

ORANGE NEWS

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Interview on Manufacturing

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WORK&SOUL

Kato Seiko Co., Ltd.

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Traveling the Hokuriku Area to Experience Craftsmanship

See hints of craftsmanship hidden
in the much-talked-about library and
the temple and sake brewery that
color its surroundings.

[Cover photo]

Location: Ishikawa Prefectural Library

The circular atrium that extends to the fourth floor is comfortable, and even eating and drinking is possible being surrounded 360° by books.

Mitsuru Senda's design, and the new way to spend time at a library, are creating a buzz.

[Model] Seina Fukui

TAKAMAZ

TAKAMATSU MACHINERY
PR Magazine Spring 2025



Part Business Department, Collet Section, Section Head
Kazuyuki Nishida

New fields for the Collet Section and the new product: “Easy-lock Unit”

In this edition's interview, we spoke to head of the Collet Section Mr. Nishida about the development background and characteristics of the “Easy-lock Unit”, a new product from TAKAMAZ that makes it possible to shorten collet setup change times, and also about the uniqueness of the collet plant run by a select group of only 21 people, and the transformation they are currently bringing about. TAKAMAZ's strengths are its extensive lineup of standard collets and its ability to respond to special orders. There are also new business developments in the light of these strengths that cannot be missed.

In April this year sales of the new product “Easy-lock Unit” started. Could you tell us about the background leading to the development of this product?

Nishida (Part Business Department, Collet Section, Section Head)

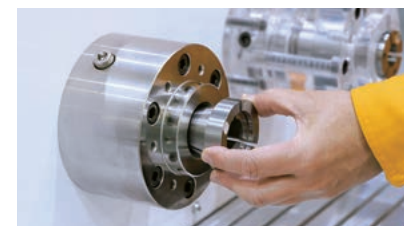
An automobile manufacturer previously made a specific request asking whether

it would be possible to change a collet without removing screws. In that context, one-touch setup chucks answer the requirement to shorten setup times. There has been talk about these chucks in the industry for more than a decade, and although it was not given much publicity, TAKAMAZ also supported the one-touch type as a custom specification. We have now formally productized this one-touch specification and gone further to make this applicable to existing machines as the new product, “Easy-lock Unit”. Sales officially started from April, but we had orders booked immediately right from the start. That shows just how high needs in the market are.

It seems to me that the inside of the collet plant has changed recently.

Nishida

Yes, last year we significantly changed the layout of the collet plant. People who've toured the plant would probably already know this, but the



plant is built so that you can view the production floor from the 2nd floor. So when the building was completed in 1991, we placed top priority on layouts that look beautiful when viewed from above by those touring the plant. But now, we've shifted toward a layout with emphasis on productivity. Wiring and piping that used to be routed across the floor is now arranged overhead, which has improved the routes along which platform trucks are moved. In addition, in-process inventory is concentrated in one place, with everything organized at the same height for better visibility. Another great achievement was raising working efficiency by carrying out detailed analysis of the routes that people moved along, and changing the layout. That alone has led to a time reduction of several hundred minutes annually. In addition to that, the fact that this environment has been created by contributing our own opinions to create a state that we can say is the best with confidence, is

bringing about positive changes in the awareness and attitude of the workers.

It seems that the Collet Section is recognized as a department with strong individuality within TAKAMAZ.

Nishida

The Collet Section is separate from the Machine Tool Division and operates independently as part of the Parts Business Department. The orders it receives take a different route from the sales department, and the section also places its own orders to cooperating companies. It performs a whole range of tasks, from receiving orders to shipping, independently. The collet plant is used by the Collet Section alone, and I think this is also a reason why the Section has a level of individuality close to that of a separate company. For that reason, although it comprises a select few 21 people, many feel it has a somewhat unique atmosphere within the company. At exhibitions where there are opportunities for contact with many customers, our Section has a unique presence within the TAKAMAZ booth.

The fact that the Collet Section is a team that is able to work across manufacturers is also important. As far as I am aware, TAKAMAZ is the only machine tool builder in Japan that has a department dedicated to collet chucks. For example, TAKAMAZ can create a collet chuck suited to a particular workpiece, even when simply handed the actual workpiece. I think this is a great strength, and I am confident that there are quite a few companies who have continued their association with us for that very

reason.

I would add that the overwhelming majority of machines are equipped with this collet type as standard, and that we can also handle additional special orders.

Even just looking at the figures published in the catalogs, I think there is a very big difference from other companies. I think these are also points that feature the characteristics of TAKAMAZ with its Collet Section. And we further expand into special orders, which already make up 70% of our orders. We have the technology to manufacture specially configured collets that once a year make customers gasp “Wow!” in surprise. I think we are able to do this work because people who liked tinkering with machines from when they were very young are working together, and are now involved with collets as professionals.



In ORANGE NEWS Vol. 002, which was published in the summer of 2023, we covered the subject of regrinding collets. Are you continuing to engage in new initiatives like that now?

Nishida

The regrinding of collets has become very well established, and gratefully

we have received many more requests, with certain customers now making requests every month. We provide explanation on the fact that there is a limit point with regrinding, and now we have a smooth cycle where once the limit is reached, customers order a new collet.

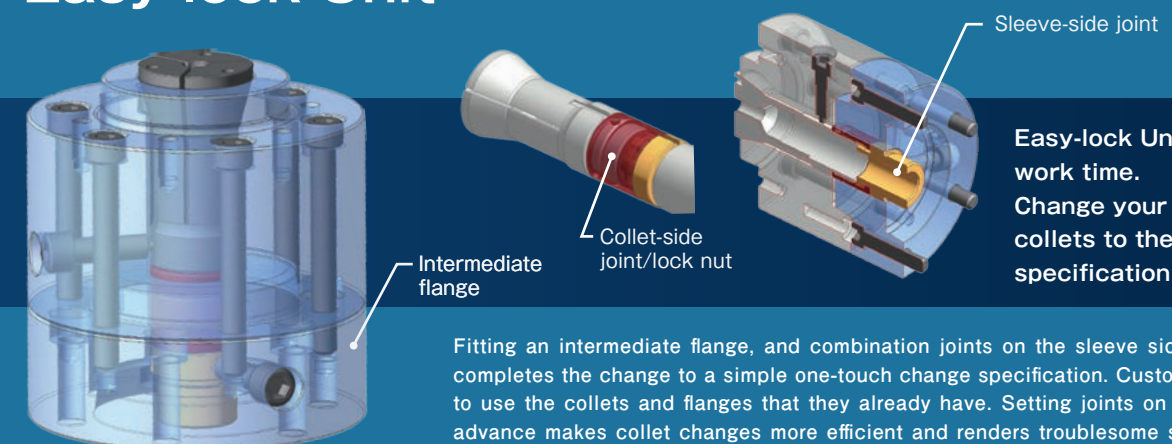
Recently, requests have been coming in through the website and elsewhere from people who want us to manufacture the collet part of a fixture even though it is not for a TAKAMAZ machine. In fact, my next scheduled meeting is with a customer who has never used a TAKAMAZ machine at all. Requests are coming from completely new customers like this and we are having in-house discussions about whether demands of this kind are more common than was thought. Last year, I had my first experience of accompanying a mobile promotional tour group visiting users with machines loaded onto trucks, through which we had the opportunity to describe our engagements with collet chucks; we received inquiries on the spot and multiple requests one after another. This is something that is uniquely possible with TAKAMAZ machines, and we also see the potential for new lines of business that are not limited to machine tools.

The Collet Section pursues an independent path although it is a part of the TAKAMAZ organization. I am looking forward to a future where this small group of elite specialists can help customers in new fields. As a first step, I hope that people will get to see, touch and experience the new product “Easy-lock Unit” at the next exhibition.

TAKAMAZ Easy-lock Unit

Making collet setup changes easier

Easy-lock Unit



Fitting an intermediate flange, and combination joints on the sleeve side and collet side, completes the change to a simple one-touch change specification. Customers can continue to use the collets and flanges that they already have. Setting joints on multiple collets in advance makes collet changes more efficient and renders troublesome stroke adjustments unnecessary.

Kato Seiko Co., Ltd.

Plant Manager at the
Toyota Plant
Isao Kawanishi



President
Akihito Kato



Proactively engaged in CSR initiatives, to fulfill social responsibilities in areas including the environment, human rights, and working styles.

2024 CSR Report



Both tangible objects and intangible concepts

Taking the next step with a clear vision of the way forward, while having a sincere commitment to contributing to the local community and resolving social issues.

【Kato Seiko Co., Ltd.】

KATO SEIKO Co., Ltd.

104-12 Haidashi, Hajodo-cho, Kariya City, Aichi Prefecture
 TEL.0566-23-2312 FAX.0566-23-2315

Representative: Akihito Kato
 Stated capital: 50 million yen
 Number of employees: 222 (as of August 31, 2024)
 Established: April 1, 1960
 Nature of business: Proposing and manufacturing automobile parts,
 railroad parts, housing-related parts



HP

Kariya City, Aichi Prefecture Our first impression on visiting the head office and plant of Kato Seiko was that it is casual and smart. That was reinforced by the image we received from President Kato who we had gone to interview, and it turned out to be a very fresh WORK & SOUL interview.

First of all, please tell us your company's history.

[President Kato] Our business was founded in 1954, and I have heard that my grandfather machined automobile parts himself and delivered them by motorcycle. As a company, the start was when it was incorporated under the name Kato Iron Works, which was in 1960. With the head office in Kariya City, we completed the Gifu plant in 1967 and the Toyota plant in 1989. Moving to the most recent developments, we completed a new company office building and moved the head office there in January 2024. Then, in March of the same year, we acquired Yamada Seiko K.K., which makes molds for molding plastics, as a subsidiary. That is the rough history of the company up to this point.

How would you describe your company's philosophy and commitments in regard to manufacturing?

[President Kato] As would be expected, we do emphasize high quality. However, I feel that the most important thing is finding the right balance with cost while keeping the quality high. While we manufacture items faithfully to the drawings we receive from customers, we focus on development with closer communication while offering to our customers the wealth of knowledge and machining expertise that we possess. Our attitude to development is "to build what is most suitable for the customer together with the customer".

Your company's catchphrase "Both tangible objects and intangible concepts." is eye-catching, isn't it?

[President Kato] That is also something that we focus on. Kato Seiko has contributed to society by making parts for over 60 years, but the nature of the companies required by society has changed considerably. Our business is not just making things and being compensated by the customer; we aim to demonstrate the meaning of our existence by sincerely facing up to

social issues and resolving them. I think that is the kind of company that this region needs. Considering that the primary objective of the company is to ensure its own permanent existence, it is important to become a company that continues to be needed by society. The message contained in the catchphrase is that, while keeping manufacturing as our basic activity, we will also be fully involved in making contributions to the local area by maintaining employment and by cooperating with research at schools in the region.

I have the impression that your company has a full range of measuring equipment. What is the intention behind that?

[President Kato] I think we have very extensive measuring facilities considering our scale and the products that we manufacture. The first thing I did after joining the company was to invest in that. This is because by establishing a system where we can complete all analyses and the like in-house, we can respond to customers more swiftly and thus speed up the development cycle. We are thinking that from here on we have to make even better

use of this extensive measurement environment by perhaps launching a new business where we provide a "measuring service" for products other than our own.

In what direction will your company's strengths and competitive edge take you?

[President Kato] The main items that we manufacture are what is known as "body parts" for automobiles, which includes seats, door handles, joint parts and so on. I think that the technological expertise that we have built up in this area is appreciated by customers too. However, the reality is that it is hard to get the people who are manufacturing automobiles to spend money on these parts. Development costs are incurred for batteries, artificial intelligence, and sensors related to the shift to electric vehicles and automated driving technology, and this being the case, our area is necessarily looked upon as that were costs are to be suppressed as much as possible. The trend throughout the industry is that while issues relating to costs are growing, opportunities to contribute on the technology front are becoming less

common.

To address this we are thinking of becoming involved in resin processing too, and as I mentioned at the outset we have made Yamada Seiko, a company engaged in resin molding, a subsidiary. Resins are materials that are necessary to make automobiles lighter. Some automobile parts that were metal have been replaced with resin ones already. We are now organizing the system so that, even if in the future the products we supply change to resin, we can continue to offer them without change. Having said that, metal parts will definitely not disappear immediately, so we will continue our steady efforts to minimize waste in cutting and increase productivity. And I think this is a point that relates to TAKAMAZ machines.

Since the topic of TAKAMAZ has come up, can you tell us the reason that you introduced our machines?

[President Kato] The first thing is that they are not subject to major problems. Beyond that, they have the best balance between what we want to do and the equipment size and cost. Another reason for the introductions is that because there are many

TAKAMAZ machine models, it is easy to select the appropriate product.

[Factory Manager Kawanishi] In the context of the factory floor, I feel that the machines have exceptional versatility. With regard to setup changes and so on, they are well suited in terms of developing multi-skilled workers since they are easy to train on and all products can be cut as long as the main collet is available. In addition, there are parts that can be used in common on equipment that was introduced in 1988 and the latest equipment, so they are also very convenient in terms of compatibility. I think it's good that both the new and old equipment can be used even now, to make a wide range of products.

Also being the founder of a design company, we felt President Kato's zeal for "organizing information". The thoughts and visions that he conveys in a lively and logical manner are easy to understand and highly convincing. We hope to further deepen the relationship between Kato Seiko and TAKAMAZ.

Company Entrance Ceremony of 2025

The company entrance ceremony for FY2025 was held at our headquarters on April 1, and we welcomed 11 new recruits into the company.

The sight of them listening intently to the speeches from the chairman and president was truly wonderful.

"We are now in an era that can be called a great turning point. The environment surrounding the automobile industry is exposed to the waves of historic change. I want you to think of this era of change as a good era, and to become an employee who can change, and make changes, by yourself."

(excerpt from the Chairman's speech)

"This year is the year we announce TAKAMAZ's mid-term business plan. All of you have great capacity for growth and I am anticipating that your growth will contribute to our company's growth in accordance with the plan." (excerpt from the President's speech)

All the new recruits were fresh and earnest after the ceremony. We look forward to what they will do in the future.

Congratulations on joining us!



New recruits, what are your interests?

I am a Mrs. GREEN APPLE fan.

My hobby is traveling alone.

My hobby is magic tricks.

My hobby is driving and touring.

My hobby is exercising: badminton, athletics, etc.

I like to sing loudly in my car.

My hobby is soccer, which I started when I was a kid.

I like listening to music, and I often listen to Mrs. GREEN APPLE in particular.

My hobbies are karaoke and weight training.

My hobby is making my own keyboards.

I like watching movies and anime.

information



Traveling the Hokuriku Area to Experience Craftsmanship

— CRAFT CONSCIOUS —

See hints of craftsmanship hidden in the much-talked-about library and the temple and sake brewery that color its surroundings.

The architectural beauty of the building designed by Mitsuru Senda has caused a sensation, bringing many people to visit the Ishikawa Prefectural Library.

This sensation has suddenly drawn attention to the Ishibiki and Kodatsuno areas, which until now had been fairly quiet areas within the city of Kanazawa.

For this edition, we visited the Ishikawa Prefectural Library and its surroundings, focusing on design.



Ishikawa Prefectural Library

The facade is designed based on the feeling of anticipation when turning the pages of a book. With a collection of over a million books and circular atrium space that extends right up to the fourth floor, this is a library whose architecture became a topic of discussion and bustles with people.

Tentokuin Temple

Combining grandeur and elegance, the Tentokuin Temple is known as the family temple of Princess Tama. It also offers a lot of attractions, including the kimonos and furnishings of the princesses displayed in the hall, and the Chinjudo shrine which is connected via a corridor.

The Ishikawa Prefectural Library, was completed in 2022 and is nicknamed the "Hyakumangoku Bibliobaum". This refined building transcends the intrinsic function of a library and attracts a lot of people. Across the road stands Kanazawa College of Art, and this neighborhood has truly evolved into an intellectual and creative area.

The Tentokuin Temple, which is in a corner of this area, once covered an area of 40,000 tsubo (approx. 132 m²) and it still maintains a majestic appearance at that site. Discover a captivating world that is unique and crafted with a high level of aesthetic sensibility, including the main hall adorned with wonderful pictures of the

SAKE SHOP FUKUMITSUYA KANAZAWA

A shop run directly by the Fukumitsuya sake brewery. According to the shop's theme "daily life with junmai sake", it offers all the brands of Fukumitsuya's junmai sake along with carefully selected drinking vessels and local snacks to have with sake. If you make a reservation you can also enjoy a "sake tasting experience".

Strolling Through TAKAMAZ

Kanto Office Servicing Operations Tsukasa Kogure

Pick up

Although he graduated from a technical high school, he once aspired to be a chef for Italian cuisine in Kamakura. After many twists and turns, he joined TAKAMAZ in November 2018, and is now dedicated to his daily work in servicing operations at the Kanto Office.

His specialty work tool is Allen wrenches. He carries around five types that have differing lengths and heads, and can repair and perform maintenance on machines with ease.

Rugby is popular in Saitama Prefecture, where the Kanto Office is located. He himself was a member of the rugby club in middle and high schools, and hence did a lot of physical training.

Golf is one of his recent enthusiasms. His routine now is to go to the practice range twice a week with a golf set that he received as a gift from a superior two years ago in his hand.



TAKAMAZ

Scan this QR Code

for more details.

<https://www.takamaz.co.jp>



TAKAMATSU MACHINERY CO., LTD.

■HEAD OFFICE & PLANT
1-9 ASAHIGAOKA HAKUSAN-CITY ISHIKAWA JAPAN. 924-8558
TEL +81-(0)76-207-6155 FAX +81-(0)76-274-1418

■ASAHI PLANT
4-13 ASAHIGAOKA HAKUSAN-CITY ISHIKAWA JAPAN. 924-0004
TEL +81-(0)76-274-0123 FAX +81-(0)76-274-8530

TAKAMATSU MACHINERY U.S.A., INC.

■CHICAGO HEAD OFFICE
1280 LANDMEIER ROAD ELK GROVE VILLAGE, IL 60007 USA
TEL +1-(0)847-981-8577 FAX +1-(0)847-981-8599

TAKAMAZ MACHINERY EUROPE GmbH

IM HÜLSFELD 19, 40721 HILDEN, GERMANY
TEL +49-(0)2103-789-4882 FAX +49-(0)2103-789-4883

TAKAMAZ MACHINERY (HANGZHOU) CO., LTD.

■HANGZHOU HEAD OFFICE
NO.6800, JIANGDONG 3RD ROAD, JIANGDONG INDUSTRIAL PARK, XIAOSHAN, HANGZHOU, ZHEJIANG, CHINA
TEL +86-(0)571-8287-9709 FAX +86-(0)571-8215-3732

TAKAMATSU MACHINERY (THAILAND) CO., LTD.

■BANGKOK HEAD OFFICE
888/59 MOO 9, TAMBOL BANGPLA, AMPHUR BANGPLEE, SAMUTPRAKARN PROVINCE, THAILAND
TEL +66-(0)2-136-7831 FAX +66-(0)2-136-7834

PT. TAKAMAZ INDONESIA

JL. FESTIVAL BOULEVARD BLOK AA 11 NO.30.31 GRAND WISATA TAMBUN, BEKASI 17510
TEL +62-(0)21-8261-6431 FAX +62-(0)21-8261-6430

TAKAMAZ MACHINERY MEXICO, S.A. DE C.V.

AVENIDA DE LOS INDUSTRIALES 522, LOCAL 4, INDUSTRIAL JULIAN DE OBREGON, 37290 LEON, GUANAJUATO MEXICO
TEL +52-477-784-0468

TAKAMATSU MACHINERY VIETNAM CO., LTD

NO.76 M HOANG QUOC VIET, PHU MY WARD, DISTRICT 7, HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM
TEL +84-(0)28-3620-5671 FAX +84-(0)28-3620-5673

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TEL (076) 274-1408 FAX (076) 274-8530