

***FINE-TUNING THE OSAKA METROPOLIS PLAN:
REVITALIZING THE OSAKA AND KANSAI REGION, AND PLANNING AHEAD***

大阪都構想の検証と大阪・関西圏の未来予想図の提案

The Nishioka Seminar

本報告は、大阪維新の会が掲げている大阪都構想に着目しながら、大阪そして関西地域が熾烈な競争社会の中で発展していくために必要となる政策について研究した。それと同時に大阪都構想を推進する橋本徹大阪市長が海外メディアにどのように取り上げられているのかについても分析した。政策において着目した点は以下の3点である。公共事業と公益事業、ニッチ市場戦略による海外展開、そしてグローバル・ハイエンドシティ。このような視点から、大阪そして関西地域のあるべき未来予想図を提案する。

The Nishioka Seminar, hosted by the Faculty of Economics of Doshisha University, focuses on the Osaka Metropolis Plan, the main goal of “Osaka Ishinkai”. One outcome of the seminar is the establishment of the political party, “Nihon Ishinkai”, in order to provide a political platform for the idea. It is clear that both “Osaka Ishinkai” and “Nihon Ishinkai” will have an impact on Japanese politics and society in the future. Therefore, we assume that focusing on the Osaka Metropolis Plan will give us an understanding of what such ambitious projects entail for Japanese society. With these aims in mind, we present the main theme of this seminar as ***FINE-TUNING THE OSAKA METROPOLIS PLAN: REVITALIZING THE OSAKA AND KANSAI REGION, AND PLANNING AHEAD.***

There will be four groups. Each group will present various views on this theme.

Group 1: Analyzing public works in Osaka using Porter’s cluster theory

Group 1 will explain the differences between public works and public utilities. It will analyze Kansai International Airport as an example of public works, using the cluster theory of proposed by Professor Michael Porter.

Group 2: Small enterprises in Kansai and the niche market strategy for overseas expansion

Group 2 will analyze the economic policy of the Osaka Metropolis Plan, especially the potential advantages to small enterprises in the Kansai region, in order to enable overseas expansion.

Group 3: The future of Osaka

The future holds great promise for Osaka. Group 3 will deliberate on ideas to position Osaka as a global, high-end city, through the establishment of a vibrant urban economy, which is one of the themes of our seminar.

Group 4: Mr. Hashimoto's coverage by the international press

Mr. Toru Hashimoto, the Mayor of Osaka, is one of the primary figures of the Osaka Metropolis Plan and *Osaka Ishinkai*. Group 4 will present the perceptions of the international media about Mr. Hashimoto and the Osaka Metropolis Plan.

We hope that our discussions will be of interest to all.

Group 1:

Analyzing public works in Osaka using Porter's cluster theory

S. M.

A.D.

T. K.

S. F.

K.H.

Index

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Differences between public works and public utilities**
- 3. An example of public works: Kansai International Airport**
- 4. Applying Professor Porter's cluster theory to Kansai International Airport**
- 5. Kansai's innovative strategy to increase international investment: Special Economic Zone**
- 6. Conclusion**

1. Introduction

We have some doubts about Mr. Hashimoto's proposal concerning the

Osaka Metropolis Plan. Mr. Toru Hashimoto is promoting privatization, which means transferring the ownership from the public sector to the private one. However, we question whether he confused the idea of public works with public utilities. As a result of this misunderstanding, there has been a spate of public works under construction in Osaka Prefecture. We fear that these kinds of public works will not function well in the future. In our presentation, we will focus on public works in Osaka Prefecture and provide some suggestions to help matters.

2. Differences between public works and public utilities

It is clear that both public works and public utilities are activities undertaken to contribute to the economy. Public works are considered as some projects. On the other hand, public utilities follow the nature of a business. In this case, the meaning of “business” is different from what we normally identify with the term. It has a special meaning in that a public utility provides the necessary services we need for everyday life. Public utilities can function as enterprises, and hence, we believe that there is no need for the public system to intervene in their operations.

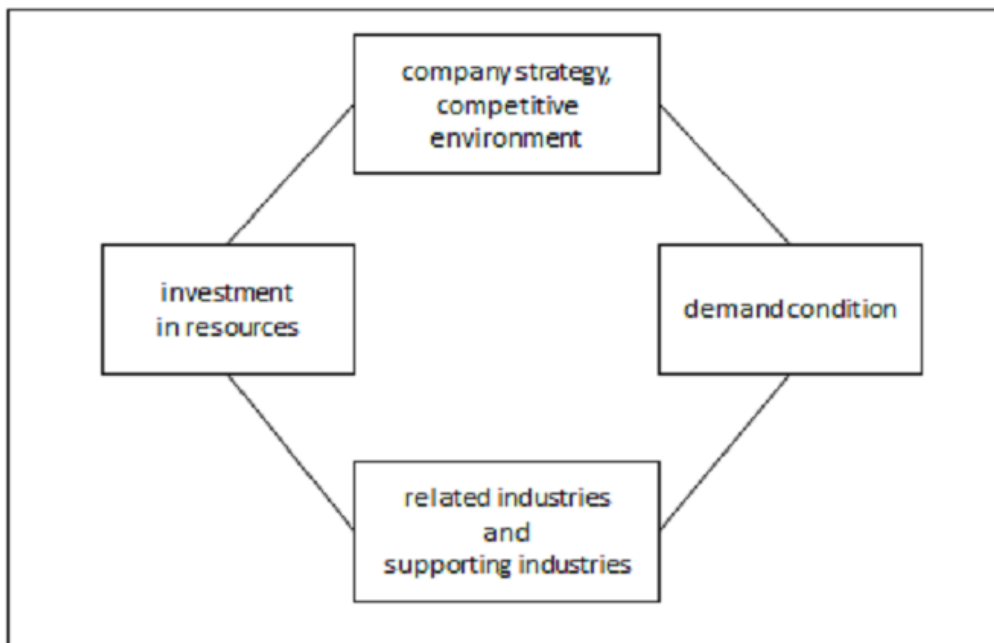
In addition, we consider that the planning of a secure system for public works projects, which could support private companies, is the most important thing for Osaka Prefecture. We perceive that to be successful, public works projects would require the establishment of various systems enabling such projects, such as a legal system, one supporting infrastructure development and so on.

3. An example of public works: Kansai International Airport

Kansai International Airport is widely considered as an important factor that promotes the economic development of the city of Osaka. In the past, the market in Nakanoshima (modern Osaka) was revived by transportation by means of ship. In addition, Osaka had become an economic center for goods from all over Japan; therefore, modern Osaka is called “The Kitchen of the Nation” [天下の台所]. In the 1930s, the design of high-speed railways was proposed by the then Osaka Mayor, Seki Hazime, leading to the establishment of the Midosuji Line. Today, Midosuji has continued to be a location of choice for many companies and financial institutions. Thus, the needs of public infrastructure have changed over eras.

4. Applying Professor Porter's cluster theory to Kansai International Airport

We suggest applying Professor Porter's cluster theory to Kansai International Airport. First, according to Professor Porter, the cluster refers to a group of companies and other institutions that are located in a given region. Second, these groups of companies are connected by a common element, giving it a key position in a given economic branch of activity. However, these two conditions do not satisfy the "cluster condition" unless the companies draw upon the competitive advantage available to them, namely, how they make productive use of inputs. Third, the economic advantage of cluster theory is evident in the increasing productivity of the companies or industries and the fact that they drive innovation and stimulate new businesses in the field. Professor Porter proposed the diamond frame as the basis of a framework to illustrate the determinants of advantage in a business/industrial cluster.



The first figure: Porter's Diamond Frame

As seen in the first figure, the cluster imposes four requirements and it is important to meet them in order to qualify as part of the cluster. Of these

four requirements, we will focus on investment in resources.

Finally, according to the cluster theory, the government should not try to build a new cluster from scratch. Rather, it should strengthen existing clusters through enabling policies, by easing restrictions, and encouraging productivity and innovation within them.

How does the cluster theory apply to Kansai International Airport? The airport contributes to the smooth running of many medical ventures in Kansai. First, Kansai International Airport operates 24 hours a day and can play an important role in the cooling chain transportation of medical supplies for western Japan. The airport was the first to introduce this system in Japan. Second, there is an existing medical cluster in Kobe and northern Osaka (the Kinki region). In this area there are also many clusters of leading Japanese pharmaceutical companies, top universities, and research institutions such as Osaka University, Kyoto University and Osaka Prefecture University. The local government is responsible for building an appropriate public works environment for these companies, universities, research institutions, and other related industries, so that they may make competitive and productive use of the inputs/resources available to them.

Thus, it is important to (a) build a structure that exceeds the routine framework of administrative divisions and enables cooperation with other prefectures, (b) to relax regulations, (c) to resolve problems, and (d) to make the best possible use of information that should be jointly accessible. While it would not go as far as a federated state system, it is essential to establish a large-scale structure that exceeds the system of Osaka Prefecture.

5. Kansai's innovative strategy to increase international investment: Special Economic Zone

The most important and urgent policy to be formulated is the policy of Special Economic Zone system. It will act as an international strategy for innovation, which is aimed at strengthening the international competitiveness of national industry. It will also be responsible for concentrating on special regulatory and tax reduction measures for the zone.

The Osaka Metropolis Plan will introduce a new system called the "Kansai strategy for the Special Zone," in order to promote the abovementioned strategy. The goal is to carry out reforms on policies and solve any problems for the Kansai region as a whole. This system adapts new

policies that can correspond to the aging society and energy problems in Japan and other Asian countries, by specifically targeting the medical sector (specifically medicines and medical equipment). In addition, this system would constitute the business model for solving these problems and supporting market expansion. With these things in mind, we hope to alleviate, the medical and environmental problems faced by Japan and other Asian countries. Further, we should establish an international competitive base for sustainable development, and make efforts towards the economic reform and the earthquake disaster reconstruction.

We are fortunate to be guided by the experiences and expertise of Mr. Ikeshita, a member of *Nihon Ishinkai*, in policies pertaining to medicines and medical equipment. We assume that the “Kansai strategy for the special zone” is proceeding as planned.

By the following April, we foresee the introduction of specialized electronic equipment to the present list of medical equipment permitted for export and import. This underlines the need to establish a swift and an efficient system especially devised for the pharmaceutical sector.

6. Conclusion

Based on our discussion, Osaka Prefecture should create a system to support the aforementioned activities of Kansai International Airport. While we approve of Mr. Hashimoto’s decision to introduce privatization, we are not sure whether he appreciates the need for the construction of public works in Osaka Prefecture. To conclude, we believe that the precise division of public works and public utilities and such promotion of public works as projects in Osaka Prefecture as soon as possible, are of the utmost importance.

References

Osaka Prefecture, Special Economic Zone

<http://www.pref.osaka.jp/kikaku/toshichiikisaisei/sogotokku.html>

*Japanese economic macro estimation short-term model (2008) of
Socio-economic research center*

<http://www.esri.go.jp/jp/short/index.html>

Osaka Bay Environment Database

http://kouwan.pa.kkr.mlit.go.jp/kankyo-db/intro/detail_p07.html

International airport analysis

http://www2.osipp.osaka-u.ac.jp/~yamauchi/gakubu_hp/2004/paper/8.pdf

A report on the express train from Umeda Station to Kansai Airport

http://d237488.win-sv.com/osaka-jimin.jp/img/fck/seisaku/20110905Linear_kaiken/gaiyou.pdf

The information center of Midosuji

<http://www.kkr.mlit.go.jp/osaka/commu/mido/siryokan/his.html>

Professor Harada Seiji (2009). Competition and policy of industrial accumulation Research seminar for the utilization of the airport in Kansai region - Report of logistic city in 2009, July Nagaoka University

Professor Takasima Yuichi. *Examination of the regulation policy and its relaxation*, Original website of the Kansai International Airport

<http://www.kansai-airport.or.jp/index.asp>

New Kansai International Airport Joint Stock Corporation

<http://www.nkiac.co.jp/index.html>

Osaka Prefecture homepage

<http://www.pref.osaka.jp/>

Kobe Medical Industry City Plan (2005). *Improvement of medical standard of residents and reviving Kobe's economy*, Kobe city, December 2012

Group 2:

Small enterprises in Kansai and niche market strategy for overseas expansion

T.H.

S.S.

M.N.

Index

1. The Osaka Ishinkai's growth strategy and out aspirations
2. The present state of small enterprises in Kansai district
3. Professor Porter's theory and the creation of GNT enterprises
4. Innovation analysis of enterprises
5. The revival of small enterprises in Kansai by creating GNT enterprises
6. Concluding remarks

1. The Osaka Ishinkai's growth strategy and out aspirations

Today, there are many small but powerful enterprises in Osaka and

Kansai. However, these small enterprises,¹ especially in the Kansai region, are on the decline. In order to solve this problem, we intend to regenerate these small enterprises through two approaches. The first approach involves the innovation of small enterprises in the Kansai region, and the second, market expansion by creating Global Niche Top (GNT) enterprises.

We also focus on the Manifesto of *Osaka Ishinkai*, particularly the ideas pertaining to the growth strategy. The applicable portion of the “Osaka Metropolis Plan” Manifesto is as follows.

<Ideas for growth strategy>

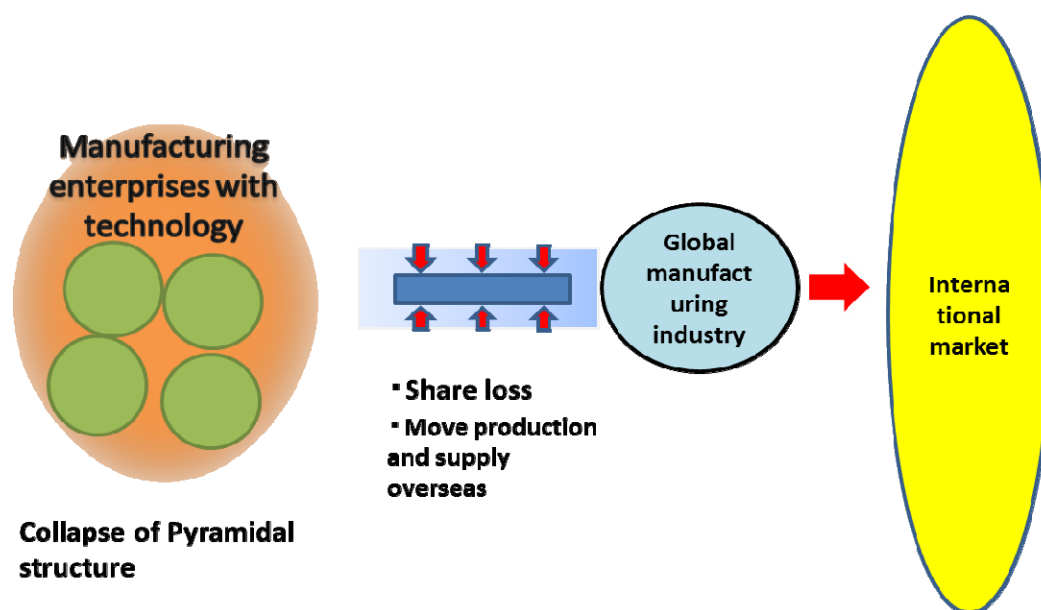
To strengthen industries and technologies, enabling them to draw upon their strengths

To encourage the city to create advanced industries, technologies, and to innovate

To support industries and enterprises that aspire overseas expansion

Clearly, these ideas for the growth strategy reflect our aspirations to overcome these problems.

2. The present state of small enterprises in the Kansai district



¹ In Japan, a small enterprise is defined as one that employs fewer than 300 employees and has less than 300 million yen capital.

Thus, small enterprises should transform themselves into GNT enterprises and undertake overseas expansion independently (they have already done it in some respects through large enterprises.) It is possible for small enterprises to succeed in such ventures, if they have already possessed some needed technology.

However, at present, there are few examples of niche enterprises that have expanded into GNT enterprises, as it is difficult to secure foreign markets. It is important to understand these barriers.

4. Innovation analysis of enterprises

We try to appreciate the barriers against the overseas expansion of small businesses by conducting an innovation analysis of enterprises. Consider the item “Business innovation to help revive Osaka’s economy” in the questionnaire devised by Professor Osami Tomizawa of Osaka City University. It contains seven viewpoints concerning the innovation of enterprises.

- i. Management strategy
- ii. Applications of management resources
- iii. Learning in the organization
- iv. Creativity management
- v. Structure of the organization/its personnel system
- vi. Cultural features
- vii. Technology management

At this point, we focus on “technology management.” Technology management is essentially the union of the core technology, business strategy, and innovation. A total of 417 national companies, of which 104 belong to the Kansai region, responded to this questionnaire.

Properties of answered enterprises

classification		all over Japan		Kansai		except Kansai	
		Number	percentage	number	percentage	number	percentage
category of business	manufacturing industry	237	56.8	61	58.7	176	56.2
	non-manufacturing industry	142	34.1	36	34.6	106	33.9
	telecommunication industry	38	9.1	7	6.7	31	9.9
	total	417	100	104	100	313	100
scale of employees	under 300 people	115	27.6	30	28.8	85	27.2
	over 300 under 1000 people	166	39.8	37	35.6	129	41.2
	over 1000 people	136	32.6	37	35.6	99	31.6
	total	417	100	104	100	313	100

To 417 enterprises in Japan, 104 companies of them at Kansai

The fourth figure: Properties of the enterprises that responded to the questionnaire

This list is classified as follows: the category of the business and the number of employees, and companies located in all of Japan, those located in Kansai, and those located in regions other than Kansai. Let us look at responses from the companies based in Kansai.

Technology management

Questions		Analysis of employee's scale			Analysis of individual region		
		less than 300 people(%)	300 people or more and less than 1000 people(%)	more than 1000 people(%)	All over Japan	Kansai	Other than Kansai
innovation	A summary of questions						
Technological management	technological forecasting	44	37	44	4.16	4.1	4.17
	technological information management	34	34	43	4.12	4.03	4.15
	guideline of technological development	47	38	50	4.29	4.12	4.34
	Perception of core technology	67	65	70	5.02	4.82	5.07
	Development of core technology	59	55	62	4.72	4.57	4.77
	Application to innovation of core technology	49	47	54	4.49	4.36	4.54

The fifth figure: Summary of respondents' answers focusing on technology management

In this list, we provide a summary of answers to the seven points and focus on technology management alone. We see that technology management appears to be a weak point of small enterprises in Kansai. Naturally then, this situation must improve. Why is it that small enterprises that have the requisite technology still do not experience growth? This is because their technology is not well matched to the business strategy (see the cells shaded grey). Then, improvements are possible only when their technology and business strategy work in tandem. Thus, we suggest that overseas expansion for small enterprises and their transformation into GNT enterprises is possible only when we focus on technology management.

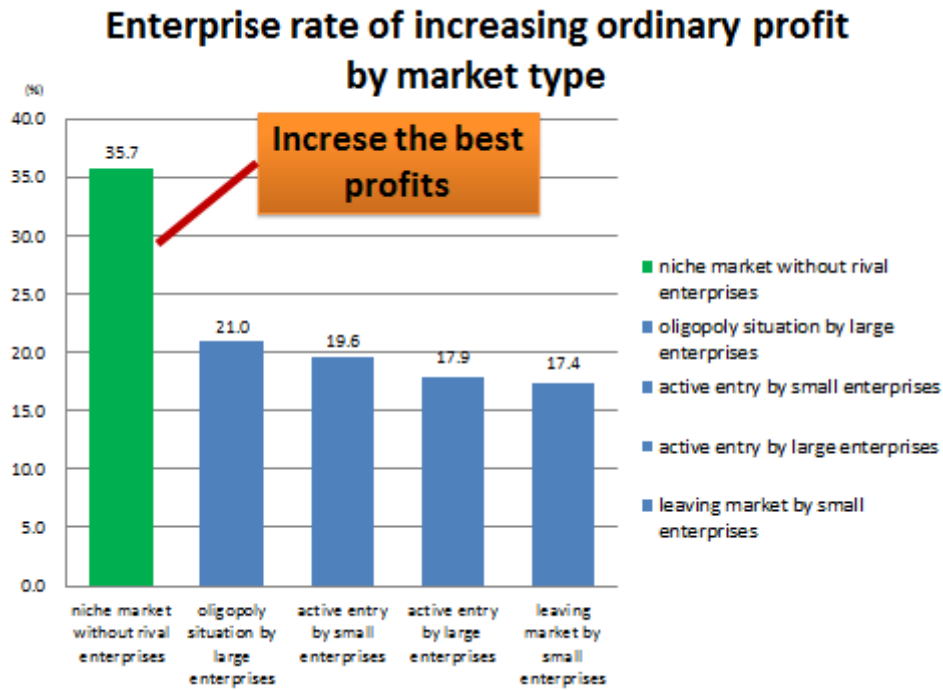
5. The revival of small enterprises in Kansai by creating GNT enterprises

According to Professor Kotler, a niche market has five factors:

- i) Size and purchasing power
- ii) Potential growth
- iii) No interest from large enterprises

- iv) Ability to gain certain economies through specialization
- v) Presents barriers to defend the entry of large companies

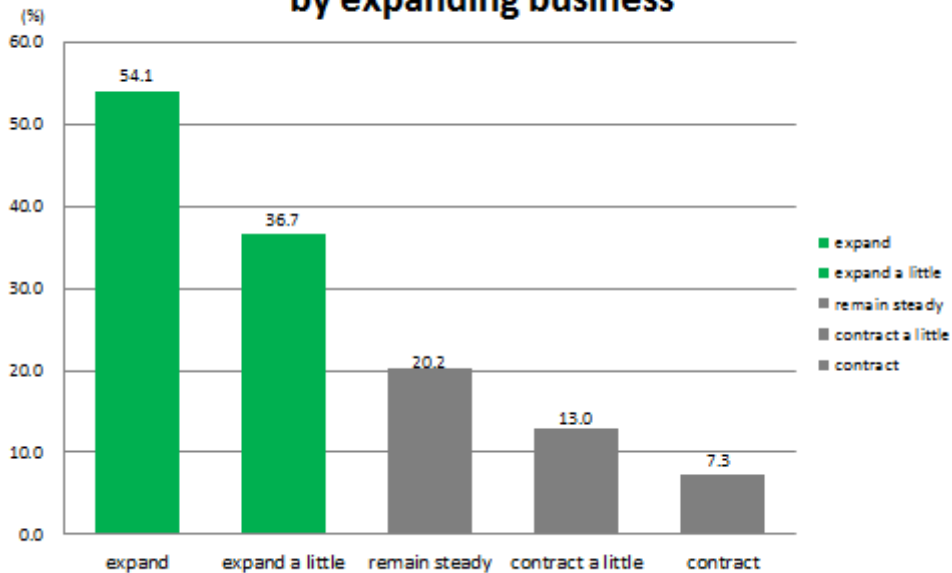
Therefore, a niche market is the best type of market for small enterprises. We will show you some materials.



The sixth figure: Enterprise rate of increasing ordinary profit by market type

The above figure shows the type of market that allows the ordinary profits of a company to increase. We see that companies could increase their profits by 35.7% (see the green bar, which also happens to show the highest value). That is because a niche market does not include competing companies, and so, a niche market allows high profitability. In addition, business expansion often benefits a company.

Enterprise rate of increasing ordinary profit by expanding business



source: the Smaller Business Finance Corporation "Actual research of management" (Nov.2004)

**The seventh figure: Enterprise rate of increasing ordinary profit
by business expansion**

The seventh figure shows how far enterprises can increase their ordinary profits through business expansion. As you can see, market expansion is often closely tied with the profits of the company. According to the figure, small enterprises should expand in niche markets overseas. We also give an example of a small enterprise that has actually expanded in a niche market overseas, namely Toshin Kogyo Co. Ltd.

Toshin Kogyo Co. Ltd. is the sole manufacturer of a particular specialized type of screen printing machine. The machine can produce textile products, such as scarves and other clothing, of varied designs and specialized patterns, unlike the normal screen printers available on the market.

EX:TOSHIN KOGYO CO.,LTD



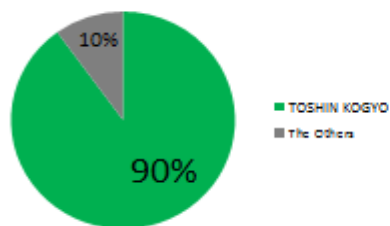
Source: <http://www.toshin-kogyo.co.jp/inkjet.html>

The eighth figure: Products of the screen printing machine of Toshin Kogyo Co. Ltd., a small enterprise that has expanded in a niche market overseas

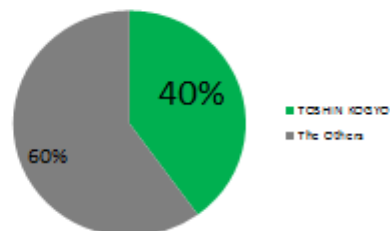
Screen printers are indispensable to the textiles industry. Currently, the company supplies the machine to about 30 countries in the world, including America, Britain, Australia, China, Korea and Thailand. It has business connections with close to 100 other companies.

TOSHIN KOGYO's market share

in Japan



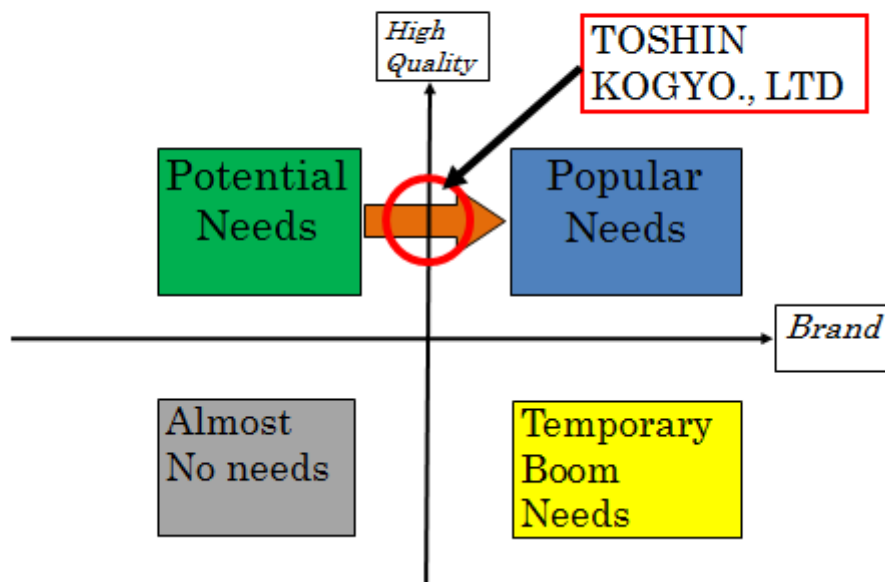
in the world



The ninth figure: Toshin Kogyo Co. Ltd.'s domestic and global market shares

The company holds a monopoly share of 90% in the domestic market. In all over the world, Toshin Kogyo Co. Ltd. already enjoys 40% of the market share. The reason for its success at home and overseas can be attributed to the company ensuring that its core competence matches its business strategy, namely, maintaining a high product quality consistent with its brand, as seen below.

Relationship between Quality and Brand



The tenth figure: The secrets to the success of Toshin Kogyo Co. Ltd.

At first, their superior technology alone was enough to respond to the needs of customers. Eventually, it became a famous brand because of exports to foreign countries. As a result, they acquired many customers, thus expanding their market as well as profits.

6. Concluding remarks

To conclude, GNT enterprises are important for the future of small enterprises. It is important to note that small enterprises need to ensure that their technologies work in tandem with their business strategy, if they wish to survive the global competition. In other words, small enterprises need to advance overseas and market themselves aggressively and cleverly.

We hope that that the Osaka Metropolis Plan will devise an enabling system to help many such powerful, small enterprises advance overseas. That is, the Osaka Metropolis Plan should promote the Union of Kansai Governments and support Kansai's small enterprises in this endeavor.

References

- Osaka Restoration Association (2011) *Autumn camp in Osaka*
<http://oneosaka.jp/pdf/manifest01.pdf>
- Osami Tomizawa (2009), *Business Innovation to revive Osaka*, Minerubasyobo.
- Michael E. Porter (1999), *Competition and strategy*, Diamond-sha
- Mituaki Shimaguchi (2004), *Business school textbook market strategy*, Yuhikaku
- Toshin Kogyo Co. Ltd., *Ink jet printing division*
<http://www.toshin-kogyo.co.jp/inkjet.html>
- The Smaller Business Finance Corporation. *Second-division economic structural change and Management Improvement*
<http://www.chusho.meti.go.jp/pamflet/hakusyo/h17/hakusho/html/17212250.html>
- Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry. *Goal for Niche Top enterprises*
<http://www.kansai.meti.go.jp/kip-net/jirei/h20-guide/ch5.pdf>
- Yuji Hosokawa (2012), *Regional vitalization and the role of university*
http://www.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/upload/26/PDF/2012/HOSOYA_Yuji_20120317_symposium.pdf
- Yuji Hosokawa (2011), *The role of Japanese craftsmanship in the creation of global niche leader enterprises*
- Part 1 <http://www.rieti.go.jp/users/hosoya-yuji-x/2011-07.pdf>
- Part 2 <http://www.rieti.go.jp/users/hosoya-yuji-x/2011-09.pdf>

**Group 3:
The Future of Osaka**

**Y.M.
T.I.
N.M.**

Index

- 1. Why do we study this theme?**
- 2. The global city**
- 3. The high-end city**
- 4. Water as a business**
- 5. Conclusion**

1. Why do we study this theme?

We are interested in the various scenarios for the future of Osaka. For participants interested in knowing the reason for this theme, we suggest that Osaka will grow from strength to strength and survive the rigors of today's challenging environment. Our theme resonates with the theme of this seminar; we wish to position Osaka as a global, high-end city, with an exemplary urban economy.

Let us understand what we would need to do in order for our goals to be met. If we consider the global ranking of Osaka as a city, it ranks 3rd in the list of the most expensive cities worldwide. Clearly, the cost of living in Osaka is very high. However, Osaka also ranks 15th in the list of the world's leading global cities and has an instrumental role in driving the global economy. Thus, our theme concentrates on the future of Osaka—how to make a fine city even finer.

2. The global city

We would like to draw the comparison between the Sassen's global city concept and our concept of Osaka as a high-end city. Let us view these concepts briefly.

Globalization can be termed as more of homogenization rather than polarization. Homogenization is to change something so that its parts become similar or the same. Polarization divides something into clearly separate groups with opposing beliefs, ideas, or opinions. Only a few big cities (like New York, London, and Tokyo) can be termed as truly global cities. These cities are bound to expand even further, while others will go into a decline. Osaka must become a global city. The four main conditions for a city to become a global city are:

- (i) They should function as the central of decision-making and command,
- (ii) They provide a number of specialty services,

- (iii) They promote knowledge-based industries to enable innovation and
- (iv) They contribute significantly to the city's or even the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Sassen said globalization is characterized not as competition, but rather as a division of functions. Why is this condition important? A global city should be able to provide a variety of specialty services, and thus, it should be able to fulfill numerous diverse functions. As a result it makes companies need only making-decision and command.

3. The high-end city

High-end products and services are typically more expensive but better quality compared to other products of the same type. Why use the word “high-end” though? “High-end” implies the best of something. That is, it also implies high quality. Based on this, it positions itself as something with high added value. This condition is necessary for attaining goals associated with growth. There are four growth goals for Osaka: attaining an average annual actual rate of growth over 2%, creating jobs to extent of several thousand annually, attracting 650 million foreign visitors in 2020, and dealing with 600,000 tons of cargo at Kansai International Airport and 190,000 TEU² container port traffic in Hanshin Harbor in 2020. By meeting these goals, we hope to raise GDP of Osaka. The fountainhead of these aspirations lies in building a bustling city full of efficient and motivated citizens, enhancing human resources and enabling them to achieve their best, enabling robust industry and technology, learning from the challenges and successes of other Asian powers, improving logistical infrastructure, and in general, revitalizing the entire city.

We are of the view that it is possible to attain these growth goals if we were to secure the abovementioned resources. Osaka has already had six strong points to its credit: a creditable high-tech industry, companies that can compete in the global market, good urban services, high-end manufacturing, and support available to ventures in the proposed growth areas. That is, they are some forms of an international base and can do even better overseas by harnessing its strong points. By strengthening its services and developing high value-added products simultaneously, Osaka will no doubt make its mark not just at home, but also abroad.

² twenty-foot equivalent unit コンテナ荷扱量を量的にあらわす単位

4. Water as a business

Osaka's water supply system and its development of Kansai International Airport immediately come to mind when considering Osaka's track record in high value-added services. As Osaka possesses the technology to build and revamp water systems—something important the world over—we decided to focus on water as a potential international business for Osaka.

The Osaka Water and Environment Solutions Association (OWESA) is adequately endowed to promote such a business. One of the main activities could include an engineer-cum-technology exchange training program. OWESA and private enterprises associated with it may help solve water supply problems of other countries. In fact, in the past too, Osaka has helped Ho Chi Minh City to solve its water problems. Problems such as rapid urbanization, population growth and development, replacement of old sewer pipes (generally built many years ago when some Asian cities were under foreign rule), dealing with the discharge of raw sewage into rivers, and suggesting anti-flooding solutions when most of the city lies below sea level, have already been tackled by Osaka. Specific solutions included increasing the water pressure, plugging leakage, and enhancing energy efficiency. However, the resulting construction came about only through government-citizen collaborations and not through the auspices of a major company. The resulting framework for such solutions generally consists of two parts (one involving consulting, and the other, construction), so as to enable private companies to join such ventures.

5. Conclusion

Osaka should target high-end markets like the water sector. This will help Osaka grow and survive. To make this dream come true, Osaka should build a functional integrated headquarters that provides many professional services and shares industry knowledge.

References

- Saskia Sassen (2008). *The Global City –Views in the world from New York, London, Tokyo*, Chikuma-syobo
- Noriyuki Sugiura (2003). *The theory of urban economics*, Iwanami-shobo

Group 4:
Mr. Hashimoto's coverage international press

A. I.

A.K.

So far, we have discussed ways to revive Osaka from a national viewpoint. However, such reform is not possible without our considering Osaka's impression on the whole world. For this reason, we decided to conduct research about how Mr. Hashimoto, the Mayor of Osaka, is covered in the foreign press. In doing so, we hope to observe how the foreign press view him, mainly whether they see him as a real leader or otherwise.

First, we present the views of two newspapers in the U.S.: *The Washington Post* and *The International Herald Tribune*. We will then proceed to a comparison with the newspapers of other countries, namely *The Guardian* in England and *The Straits Times* in Singapore.

The International Herald Tribune is a widely read international newspaper in the English language. It is a part of The New York Times Company. It is printed at 38 sites throughout the world and is sold in more than 160 countries and territories. Press comments are liberal. Some of its bylines are authored by Martin Fackler, who has been the Tokyo Bureau Chief of *The New York Times* since 2009. In 2011, he was part of the team whose coverage of the tsunami and the nuclear disaster in Japan was named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting.

On September 27, 2012, *The International Herald Tribune* reported Mr. Hashimoto as a "brash political samurai" (meaning brave politician), "who promises a drastic overhaul of the government". He shocked Japanese politicians with his un-Japanese, in-your-face style. His charisma has made the group the most-feared force in Japanese politics. He reflects the desire for change in a nation anxious over its hard times and shocked at a lack of leadership by the two main political parties. Hashimoto's party aims is to replace what exists with a US-style federalism in which newly created states would hold greater control over their regions. Many Japanese feel some fear with "his take-no-prisoner style" (meaning very aggressive style), and his rightist comment which make Japanese angry. Mr. Hashimoto offers the

ability to make quick decisions that is rare in Japanese politics.”

Francisco Toro reported about the “Hashimoto boom” on November 23, 2012. Francisco is a Venezuelan journalist, political scientist, and blogger. This boom tells a story of fighting with long-held certainties in Japan. “Though this country is supposed to be utterly incapable of reform, the rise of the Green Tea Party (Ishin no kai) shows that, alongside its ossified civil service, it also counts plenty of people who want more than government-by-bureaucracy.”

The International Herald Tribune also portrayed Mr. Hashimoto who has “a buck-stops-here ability to make quick decisions that is rare in consensus-driven Japan.” “Osaka needs a decisive leader, but the whole nation needs one even more.”

The Washington Post is a leading American daily. Press comments are liberal. The bylines are authored by Chico Harlan, who joined the foreign staff in 2010, after two years of covering the domestic crisis in the Washington Nationals Baseball. *The Washington Post* reported Mr. Hashimoto, on May 23, 2012, as a “firebrand mayor,” “the product of the fed-up country” (meaning unhappy country). Mr. Hashimoto wants “wholesale changes to Japan’s sleepy status quo.” “He holds a tea-partyish small-government philosophy, but he speaks about it in such forceful terms that critics here have given it a different name: Hashism.” Mr. Hashimoto has much more name recognition than Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda and is supported more than nearly three times. His political style is to produce many enemies and argue with them. This style made him known to lot of people. He fired city employees with tattoos and supported the move to give a general power of attorney to elected officials. This type of politician is a near-heresy in a country, which is cautious on uncontrolled authority, part of its recoil from WWII militarism. He is a threat merely to the established political parties. Now, the established political parties are almost formed by second- and third-generation politicians. Instead Mr. Hashimoto’s party is a generation that entered a tight job market after Japan’s real estate and stock bubble burst. “Those applicants represent Japan’s disenfranchised, and a counter to the privileged blue bloods” (meaning second and third generation politicians) “There’s no model for what we’re trying to do.”

The Washington Post mentioned him as “unordinary Japanese.” “His political style has expanded his fame, largely because he has been prolific

both in making enemies and in jousting with them.” His challenge is totally new in Japan, but this could be a chance to change and develop.”

The *International Herald Tribune* and *The Washington Post* reported Mr. Hashimoto as “a rightist man, who could be a threat not only to Japan but also to surrounding countries. However, to get out of the stagnant Japanese situation which anybody could decide, he would be a favorable one.”

Next, we will present remarks on Mr. Hashimoto from the British national daily, *The Guardian*. The paper’s readership is generally composed of the mainstream Left of political British opinion. The bylines are authored by Justin McCurry, *The Guardian*’s Tokyo correspondent.

On July 17, 2012, *The Guardian* reported Mr. Hashimoto as “either a dangerous populist bent on returning Japan to its militarist past or a charismatic radical leader trying to breathe life into the country’s stagnant politics. He is now expected to be its future leader. The established parties have much to fear from Mr. Hashimoto. His style and substance is like that of a dictator, likening him to Hitler and nicknaming his movement as ‘Hashism.’ His party, ‘Ishin no kai,’ could cause dramatic changes in Japan’s political landscape, which would take 60 out of 480 seats in the lower house. The next election will see the birth of a new kind of Japanese politics. Mr. Hashimoto became popular because of the nation’s anxiousness with the established mainstream parties and the noticeable failure of the representative democracy. Mr. Hashimoto offers oversimplified, authoritarian pseudo-answers, which don’t really solve problems, but serve to get rid of popular frustration with the existing political system. On welfare, he has copied the conservative right in the US and Britain. He seems less principled and more populist than Margaret Thatcher and Junichiro Koizumi. Mr. Hashimoto approaches politics purely as a power struggle. His administration is what is in danger.”

The Guardian reports him as a “dangerous populist bent on returning Japan to its militarist past” (someone who does not really solve problems). “Mr. Hashimoto derives his popularity from popular frustration with the established mainstream parties and the perceived failure of representative democracy.”

Now, let us turn to *The Straits Times* in Singapore. *The Straits Times*’ political position is right wing and pro-government (i.e., the paper’s views are in sync with those of the government). The Singapore government is

one-party dictatorship. *The Straits Times* has sometimes been criticized as media that expresses the opinions of the government (i.e., the People's Action Party) and lacks the freedom to criticize it. The role of this paper is to help in 'nation building'. It builds a political consciousness, assists in economic development.

The bylines are authored by Kwan Weng Kin, the paper's Japan correspondent. The paper's editors have been groomed as pro-government supporters. There have been reports that "the government exerts significant pressure on *The Straits Times*' editors to ensure that published articles follow the government's opinion."

On November 30, 2011, *The Straits Times* reported Mr. Hashimoto as a "new star in Japanese politics." "Lawyer-turned politician, Toru Hashimoto, is arguably Japan's most inspiring politician after former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi a decade ago. Mr. Hashimoto is trying to solve problems by his frank talking style. His purpose is to reform the city by eliminating overlapping administrative functions and removing civil servants. Fresh after Sunday's election in this December, the popular Mr. Hashimoto was already being actively courted by political parties that see him as a potential leader. He is expected to win the national election... Mr. Hashimoto comes from a troubled family background, much of which still remains rather hazy. His parents were divorced when he was young. And his father was a gangster and he committed suicide. He is clearly not your average Japanese politician or man. For example, he has seven children. And he dyed his hair brown and would go to work in blue jeans... He is certainly not known for mincing words. He told his staff "Those who are not committed should resign. Otherwise, you must be prepared to die with me." *The Straits Times* said, "Mr. Hashimoto has a leadership which will be able to change Japan."

The Japanese press has focused on the problems with Mr. Hashimoto's party. On September 9, 2012, the *Nikkei* reported Mr. Hashimoto as "a charismatic figure. He has a clear way of speaking, makes his presence felt by making political enemies... addresses voters directly on Twitter. But the preparation is still incomplete. The idea of the party is unclear. A strong foundation is necessary to threaten established parties."

On September 6 of the same year, *Asahi* noted that one way to solve problems with the party would be to split the roles of the Diet caucus head and Mr. Hashimoto. It also proposed that Mr. Hashimoto is "the only

individual with the charisma and popularity to serve as party head and attract voters nationwide.”

Mainichi also reported Mr. Hashimoto as a strong leader. “...But his opinion is not ‘standardized.’ He indicates a direction of policy clearly. However, the process of a policy is unclear. So he needs to show a more detailed policy to the nation. A concrete policy is of the utmost importance for Japan.”

Yomiuri thought that Mr. Hashimoto’s policy “is not enough.” In *Yomiuri*’s opinion, solutions to problems, such as the financial crisis, the national pension system, and the medical system, need to be clarified. It noted that it is important for policies to be practical. Only then would his opinion become “more persuasive.”

The Japanese newspapers, therefore, report Mr. Hashimoto as a politician whose political style has problems. He has no doubt become the center of the nation’s attention. But his policies lack details, and he needs to clarify his ideas.

Based on what we have seen so far, we may divide the tone of the press into three types: right-wing, liberal, and left-wing.

Right-wing nations, such as Singapore, praise Mr. Hashimoto. Singapore is run by a dictatorship. Apparently, Mr. Hashimoto functions in the same manner.

The U.S., which is liberal, agrees with Mr. Hashimoto’s views and style too. They believe Mr. Hashimoto will change the face of Japanese politics. His style of functioning mimics that of state governments in the US.

However, left-wing nations, such as Britain, do not agree with his style and views. The U.K. is a democracy, which does not believe in concentrating political rights in one person. Thus, they believe Mr. Hashimoto to be a divisive politician.

All the newspapers have treated him as a rightist, that is, the future national leader of Japan, in different degrees. Mr. Hashimoto was treated either as a favorable leader, who will help Japan’s situation, or as a dangerous leader, who will return Japan to its militarist past. He is not just the ordinary Mayor of Osaka. He has attracted and continues to attract the attention of Japan and foreign countries. The Japanese citizens need to decide if this unordinary Japanese has potential to be the country’s next leader.

However, the foreign press has only reported on his movements superficially. They have written about Mr. Hashimoto's character and have not really criticized his proposed reforms and his visions of Osaka. The views of the foreign press typically resonate that of the Japanese press. In fact, foreign press appears to have only grasped the idea of his reforms from the Japanese press. However, foreign correspondents have always kept a close eye on Japan's political environment. Considering this, we need to keep ourselves informed about the real situation in Osaka, instead of relying on the foreign press. Our vigilance will also help ensure that the world is adequately and correctly appraised of Osaka.

References

- The Asahi Shimbun* (2012) "Hashimoto's party set for national stage, plans to turn government structure upside down" September 6
- The Nikkei Shimbun* (2012) 「維新の国政進出は準備が十分なのか (社説)」 "Is Hashimoto ready for the national stage? (Leader)" September 9
- The Mainichi Shimbun* (2012) 「維新の会の公約 中身が大ざっぱ過ぎる」 "Too rough campaign promises of *Ishin no Kai* (Leader)" November 30
- The Yomiuri Shimbun* (2012) 「維新の会の公約 二枚看板だけの戦いにするな」 "Promise of *Ishin no Kai*; don't compete with only two stars (Leader)" November 30
- The International Herald Tribune* (2012) "A brash political samurai: Japanese mayor offers welcome jolt to the gray world of 2-party system" September 27
- The International Herald Tribune* (2012) "The rise of the green tea party" November 23
- The Washington Post* (2012) "Behind a firebrand mayor, a sign of Japan's discontent" May 23
- The Guardian* (2012) "Charismatic outsider Toru Hashimoto tipped as future leader of Japan" July 17
- The Straits Times* (2011) "A new star in Japanese politics: the recently elected mayor of Osaka is being actively courted by political parties" November 30