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economic and political stability has always been a concern in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. This concern has been magnified by the two oil rich nations that dominate the region—Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The UAE has one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. It has also become more dependent on revenue sources other than oil. As a result, the UAE has established itself as a financial and commercial hub. The UAE’s economic growth has made it a safe haven for foreign capital.

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NGK revs up growth in the region through high-performance parts

The Dubai Auto Expo (DAE) in Dubai, located next to the largest seaport in the Middle East, was established in 1997 as a hub for automotive tools and supplies. And since DAE is set to feature a market of over 2 million people in the neighboring territories.

Since 2001, NGK has been one of the world’s fastest-growing automotive companies and home to hundreds of Japanese companies in the region. “Our facility here in Jebel Ali is very important to us given its strategic location,” says Hisataka Sato, NGK Spark Plug Middle East Managing Director. “From Dubai, we’re close to almost all of the countries in the Middle East, the United States, Africa, the Commonwealth of Independent States and South Asia.

While the Japanese-based company develops engine components for most of the world’s leading auto manufacturers, NGK’s activities in Dubai are focused on automotive, its fast-growing industries, its increasingly prosperous customers have developed a keen interest in imported high-performance vehicles. “We produce high-performance spark plugs that are suitable for our customers interested in setting their cars on the fast lane,” says Sato. Opening its regional base in Dubai in 2002, NGK is particularly proud of its PowerPlug®, Everyday Plug and Standard Spark plugs, which offer extreme performance, improved thermal response and superior anti-backfire performance. Also, NGK has special CNG/LPG spark plugs for CNG/LPG-powered engines.

Because these high-performance spark plugs are eco-friendly, they allow people to enjoy driving without having to worry about polluting the environment.

“NGK’s expertise in the field of electronic parts is particularly important in high-performance vehicles that have become an essential part of the Arab region. These engines need to be kept in top condition, and in the region we produce a total of 37 million parts per day and are trying to expand in the African market. This expansion is a result of the growing number of wealthy individuals in the region.”

“Our strategy is to increase our sales figures and standard distribution to the countries throughout the region, which we foresee in the coming years. We would also like to promote our high-performance, environmentally friendly products to the auto industry and use it as a strong supporter of the industry here,” says Sato.

“Relationships on a personal level as well as corporate citizenship are very important to us. We hope to continue our strong relations with the government, our employees and our customers.”

Focus on customers propels growth in the Middle East market

With the growing number of wealthy individuals in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, the United Arab Emirates and other major economic centers of the region, customers are looking for more than superior products for their cars; they’re looking for brand loyalty and customer service.

“Fortunately, our success can be attributed to our honesty as a company and the integrity we’ve created with our customers over the years through one-on-one communication,” says Koyanagi, who assumed the top post six years ago and has since assumed a leadership role in the Middle East market.

NGK Spark Plug Middle East Managing Director Hisataka Sato