A Czech icon establishes itself abroad

In June 2007, Škoda Auto was named the Czech Republic’s most iconic and influential companies. The ranking, compiled by the Czech Top 100, recognized not only the carmaker’s success in business but also a clear testament to Škoda’s successful efforts to grow into a global brand.

Founded in 1895, Škoda Auto began as a horse-drawn coach business in the city of Mlada Boleslav, some 50 km north of the capital Prague. Then, it began producing motorcycles in 1900 and its first automobile appeared five years later. That was more than 100 years ago.

It was in the early 1950s when the company established a partnership with Süsswein’s coach business. It still continues today.

Throughout the 20th century, the company diversified throughout Central and Eastern Europe, where for many people, Škoda stands for hard work and thrift.

In design and function, Škoda has reflected the sensibilities of the Czech people – hardworking and reliable.

“Škodas are family cars. Throughout the region, families usually buy only one car, and this car must be many things. It must have enough space to fit the family and luggage in, but it also must be contemporary and sporty,” says Chairman Daniel Wittig.

“Following the so-called “Velvet Revolution” in 1989 that toppled the communist regime, the newly installed government agreed to privatize Škoda Auto, a move that would ensure the company’s longevity. In the future, Volkswagen took over the ownership of the renamed company. Since its privatization, Škoda has scored much success. It leads the market in the Czech Republic, in Europe. Today, it is looking beyond the region to global growth. Škoda’s long history in the automotive industry allowed for a successful and impressive transition after it was privatized. “The image of our economy and the miracle of Škoda are very much alive. There is a rich tradition here at Škoda. There is much experience and expertise. Bohemia is one of the centers of excellence in the region today.”

Daniel Wittig, chairman of the board of directors of Škoda Auto

The Czech Top 100

The Association for Foreign Investment is a government related organization whose mission is to develop favorable economic trade relations between Japan and the Czech Republic. www.sst.cz

The Automotive Industry Association brings together the major manufacturers and suppliers within the Czech machining industry and acts as a point of contact in the industry with operating foreign companies. www.autosap.cz

The Association of Engineering Technology is a partnership of local Czech companies with an interest in foreign investment. It offers a wide range of services to interested companies from abroad. www.afi.cz

The Automotive Industry Association is the most authoritative yearly ranking of and the most prestigious award given to the most influential Czech companies. www.czchtop100.cz

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Giving companies the right start

One of the most successful emerging European markets for the past several years, the Czech Republic has remained an attractive destination for foreign investors in search of a reliable production platform. 

They have been many claims to the heart and gateway of Europe over the last century. Being at the center of Europe and all its partners, the Czech Republic is reflected in the constant GDP growth. Last year, real GDP growth was 5.1 percent and so is the projection for the present year.

We can see the growth of our bilateral trade volume, which reached $3.1 billion in 2006, with indications for further substantial increases in the next years. We firmly believe that Czech exports to Japan showed an increase of 19 percent in 2006 as compared to 2005, with main items being industrial machinery (16.6%), transport equipment (13.3%), and communication equipment (10.3%).

One of the main contributors to the bilateral relations has been the Motor Industry. With its illustrious history, unflagging support from Volkswagen Group, and a world-wide network of Czech-owned subsidiaries, the Czech car industry enjoyed an era of exponential growth. Today, it has become a world leader in terms of production and innovation.

The trade balance between Japan and the Czech Republic has imbalanced consistently in favor of the Japanese side. In 2006, the trade deficit was $571 million, and in the first half of 2007 it reached $394 million.

In the same period, Japanese exports to the Czech Republic rose by 11 percent, to the Czech Republic rose by 11 percent, reaching $2.2 billion. Japanese imports from the Czech Republic fell by 8 percent, reaching $449 million.

But just looking at the number of Japanese and Asian investors in the country, the Czech Republic is a very attractive destination for foreign investors in search of a reliable production platform. 

In addition to the appeals of the Czech Republic being a part of Europe, the country has long been a hub for international trade, particularly with Asia. The country has a well-developed infrastructure, a skilled labor force, and a business-friendly environment.

Despite the perceived challenges of doing business in a different culture, many Japanese companies have chosen to invest in the Czech Republic. This has been due to a number of factors, including the country's central location, its well-developed infrastructure, and its large market size.

The Czech Republic’s central location makes it an ideal hub for companies looking to access multiple markets in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. The country also has a well-developed infrastructure, with modern highways, rail networks, and airports. Additionally, the Czech Republic has a large and skilled labor force, with a high level of education and training.

However, companies are increasingly looking for new locations to establish their operations. This is due to the fact that the Czech Republic’s central location can be a disadvantage, as it makes it difficult to access markets in the Middle East and Asia. Additionally, the Czech Republic’s high labor costs can be a deterrent for some companies.

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In addition to the central location and infrastructure, the Czech Republic also has a well-developed automotive industry, which is attractive to Japanese companies looking for a production platform in Europe.

In conclusion, the Czech Republic is a very attractive destination for foreign investors in search of a reliable production platform. The country’s central location, well-developed infrastructure, skilled labor force, and automotive industry make it a compelling choice for Japanese companies looking to expand their operations in Europe.
Cooling down a red-hot market

The recent rise in demand for air conditioners in Europe prompted Japanese air conditioner giant Daikin to establish the location as it was ideally situated, and had established operations in the Czech Republic seven years ago. The firm chose Plzen as it was ideally situated, and had established operations in the Czech Republic seven years ago. Daikin has been searching for a construction company to partner with. Orco Property Group seeks partners to share in its success.

Within its global network, Astellas Pharma in the United States and Europe posted higher financial growth from 2006 to 2007 than in its home market Japan. The Czech Republic represents an important part of growth in Europe as the domestic pharmaceutical industry has a major role to play in the future. The country’s location is more than 10 hours away from many new climate change initiatives, such as the Copenhagen Accord. With the success of the Plzen operations, Daikin plans to invest in the Czech Republic to be close to our manufacturing facilities in the Czech city of Plzen in 2003. Daikin chose the location as it was ideally situated, and had established operations in the Czech Republic seven years ago. The firm chose Plzen as it was ideally situated, and had established operations in the Czech Republic seven years ago. Daikin has been searching for a construction company to partner with. Orco Property Group seeks partners to share in its success.

It’s been 110 years since Czech automotive manufacturer TATRA built its first passenger car in Europe and 109 years since it built its first truck. Since its establishment in 1850, the company has served as a leader in the manufacture of commercial vehicles and parts. Today, TATRA produces rigid axle trucks. TATRA is also coming out with new products they can be proud of,” recalls Chairman and CEO Ron Davis. For Davis, Prague is a perfect fit for successful business investment. ‘I definitely like to broaden our already existing relationship with the Japanese, not only on the industrial market but also with regard to office space and the residential and investment markets.

The business environment is very welcoming and the work ethic of the Czech people is great.

The home of carmaker Škoda, Plzen had a long history of being an industrial center and could therefore provide a highly skilled labor force. Employing 1,000 people, the Daikin factory manufactures re-

Every year we grow. But every year, we also face new challenges. We work to understand how to overcome these new challenges and continue to grow. Continually, we ask, ‘Is it hard that we work towards success?’” Bando says. www.daikin-czech.com

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The TATRA Bill high-mobility heavy-duty tactical truck is the most recent addition to the new military family of TATRA Trucks’ heavy-duty vehicles.

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Marriott launches its newest hotel in Prague

Located at the Czech capital's famous Castel of Hradcany, the 235-room, four-star Courtyard by Marriott Prague is the latest in a string of European hotels from Marriott International, the world's largest hotel chain.

According to the hotel's management, it hopes to establish a strong foothold in the Czech Republic and beyond. "We are excited to be part of this vibrant city," said Robert Krystek, general manager of the hotel.

The hotel's spacious atrium captures the changing colors of the sky.

The studio apartments come with a separate living area and offer full amenities to ensure a comfortable stay.

Japanese logistics provider strengthens global position across Europe

Amid growing competition in the logistics industry, the logistics industry, the largest challenge has been to deliver current customers and gain new customers. With its extensive expertise and long history, Japanese logistics provider, Japan Shippers Group has relied on a solid foundation that has allowed it to expand into related sectors such as warehousing, transportation, and information technology.

When MOL Logistics set up its Czech subsidiary in August 2002, the primary objective was to support the supply chain and logistics operation of one of the largest Czech companies in Europe. Since then, MOL Logistics Czech (MLG/CZ) has expanded its network, capturing and client base.

The hotel also offers a wide range of dining options: the

Continuous innovation leads to reliable growth

Having gone through four ownership changes and three name changes, the manufacturer Cadence Innovation remains a leading player in the automotive industry. In the Czech Republic, it has developed partnerships with the world’s largest international automakers.

"Despite all the changes and changes in ownership, we have been able to retain our identity. Today, we can say that our company is financially sound and has improved its reputation more than 15 times," says CEO Pavel Neuman.

Pavel Neuman, CEO of Cadence Innovation

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