

Whether through direct investment, partnerships or by putting Japanese know-how and products to work, for Canadians, Japan means business.

LAND OF RISING OPPORTUNITY

LIKE MANY COUNTRIES THESE DAYS, JAPAN MIGHT be navigating difficult economic times. But according to Japanese trade and investment officials in Canada, there are plenty of reasons to bet on Japan and tap into its resident strengths.

Among its pluses, Japan remains Asia's largest market and home of Asia's largest concentration of Fortune 500 companies, says Yuji Kurano, the executive director of JETRO Toronto (Japan External Trade Organization). "Japan is also one of Asia's largest sources of industrial foreign direct investment and is responsible for Asia's most developed industrial network."

In other words, not only do partnerships with Japanese companies provide a ready gateway into Japan and other Asian markets, Japanese consumer purchasing power also makes Japan a key market for Canadian goods and services. The opposite also remains true.

Long known for its engineering and manufacturing excellence, today Japan is emphasizing new age expertise in areas ranging from ICT, robotics and aerospace to environmental and energy technologies. "For example, Hitachi is working in Saskatchewan

on wind and gas turbines, and has also started in the area of carbon capture and storage," says Mr. Kurano.

In its traditional stronghold industries, such as industrial equipment manufacturing, Japan remains stalwart. Consider Kubota; since establishing itself here in 1975, the maker of efficient, small-diesel tractors has become a favourite among Canadian landscape contractors and maintenance organizations, large property owners, construction contractors and farmers.

Among the examples of high-tech Canadian and Japanese manufacturers working together are landing gear maker Sumitomo Precision Products' relationship with Bombardier, and CAE and Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation's (MJET) collaboration on a training solution for the new Mitsubishi regional jet.

Mr. Kurano says Canada and Japan are natural partners. "We share fundamental values, and Canada's wealth in natural resources has long matched Japan's demand for them."

All the more reasons to continue cultivating a mutually beneficial relationship. ●

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