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会見

INTERVIEW

There are many synergies between Mabuchi Motor and Electromag

Interview with Tomofumi IMAMURA, Mabuchi Motor Co., Ltd. Group Executive Officer, Chief Regional Officer in Europe, Mabuchi Motor Electromag SA Chairman

It is a safe assumption to consider that almost all our readers are using Mabuchi Motor products daily even though they may not be familiar with the name, as Mabuchi is a business-to-business company. Mabuchi Motor produces small electric motors that are found everywhere. Dozens of those can be found in a car to open the windows, adjust the mirrors and seats, and lock a car, etc. At home, your electric toothbrush, shaver, or vacuum cleaner are equipped with them. Mabuchi's motors are so good that some of their products have high market share; door mirrors accounts for around 80 percent and door lock accounts for around 70% in the world.

Last year the company acquired the Swiss motor company Electromag (currently Mabuchi Motor Electromag) to enter the medical industry where the need and potential for small electric motor are considerable. Mr. IMAMURA kindly answered our questions on this highly specialized industry and the potential synergies between the two companies.



Mr Tomofumi IMAMURA

Can you introduce Mabuchi Motor to our readers?

Mabuchi was founded by two brothers in 1954 in Tokyo. Mabuchi is a global company with 23 subsidiaries and more than 20,000 employees worldwide. About 90% of our sales are outside of Japan.

In what industries is Mabuchi Motor active and what are your main products?

We produce small electric motors for automotive products (73%) and life and industrial

products (27%). A car has many small motors to activate its moving parts: power window lifters, door mirrors, headlight level adjuster and power seats, electric parking brake, seat belts, air conditioning damper, door locks, etc. Aside from automotive, as life & industrial products, we produce motors for many kinds of applications such as small mobiles, collaborative robots, electric toothbrushes, vacuum cleaners, hair dryers, shavers, etc.

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INTERVIEW

There are many synergies between Mabuchi Motor and Electromag

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In July 2021, Mabuchi acquired the Swiss company Electromag (Vaud); what were the reasons?

Mabuchi is seeking to diversify its portfolio of applications. The demand can be volatile depending on the economic situation. The medical market is an interesting industry for us with which we have synergies. Like automotive, medtech is a highly regulated industry in which strict standards apply for safety, accuracy, and reliability.

Mabuchi Motor Electromag has good products of ultra-quiet and high-speed motor and recognized certifications such as ISOs.

Electromag is a small company in comparison to Mabuchi Motor; how do you identify interesting companies overseas?

Our research department is always looking for potential partners and markets. We have already identified the medical industry as having a strong potential for us. We were looking for a medical motor company to work with. Thanks to this acquisition, we benefit from Mabuchi Motor Electromag's expertise.

How is the integration going?

Very well. This is mutually a beneficial integration. Mabuchi Motor Electromag has very good technology, but it is a rather small company. Thanks to Mabuchi's production capacity, network, and engineers, Mabuchi Motor Electromag can further develop its potential,

for instance, for home care. From Mabuchi's perspective, Mabuchi Motor Electromag is not only a step in the medical field but also has interesting technologies that can be expanded and sold their product to industrial applications. By integrating with Mabuchi manufacturing know-how, Mabuchi Motor Electromag can gain further competitiveness in medical market with low-cost mass production.

Did COVID and supply chain issues affect Mabuchi and Electromag sales?

Mabuchi must cope with challenges that affect the whole industry, such as supply chain shortages and inflation on raw materials like copper and steel. In the automobile market, demand fluctuates due to these factors.

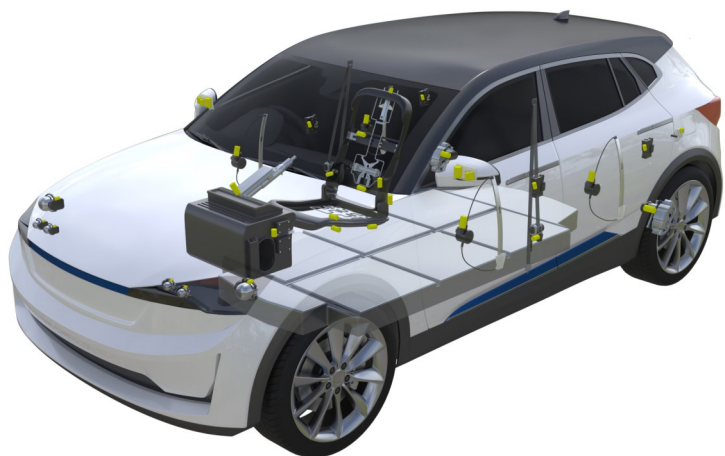
The situation is different for Mabuchi Motor Electromag. The company produces motor that are used

for medical ventilators. The demand has exploded because of COVID-19, with record sales in 2020. Mabuchi Motor Electromag's motors contribute to the healthy lives of many people. Until now, Mabuchi Motor Electromag has focused on the high-end market. Now the goal is to also reach the middle-range market, thanks to Mabuchi's low-cost mass production.

What are the trends in your industry?

In a nutshell, the key word is efficiency. The demand is for light, low-energy consumption, and small motor. I would add that customers want a quieter motor with less vibrations and less energy consumption. We are particularly good at it.

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Dozens of small motors are equipping a modern car. Here in yellow on the picture.

There are many synergies between Mabuchi Motor and Electromag

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What are your goals for the future?

For the next two to three years the goal is to achieve this integration.

As said, there are multiple synergies we want to develop. We want to expand our lineup in the medical application. We expect Mabuchi Motor Electromag to grow accordingly. We already have a talented

team here and will continue in the future in Switzerland. Plus, there is strong local expertise for medtech in Switzerland.

会見

INTERVIEW

Japanese economy starts 2022 with a small contraction of its GDP

From January to March 2022, the Japanese economy contracted slightly (-0.2%). The strength of the Yen has partially absorbed the inflation on energy sources - a phenomenon shared with Switzerland. Looking into the detail, the demand has resisted amid the adverse business environment (+0.2%).

It is the net export of goods & services that was unfavorable (-0.4%). Indeed, although exports have

grown for the third quarter in a row, imports have increased even more resulting in a negative balance.

Over the past two years, Japan's economic activity has fluctuated following the COVID waves and related sanitary measures.

For the record, the GDP contracted in Q1 (-0.3%) and Q3 (-0.7%) but grew in Q2 (0.5%) and Q4 (0.9%)

resulting in an overall growth for 2021.

While the third largest economy in the world resisted during 2022's first quarter, the second one will be challenging. Chinese slowdown, supply chain issues and inflation.

Source: [Cabinet Office of Japan](#)

動向

TREND

JETRO Invest Japan on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook

Our colleagues from JETRO Invest Japan Department have launched official social media accounts on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#) for foreign companies and foreign-affiliated companies to share useful information about establishing bases or expanding business operations in Japan, and alliances or partnerships with Japanese compa-

nies. They will post information in English on the latest trends, including Japanese market insight, case studies, business opportunities with Japanese companies, events, incentives from national and regional governments, and the regional business environment.

We welcome them on social media

and hope Swiss and Lichtenstein companies will find the published information useful. We also kindly remind them that [JETRO Geneva](#) also has an official LinkedIn account on which we share relevant information and inform on future events.

日程

ACTIVITY

Technology is helping wheelchair users to use public transports in Japan

革新

INNOVATION

Travelling when being in a wheelchair can be particularly difficult. Aware of that, four leading Japanese companies ran a test in February to improve and coordinate the services provided to wheelchair users as highlighted by the [Japan Times](#).

ANA (airlines), East Japan Railway (train), Tokyo Monorail (monorail connecting Haneda Airport to Tokyo), and Kyoto based taxi operator MK (taxi) have worked together using new technologies.

The participants could inform the airlines ANA about the specificities of their wheelchair and level of assistance required. That information was then shared with the other companies. Using location information, all companies were informed in real time when the travellers arrived and were ready to

take care of them. The participants went from Tokyo Central to Haneda Airport by train. They boarded a flight to Osaka. Upon arrival, they travelled in Kyoto, Osaka, and Hyogo prefectures using MK cabs.

The feedback from the participants was extremely positive with a

smooth journey instead of what can be a challenging trip.

The service is likely to be expanded all over Japan according to ANA. The airline is continuously trying to improve all passengers' experience. They already [introduced autonomous wheelchair in 2019](#) at Narita Airport.



Testing the electric wheelchair at Narita Airport, May 2019
Copyright ANA

Agenda: JETRO's Chairman Nobuhiko SASAKI at WEF

活動

AGENDA

Traditionally held in January, the World Economic Forum in Davos was postponed to May this year because of the pandemic.

JETRO's Chairman was speaker for a session called [Serving Up Digital Services](#). The speakers discuss on how to ensure that trade in digital services is innovative and open. The session is available in replay as well as many others on the website of the WEF.



Mr Sasaki, JETRO's Chairman

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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