



UKTI helps Seymourpowell grow in Japan

Fast facts

Company: Seymourpowell

Industry: Creative Industries

Target Market: Japan

UKTI Services: Events, Overseas Market
Introduction Service

www.seymourpowell.com



Through the Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) and a workshop event, UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) has helped design and innovation consultants, Seymourpowell, to secure new business in Japan.

Since Seymourpowell was set up in 1984 by Richard Seymour and Dick Powell it has become a leading design and innovation company. Its team of award-winning designers has produced some of the defining products of the last three decades, working with international brands including Tefal, Dove, Ford and Nokia on products as diverse as a kettles and toasters, toiletries, transportation design and mobile phones.

Today employing 90 people, Seymourpowell has its own design studio, research centre, materials library and prototyping workshop, all based in London.

“Ultimately, we are about making things better: better for people, better for

business and better for the world,” says Takehiro Ikeda, Senior Designer & Design Strategist at Seymourpowell. “Companies from around the world come to us because they need to answer three questions: What should we do? Why should we do it? How do we do it? We provide the answers through a unique holistic approach to design and innovation, which combines in-depth experience and up-to-date intelligence about people, markets and businesses. We can forecast and interpret the vital implications of consumer behaviours and work out future scenarios to give our clients the confidence and reassurance that they are making the right decision.”

Expanding in Japan

Often a project for a multinational client will take Seymourpowell’s researchers all over the world as they scope out unique solutions relevant to specific markets. The company has always had a base of clients that are themselves based overseas, in particular in the Far East, North America and Europe.

In 2007, Seymourpowell commissioned an OMIS from UKTI, with a view to attracting more business from Japan. The company provided a list of target clients and asked UKTI to arrange meetings with the relevant contacts within each one.

“For almost 30 years we have worked with most of the major Japanese companies,” says Take. “Without a direct contact, it’s difficult to have an initial conversation with a company.

“Not only was UKTI able to identify the right person for us to speak to, but as they are trusted and respected, this was considered to be a proper introduction”

Takehiro Ikeda, Senior Designer & Design Strategist at Seymourpowell

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New client

In November 2012, UKTI Japan together with Shiga University organised a workshop in Hikone for Japanese SMEs interested in working with overseas design consultancies to expand their business in the global market. Seymourpowell was invited to join and contribute to the creative workshop.

Two months later, a well-known luxury Japanese brand that had participated in the workshop was attending a trade show in London and contacted Seymourpowell. A meeting followed, at which the company explained how it could help the business to successfully expand into the UK and Europe. Since then, a European brand strategy has been completed and is set to be implemented. With the help of Seymourpowell’s direction, this Japanese customer is now in discussions with the UK’s largest

distributor for premium lifestyle interiors with a view to launching its products. It is also seeking direct investment for its own UK store.

“The UKTI workshop was well organised and a useful initiative for us to be a part of,” says Take. “It allowed us to meet the right people in these SMEs, in the right context: we knew that they were there because they were interested in the UK, and we were able to show them our passion for working with Japanese SMEs. UKTI also arranged for excellent media coverage of the event. Documentation used in the workshop showing our name was published on Nikkei business online. It’s always good exposure to have our name in the local press and we have since sent this link to clients, affirming that we are serious in our commitment to Japan. UKTI’s support has put us in a strong position from which to continue to grow our Japanese client base. Knowing that we have them on board is a great bonus.”

The UK and Japan

Japan is the third largest economy in the world. With GDP twice the size of the UK and GDP per person nine times that of China, Japan remains the high-tech powerhouse economy of Asia - with the second highest spend worldwide on R&D, a hunger for IP and new trends, and an increasingly globalised outlook.

Exports from the UK to Japan are worth £9.6 billion a year and 450 British companies have operations there. British companies are succeeding in Japan across a wide range of manufacturing, consumer goods, high tech and services sectors.

For further information about business opportunities in Japan, visit www.ukti.gov.uk/japan and our digital platform Export to Japan at www.exporttojapan.co.uk

Helping you access international markets

Doing business in another country can be a challenge, so it’s good to know that UK Trade & Investment is there to help you succeed.

Through a range of unique services, including participation at selected trade fairs, overseas missions and providing bespoke market intelligence, UK Trade & Investment can help you crack foreign markets and quickly get to grips with regulations and business practices overseas.

UK Trade & Investment’s Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) is a flexible business tool, letting you use the services of our trade teams, located in our embassies, high commissions and consulates across the world, to benefit your business.

A service package could include:

- Market, sector advice
- Analysis of market entry strategies
- Support during overseas visits
- Identification of possible business partners

UKTI was delighted to support Seymourpowell in its business overseas.



To find an adviser in your chosen market and begin your own success story now, scan this code with your smartphone, visit www.ukti.gov.uk/trade, or email enquiries@ukti.gsi.gov.uk

UK Trade & Investment is the Government Department that helps UK-based companies succeed in the global economy. We also help overseas companies bring their high-quality investment to the UK’s dynamic economy. We provide companies with the tools they require to be competitive on the world stage.