

BUSINESS
FINLAND



NORDIC
INNOVATION
HOUSE
TOKYO

JAPANESE E-COMMERCE RETAIL GUIDEBOOK

A handbook for Nordic entrants to the Japanese e-Commerce market



FOREWORD

Although the impact of Covid-19 has made 2021 a difficult year for the retail industry in Japan, it has also seen rapid growth of the e-commerce market.

Before the pandemic, Japanese consumers tended to prefer a relatively physical shopping experience at specialty stores and department stores. In physical stores, consumers can receive the full benefits of Japanese hospitality or “omotenashi”. Since 2020, the declaration of multiple states of emergencies due to Covid-19 has restricted the physical shopping experience, and this led more consumers to shop online.

Previously, it was extremely difficult to enter and succeed in the Japanese market without having a local distributor/agent or incorporation in Japan. A large amount of investment was required to meet the particular demands of Japanese retailers. Nowadays, with the right e-commerce business set-up and a local partner, it is feasible for companies to enter the Japanese market and approach millions of consumers.

On the other hand, although the size of the retail market in Japan is attractive, it is highly competitive. The key to success is not only the selection and setup of the online store business model, but also the understanding of market localization and Japanese consumers' online shopping characteristics.

This Japanese e-commerce retail guidebook provides the necessary information of preparations, business models, marketing and branding for Nordic companies to enter and succeed in the Japanese market through online stores. We stand ready to assist Nordic companies every step of the way.



Laura Kopilow
Advisor, Consumer Business
Business Finland Tokyo
laura.kopilow@businessfinland.fi



Haruki Tsuji
Project Manager
Business Sweden Tokyo
haruki.tsuji@business-sweden.se



Niklas Karvonen
Community Director
Nordic Innovation House Tokyo
niklas@nordicinnovationhouse.com



Joakim Larsson
Consultant
Business Sweden Tokyo
joakim.larsson@business-sweden.se



Kasper Thim
Consultant
Business Sweden Tokyo
kasper.thim@business-sweden.se

CONTENT

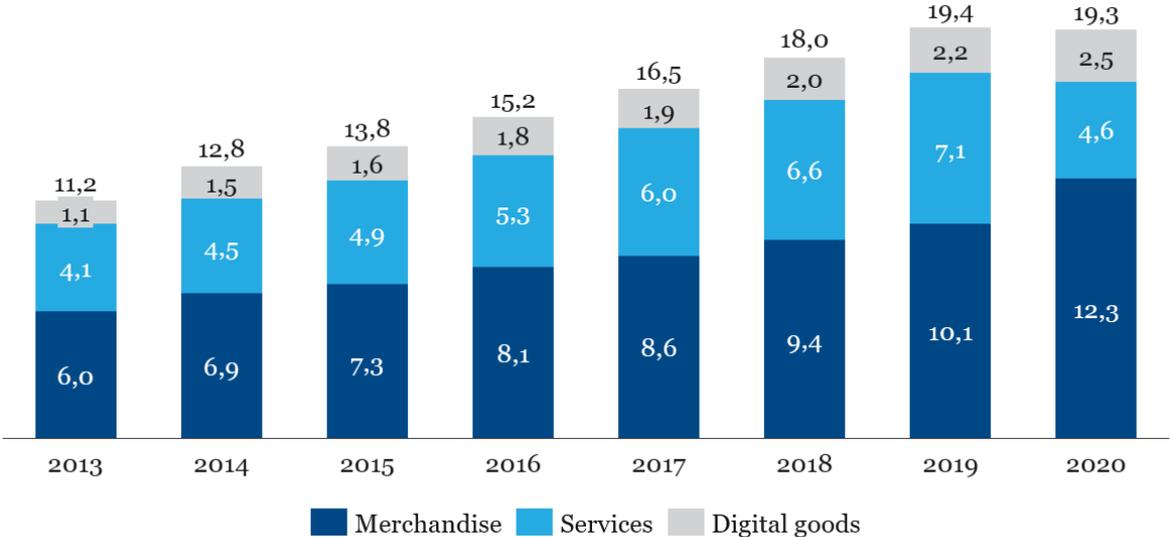
INTRODUCTION	4
MODEL AND PLATFORM.....	6
E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS.....	6
CHOOSING A FULFILMENT MODEL.....	9
LOCALIZATION.....	12
BRANDING AND MARKETING.....	14
BUILDING A NORDIC BRAND IN JAPAN.....	14
PRICING STRATEGY.....	17
MARKETING CHANNELS	18
REGULATORY	21
TRADEMARK AND DESIGN RIGHTS.....	21
IMPORT REGULATIONS & VAT	22
NORDIC SUCCESS CASES	25
BABYBJÖRN	25
LAPUAN KANKURIT.....	27
ORREFORS KOSTA BODA.....	29
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	30
APPENDIX.....	31

INTRODUCTION

The E-commerce market in Japan has more than doubled over the last decade, reaching 19 trillion JPY (~150 billion EUR) in 2020, making it the fourth largest e-commerce market in the world after China, the US, and the UK. 93% of the Japanese population use the internet, and during the year of 2020, 69% of the population purchased something via online channels at least once a month.

Mobile shopping is still lagging other markets at roughly 25% of total purchases – though many shoppers start their research on mobile, most still prefer to finalize the purchase via a computer browser. In terms of product categories, the category dominating Japanese E-Commerce sales is Media product purchases with over 30% of total value. This is followed by Apparel at ~13%, Food at ~11%, and accessories and consumer electronics at ~4% each.

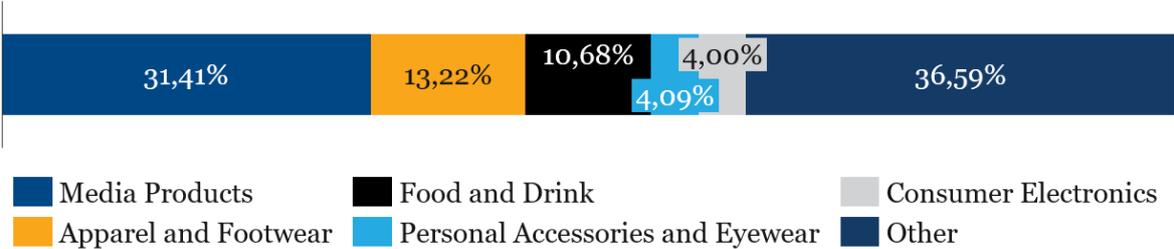
E-commerce has been growing especially quickly during the period of 2020-2021, as the Covid-19 pandemic kept many Japanese people at home during State-of-emergency measures in most Japanese cities and regions. Japanese retailers, who had long been somewhat lagging in adoption of online sales channels, were forced to quickly adapt to an online-first reality. This shook up the market significantly, increasing its size but also the level of competition from Japanese actors.



1: Japanese E-commerce growth in trillion JPY, 2013-2020 (METI Data) - Services (mainly travel, events) decreased significantly in 2020, but was offset by a marked increase in merchandise purchases

Though the Japanese population generally skews older than many other developed markets, with a median age of 48.4 (compared to an EU median of 43.7), the share of the population shopping on online channels has historically been slightly younger. However, the share of older consumers buying online increased significantly during 2020-2021 as pandemic measures forced shoppers of all ages onto online channels, and many of them now say they will continue shopping online even after the end of state-of-emergency measures.

Japanese consumers generally lean towards the purchase of fewer, high-quality items over mass consumption of cheap goods. Urban living in small spaces puts storage space at a premium for most, discouraging spontaneous purchases of low-cost items. This is especially true for durable goods, and for older consumer segments. Whilst disposable incomes are not as high as they were 20 years ago, owing to low economic and wage growth and an increased tax burden, Japan is still one of the world’s largest markets for luxury goods and apparel. The expectation for very high quality also extends beyond the product itself into all aspects of a purchase, such as excellent customer service, quick and convenient shipping options, and even high-quality packaging materials.



2: Breakdown of the top product categories for Japanese E-Commerce spending (2020)

This does not, however, mean that there is no room for mass-market items, especially for consumable goods such as cosmetics. This is also evidenced by the prevalence of 100-yen (1\$) stores throughout the country, selling a wide range of consumables at very competitive prices. Younger consumers specifically are trending towards cheaper purchases, driven by low incomes, part-time employment and stagnant wage growth.

Culturally, Japanese consumers are further defined by the traits of high risk-aversion, avoidance of uncertainty and conformity to the wider social group. Trust in unknown and/or foreign brands is low, with consumers valuing the perceived safety that comes with making a purchase from an established local brand with a long-standing history in the market. They will also often spend significant time and effort into research before making a final purchasing decision – especially so for a higher-value item – consulting third-party comparison sites such as kakaku.com as well as independent product reviews and detailed product information. Recommendations and customer reviews are highly influential, and successful brands spend a lot of effort making sure to build, and display, favorable customer ratings and reviews. Preference for conformity also shows in common practice of showcasing certain products as “best” or “recommended” choices, abating customers’ fear of making an “incorrect” decision when faced with too much freedom of choice.

PLATFORM AND MODEL

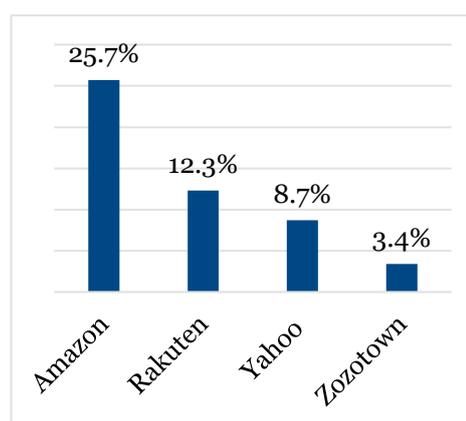
E-commerce platform and model of fulfillment are the first aspects that needs to be considered when deciding to enter the Japanese e-commerce market. A new brand entering have a lot of options for how to go about getting their goods or services to the Japanese consumers. On the surface the decisions can seem straight forward, but it is worth taking time to get to grips with the specific aspects, potentials strengths and weaknesses, and how these decisions fit in with a company's strategy, capabilities, and end goal.

Covid-19 saw a rapid change in the e-commerce market landscape with many brands putting greater emphasis on D2C models through e-commerce to capture consumers interests without the need to go through more traditional channels. The changing landscape have lowered barriers of entry especially for international brands. D2C in Japan can be done through major platforms, smaller niche sites, or an own website thus allowing for greater connection to the end user, a flexibility in pricing, and greater adaptability what aspects are done in-house or externally. Even so, Japan remains a traditional landscape where wholesalers, retailers, and physical stores have strong position with consumers and D2C-only models are still in its infancy. Therefore, a brand looking to enter through e-commerce exclusively need to understand that the Japanese market will come with additional challenges in reaching the target audience and potentially a need to spend extra on marketing to compensate and achieve a foothold to build on long term.

E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS

The Japanese e-commerce market is a mature market where larger players dominate the landscape. The largest platforms for e-commerce are Rakuten, Amazon, and Yahoo shopping. Estimates vary, but these three websites cover around 50% of the Japanese e-commerce market with Rakuten and Amazon at a combined roughly 40% and Yahoo at around 9%.

Outside of these major platforms several local players exist, especially in niche categories with brands aiming for a specific segment or demography. One notable site to be aware of is Zozotown which has been solidified as a major player when it comes to fashion. Other local players include AU Pay, a website connected with local phone operator KDDI, and Qoo10, an eBay-affiliated platform focused on user-generated reviews and the surrounding community. For cosmetics there is @cosme, a cosmetics retail chain & e-commerce site, that not only does sales but



also is a social & blogging website related to cosmetics. No matter the platform the key to these platforms is understanding how they work as tool for promoting a brand and how to fit them into an overall strategy for market entry. Setting up on Rakuten, Amazon, and Yahoo at once offers the largest market coverage but most likely would stretch resources too thin for smaller companies. Having a final goal of full market penetration is good but as a first step going with a limited selection in platforms in combination with an own site is likely

better for establishing the brand long-term. The different major players all come with slightly different focus that is outlined below.

Amazon

Amazon is more focused on the product and offering a large variety at the lowest price. Like Rakuten, Amazon also offers Amazon brand registry which enables the creation of a store front to manage goods and brand image. However, this feature is much less pushed on the site. For example, a customer searching for a brand name will be presented with a list of items first rather than the individual store. This means that even if your brand has a presence, a customer searching for it will still be presented with other cheaper options of related brands. On the plus side, Amazon is connected globally so a merchant familiar with its offering in one country will have an easier time understanding and using the platform here. Amazon also offers cross-border fulfillment worldwide, but it is important that longer delivery times can lead to poor ratings or lower item rankings. Merchants with local fulfillment or fulfillment done by Amazon are more likely to get prioritization on the page of listed items that appears when a customer does a search. In addition, other merchants on Amazon frequently offers discounts meaning that it's easy to end up in a price war. Premium brands or brands that wants to avoid discounts are recommended to utilize Amazon with limited capability.

Rakuten

Rakuten aims both towards consumers and other retailers. Its key feature is the ability to create miniature online "stores" wherein each selling company can setup its own brand page. On these stores, a brand can create its own visual identity and aim for greater conversion. However, currently Rakuten has over 50,000 competing stores meaning that it is very easy for even strong performing brands to get lost in the massive noise of constant new products and deals. As a platform it is also greatly focused on the point ecosystem as a kind of discount. Customers will typically receive 1% of total purchase value in Rakuten points and this percentage can increase through several interlinked Rakuten services. For example, if a user pays with a Rakuten credit card the ratio can go up to 3.5%. 1 point is then worth 1 JPY in Rakuten affiliated stores. To get started on Rakuten a merchant needs to apply for and register as a seller account with a local bank account and this is mainly done through partner companies. Cross-border e-commerce without a partner on Rakuten is only possible from a select number of countries where Rakuten has a local office, currently Canada, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Taiwan, the UK, and the US. Therefore, for a Nordic brand planning to use this platform it is recommended to look towards local fulfillment.

Yahoo!

Yahoo is also centered around stores for merchants to build and have greater control of the brand's image. However, while it does offer a variety of goods it is mainly known for fashion. To get setup on Yahoo, registration with a local bank account and phone number is needed, but unlike Rakuten or Amazon it lacks English support so setup without a Japanese speaker or partner is not advised. With the additional steps needed and the language barrier necessitating a local partner Yahoo is typically not recommended as a first entry into the Japanese e-commerce market.

No matter what strategy is chosen it is important to know that these sites are well saturated marketplaces. Therefore, it is advised to consider how and why they will be used when planning the market entry strategy. Consider what role they will play in establishing the brand image on the market and what purpose they will serve outside of just pure sales as while these platforms can be used to grow the fanbase it can be a big challenge. Getting established on these sites is a great first step to reaching the Japanese public, but it is also very easy to get lost in the immense price war or frequent discount/point campaigns. Furthermore, depending on the type of brand, being on these sites might clash with the certain value a brand wants to portray.

For the practical details, please see the links below, offering in detail how to setup on [Rakuten](#) and [Amazon](#) in English.

Other options and own website

Outside of the big players as mentioned above there are several category specific sites that offer a greater chance of reaching specific customers of your brand. These sites are however even less adapted for international brands to easily set up and start selling so are best utilized in collaboration with a partner or in later stages of the market entry.

One area that is worth considering are the number of Nordic focused e-commerce platforms that exist, some of the biggest including [Scope](#), [Hokuo no Kurashi](#), and [Kozlife](#). They are less clustered, familiar with handling Nordic brands, and offer good opportunities for displaying the brand. Furthermore, these websites already cater to a customer base with an interest in the Nordic lifestyle and Nordic brands image meaning that there are less barriers in converting an interested customer to a purchasing customer.



In addition to the platform strategy establishing a local Japanese page is recommended as consumers will want to find additional information on a brand or service in the local language. Furthermore, a local website is a good place to build the brands image and serves as a focus point in the customer journey where you can have greater control of the localized message. It is important to note that a local page means not just translating product information, but also considering how to localize the story, visuals, and brand image.

Finally, no matter if on a platform or through a brands own site, it is important to remember that traditional e-commerce aspects like returns, warranty, after sales support etc. are going

to be expected and will be important in building trust with a Japanese consumer that is used to high standards. This and how to localize is further expanded upon in the localization chapter.

Regarding the administration for establishing a local website, there are three options. They are international domain (.com/jp), 2nd degree local domain (.jp), and top local domain(co.jp). An international domain is the quickest option and most used by brands that don't have any local presence. This is because to register a 2nd degree domain (.jp) a permanent address in Japan is needed and for a top local domain (co.jp) a company must be registered in Japan. The cost of a .jp domain is about 31 Euro (4,000 JPY) in the first year and for a co.jp domain it is about 78 Euro (10,000 JPY) the first year. To apply for a local domain an application is sent, in Japanese, to a company that offers registration services. Be aware that exact prices will vary depending on which company is used to register a such domains.

More information on the application process can be found on the [Japan Registry Services homepage](#). It is also possible to find a list of [companies](#) that offer web registration (Only in Japanese).

A top local domain is typically recommended as it is seen as more trustworthy to Japanese users and makes it easier to build a presence. However, for smaller companies looking to enter the market it might be better to wait until a customer base has been established as it requires a local contact to handle the registration and adds to the initial investment needed. In essence, choosing to establish an international domain vs a local domain comes down to resources vs time. International domains are the easiest way to enter the market, but Japanese customers might be hesitant to purchase from an unknown brands international website or if the localization is lacking.

CHOOSING A FULFILMENT MODEL

After deciding on an e-commerce platform, the largest decision to be made in planning is which model to use to supply the goods to the Japanese consumers. Depending on the model there are varying degrees of investment and time required for implementation. Japan has a population of 126 million and is roughly the size of Germany, but customers still expect quick delivery (next day or within 2-3 days). The model that is most suitable for international merchants depends on the goals for market entry, timeline, and budget available. Additionally, the model used can also affect how the brand is perceived in the market.

In principle there are three models commonly used, each with their own strengths and drawbacks. They are as follows.

Cross-border fulfilment

This option means to have set up a localized sales page and carry out shipping from a warehouse outside of Japan on an order-by-order basis. It eliminates the costs associated with warehousing and makes it easier to sell certain products, like food and supplements, that would require special import clearances. However, it will increase both delivery time and the cost of the good. Therefore, it is vital to communicate this to the end consumer when they order. There is also a limiting factor on which major platforms support this model.

The cross-border e-commerce market saw slight stagnation (3.24B Euro in 2019 to 2.95B Euro in 2020) due to the logistical challenges and closing of borders associated with the pandemic. Furthermore, this option only makes up about 3% of the total market. Nevertheless, cross-border e-commerce is expected to grow at a CAGR of 3.7% between 2020-25.

The cross-border model is the quickest to set-up but is not recommended for most brands as it is limiting when it comes to large-scale business. Furthermore, achieving success and market penetration with this model is difficult since, as stated above, it is a minor share of the overall market size and even then, it is easy to get lost in the noise. Finally, while putting your brand on a major e-commerce platform or own website that allows for cross-border is starting point not having a partner that understands the market needs and consumer patterns will likely lead to potentially costly mistakes in marketing or product selection that greatly increases the risk of failure.

Local fulfilment

This option means working with a local partner to handle some part of import, warehousing, and shipping to fulfill customer orders locally. It brings additional costs in warehousing fees and the potential partner taking a cut of the profit but allows for large scale import and strategizing. Furthermore, it makes it possible to both deliver goods and accept returns quickly. Since consumers expect fast delivery times and high after sales service support, local fulfillment is commonly recommended to new brands. To achieve success with this model it is key to find a good partner that will handle the brand properly. Bear in mind that such a search will add extra time in taking the product to market and finding the right partner can be a challenge at times but spending this extra time prior to market entry will likely lead to great chance of long-term success.

Local incorporation

This means setting up a local entity or subsidiary to handle all or some part of the Japanese business by incorporating, hiring local staff, and potentially renting an office location. This option brings personnel costs, rent, tax duties, and local warehouse fees meaning that it requires the highest investment, but it also allows for the greatest control of a brand's position in the market. The local incorporation model is most common after some test sales or initial entry with partner has been done as it requires the largest investment. With that said it is worth considering if a large-scale entry is already planned.

A summary of the pros and cons can be seen below.

	+	-
Cross-border	Tax & Tariff free up to 129 Euro (16,666 JPY) Eliminates costs related to local warehouse. Quickest option	Longer delivery times. Shipping fees increase the price. Limits the types of fresh and frozen food that can be sold
Local fulfilment	Quicker delivery times. Allows for large scale import and planning. Easier to build trust with consumers.	Larger investment cost needed. Longer run-up needed Challenge in finding the right partner
Incorporation	Allows for full control of strategy. Best for closest relation to market and insights.	Largest investment cost needed. Longest time needed.

The logistical aspects of shipping and selling to Japan are many and can be complex to navigate. The different models vary in who is handling the aspects from customers first seeing the brand, to making a purchase and then carrying the goods from the warehouse. There are four major aspects in this area to consider. First is, where is the fulfilment done from. I.e., is shipping done to the consumer from a warehouse outside of Japan or locally. Next, if needed, who is handling the import and customs procedures. Going beyond physical logistics, comes the matter of the platform used and how to run it. Finally, to spread the brand, marketing is a must and using a local agency will aid with navigating the intricacies of the Japanese market. A summary of the aspects can be seen below.

	Warehouse	Import	Platform	Marketing
Cross-border	International	NA	Own page Amazon Rakuten	JP agent
Local fulfilment	Japan	Partner	Own page Amazon Rakuten Other	JP agent
Incorporation	Japan	Partner Local staff	Own page Amazon Rakuten Other	JP agent Local staff

LOCALIZATION

Localizing products or content for the Japanese market is notoriously tricky to get right. On the surface, there is the Japanese language, with its multiple alphabets and thousands upon thousands of characters, but beyond that, there are also the thorny domains of cultural expectations, tone, and varying levels of formality. Today's machine translation technology has some way to go in producing accurate Japanese text considering all these aspects, so hiring a professional translator is a minimum requirement for localization of marketing materials, product copy and websites. This is also true for other aspects of the marketing strategy, such as SEO keywords and SNS hashtags, which risk becoming ineffective if directly translated without an understanding of local trends and behaviours.

The next step beyond direct translation of the information already present in the main website or marketing materials is also adapting which content and product information is provided in the first place. As previously mentioned, many Japanese consumers have a strong preference for doing their research and comparing several products before making a purchase, and so enabling and rewarding this behaviour can be very effective in creating more trust in and desire for the product.

Specific information appreciated by Japanese audiences include:

- Numerous and detailed pictures and diagrams, showing both the product itself, its origin (Nordic connotation) and its use.
- Information explaining not only the benefits brought by the product but also how it is produced - which technologies, materials and methods are used.
- Information on who the product is intended for, who usually buys it, including staged (or real) pictures of relatable people using the product, to appeal to consumers' desire for conforming to the group.
- User satisfaction statistics and prominently featured testimonials and reviews from relatable users.
- Detailed information about the company history, heritage, presence and intentions for the Japanese market, and other related information to create trust and a closer relationship with the company behind the brand.
- Detailed and clear information on policies related to shipping, returns, payments, special offers etc.
- Information on how the product has been (or already is) adapted to fit the needs of Japanese consumers and their circumstances.

As a result of this desire for extensive and detailed information, Japanese websites are often perceived by outsiders as crowded and messy. To some extent, this is unavoidable, but for Nordic brands who want to build on a Nordic image of simplicity and elegance, it's important to find a good balance between providing the information required whilst maintaining a clean layout – perhaps providing more detailed information in clearly indicated attachments and click-throughs rather than directly on the main page.



3: Comparing Japanese (Rakuten) and UK product page for an Orrefors product

Aside from website and marketing content, other localization considerations include local payment options, delivery, and customer service. For payments, whilst credit cards are the dominant payment method for online purchases at over two-thirds of transactions, certain customers (especially older and very young demographics) will appreciate alternative payment modes such as mobile/digital wallets (*PayPay, LINE Pay, Rakuten Pay etc.*), bank transfers, pay-on-delivery or pay-in-convenience-store. These options can be more difficult to set up than card payments but should be seen as mandatory to provide in the longer-term for brands serious about the market. The same goes for delivery options – whereas consumers will understand that some foreign items will require longer delivery times (especially if shipped cross-border), brands able to offer next-day or even same-day deliveries will be in a much stronger position to compete with local offerings.

Finally, Japanese expectations on customer service are very high, with the rule of thumb for customer service in Japan being “*you will always need to do more than you think*”. Offering local, Japanese language customer service is a basic expectation for any brand looking to create the trust and loyalty required to succeed in the market, whether that is through own employees or a local partner. Also be aware that Japanese customers are harsh reviewers – compared to other markets, they are more likely to leave a negative review after having a bad experience with a brand, but less likely to leave positive feedback. This, combined with reviews being highly trusted, can quickly become very damaging to a newly introduced brand with a lacking service experience.

In summary, the most important thing for brands to avoid when entering the Japanese market is to be seen as doing it half-heartedly. Starting out with imperfect translations, missing payment options, and sub-par customer service can damage trust in the brand permanently, even if these aspects are later improved. Instead, brands should work with local partners to make sure to get things as right as they can possibly be from day one, then continue improving and adapting from there.

BRANDING AND MARKETING

Just as important as choice of business model and solving operational questions is the question of how a Nordic brand should communicate with potential customers in Japan. Local culture, customs and expectations are in many cases very different to what entrants may be used to from their home markets. Yet understanding these aspects can be the difference between a long and successful presence and a swift exit from the Japanese market. In this section, we are thus highlighting some key aspects and considerations for Nordic brands who are looking to build their brand and market their products successfully to a Japanese audience.

BUILDING A NORDIC BRAND IN JAPAN

As a result of cultural factors previously mentioned, building a strong brand in Japan and gaining the trust of Japanese consumers is a long-term project. The Japanese market and media landscape still reflect the country's long history of relative isolation, based on both cultural- and language barriers. International brand recognition is therefore of limited value for all but the largest players – with most companies having to more or less start from scratch when introducing their brand in Japan. The investment required in terms of initial marketing costs should not be underestimated – a marketing spend of ~10% of targeted revenue can be used as a general rule of thumb for a new brand introduction. However, those who spend the time and investment required to find and engage an audience in Japan will find themselves amply rewarded by loyal customers, more than willing to pay a premium for products they really enjoy.

As such, it's very important for Nordic brands to have a well-developed and localized marketing plan before entering the Japanese market. Offering a new product in the Japanese marketplace whilst hoping to rely on international brand recognition to drive sales will rarely be a successful approach. Trying to apply an unmodified global marketing strategy which has worked in other geographies is likely to miss the mark in terms of messaging, marketing channels and cultural expectations. At a basic level, a Japanese marketing strategy needs to outline the targeted consumer segment and characteristics, market positioning relative to major competitors, which marketing channels will be used and how, and which narrative or message is being conveyed through those channels.

Whilst Japanese consumers recognize Nordic products as high-quality, and “nordicness” should definitely be an important part of the narrative for most Nordic entrants, it cannot be relied upon in itself as the whole story. Indeed, in the Japanese way of thinking, the two concepts of “The Brand” and “The Corporation” are much more closely related than would be the case for a European consumer. Forming a connection to a brand in Japan also necessarily means forming a connection to, and establishing trust in, a corporate entity. As such, communicating in detail about the history, philosophy and intention behind a brand becomes a very important messaging tool.

This is especially true for foreign brands looking to build some level of trust with a Japanese audience. If potential customers get the impression that a company is not serious about

doing long-term business in the market, but only looking to make quick profits, they will not trust that company to sell a quality product. On the other hand, however, offering a more personal level of insight into the company itself can help build trust even for new entrants. This can be done through personal interactions on social media platforms or websites, or through direct communication or statements by corporate management showing seriousness or long-term commitment to the market.



4: This 2016 Ad from Japanese Ice-cream company Akagi Nyugyo shows employees bowing in apology for having to raise the price for their most popular product from 60 to 70 yen

Overall, the general impression of Nordic brands in Japan is strongly positive. Whilst most Japanese will struggle to voice specific impressions for individual Nordic countries (instead conceptualizing them as a whole under the umbrella of “北欧” – “Hokuō”, lit. “North Europe”), the Nordics as a whole are strongly associated with good design, high quality, a clean, elegant esthetic, nature and natural products, health and healthiness, and a good lifestyle. However, brands should also be aware of the difference between an origin with a “premium” image (such as the Nordics) compared to one with a “luxury” connotation (such as France or Switzerland). Whilst simplicity is a key element to the appeal of many Nordic products, it can sometimes also be difficult to justify a very high price for a simple product. This means that Nordic brands wanting to enter Luxury (or to a lesser extent Mass-market) segments should likely not focus as heavily on their origin as those aiming for premium markets, as the Nordic brand image may not be as clearly associated with luxury qualities in the minds of target consumers.



5: Illustrating the space in the marketing segmentation hierarchy most strongly associated with a Nordic brand image

The product categories most strongly associated with the Nordics are furniture and interior design products (owing much to the strong brand image of IKEA as well

as the recent popularity of “*Japandi*” minimalist design concepts), and to a lesser extent also food, textiles and clothes, and literature.

There is also some association between Nordic products and values of responsibility, sustainability, nature- and environmental friendliness (along with other ethical values such as gender equality, animal-welfare etc.), though this is also true for Europe more generally. These values have historically not driven large price premiums in Japan, where awareness and engagement with environmental issues has long been lower than in other developed markets. However, this disparity has started to change in recent years, with Japanese consumers increasingly willing to pay higher prices for more environmentally friendly products, and marketing a product as sustainable, natural, or organic is becoming a valid strategy to motivate a premium price point.

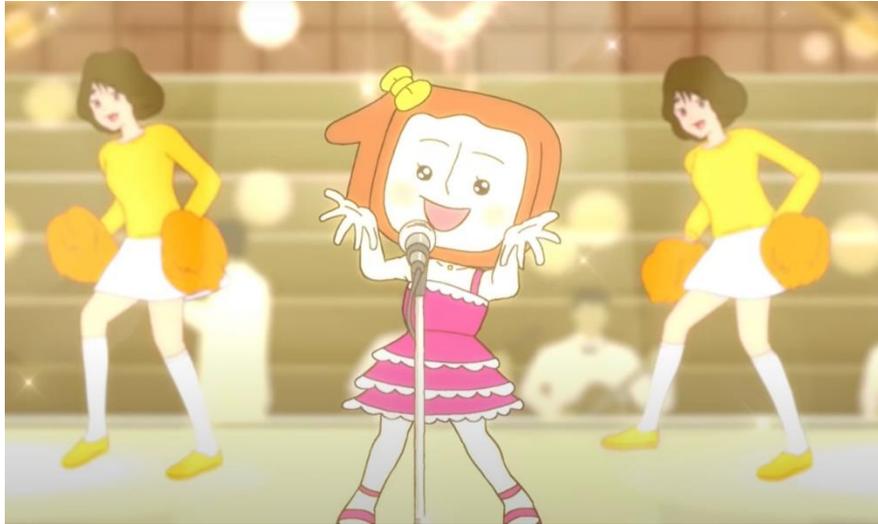


6: An example of “*Japandi*” style, focusing on simplicity, soft or neutral colors, natural materials, and a warm and comforting atmosphere

This positive attitude is a great base for Nordic brands to build upon, but as mentioned, brands should be careful to strike the right balance between highlighting their Nordic roots whilst also adapting their products and messages for the local market. Specifically, the messages of “this product *comes from* the Nordics” and “this product *works in* the Nordics, for Nordic consumers” will be received very differently. Whilst Japanese consumers appreciate knowing about a brand’s history and origins, they also want to be assured that the product they are buying is adapted and will fit their personal needs. This is increasingly true the more “personal” a product is, with examples of highly personal products being food, beauty- and health-related products, apparel and so on. Foreign-made products can certainly carry an air of exclusivity and exoticism but are also sometimes perceived to be “*Too powerful*”, “*Too loud*”, “*Too strong*” and so on. Assuring buyers that your product will work for “*Japanese skin*”, “*Japanese sizes*”, “*Japanese living conditions*” etc. will be an important factor in gaining their trust especially in these more “personal” product categories.

Finally, Nordic entrants should understand the overall approach and goals of marketing in Japan and how it can differ from that in western environments. Marketing in Japan is famous for being different and difficult to understand for foreign viewers, with much of advertising seeming inappropriately “cute”, “silly”, or detached from the product or service being advertised. Even the most serious of organizations can be represented by cartoon

mascots and nursery-rhyme jingles. This schism between western and Japanese marketing approaches stems from a fundamental difference in philosophy, with marketers in Japan favouring “soft-sell” tactics, compared to the “hard-sell” approaches more common elsewhere.



7: Japanese Finance Ministry mascot "Koko-chan" convincing young people to invest in government bonds, with a jingle including the words “both your heart and your principal will be protected forever”.

Whereas hard-sell marketing focuses on the product, with forceful and often hyperbolic messaging, soft-sell communication instead strives to create a more long-term, positive emotional connection between a brand and its intended audience. It focuses less on any specific product and more on entertainment, visual style, and the overall brand story. Whilst it is less direct, this style of marketing has proven effective in building trust and loyalty with Japanese consumers, and as such has become extensively used in the Japanese market. This choice of marketing style is also likely to be one of the reasons for why Japanese audiences overall have a more positive attitude towards advertising, and are more likely to engage with marketing messages, than their western counterparts. As a foreign brand, whilst it’s not necessarily ideal to imitate the Japanese marketing style fully, these aspects can be useful to keep in mind when designing a local marketing strategy.

PRICING STRATEGY

As previously mentioned, Japanese consumers exhibit a strong preference for locally made products, which are perceived as trustworthy and high quality. For any foreign brand to be competitive in the Japanese market, it’s therefore not enough to be perceived as “just as good” as the local competition. To gain an edge, brands will need to position themselves as either...

1. Significantly cheaper than local offerings
2. Unique, completely different from available local offerings
3. Very high quality, exclusive or exotic, often with a strong association to the country-of-origin (such as Swiss watches, German cars, French fashion...)

Whilst there are of course examples of Nordic brands succeeding in the Japanese market for each strategy, Nordic products and the Nordic brand image in general is most often suited to a premium offering, leaning on a perception of uniqueness, exoticness and/or high quality. Mass-market categories generally see very high levels of competition in Japan, and new

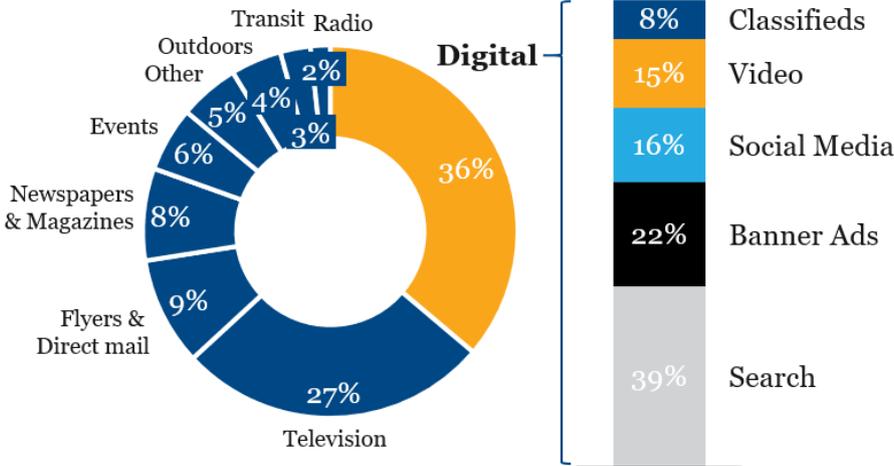
entrants into these segments will face harsh opposition from the low-price offerings of existing discount stores and importers.

In some cases, we've seen a few Nordic brands attempt to market themselves as a premium brand in Japan even though they were a mass-market player in their home market, hoping to build on a premium Nordic image to justify a higher price abroad. This strategy is most often unsuccessful, as Japanese customers are too savvy and will do their research before making a purchase from a new, unknown brand name.

Lastly, as in all export cases, brands must keep in mind the price gap between different markets. Whilst Japanese consumers may be more wary of private imports than most, being hesitant to go without the safety nets provided by extras such as customer support, return options, and Japanese-language instruction manuals, any price differences between markets in excess of ~30% (in either direction) will still encourage private importers to undercut prices in the local market.

MARKETING CHANNELS

In terms of Marketing channels, Japan, as many other markets, has experienced a long-term shift away from traditional channels towards digital advertising channels. Digital marketing represented 36% of Japanese marketing spend in 2020, making it the largest category, ahead of Television ads (27%), Promotional media (*Events, flyers, transit, and outdoor advertising etc.* – 27%) and Newspapers/Magazines (8%). The largest subcategory within digital marketing is Search-engine marketing (SEM).

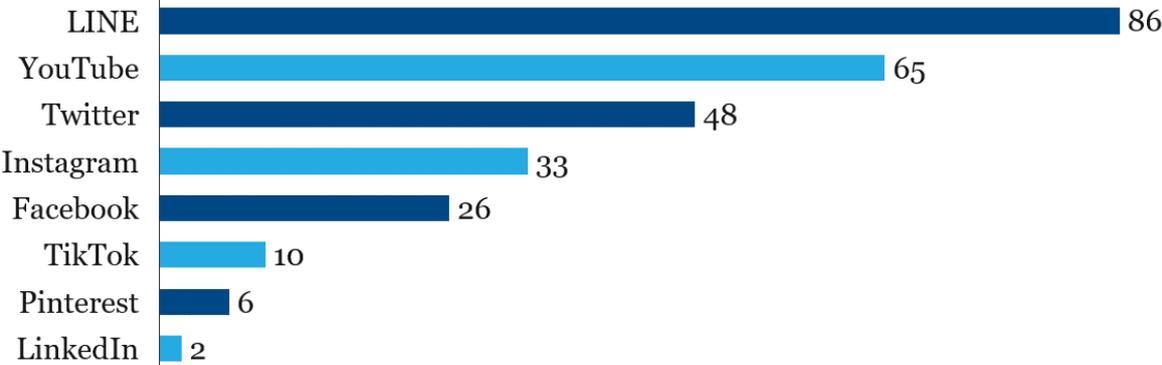


8: Breakdown of advertising channels in Japan, based on total spend (2020)

The growth of digital marketing in Japan makes sense also from a cultural perspective – even though Japanese consumers generally exhibit low trust, their confidence in Social Media and Search Engines has long been higher than in other developed markets. Conformity to the social group is valued, and personal recommendations carry a large weight in purchasing decisions, driving influencer marketing to become an especially powerful strategy to drive sales and build brand recognition.

Whilst the recent dominance of digital marketing channels is not unique to Japan, the specific landscape of Japanese digital platforms does differ from other markets in some respects. For instance, Google is not the only player in the Search engine market – Yahoo!

search and Bing together control over 20% of searches (up to 25% for mobile devices), meaning they can't be ignored for a SEM strategy. And whilst the usual suspects of Facebook, Instagram and YouTube are certainly present in the social marketing landscape, they share it with more Japanese-specific platforms such as the messaging app LINE, which is the most-used networking and messaging platform in Japan in terms of monthly active users.



9: Top Social Networking Platforms in Japan (by of monthly active users, millions)

As previously mentioned, Influencer marketing can be a very powerful tool for brand building when used correctly. Brands will have to be very careful both in who they engage, and how they do it – ensuring complete honesty and transparency to avoid any feelings of deception in the targeted audience, which is viewed especially negatively in Japan. Most commonly, smaller brands will use influencer agencies which in turn have contacts to a large number of (often smaller) influencers, which can then be approached to receive and mention products. Though they are fewer, the followers of smaller influencers tend to be more engaged with their posts and content, meaning that engaging several small influencers can often be more effective than a single, more popular profile. Also, brands should make sure to only engage influencers who are truly aligned with their brand image and messaging – influencer promotions that don't feel like a natural fit for the product will not be productive regardless of how many consumers are reached, and in a worst case can be actively harmful.



10: IKEA Harajuku partnering with Virtual Influencer “Imma” to display a virtual showroom – a screen showed a live view of Imma relaxing in her virtual IKEA-furnished living room over the space of three days

For smaller, foreign brands operating through e-commerce, Digital marketing should and will constitute a vast majority of marketing efforts. However, non-digital marketing strategies are still popular in Japan, and can be effective in certain cases as long as they are used with a clear purpose and target audience in mind.

The most important such strategy for those looking to establish a stronger connection with the Japanese market would be Pop-up stores and local events. These are a great way to let Japanese consumers touch and experience the brands' products physically, which can significantly strengthen brand interest and drive sales without the need for a permanent physical presence in a retail store.

For certain segments, such as older consumers, B2B buyers, and middle-aged consumers in segments like technology and beauty products, advertising in print newspapers or magazines could be effective. TV advertisements are also good for reaching older age groups but are expensive to both produce/localize and air, and for all but the oldest customer segments video advertisements on digital platforms such as YouTube or Instagram will be a better alternative. Finally, advertisements on public transportation (metro, buses) have huge reach across all age groups in Japan but are also expensive and so mostly relevant to larger brands who already have a significant presence in the market.

REGULATORY

The regulatory landscape in Japan has taken several strides in simplifying the process and aligning with world standards meaning that it has become easier for international brands to enter the market and establish a presence. Even so, regulations and laws will differ, and brands need to comply with them to be able to be sold inside of Japan. Proper understanding of the differences prior to exporting will avoid headaches and ensure a smoother market entry for all involved parties.

TRADEMARK AND DESIGN RIGHTS

When establishing a foothold in Japan, it is recommended to register trademark and design rights as needed with the Japanese patent office. Japan is a first-to-file jurisdiction which means that the first party to file will be granted the trademark. It is therefore advised to apply as soon as possible when planning your entry into the Japanese market.

Under Japan's trademark law there are four categories that are categorized as trademarks. They are as follows

Category	Example
1. Trademarks consisting of characters	Mercedes-Benz
2. Trademarks consisting of devices/symbols	
3. Trademarks consisting of characters and devices/symbols	 Mercedes-Benz
4. Three-dimensional trademarks. (dolls, spheres and three-dimensional signs)	

Please note that if a logo or brand is in category 3 the registration will only cover usage in that configuration. It is therefore needed to register multiple trademarks in category 1 and 2 if the plan is to use the wordmark or the symbol of the brand separately by itself.

Trademark rights expire 10 years after the date of application. To apply for a trademark or design rights as an international company in Japan the applicant must be either a foreign individual domiciled/resident in Japan or a foreign legal entity having a place of business in Japan. If the applicant does not have either a permanent address, residence, or office in Japan it is required to appoint a representative, a "Patent Administrator," such as a patent attorney in Japan for the application. Exact procedures for trademark is outlined on the Japanese Patent office website [here](#) and for design right [here](#)

Detailed costs associated with both trademark and design rights applications in Japan can be found in the appendix at the end of this document.

Japan is also a member of the “[Madrid agreement for international trademark collaboration](#)” and “[Hague protocol for international design rights collaboration](#)” by the World Intellectual Property Organization aimed at cross-border referencing. It is therefore possible to apply for Japanese rights through a multi-country application using the WIPO system. This is beneficial if a company are considering entering multiple Asian markets as one application will cover multiple markets compared with a traditional application which will only be valid in the country applied in.

IMPORT REGULATIONS & VAT

The main rule when it comes to import is that the importer, i.e., receiver, of the goods in the importing country pays for tariffs, VAT, and other fees. The importer is also responsible for import clearance and abiding to the correct procedures. In this matter, Japan has long been known for having high tariffs to control import and protect the domestic market.

This was changed when Japan and the EU signed an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) that entered into force in February 2019. This partnership aimed to eliminate or reduce tariffs on most traded goods, streamline guidelines, and align regulatory systems. Therefore, several common daily goods are now either exempt or seeing gradually reducing tariffs.

Some common goods are exemplified below

Type		Before 2019	Under EPA (After 2019)
Alcoholic beverages		15%	0%
Pork		Import system+ tariff average of 4.3%	0%
Hard Cheese		Up to 29.8 %	Decrease to 0% by 2033
Beef		38.5%	Decrease to 9% by 2033
Most textile products		8-11%	0%
Footwear and leather		10-16%	Decrease to 0% by 2033
Cosmetics		0-4.8%	0%
Furniture		0%	0%

As previously mentioned, the cross-border model allows for import free from VAT and tariffs no matter the product up to 129 Euro (16,666 JPY). This is because the customer assumes import responsibility as a private importer. For local fulfilment and incorporation, the tariff burden and clearance will be on the importer i.e., the Japanese partner or local entity.

Importers who want to claim the preferential treatment under EPAs must submit a certificate of origin showing the good qualifies as coming from a preferential country. The certificate of origin is issued via an application made by the exporter at the time of exporting showing the goods are from the originating country. The only exception when this is not needed for preferential treatment is if the goods being imported total value is 1553 Euro (200,000 JPY) or less.

When exporting to Japan it is important to verify if the EPA applies to a product and therefore what tariff that product has in addition to understanding if there are any other regulations. Exact information can be confirmed on the [EU market access database](#). Here it is possible to check tariff information, general rules, regulations, and how to understand if a product fulfills the rules of origin criteria. Please note this page is only accessible from inside the EU. In addition to above page, the EU has published several [factsheets and presentations](#) that give a good overview of various fields.

In addition to the EPA prior to exporting it is beneficial be aware of regulation and laws relating to certain products to avoid potential delays or hurdles. This will also help as an import partner handling import clearance will ask exporters to prepare or provide certain documents depending on the product category. Most common daily goods are not subject to specific regulations, but it pays to be careful and double check especially when it comes to foods, goods containing chemicals, and electronics. Food is regulated under the food sanitation law or plant protection act. Importers of food will typically be asked to provide item information, ingredient lists, food production charts, and details regarding processor

facilities. The Japanese import and investment organization has published a detailed guide outlining specific details [here](#).

Chemicals fall under the chemical substances control law (CSCL) and here importers will in addition to being registered as a chemical seller & manufacturer, need to provide chemical identification numbers, ingredient lists, and in some cases detailed explanation on compound ratio of chemicals used. The ministry for Manufacturing, Trade, Economics and Infrastructure has published an overview guide of the CSCL [here](#).

For electronics it falls under Electrical Appliances and Materials Safety Act wherein goods are categorized and applied a so called “PSE mark” as either specified on non-specified electrical product based on risk associated with product. Classification process details can be found on the Japan quality assurance organization [homepage](#).

Disclaimer that there is no single answer for all products in one category as regulations might vary depending on where the product is made, what it contains or how it is used.

Further details on Japanese import laws are available on the customs [homepage](#) with English translations of the exact laws relevant available [here](#).

In Japan as of 2022 the VAT is 10% on all consumer goods. VAT is calculated per calendar year and is added together at the end of year based on yearly amount sold. Companies that have yearly sales of less than 77,660 Euro (10M JPY) are exempt from VAT duties. To apply for tax returns, companies should turn to the Japanese Tax Authorities. If sales exceed 77,660 Euro (10M JPY), companies are obligated to pay VAT and, in such case, need to appoint a representative to the Japanese Tax Authorities who is living in Japan for the reporting process.

Anybody importing goods to Japan need to follow Japanese marking laws regulated by the household goods quality labeling act. This sets out what must be displayed regarding the quality, how they should be displayed, and other general information. The Japanese Governmental Consumer Affairs Agency has summarized detailed information in a [handbook](#) which covers common labeling matters and vocabulary related to major daily goods.

NORDIC SUCCESS CASES

To give some more concrete examples of Nordic brands who have succeeded in the Japanese e-commerce market using the general tactics and guidelines presented so far, this section will go through the journeys and lessons learned from three Nordic players who have long been present on the market. These are Swedish baby-products and accessories brand BabyBjörn, Finnish linen- and wool textiles producer Lapuan Kankurit, and Swedish Glassware brands Orrefors and Kosta Boda.

BABYBJÖRN

BabyBjörn is a Swedish brand selling baby products such as carriers, cots, and bouncers. They were founded in 1961 and have since won global recognition and several design awards for their products. They entered the Japanese market around the year 2000 through a local distributor, who in turn sold BabyBjörn's products to local physical retailers.

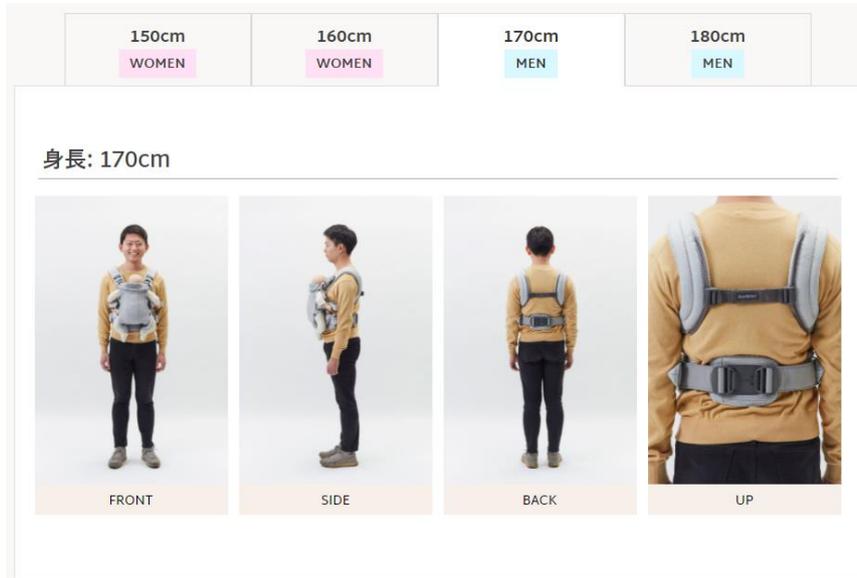
Around 2010, BabyBjörn set up their own Japanese subsidiary to gain more control over their market presence, and at the same time, set up their first online sales channels with Amazon and Rakuten. A few years later, they launched their own, fully controlled online store at babybjorn.jp. Today, the majority of BabyBjörn's sales in Japan come from Online channels – even more so with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting shifts in shopping behaviours. Third-party platforms such as Rakuten and Amazon still drive a majority of Online sales, but BabyBjörn are trying to shift volumes long-term to their own site as much as possible as it is preferable both for higher profitability and increased control over how the brand is presented to consumers.

For BabyBjörn, combining online and physical sales channels has been a good recipe for success. Each channel plays its own role and targets a different customer segment – with physical stores creating local credibility as well as opportunities for potential customers to experience the products and better appreciate their quality, whereas online channels target those who prefer to do online research, and city-dwellers who may not own cars and thus prefer to get large items home-delivered. As such the level of cannibalization and overlap between the channels is low enough to motivate a continued presence in both.

BabyBjörn lean heavily on Nordic values in the branding and marketing – in their case, using international models, images and video throughout their online presence. They build on Nordic associations with progressivism and equal parenting, highlighting these values in an entertaining (rather than overly problematizing) way in their marketing and campaigns. They also play into increasing environmental awareness amongst Japanese consumers through eco-labelled products.

On the other hand, when talking about their products, BabyBjörn are careful to emphasize their fit to Japanese needs – highlighting the advantages of placing babies in bouncers rather than on the floor (as would otherwise be common Japanese practice) or of keeping babies in harnesses rather than in strollers when navigating dense city- and public transport environments. They also show diagrams specifically highlighting how products have been adapted in size to fit people of average Japanese height. Finally, they are careful to provide

clear manuals and instruction videos for products in Japanese, and to show adherence to Japanese-specific safety standards and certifications. The information shown on BabyBjörn’s product sites is essentially the same as for the international version, however presented in a much more visual way with extensive use of images rather than passages of text, as this is more appealing to Japanese consumers.



11: Picture-content from BabyBjörn’s Japanese product site, showing how the product has been adapted for Japanese sizes

As for marketing, BabyBjörn initially relied heavily on Search engine marketing and SEO to drive traffic to their shop sites. Whilst this is still an important component of their marketing strategy, focus has shifted in recent years towards social media marketing and use of influencers. For influencers, BabyBjörn identify a large number of smaller influencers in the correct segments (recent mothers or mothers-to-be) to post about their child-care experiences and using BabyBjörn’s products. This strategy has proven very effective in driving both traffic and sales conversions.

One strong recommendation from BabyBjörn when working with local partners and stores is to focus as much as possible on a single exclusive partnership when first entering the market. There can be a temptation to get products into as many stores as possible, but this strategy will often result in no single store having incentives or resources to properly market the product. In the long term, this is an ineffective method to build brand awareness, and even worse, may lead to some stores starting to discount excess stock, actively hurting the brand. Instead, working with a single, larger partner, whilst it may lead to lower initial sales, creates the necessary preconditions for long-term brand building. For those with enough resources to seriously invest in the Japanese market, immediately setting up and driving traffic to a fully owned, proprietary store can even be the most profitable option. However, for most, the exposure which can be gained from appearing on major third-party sites can be a more reasonable strategy to start driving initial sales. From there, a brand can work to gradually build and nurture brand awareness, with the aim of converting customer traffic to their own site in the longer term.

LAPUAN KANKURIT

Lapuan Kankurit (LK) is a Finnish textile company founded in 1973 by third-generation weaver Juha Hjelt and his wife Liisa, but the weaving tradition dates back to 1917 when his grandfather started making felt boots. The company is still family run today as the CEO is their son Esko. It is known for high quality bath linen, scarfs, blankets, and other textile daily goods.

LK entered Japan in 2008 with test sales carried focused on limited items in Isetan and online sales through a local interior focused website with strong sales power. The market entry, development, and representation (and this interview) has been done with a strong local distributor called Biotope. They oversee the LK brand and carry out sales and marketing activities such as pop-up store, B2B-event booths, localize the brand materials/visuals, and adapt the market development strategy to fit the Japanese market both offline and online.

LK also started working on developing a Japanese exclusive design with local designer Suzuki Masaru. Today the brand is established across the country at various interior shop locations as well as its own flagship store in Omotesando, Tokyo. Furthermore, the brand is available on several interior and Nordic focused online shops in addition to having a fully-fledged in-house operated e-commerce site. The Omotesando store is meant to serve as a kind of Mecca for fans of the brands to gather and as such pre-covid they regularly held Finnish focused event such as a Sauna or cooking class event. Online promotion is done mainly through Instagram as visual image is the most important aspect to show to the Japanese consumer. Here LK also utilizes influencers relevant to the brand image and prefers to do promotion with larger number of smaller accounts as this increases the potential for good variation while keeping target relevant vs a single large influencer that might run the risk of not being a good match. The online and offline placement is aimed to work in synergy by showing consumers one image and focusing them to specific point of sales. Therefore, it is worth noting that LK is not currently actively pursuing Rakuten or Amazon as online sales channels for as the brand building power on those sites is lower compared to more relevant specific category e-commerce sites.

The journey to this stage has been taken gradually through step-by-step expansion in B2C through collaborations and pop-up stores to increase awareness and B2B via growing exhibitions at industry events to gain the attention of retailers. The slow and steady approach was needed as the goal for LK was to not just get quick sales but to build a brand long term and the key to that process was creating a core fan audience with a deep connection to the brand first and then try reach a larger audience. Also, the slower process meant that LK could avoid spreading resources to thin across many marketing platforms and sales channels thus matching and growing the sales team capability and knowledge alongside the steady increase in sales.



12: Localized social media content showing LK goods being used in Japanese daily life

LK did this first by focusing on wool items and the Finnish image of cold nature that is already established in the Japanese mindset and this was used as a base to show how the items would fit into a Japanese lifestyle. This was needed as while the Finnish image is already strong and great tool for new brands wanting to reach a wide audience when entering Japan, it will only take that new brand so far. Especially for international lifestyle goods and brands in Japan, once it needs to convert interested customers to purchasing customers LK stresses there should be an emphasis to show how the Japanese customer can implement it into their daily life. Therefore, having a good understanding of the end users and their daily life is extra important for the Japanese market.

Furthermore, LK stresses it is important for newer brands wanting to enter the Japanese market to figure out your key item and that the best performer might be different than what is expected. Being able to carry out some type of initial test sales can give highly valuable information for figuring out the Japanese consumer and avoid potential failures with large stock in items that are not suitable for the market. LK also mentions it is also worth to note that in building the brand, especially when aiming for a more premium image, new brands should be careful not to oversell as discounting will dilute the image. Finally, emphasis should be placed on finding a good partner that is willing to plan long-term and work together in creating the brand image as that is the best recipe for a stable entry.

ORREFORS KOSTA BODA

Orrefors Kosta Boda (*hereafter shortened to OKB*) is a Swedish glassware corporation formed in 1990, though many the individual glassworks who are part of the group have a significantly longer history, with some dating back to the 1800's. Today they mainly sell glassware and interior design elements under the two brands of *Orrefors* and *Kosta Boda*, and are represented in Japan (and this interview) by a long-term local Japanese partner.

OKB also has a long history in Japan, with a presence dating back to the 1970's. They have long promoted their goods in an own gallery in Tokyo as well as through several distributor partnerships. They started developing their Japanese website in 2011. Though they have also long been present on both Amazon and Rakuten, OKB are now turning away from these third-party sites and are no longer promoting new products on these platforms, citing problems with controlling pricing of their goods as well as their brand image. Instead, OKBs own Japanese website is their most important sales channel, especially as sales from department stores have plummeted during the recent pandemic-related state-of-emergency declarations.

Reflecting on their long history in the market, OKB remarks that whilst Nordic brands certainly still have a strong brand image and loyal audience, recent years have seen higher competition, especially as more Nordic players have targeted Japan to capitalize on favorable conditions. As such, making it as a Nordic brand in the market is less of a given now than it was 10 or 20 years ago.

Whilst OKBs products don't necessarily play into the traditional Nordic associations of simplicity and clean design, they are still using their Nordic image as a core part of their marketing story to this day, using Japanese consumers' familiarity with the Nordic idea as a stepping-in point into the more specific narrative and brand story of OKB and its history.

OKB also highlight the need to understand that what the Japanese customers like about your brand may be very different from what customers in other markets appreciate the most. For OKB, who have been present in the market for a long time, nostalgia from customers who grew up around OKB products have become one of the key selling points for their products. As a result, the products which are best sellers in Japan are often completely different from those driving the largest volumes in other markets and choosing which products to include and highlight in the Japanese catalogue is thus an exercise based on both a deep understanding of the market and many years of experience with selling the products there.

A final tip is, paradoxically, to avoid becoming too popular. Japan is a market especially prone to fads and trends, which can lead some products to quickly gain fame, only to then become immediately outdated as their short stint in the spotlight passes over. How to best manage this tendency for short-lived fads will of course depend on the specific brand strategy chosen, but for many brands who seek longevity and stable profitability, it can better to manage a quality group of loyal customers than attempting to grow too wide too fast.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Business Sweden would like to thank everyone who has contributed with their input, insights and expertise to this report. Specifically, we want to thank everyone who has taken the time to participate in an interview, including...

- Haruna McWilliams, *Tokyoesque*
- Keita Fujiwara, *KOTTE&Co (Representing Orrefors Kostaboda)*
- Kumiko Ito, *Rights&Brands*
- Makoto Fukai, *BabyBjörn*
- Maria Arteaga, *DMFA (Digital marketing for Asia)*
- Masato Tsukiji, *Biotope (Representing Lapuan Kankurit)*

APPENDIX

Type	Trademark	Design	
Application	26€ (¥3,400) +53€ (¥8,600) per classification	Application	124€ (¥16,000)※
Defensive mark application	53€ (¥6,800) +134€ (¥17,200) per classification	Defensive mark application	40€ (¥5,100)※
			※ per design in the case of collective application for multiple designs)
Annual fee / Registration fee			
Registration fee:	219€ (¥28,200) per classification	1-3rd year: annually,	66€ (¥8,500)
-Payment of registration fee by installments	127€ (¥16,400) per classification	4-15th year: annually,	131€ (¥16,900)
Renewal fee:	301€ (¥38,800) per classification	4-20th year: annually, ※1	※1 For Designs applications filed on or after April 1, 2007
-Payment of renewal fee by installments	176€ (¥22,600) per classification	4-25th year: annually, ※2	※2 For Designs applications filed on or after April 1, 2020
Defensive mark registration fee:	219 (¥28,200) per classification		
Defensive mark renewal fee:	259 (¥33,400) per classification		
Opposition/ Appeal / Trial			
Opposition	23€ (¥3,000) +62€ (¥8,000) per classification		
Appeal	117€ (¥15,000) +311€ (¥40,000) per classification	Appeal	427€ (¥55,000)
Trial / Retrial	117€ (¥15,000) +311€ (¥40,000) per classification	Trial / Retrial	427€ (¥55,000)

**BUSINESS
FINLAND**



BUSINESS SWEDEN TOKYO

Roppongi 1-10-3-200, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032, JAPAN

T+81 (0)3 5562 5091

tokyo@business-sweden.se

BUSINESS SWEDEN Box 240, SE-101 24 Stockholm, Sweden

World Trade Center, Klarabergsviadukten 70

T +46 8 588 660 00 F +46 8 588 661 90

info@business-sweden.se

BUSINESS-SWEDEN.COM



[LINKEDIN.COM/COMPANY/BUSINESS-SWEDEN](https://www.linkedin.com/company/business-sweden)



[TWITTER.COM/BUSINESSSWEDEN](https://twitter.com/BUSINESSSWEDEN)



[FACEBOOK.COM/BUSINESSSWEDEN](https://www.facebook.com/BUSINESSSWEDEN)



[INSTAGRAM.COM/BUSINESSSWEDEN](https://www.instagram.com/BUSINESSSWEDEN)