

ORANGE

NEWS

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TOP INTERVIEW

MISSION 2025

The role that TAKAMAZ should play now

Interview on Manufacturing

Thoughts of the leaders of
TAKAMAZ,
taking JIMTOF2024
as signaling a turnaround

WORK & SOUL

Siam Kochi Co., Ltd.

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“Mizuhiki” is dominating
spatial aesthetics.

[Cover photo]

Location: JIYUKAJIN Mizuhiki Museum

The cover of this edition was shot in the at JIYUKAJIN Mizuhiki Museum, where a modern artistic space featuring the traditional craft of “Mizuhiki” has been created. Here we find a new world of Mizuhiki.

[Model] Anna Tauchi

TAKAMAZ

TAKAMATSU MACHINERY
PR Magazine Winter 2025

Special New Year Issue TOP INTERVIEW

MISSION 2025

The role that TAKAMAZ should play now

President
Soichiro Takamatsu

Chairman
Kiyoshi Takamatsu



While the environment in which machine tool builders find themselves presents many challenges, including the shift to electric vehicles, carbon neutrality, and digital transformation, TAKAMAZ must judge which direction to take at every turn, while facing market trends that change in the blink of an eye. However, in the midst of this, the mission that TAKAMAZ must accomplish remains constant. With the year 2025 just started, we asked the top management of TAKAMAZ again about the company's mission.

Please tell us your thoughts, as managers, about JIMTOF2024, which was held at the Tokyo Big Sight from November 5 to 10.

JIMTOF is said to be one of the world's big three machine tool fairs, and there is no doubt that it is the most important exhibition both for us and for Japan's machine tool builders as a whole. We exhibit at all of the world's top three machine tool fairs, and we felt a clear difference in enthusiasm at JIMTOF. This was true of the exhibiting manufacturers, but the visiting customers also had a really high level of enthusiasm, and that reminded us how important JIMTOF is. At the venue, we were strongly motivated to tell the customers about our new products and initiatives. Working on this in-house only will not be appreciated by anyone. I believe that the way we express this information is very important. That is why we prepared carefully for JIMTOF, which only happens once every two years. Thanks to everyone's efforts, more visitors than had been imagined came to JIMTOF2024, and many of them stopped by at the TAKAMAZ exhibition booth. Even though the capital investment needs had not risen that much, I am just thankful that we were able to build deep relationships with the people who visited. The exhibition closed with great success, with the set targets achieved, but what is important is what happens after JIMTOF. I feel that the sales department is also more strongly conscious about follow-up than ever before. At exhibitions we are not just announcing new models that address current needs, but also spreading the word about products that we will be selling in the future. I hope we have managed to clearly convey the efforts we have been making over the past two years.

So not only themes for this year and the next, but also a message for the future is included as well. Speaking of the future, 2024 was

quite a challenging year, but what do you think about the market conditions, in Japan and overseas, that will bear on the machine tool industry in 2025?

Market conditions are difficult to predict accurately. Our attitude is that we should think about what we can do once the market conditions have improved. Rather than preparing for negative circumstances, I would like to make preparations to show our capabilities once conditions get better, so that we can get maximum recognition at that point.

There have been incremental changes in many areas, so if we look at the last year or two the changes may not be that great, but if we look back a decade or two, everything has definitely changed and is definitely getting better. We need to come up with products that have improved greater when compared with such growth, or people will no longer appreciate us. So in that sense too, I believe it is important to keep evolving what we need to change each and every year. If we don't do this, the changes in one or two years may not be obvious, but it is likely that when we look back over a span of a decade we will see a great difference. TAKAMAZ is steadily attending to what we need to do every year, and we will continue our efforts with this in mind going forward.

Please tell us about the role that the TAKAMAZ you have described should play in relation to "society", "the industry" and "the customers".

Currently there are so many challenges that need to be addressed in the world. With regard to the environment these include carbon neutrality and the SDGs, while at the same time we also have to increase productivity. In order to achieve this, digital transformation and IoT are required. We have to closely examine how the wave of transition to electric vehicles will work out for the industry in which we operate. There are really a lot of challenges now, and we are of course working on them. This is because these are also management challenges for our customers. I think it is TAKAMAZ's role to help address these challenges. I hope that, in the light of this, customers decide to choose TAKAMAZ machines and purchase them. We would appreciate it if customers could tell us what challenges they are facing now. There

are many challenges now of a kind that were not spoken a decade ago. I would like you to share with us your ever-changing challenges so that we can address these challenges together with you while making use of the technology and information that we have. Machines that ignore the customers' challenges will not be supported. Providing machines that can help with these challenges is an important role for TAKAMAZ.

While doing this, are you conscious of the competition?

Of course, there are cases where we do some benchmarking of not only our competitors' product performance but also their initiatives and then use them as a reference, but the most important thing is always the customer's needs. We consider customer feedback to be of the greatest importance. When dealing with a situation where there is no single definite solution, we recognize that we will work together with the customer to tackle it.

How do you see the role of TAKAMAZ in relation to local communities?

The perspective of contributing to the local community is also becoming increasingly widespread throughout the world compared to the past. There is a growing awareness of how companies can contribute to local communities and be involved in them. Looking back on our past, our style of business is not one where our products are consumed locally. However, I would like to have more of a relationship with local communities from now on. Recently, we have been thinking how we can contribute to local communities in areas where we excel. The search is still very much in progress, but we are cooperating in educational situations such as local technical high schools and technical universities by having our engineers and designers serve as instructors. I personally would be happy to help students as much as possible with their studies.

The first interview of 2025 concluded with the top management's desire to place the greatest importance on contributing to the local community and on listening to our customers. This also overlaps with the overall thinking of TAKAMAZ, and I was reminded that it is this very philosophy that nurtures employees who customers will trust.

Thoughts of the leaders of TAKAMAZ, taking JIMTOF2024 as signaling a turnaround



General Manager
Domestic Sales Dept.

Yoshikiyo Yamazaki



Senior Executive Officer
General Manager
Overseas Sales Department

Hideki Karaki



General Manager
Sales Affairs

Kazumasa Furuya

JIMTOF2024 was staged in November last year and ended in great success, having attracted many more visitors than the last time it was held. We see this as a positive sign for the industry and expect the market to turn around. For this issue's "Interview on Manufacturing", we spoke with three department heads who have experienced firsthand the passion of customers at JIMTOF2024 and who are leading TAKAMAZ into a new year.

You have just completed JIMTOF2024, the largest-ever JIMTOF, and I would like to start by asking you about your impression of the event.

General Manager
Domestic Sales Dept.

Yamazaki

Compared to the last time when it was staged two years ago, my impression was that there were around 30% more visitors. It seems that the actual number of visitors was around 130,000. At the previous staging, JIMTOF2022, I remember that there were very few visitors from overseas since it was immediately after the Covid-19 pandemic, but this time there

were many visitors from overseas from the first day. I got the impression that there were many people from India and China in particular.

General Manager
Overseas Sales Department
Karaki

To touch on this event from the perspective of the Overseas Sales Department, our affiliate based in China, HANGZHOU FEELER TAKAMATSU MACHINERY CO., LTD., came with customers in two separate groups on a tour. A schedule was set up where they had a tour of the TAKAMAZ Head Office and Asahi Factory, and then visited JIMTOF2024, on two consecutive days.

General Manager
Sales Affairs

Furuya

This was possible because the Hokuriku bullet train has started running.

Yamazaki

Many of them told us that TAKAMAZ had really changed. Previously our mainstay was machines that were compact and designed to be used for mass production, but now we are

focusing on machines for high-mix low-volume production that can also handle larger workpieces. I feel that we were able to showcase something different from the previous character of TAKAMAZ.

Furuya

This time we did a demonstration on a general-purpose lathe, which attracted the interest of very many people.

Karaki

By exhibiting models that can handle long workpieces and are also able to complete all necessary processes on a product on a single machine, I feel that we managed to change the image of TAKAMAZ up until now and promote a "New TAKAMAZ". In that sense we managed to have a good exhibition that was right on target.

Furuya

That was the third model in the XTL Series, the XTL-8MYS, which was the main exhibit this time. Sales of that model are scheduled to start in the coming spring.

► Next, considering future sales strategies

Yamazaki

Thanks to the large number of visitors, we were able to achieve our quota of inquiries and orders at this exhibition. On the other hand, when we listened to the feedback from our customers, we found that quite a few of them had capital investment needs but were unable to invest due to the effects of the long Covid-19 pandemic, or wanted to invest in equipment due to the shift to electric vehicles but were unable to do so. Many of the customers made it clear that manufacturing of products for internal combustion engines will continue. As for the domestic market these past few years, people have kept saying that the situation will get better, but the reality is that it has been going up and down. We would like to bring the success that we had at this exhibition into the actual market, including overseas.

Karaki

Although we tend to use the general term "overseas", there are differences from region to region. In Southeast Asia, we can enter the market with the same approach to sales as in Japan, but in the European and North American markets, we recognize that finding the right match with dealers and building relationships with them is very important. In this situation, their view was that the transition to the Trump administration would revitalize the economy and get things moving, and that things would start to pick up gradually in the first half of 2025 and get better through the second half. However, there are many concerns, such as talk about tariffs, and my impression at this point is that it is difficult to predict what will happen from here on. Still, I believe that the domestic situation in the U.S. will improve, as Trump's statements and other factors can be taken as placing an emphasis on hybrid and gasoline-powered vehicles, rather than making a shift to electric vehicles.

► The profit structure of a changing TAKAMAZ

Karaki

While it is important to read the economic environment and endeavor to increase sales, it is also necessary to look at the structural challenges in TAKAMAZ's business. In Japan, the volume of specifications required by customers has increased with time significantly, and further customization has become necessary, making it difficult to make a profit because it takes many man-hours and added value to deliver a single machine. It is the Operation Department that is tackling the issue of how to improve this situation.

Furuya

That is the "TAKAMAZ Profit Improvement Project", isn't it? We definitely intend to achieve results there. I joined TAKAMAZ in 1990, and the Covid-19 pandemic was the third recessionary wave I had experienced, following the bursting of the bubble economy and the Lehman collapse. What I feel from my experience is that the thing our customers value is after-sales service. There are cheap machines and expensive ones, and slow and fast delivery lead times, but in the end it is the trust that is built through after-sales service that counts. TAKAMAZ has gained the support of small and medium-sized enterprises by valuing the factory floor and continuing steady and diligent sales efforts, and I would like to take on the challenge of new initiatives without losing sight of that point.

Now that JIMTOF2024 has ended with great success and you managed to make the presentation you had hoped to, what are your prospects for developments from here on?

Yamazaki

At a time when the future is uncertain, we would like to return to our roots with diligent sales activities. First of all, we intend to visit all the customers we greeted at JIMTOF2024

without omission. We have received a great number of inquiries about shaft cutting, which we mentioned earlier. We see the most promising of these as concrete sales opportunities. As for new prospects, I feel that customers getting to know about TAKAMAZ's new initiatives in the turning work field, which has been sluggish for the past two years, has been a very good trigger, and we hope to translate this into solid business results.

Karaki

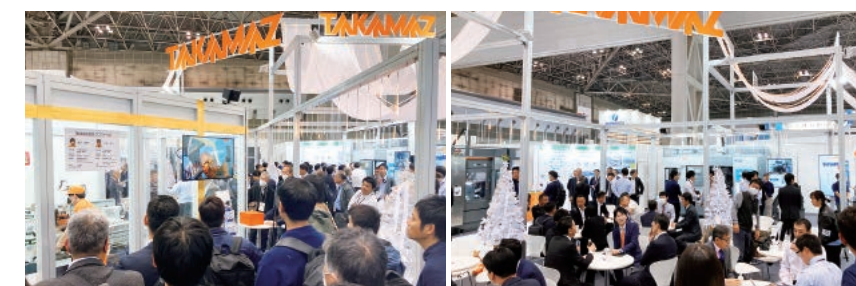
What was good about this exhibition was that we were able to dispel the image that overseas customers had about TAKAMAZ machines, and their concern that they were not rigid enough due to their compact size, by showing them larger machines. Considering the future market, we see that we should turn our attention to India, and we plan to participate in Indian exhibitions.

Furuya

The Operation Department handles a wide variety of tasks, including being involved in exhibitions, business negotiations, and after-sales service. During our work, we will maintain our efforts to respond quickly to what our customers want by staying close to our sales personnel. We intend to provide solid support to sales through work that puts the convenience of our customers first, including the training of young people involved in maintenance work.

The year 2025 will begin under unpredictable circumstances, with political and technological trends in the midst of change, but we will take our success at JIMTOF2024 as a sign of a turnaround and introduce a new TAKAMAZ to Japan and overseas. We look forward to working with you again this year.

JIMTOF2024 (Staged in November last year)



Total number of exhibition visitors
129,018
(Previous time 114,158) **13% up**

Total number of visitors to the TAKAMAZ booth
2,407
(Previous time 1,797) **34% up**

vol.008

Siam Kochi Co., Ltd.

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A working environment where the phrase “Sabai Sabai” is heard everywhere.
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In this edition's WORK & SOUL we are leaving Japan and talking to a customer in Thailand. This was an interview conducted in a friendly atmosphere from start to finish, connecting online with the president, who has close ties to Japan. It was a meaningful meeting, with his son also making an appearance at the end.

What aspects of the workplace do you feel are uniquely Thai?

The working hours, holiday pay, and other work arrangements are very similar to those in Japan. Thai people frequently use the expression “Sabai Sabai”. It means “comfortable, relaxed, and feeling good”, but the phrase also sums up the atmosphere that is valued in the workplace. For Thai people, working in a good mood is important. It is also believed that it is very important for the managers of factories in Thailand to maintain an environment where people can work without worries.

Please tell us about the characteristics of the region where your company manufactures products and the environment where you are located.

Thailand is dotted with industrial parks, and my factory is located a bit away from one of such prominent parks. Although it

is far from the city and residential areas, we have a dormitory for our employees, so there is no time-consuming commute to work. Naturally, the factory has a corporate cafeteria and a cafe.

Please tell us about your company's business.

Thailand's industrial structure is much the same as Japan's. The main industry is automobile production too. The main work at this factory is also machining automobile and motorcycle parts, with the greatest focus on automotive gear parts. The factory is equipped with personnel and equipment for cutting, turning, milling, bending, thread rolling, and polishing processes. Usually in Thailand, as in Japan, the range of processes to be done is divided up among different factories, and so our ability to complete product manufacturing from start to finish is a unique strength.

How did you start your current business?

I originally worked for a Japanese automobile manufacturer. From there, I moved to a company that served as a supplier, and after building my knowledge more, I started my own business. The company started with four people and after 17 years, now has

more than 90 employees. Although we had some difficulties with cash flow soon after establishment, I think it is safe to say that, operationally, we have been doing well so far.

How is the current business environment, given factors like the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic?

The impact of Covid-19 has been very significant in Thailand. Demand has decreased, and due to behavioral restrictions and other factors, sales have also dropped significantly. Since then, we have been on a recovery trend, but have not yet returned to previous conditions yet. The number of automobiles sold in Thailand was 2 million at its peak and has declined to about 1.7 million this year, so the impact of this decline is reflected proportionally in the sales of this factory.

What do you think are the strengths and competitive advantages of your company as you manage a factory in Thailand?

The first advantage is that we can supply products of the same quality as in Japan at Thai prices. The second is the speed of decision-making. The strength of the company is that I, as president, am involved in all operations and can make decisions

immediately, rather passing issues through bureaucratic stages. In addition, although this is a local company, we are able to communicate well with our Japanese customers and build a relationship that is based on the heart rather than words.

What were some of the ideas and initiatives that led up to your current strengths?

Regarding part machining, our strength is that we can handle everything from start to finish, but this means that it is important to be able to overcome our weaknesses and make higher quality products. I believe that our continued focus on quality to the greatest extent possible has led to the trust that we see today. Although I have been involved in Japanese automobile manufacturing for a long time, initially the quality of Japanese automobiles was said to be not very good. However, as a result of continuous improvements, Japanese automobiles are now regarded as the highest quality in the world. This factory has also introduced Japanese production systems to improve quality. We are also working to improve employee management skills through workshops and on-the-job training, but Thai people have strong a “Sabai Sabai” mentality and tend to be overly optimistic.

What principles and philosophies are most important for you?

Our management philosophy is “Honest, Considerate, Competent, and Conscientiousness” as our code of conduct, and we believe that the most important priorities are: customers first, ourselves second, society third, and shareholders fourth. I am aware of my responsibility to do my job, to be honest with the company, society, and shareholders, and to uphold moral and orderly conduct.

What is your vision for the future?

Right now our field is the automotive industry, but in the future we would like to take the technology we have developed in the automotive industry and further advance it so that we can supply parts for airplanes.

Finally, what do you appreciate about TAKAMAZ's machines, service, and so on that led you to install our machines? Please give us some actual examples.

TAKAMAZ's machines are more compact and easier to lay out than others, which is a major reason why we introduced them. We now have over 40 TAKAMAZ machines in operation at our factory, and communication is very smooth when we have problems or need maintenance advice. Your support at

the factory floor is very good. We look forward to working more closely with TAKAMAZ to ensure that this factory continues to evolve into the future.

At the end of the interview, we were also able to talk with the President's son (bottom left of photo on p. 7), who is working with TAKAMAZ machines. He mentioned, “I have been using TAKAMAZ machines since I first started working at this factory. I appreciate the fact that TAKAMAZ machines are compact, easy to handle, easy to maintain, and have short lead times. It is good that the concept remains the same even when new machines are introduced, so we can use them as they are.” This was a very nice and happy interview for us. Thank you very much.

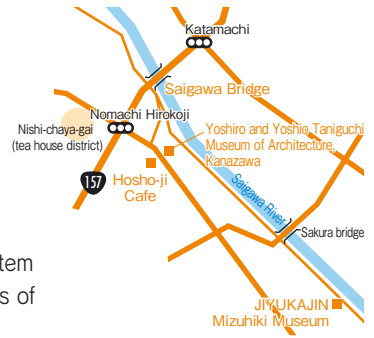
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Capital: 17 million baht
Number of employees: 93 (as of April 2024)
Established: March 2007
Nature of business: Precision automotive parts

Traveling the Hokuriku Area to Experience Craftsmanship

— CRAFT CONSCIOUS —

Unleash your sense of beauty. “Mizuhiki” is dominating spatial aesthetics.

On the banks of the Saigawa River, which runs through the city of Kanazawa, new aspirations in traditional crafts and culture are beginning to emerge. Mizuhiki, a well-known traditional craft of Ishikawa, has become not only a fashion item but also an attractive spatial tool, and architecture that was intended to house works of art has been turned into a museum with its own value as a work of art.



Jiyukajin Mizuhiki Museum

Opened in April 2023. This is a museum of mizuhiki where visitors can experience a fantastic space adorned with lampshades. In the adjacent shop, beautifully designed mizuhiki with delicacy and warmth, carefully crafted one by one by skilled artisans, are on display.

Yoshio and Yoshio Taniguchi Museum of Architecture, Kanazawa

This is a museum about architecture and the city. Designed by Yoshio Taniguchi, it was built on the site of Yoshio Taniguchi's residence.



Hoshio-ji Cafe

Garden & Cafe in the Teramachi area. With a main hall that has a history of about 400 years and a priest who is also a Zen painting and calligraphy artist, the temple is full of attractions.



Saigawa Bridge

Mizuhiki, as a lucky charm, was believed to bring good luck and blessings when tied, and was attached to congratulatory gifts. In Kanazawa, the delicate beauty and design qualities of mizuhiki have been elevated to a new level, and now they are used in a variety of settings. The name Jiyukajin Mizuhiki Museum means freedom, playfulness, and beauty, and as the name suggests, it is an art museum using mizuhiki to create a beautiful space. It will surprise and inspire the viewer. Walking along the banks of the Saigawa River from the Mizuhiki Museum, you will come across the Yoshio and Yoshio Taniguchi Museum of Architecture, Kanazawa.

Inside the building, the hall and tea ceremony room of the Japanese-style annex “Yushintei” of the Akasaka Rikyu guesthouse have been reproduced to showcase the architecture as a new style of museum to the world. Further down the Saigawa River is the 100-year-old Saigawa Bridge. The Teramachi temple district which was created to protect the central area of Kanazawa and town across the river, show the history of how the city of Kanazawa was built. Right now in Kanazawa, the banks of the Saigawa River are becoming a hot spot. Feel the breath of a new culture while relaxing in a cafe in Teramachi.

TAKAMAZ

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