
samuel@custom-media.com
www.custom-media.com

BIJ.TV is the first and only online bilingual video channel dedicated to successful Business in Japan.

The site features interviews with executives, thought leaders, decision makers and entrepreneurs. BIJ.TV also produces company profiles and covers events.

BIJ.TV is professionally shot and produced, with interviews conducted in a studio, at the client's office or on location.

Our clients include business leaders such as managers, entrepreneurs and other experts from various fields. All content includes English or Japanese subtitles, ensuring the message is clearly understood by potential new clients, vendors, staff and investors.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Interviews: discussions with senior leaders on company profiles, new products and current events
- Events: publicity, promotion and brand enhancement; live and on-demand webcasting
- Corporate videos: investor relations, company promotion and client testimonials
- Training: best practices, product demonstrations, new legislation and management skills



Custom Media K.K.
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Custom Media is an award-winning media, design and market-entry agency specialising in innovative print and digital publishing, including magazines, marketing collateral, websites, apps, videos and other communications.

Celebrating our sixth year, Custom Media has rapidly grown to three departments, with an emphasis on well-executed, bilingual projects (English and Japanese).

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Our clients include luxury real estate developers, top universities, major manufacturers of consumer goods, global airlines and hotels, foreign chambers of commerce, government bodies, NGOs, financial institutions and NPOs.

BCCJ 2013 Company of the Year.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Print: bilingual magazines, brochures, newsletters, white papers, annual reports, etc.
- Communications: advertising, branding, copywriting, investor relations, public relations, editing and proofreading
- Digital: company websites, video production (BIJ.TV) and social media consulting



I&S BBDO Inc.
Harumi Triton Square X
1-8-10 Harumi
Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-6038

Aya Miyashita, director of corporate communications

03-6221-8585
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www.isbbdo.co.jp

I&S BBDO is the Japanese arm of the BBDO worldwide network operating in 81 countries, and is a top-tier advertising and marketing-services company.

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With an extensive portfolio of creative advertising, BBDO focuses on the philosophy of "The Work The Work The Work", citing: "At BBDO, the Work encompasses every kind of creative content that can touch the consumer and reinforce the brand".

The Work is where the brand meets the consumer. The Work is what touches their hearts and minds. The Work is what leads to the sale.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Advertising
- Direct marketing, CRM, promotion
- Shopper marketing
- Core digital
- E-CRM
- R&D
- Public relations
- Media planning and buying

The A-List of Communications & Media



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McCann Worldgroup is one of the world's leading marketing communications networks with over 300 offices in 125 countries around the world.

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McCann Erickson Japan is a key member of McCann Worldgroup and is the only true international advertising agency represented in Japan's top 10. In addition, it is the only one that can plan and buy media independently with a media-neutral perspective.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Advertising
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- Event marketing/promotion/retail
- Healthcare professional/direct-to-consumer communications
- Communication planning and media buying
- Analytics
- Public relations
- Brand consulting/design
- Sustainability communications



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Meltwater, a global firm founded in Norway and headquartered in San Francisco, helps businesses drive growth and build brands. Meltwater's online intelligence platform analyses billions of digital documents daily to extract precise, timely business insights that help more than 20,000 companies understand their markets, engage their customers and master the new social business environment.

With offices in 27 countries, Meltwater is dedicated to personal, global service built on local expertise. The Tokyo office was established in 2008, and we currently have over 400 active corporate clients in Japan.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Meltwater helps companies make informed decisions through a variety of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solutions:
- Global web news monitoring
 - Social media monitoring (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, blogs, forums and review sites)
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 - Social media promotions and contest apps
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 - Information sharing tools
 - Media reports & custom media centres
 - International press release distribution



Publicitas Japan K.K.
Pegasus Aoyama 720
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Hiroko Minato, managing director
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Founded in 2012 in Tokyo, Publicitas Japan is a local partner for advertisers and agencies seeking global media solutions.

Publicitas Japan has access to exclusive international publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Times of India*, *The Straits Times*, *Le Parisien*, *Forbes*, *Forbes Asia*, *Elle*, *Vanity Fair*, *Delta Sky*, Garuda Indonesia's *Colours*, *Air France Magazine* and *Air France Madame*.

Our media experts guarantee a profound understanding of media brands and products.

Publicitas Japan offers a full range of multimedia solutions, including leading newspapers, magazines, in-flight media and television, as well as digital media. Our team provides premium sales services in both international and domestic markets.

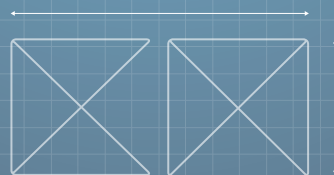
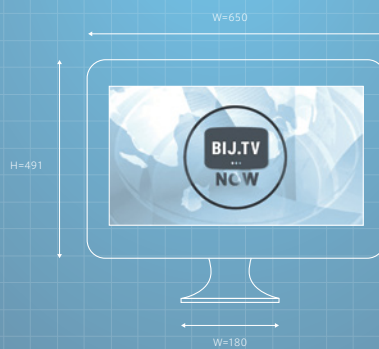
Publicitas Japan is part of the Publicitas global network, based in Switzerland.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Our media specialists have access to a portfolio of global media, including:
- Leading newspapers
 - Luxury magazines
 - Mobile and digital platforms
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 - In-flight programming
 - TV and radio

EVERY BRAND HAS A UNIQUE STORY...

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custom media

Before opening his Nakamura Azabujuban Clinic in this fashionable Tokyo neighborhood, Dr. Mitsuyasu Nakamura spent two decades as a topflight physician and department head at Keio University Hospital. He speaks fluent English—he was a postdoctoral fellow for four years at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston—and is quite comfortable interacting with foreign patients. Board-certified in internal medicine, gastroenterology, gastroendoscopy and hepatology, Dr. Nakamura also considers himself a family physician after years of regular emergency room stints at the Tokyo Medical Center, one of Japan's biggest hospitals.

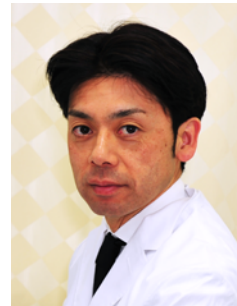
The doctor deals with everything from common colds and flu bugs to seasonal and chronic allergies

and more serious conditions such as polyps and liver disease. He also administers vaccinations, offers various types of health screening—including blood screening—and antiaging programs designed to check the functional age of a person's bones, muscles, blood and nerves. He emphasizes wellness and preventive medicine.

The clinic has the latest colonoscopy and gastroscopy equipment, and Dr. Nakamura can perform various exams and procedures onsite, including X-rays, ultrasound, electrocardiograms, upper endoscopy, colon fiberoscopy and minor outpatient surgeries such as polyp removal.

Just a minute away from exit 4 of

Azabu-Juban Station on the Nanboku and Oedo lines in the Azabu-Juban Square building, Nakamura Azabujuban Clinic is open MTWF from 10a.m. to 1p.m. and 3 to 6:30p.m., and 9a.m. to noon on Saturdays; closed on Thursdays, Sundays and public holidays. An English-speaking receptionist handles inquiries and reservations from foreign patients.



Nakamura Azabujuban Clinic

Azabu-Juban Square 2F,
2-2-10 Azabu-Juban,
Minato-ku, Tokyo
106-0045

TEL: 03-5419-7300

The clinic has two exam rooms and a recovery room for patients to relax in after endoscopy tests, and its thick doors and walls ensure your privacy during all consultations and treatments.

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HOSPITALS: UK VS JAPAN

Length of stay, language, birth, kids and pain relief

BY DR NICOLA YEBOAH

A stint in hospital anywhere can cause anxiety, but even more so when it occurs in an unfamiliar country. Non-Japanese patients' main worry is about the ability (or inability) of medical staff to speak English and, therefore, communicate effectively about something as important as personal health.

The level of English spoken in hospitals in Tokyo varies widely. Therefore, it is unsurprising that many patients who need to undergo non-urgent procedures choose to go home for these. However, if you do end up in hospital during your time in Tokyo, rest assured that the level of care you will receive is generally the same as in any other developed country.

Differences with the UK

First, the length of hospital stay is generally longer in Japan than in the UK. Even for relatively simple procedures that would commonly be performed as day surgery elsewhere, hospital admission is often required. Patients are frequently admitted on the day prior to their surgery and discharged the day after, requiring a two-night stay for general procedures.

This length-of-stay difference is particularly noticeable in obstetrics. In the UK, following a normal birth, new mothers are typically discharged the day after



delivery, or even on the same day. In Japan, a four- to five-night stay is average. Some mums (especially first-timers) actually find this extra time very helpful.

Midwives are available at all hours to answer any questions, address concerns and give reassurance—all very important when you are suddenly landed with a new job for which you have had no training! Plus, getting your meals cooked for you and having a few days of (relative) rest is an added bonus before returning home. For those seasoned mums who are keen to go straight home to attend to older children, early discharges are possible.

Second, you can expect to have more tests done than in England. For routine operations, even for

young and healthy people, chest X-rays, electrocardiograms (ECGs) and blood tests are standard. Some hospitals even give an HIV test as part of the normal admitting routine. In Tokyo, scans such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) are much more widely available than in the UK and, thus, are more frequently used. This can lead to earlier diagnosis and treatment.

Another question I am often asked is about the availability of pain-relieving medications. Many patients describe simply being given paracetamol during their hospital stays for painful conditions that are usually treated with much stronger drugs in the UK. Overall, hospitals are trying to improve this situation. Even the availability of epidurals (for pain

- Level of care is similar to that of other developed nations
- Four- to five-night stay standard for childbirth
- Extensive testing and overnight stays for routine procedures

relief during childbirth) is slowly increasing. Nevertheless, if you have a planned admission, be sure to ask your doctor about available pain relief before entering hospital.

Finally, a few words regarding paediatrics. Parents of course worry about the possibility their children will need a hospital stay while in Tokyo. Typically, their concerns are about hospital regulations, which may not allow a parent to stay overnight with their child during hospitalisation. If your child is staying in a private room, it is usually fine for one parent to stay overnight, and a (small) fold-up bed is provided for a minimal charge.

Parents are also normally excluded from any potentially unpleasant procedures such as taking blood or putting in intravenous (IV) lines. This can be hard to fight against, and usually isn't a battle that you will win. Having said that, my two children have both had in-patient stints in Tokyo and the overall level of care received has been excellent.

On a practical note, if you have private health insurance, you can try to arrange for the hospital to bill the insurance company directly. Many large hospitals in central Tokyo are becoming familiar with foreigners who have overseas insurance and, even compared with a few years ago, are now more willing or able to deal with those companies directly. 🍀

ARTS

UK EVENTS IN JAPAN

COMPILED BY
KANA SHIMOYOSHI

1 15 MARCH–1 JUNE

KINKARAKAMI Japanese Leather Paper

Takashi Ueda's Works of Art

The focus of this exhibition is *kinkarakawakami*, Japanese leather paper, which has the same feel as the gold-embossed calfskin used as wall coverings in Buckingham Palace. The exhibition was designed as a celebration of artist Takashi Ueda's 80th birthday.

Image: *Hunter*, by Takashi Ueda

Paper Museum

1-1-3 Oji
Kita-ku, Tokyo
10am–5pm (closed Mondays,
30 April, 7 May; open 5 May)
¥300
» [www.papermuseum.jp/en/
events](http://www.papermuseum.jp/en/events)
03-3916-2320

Free tickets

We are giving away five pairs of tickets to this event.

2 FROM 12 APRIL

The World's End

This 2013 British science-fiction comedy was written and directed by Edgar Wright, and stars Simon Pegg. Wright and Pegg's previous collaborations include the zombie comedies *Shaun of the Dead* and *Hot Fuzz*. This film is the last of the trilogy. Five childhood friends return to their hometown to complete the The Golden Mile pub crawl, only to discover an alien invasion has occurred.

Photo: ©FOCUS FEATURES

Cine Quinto Shibuya (among other locations)

Shibuya Parco Part 3, 8F
14-5 Udagawa-cho
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
Adults: ¥1,800
» www.worldsend-movie.jp
03-6408-0625

3 30 APRIL

Planet Earth in Concert

The BBC's nature documentary series *Planet Earth* was produced in collaboration with NHK and the Discovery Channel. It was the first production to be filmed in high definition by 40 camera crews at over 200 locations across the world. Twelve scenes from the award-winning series were carefully selected for *Planet Earth in Concert*, which will be shown with a live 80-piece orchestra playing in the background.

Photo: ©MARTYN COLBECK ©PETER SCOONES
©PAUL BREHEM ©FRED OLIVIER ©FRANCOIS
SAVIGNY/NATUREPL.COM 2005

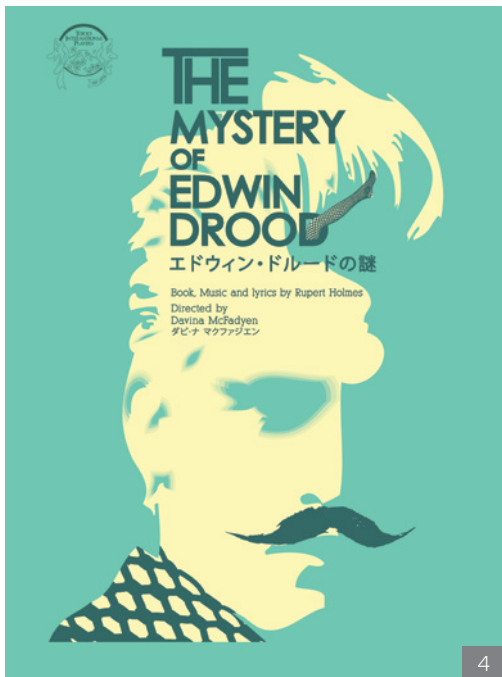
Tokyo International Forum, Hall A

3-5-1 Marunouchi
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo
3pm, 7pm
Adults: from ¥4,200
» <http://planetearthinconcert.jp/>
0570-550-799

Free tickets

We are giving away one pair of tickets to the 3pm show.





4

◦ To apply for free tickets, please send an email with your name, address and telephone number by 30 April to: coordinator@custom-media.com. Winners will be picked at random.

4
15-18 MAY

The Mystery of Edwin Drood
Set in a Victorian music hall at Christmas, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is a meta-theatrical event that invites the audience to participate in the show as the actors stage a play within a play. As Charles Dickens was unable to complete his final mystery novel due to his untimely death, it now falls to the audience members to vote on the show's ending.

Theater Sun-Mall
Sun-mall Crest Building
1-19-10 Shinjuku
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo
15, 16 May: 7pm
17, 18 May: 1pm, 7pm
Adults: from ¥4,000
» www.tokyoplayers.org
090-6009-4171

◦ **Free tickets**
We are giving away one pair of tickets to this event (any show).

New National Theatre, Tokyo
1-1-1 Hon-machi
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
Various showtimes (no performances on 20, 26-28 May)
Adults: from ¥3,240
» www.nntt.jac.go.jp/performance_en/play/140501.html
03-5352-9999

6
18 MAY

The Masterpiece Classics Series No. 97
The Tokyo Symphony Orchestra's *Series No. 97* will have a Scottish theme. The programme will include Carl Nielsen's "A Fantasy Journey to the Faroes", Gueriero Max Bruch's "Scottish Fantasy" and Felix Mendelssohn's "Symphony No. 3 in A Minor", also known as "the Scottish".

Photo: ©SHIGETO IMURA

Muza Kawasaki Symphony Hall
1310 Omiya-cho
Saiwai-ku, Kawasaki-shi,
Kanagawa
2pm
Adults: from ¥3,000
» <http://tokyosymphony.jp/pc/concerts/list>
044-520-1511



5

5
15 MAY-1 JUNE

The Tempest
As the last play that William Shakespeare wrote alone, *The Tempest* is a glorification of humanity, taking place in a phantasmal world. The work was a key theme in the opening ceremonies of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This play is directed by Akira Shirai and will be performed in Japanese.

Photo: ©MASAYUKI IKEDA



6



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5

1 | BCCJ

The Africa Society of Japan (ASJ) visited the BCCJ offices on 1 April. Attending were (from left): Tamio Okawara, ASJ executive director; Lori Henderson MBE, BCCJ executive director; Shinsuke Horiuchi, ASJ managing director; Masahiro Asano, ASJ director; and Hideya Komori, country manager of WorldPay and former BCCJ executive committee member.

2 | EMBASSY

Attending the St David's Day reception at the British Embassy Tokyo on 3 March were (from left): Rose Iwata, member, St. David's Society Japan; Julia Longbottom, minister, British Embassy; Ursula Bartlett Imadegawa, president, St. David's Society Japan.

3 | EMBASSY

Kevin Oakes, CEO of Steelite International, presented a Steam Punk Rhino to Julia Longbottom, minister, British Embassy Tokyo, at the Royal Crown Derby and Steelite International Reception, held at the embassy on 20 March.

4 | ANNIVERSARY

British Airways (BA) marked 65 years in Japan with a party at the British Embassy Tokyo on 28 January. Attending were (from left): Jonty Brunner, BA regional commercial manager for Japan and Korea; British Ambassador Tim Hitchens CMG LVO; Andrew Crawley, BA chief commercial officer; and Andrew Barker, head of investor relations, International Airlines Group.

5 | ANNIVERSARY

Attending the 25th anniversary party of the British School in Tokyo (BST) at the British Embassy Tokyo on 19 March were (from left): Kirsten O'Connor, BST head of primary; Sadaaki Numata, English Speaking Union of Japan; Sara Hitchens MBACP, integrative counsellor; and Brian Christian, BST principal



6 | MEDIA

Chris Davies, director of sales & marketing at BBC Global News, spoke at a BBC.com seminar on mobile advertising at the Ritz-Carlton, Tokyo on 12 March.

7 | CHARITY

Tom Wordley played guitar at an Aid for Japan fundraising event in London, held on 11 March at Lowiczanka restaurant.

8 | CHARITY

Keys of Change organised a performance by the Fukushima Youth Sinfonietta at London's Southbank Centre on 2 April.
Photo: www.campbellpicks.com

9 | MUSIC

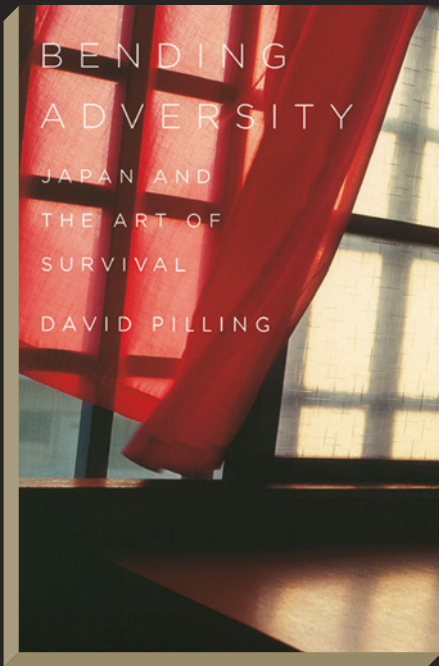
Rock guitarist Hotei (centre) was a guest performer at the Rolling Stones concert on 6 March at the Tokyo Dome.

10 | FOOD

Ambassador Tim Hitchens (left) sampled British cheese with Dr Stephen Baker, country head, Scottish Development International, at Foodex Japan 2014, held on 4-7 March.



BCCJ ACUMEN has one copy of this book to give away. To apply, please send an email by 30 April to: editor@custom-media.com. The winner will be picked at random.



Bending Adversity:
Japan and the Art of Survival
Allen Lane
£20.00

A commanding read on all things Japanese

FT journalist offers fresh insights post-3/11

I have always been a great admirer of David Pilling's journalism. As a thinker, analyst and stylist, he is outstanding. Further, he is one of the main reasons the *Financial Times (FT)* is required reading for anyone who aspires to understand this region.

I have a particular respect for the fact that, when he was an *FT* Tokyo correspondent, he made a serious (and successful) effort to study the Japanese language. Few of his fellow scribes were as diligent, and the results are demonstrable. Time and again, his columns made the ever-complex maze of Japanese economics and politics accessible to a readership that had few other interpreters to whom to turn. It was inevitable—as one hoped—that a book would ensue.

What we have is the most important book on Japan to be published in the last two decades. This is not a book about 3/11—although it deals with the triple disaster most thoroughly and with tremendous insight—and yet you feel it could not have been written in quite the same way if the earthquake, tsunami and subsequent nuclear meltdown had not occurred.

Pilling explores with great acumen such issues as the controversial ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo's Kudan district and the varying attitudes of the prime ministers who have gone through the notorious revolving door of late.

He considers in detail the recent debate over whether Japan's use of "comfort women" merits the attention it is getting, and

recounts a chilling meeting with the granddaughter of Hideki Tojo, the wartime leader who ordered the attack on Pearl Harbor and was later executed.

Closer to home, Pilling looks at the background to the ongoing argument over what the Japanese call the Senkaku Islands, the uninhabited islets in the South China Sea that the Chinese also claim. His explanation of the history surrounding the issue is most illuminating, but leaves us with a sense that this dispute will not soon be resolved.

The chapters that deal with Fukushima, post-disaster, are vivid and distressing. Many of us who were on the ground here on 11 March 2011 suspected we were not being given the truth. We were right. The extent of the cover-ups and distortions is alarming.

Tokyo Electric Power Company comes out of this extremely badly and Pilling makes no bones about why. But the Japanese government should not exactly think of itself smelling of roses.

Frankly, the 3/11 experience really serves as an illustration of just how poorly the Japanese government is placed to serve the people. Pilling's book brilliantly illustrates the shortfalls. What it doesn't do is to suggest in concrete terms how this might be remedied—and maybe that is not what the role of a foreign observer ought to be.

Pilling's book covers much more than this and is a commanding read. It is entertaining and enjoyable as well as informative. Truly, a special find. 🇯🇵

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