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INTERVIEW

Yamaha is once again the market leader with 18% market share

Interview with Mr Vincent Mentha, Managing Director at Hostettler AG, Yamaha's official importer

Yamaha is a century old leading company well known for making fantastic motorcycles, incredible music instruments, HiFi equipment, boats, bikes, etc.

We interviewed, Mr. Vincent Mentha, CEO of Hostettler AG, the official distributor of Yamaha motorcycles, scooters and recreational vehicles for Switzerland and Liechtenstein since 1968. He kindly answered our questions on the latest trends and the foreseeable future for this industry.

Yamaha has been leading the motorcycles sales in Switzerland for more than ten years, how do you explain this success?

The excellent collaboration between Hostettler, Yamaha Motor Europe and Yamaha Motor Corporation has been a success, as the brand has long been solidly established as the number one supplier of powered two-wheelers in our country. During all these years, the cooperation has been intensified and constantly optimized. As a family-owned company, Hostettler has continued to grow and improve its level of service for the distribution of the Yamaha products. The infrastructure at Hostettler's headquarters in Sursee,



Mr. Vincent Mentha, Managing Director

Central Switzerland, has been continuously improved. One of the most important points is certainly the Swiss Yamaha dealer network, which has always received special attention. For instance, over the last 5 years, the network has been completely restructured, including the implementation of new brand standards. Another key to Yamaha's success in Switzerland has certainly been Hostettler's intensive involvement in motorcycle racing in all its disciplines. Over the years, many championships have been won in Switzerland and around the world by top riders supported by the importer Hostettler AG. This commitment is part of the DNA of Hostettler. During all these years, Yamaha

has continuously developed products of a high technological level, meeting the expectations of its customers as closely as possible. Yamaha is well known for its innovative and exciting approach!

What can you tell us about your sales in 2020?

Our sales were very good in 2020, both for motorcycles and scooters. Yamaha is once again the market leader with more than 8,500 units sold and almost 18% market share. The overall market for powered two-wheelers grew by 17.43% to almost 50,000 registered units. The effects that led to this are certainly linked to the Covid-19 situation, but also to the effects of the change in legislation for driving licenses for powered 2-wheelers. Indeed, 2020 was the last year of direct access to motorcycles of unlimited displacement and power for people over 25 years old. This logically led to a strong demand in this category, concentrated in 2020.

How have you been impacted by the COVID (positive or negative)?

Considering our sales results described above, we can only be

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INTERVIEW

“The demand has been very strong over the last months”

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satisfied with the effects of Covid-19, and this in a rather surprising way. Due to the restrictions on their liberty as a result of the pandemic situation, consumers have turned massively to accessible and usable leisure products.

Traditionally, the start of the motorcycle season takes place in spring, around March. It is exactly there that the first lockdown took place, which first caused a shock wave in all fields of activity, including ours. Then, when the shops reopened, we observed a surprising enthusiasm for leisure products in general and for motorcycles and scooters in particular. This positive trend has continued until the end of the year.

What are your bestselling models?

There are many bestsellers in the Yamaha product range, but for sure one of the most famous in the motorcycle category is the MT series. This range is part of the Hyper Naked segment and is available in different sizes, from 125 to 1000 cm³. A total of no less than 8 models make up this range and almost all of them are among the bestsellers in their respective categories. The MT-07, for example, with more than 1,300 units sold in 2020, is the bestseller in all categories of motorcycles. (Editor's note: the success shall continue as the MT-07 and MT-09 have been completely revised this year). But Yamaha is also known for its models with a long tradition, such as the Ténéré



One of Yamaha's bestseller, the 2021 fully revised MT09.

700, which is a motorcycle that is ready to meet any challenge on all types of terrain around the world. In the field of scooters, Yamaha has long set the standard with its TMAX, XMAX and NMAX models, which have a strong identity (Editor's note: the scooter range also benefit from new features such as better connection with the smartphone, start/stop function, and improved security).

In your industry, are there any technological or regulatory trends ongoing similar to automotive?

Yes, quite similarly to the car industry, regulations for powered two-wheelers are also changing. As of 1st January 2021, the new Euro 5 emission regulations for powered two-wheelers have been implemented. These standards are more and more stringent regarding noise and engine emissions. All manufacturers have to adapt to them, and Yamaha in particular has made great technological efforts to meet these requirements.

What will motorcycles and scooters look like in 5 or 10 years?

That's an interesting question! Certainly, there will be technical changes related to what we explained earlier about standards. Safety technology will also advance, as can already be seen in the automotive industry, such as driving and comfort assistants. Of course, electrification is a very actual subject and several manufacturers already offer models of scooters or motorcycles powered by this type of energy. Yamaha is no exception and is currently finalizing its E-powered models which should be introduced on the market very soon. But one thing will remain: customers and fans of freedom and sensations will always want to feel the same emotions. And therefore, our products will always have to be able to provide this kind of unique experience!

Japan's football heroes to kick-off Olympic Torch Relay

With 121 days to the opening ceremony of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the torch relay will begin its journey in a highly symbolic way.

Indeed, the members of Japan's 2011 women's football team who won the World Cup that year will start the relay from Fukushima.

Captain Homare Sawa and her teammates have become national heroes winning the prestigious FIFA World Cup only four months after the most deadly natural disaster the country ever experienced.

While the country was just starting to recover from the Great East

Japan Earthquake, this victory meant a great deal. Captain Sawa dedicated this win to the people who suffered. Then-Prime minister

Kan said he thought that they brought courage to the whole nation.

Source: [Tokyo 2020](#)



Torch relay ceremony: Source Tokyo 2020

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EVENT

The Tokyo Games will have to take place without foreign visitors

The decision was expected and has been taken on March 20. Due to the epidemiological situation, foreign spectators will unfortunately not be allowed at the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games starting on July 23.

During the last Five Parties meeting between the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG), the Organising Committee Tokyo 2020 and the Government of Japan, the Japanese parties have informed the IOC and IPC which have acknowledged this logical decision.

Currently, the COVID-19 situation in Japan and many other countries around the world is still very challenging and a number of variant strains have emerged, whilst international travel remains severely restricted globally. Based on the present situation of the pandemic, it is highly unlikely that entry into Japan will be guaranteed this summer for people from overseas. In order to give clarity to ticket holders living overseas and to enable them to adjust their travel plans at this stage, the parties on the Japanese side have come to the conclusion that they will not be able to enter into Japan at the time of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

This conclusion will further contribute to ensure safe and secure Games for all participants and the Japanese public.

In line with their principle of safety first for all participants and respect to all parties on the Japanese side, the IOC and IPC announced in today's Five Parties meeting that they fully respect and accept this conclusion.

Under these circumstances, ticket holders from overseas will soon be informed of the refund mechanism.

Source: [Tokyo2020](#)

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EVENT

革新

INNOVATION

Japanese AI start-ups: Axelspace, Kotozna and Effciera

We continue our series on Japanese start-ups who were part of the J-Startup program attending the last [CES 2021 Japan Showcase](#). This time we introduce three AI-oriented companies.

[AXELSPACE](#) has developed a product called AxelGlobe which is an intuitive earth observation web platform. Satellite observation is usually costly and requires a high technical knowledge, but not for AxelGlobe which is highly accurate but also affordable and easy to use.

Thanks to [Kotozna's](#) In-room's multilingual, chatbot-powered,

contactless solutions, hotels can now operate without fear of contagious diseases and language barriers. Customers can make their wishes clear thanks to a highly accurate live translation and hotels can better share useful information with their guests. The system already covers more than 100 languages.

[LeapMind](#) is developing deep learning solutions on edge devices. Its product Effciera has set a new standard for edge AI. It is extremely light yet highly effective making it suitable for very small devices. Efficiency is key for the future of IoT,

smart homes and infrastructures. Effciera allows substantial savings in regard of energy and space.



One of the micro satellites used by Axelspace

Agenda

活動

AGENDA

✓ Stay tuned!

JETRO is a government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small to medium size Japanese firms maximize their global export potential.

The JETRO Switzerland Newsletter can also be viewed and/or downloaded online: <http://www.jetro.go.jp/switzerland/newsletter>

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