



World Eye Reports

Poland

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V4 友 Japan

Exchange Year 2014

A view of modern downtown Warsaw. Seated at the crossroads between Asia and Europe, Poland offers numerous long-term opportunities in a variety of industries — particularly in technology and manufacturing.

www.worldeyereports.com

Poland leads V4 closer to Japan amid healthy domestic economic growth

A year ago today, the prime ministers of the Visegrad Group (V4) and Japan held a summit in Warsaw to discuss, among other common interests, economic cooperation and development between the four central European countries — Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia — and Japan. Of the V4 countries, Poland has attracted the greatest interest for foreign investment.

This is largely due to Poland's relatively substantial domestic population of almost 40 million and a burgeoning economy that has outperformed most other European countries since the country's integration into the European Union in 2004.

In fact, the year 2014 has been officially designated "V4 + Japan Exchange Year." This year, both Poland and Japan will take a closer look at the business areas that

have benefited both sides through their long-standing and mutually beneficial economic relationships. "Japanese firms — particularly from the automotive and other manufacturing sectors — have long realized the strategic poten-

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tial of Poland for their European interests," explained Makoto Yamanaoka, the Japanese ambassador to Poland. "Investment from these areas was significantly bolstered following the country's shift to a capital market, which began in 1989 with the collapse of the Iron

Curtain."

Current official data of JETRO in Poland indicates there are 288 Japanese and Japanese-affiliated companies operating in Poland, of which 80 are in the manufacturing sector. These compa-

powerhouse in Poland and Japanese companies have always been key players in this area, particularly in electronics and auto manufacturing. In recent years, despite a shift away from electronics, the automotive sector is expected to expand both from a manufacturing and sales perspective, as major car manufacturers in Poland position themselves for growth and increased sales.

In general, the outlook is positive across the Polish economy, according to Marek Kloczko, secretary-general of the Polish Chamber of Commerce, who said, "Poland has all the assets necessary to boost both local and foreign investment: a large domestic population, a strong financial sector and political stability."

The IT sector, in particular, stands out above the rest as far as growth is concerned. "A lot is happening in IT," Kloczko said.

"Poland has a sizable young population joining the workforce, and they are tech-savvy and ambi-

tious. There is a collective push to raise Poland's brand image on the global IT stage." ♦

Japanese firms — particularly from the automotive and other manufacturing sectors — have long realized the strategic potential of Poland for their European interests."

— MAKOTO YAMANAKA
Japanese Ambassador to Poland



JAPANESE EMBASSY IN POLAND



Poland Tokai Okaya Manufacturing produces high-quality stamped metal components for the automotive, household appliance, renewable energy and LCD TV industries.

Vision in an empty field grows into fruition

Sitting in his office in Lysomice, a three-hour drive from Warsaw, Hideki Nakasone has an interesting story to tell. While working on a feasibility study for Okaya & Co., one of Japan's largest trading companies, he was initially tasked with evaluating Poland's viability for the company's newest venture.

"Given the strong Japanese presence in Poland and the vigorous growth rate of the Polish market, I was confident in the tremendous potential of the country," recalled Nakasone. Following the study, Okaya & Co. decided to invest \$40 million to build a state-of-the-art facility to service major LCD TV manufacturers in the country.

Nakasone's next challenge was to build a factory large enough and competitive enough for the Polish market. He described the empty field where the company's plant stands today. "All I could see was green grass," he said with a laugh. "I kept asking myself: 'Where's the factory? Where's the factory?' We knew it would be a difficult process, but we had tremendous support from Okaya in Japan."

In 2006, Poland Tokai Okaya Manufacturing (PTOM) was established and the factory was completed a year later. Nakasone has been president of PTOM from the beginning.

Rising from relatively humble

beginnings producing and assembling stamped metal parts for LCD TVs, PTOM is now capable of assisting companies across the entire manufacturing supply chain, including design, welding, stamping, tooling workshops, overprinting and assembly.

In less than 8 years, PTOM expanded from the LCD TV market to the automotive, white goods and energy sectors. In fact, just last October, it delivered its first solar frames to one of its energy partners.

"There really is limitless potential to what we can do here," Nakasone said. "Much like our Okaya motto, we are always open to challenges. These challenges drive us to make the best products available for our partners."

"We are very excited for the road ahead," Nakasone continued. "We have 3 ISO certifications as proof of our commitment to our partners (ISO/TS 16949, ISO 14000 and ISO 9001-2008) and our machines are manned by engineers and technicians trained with Japanese precision and diligence."

Almost a decade after it was born, PTOM has become a clear representation of Japanese technology, ingenuity and resilience. With numerous projects underway and an unlimited array of capabilities, Nakasone's story is far from over. ♦

www.ptom.com.pl

High quality niche market sets Subaru Poland above the fray

Witold Rogalski is the managing director of Subaru in Poland, but his employees and friends refer to him more often than not as "father director." It is an endearing nickname for someone who has managed the company since it started in 1999 with a paternal

devotion to workers and clients. Since it arrived in Poland, Subaru has thrived by tapping into a niche group of Polish auto consumers who value a pricier, but higher-quality category of cars.

"We are not competing for market share," explained Rogal-

ski. "Other manufacturers may market their cars in Poland on a similar platform, but what sets Subaru apart is our unique character that reflects the individualistic character of our clients."

"Over 96 percent of our clients have attained higher education and many are busi-

nesspeople or professionals," he added. Today, Poland's burgeoning economy and increasingly qualified workforce are also widening the market for Subaru autos.

Subaru Import Polska is managed through a transparent open-line communication model. In fact, it hosts one of Europe's biggest online import car forums, where everyone from a Subaru owner to the editor of an automotive magazine can discuss cars.

"Transparency lies at the core of our business," Rogalski continued. "When buying any car, there are always trade-offs. Such communication platforms and attitudes give the customer the chance to objectively analyze and make a very informed decision, one that is based on their character and needs."

Even more importantly, the company's success can be credited to the relationships built and maintained over time across



Subaru's SUV lines are the popular choice among its Polish patrons

the Polish Subaru network through its dealers, suppliers and customers.

"We treat everyone involved with Subaru as our partners —

that is the secret to our success," Rogalski said. "We have a good product, good relationships and high morale." ♦ www.subaru.pl

SUBARU

Being the best in an IT market niche

CompFort Meridian Polska is a Dutch-owned Polish LLC, which has operated in the Polish market since 1990. It currently employs more than 120 people and in 2012, the company's turnover was about \$32 million.

"Our mission is to be a leading provider of IT infrastructure management solutions that enable optimal availability and performance of systems and applications," said Maarten Goslings, president and founder of CompFort Meridian. "We help customers in Poland optimize their IT processes, reducing complexity and costs."

The company delivers solutions designed to help businesses make efficient use of their IT systems by ensuring that the systems are always available, secure and properly managed. Its portfolio targets large- and medium-sized clients in all sectors of the Polish economy, including telecommunications, banking, insurance, mining and oil and gas, as well as public sector institutions.

"There are many small IT vendors that are not reliable enough for our clients, and there are many large vendors whose services are expensive and inefficient," Goslings explained. "In some areas

We help customers in Poland optimize their IT processes, reducing complexity and costs."

— MAARTEN GOSLINGS
President and Founder
CompFort Meridian



COMPFORT MERIDIAN

of the business, our company has very few strong competitors. In these areas, we are simply the best. This creates a unique situation, in which our team can easily compete with the largest organizations while maintaining the flexibility and effectiveness typical of smaller entities."

"Our clients always have the opportunity of talking to someone about the problem they need to solve. We have a compact management system with no complex structures," he continues. "How-

ever, the quality of implementation, products and support we provide is absolutely top-notch."

In the Polish market, CompFort Meridian represents leading global software vendors such as BMC Software, Check Point, Compuware, Entuity, F5, IBM, Imperva, Lieberman Software, Micro Focus, SailPoint, Symantec, Tufin Technologies, VMware and many more. In addition to Poland, it also has operations in Russia and Slovakia. ♦ www.compfort.pl

Poland's tech brilliance shows in advanced software R&D

There is a growing evidence of Poland's transition from an "OEM-base country" to a global high-tech player. One interesting example is the company 9livesdata, led by Cezary Dubnicki (Ph.D.) in Warsaw.

Since its inception in 2008, 9livesdata has delivered advanced software R&D services to international clients. It is one of many local companies thriving in the tech-savvy environment that is today's Poland. Dubnicki worked for decades in the United States, including stints at Princeton University and Japanese tech giant NEC. He led the design of NEC's award winning HYDRAsTOR — a scalable distributed backup storage system.

The 9livesdata team designs and implements HYDRAsTOR back-end software for NEC. With the fourth generation HS8-4000 model released in 2013 in the U.S. and Japan, HYDRAsTOR is the world's fastest and most scalable deduplicating system, with an astounding maximum throughput exceeding 900 TB/hour and 100 PB of effective capacity.

Brilliance is available in this country, and we extend an open invitation to companies, particularly Japanese, to take advantage of it."

— CEZARY DUBNICKI
Founder
9livesdata



9LIVESDATA

"Besides implementing advanced, failure-tolerant distributed software, we often create intellectual property for our clients," said Dubnicki. The success of 9livesdata can be traced back to its people — an example of Poland's growing talent and expertise in the tech sector. The company's consultants comprise four Ph.D.s and 42 others with masters in computer science,

many of whom also hold advanced degrees in mathematics.

Like other sector-leading companies in Poland, 9livesdata stands out as an ideal tech partner in the region. "Brilliance is available in this country, and we extend an open invitation to companies, particularly Japanese, to take advantage of it," Dubnicki said. ♦ www.9livesdata.com



Hideki Nakasone, president of Poland Tokai Okaya Manufacturing



Poland Tokai Okaya Manufacturing Sp. z o.o.
Cetaszewo 57G
87-148 Lysomice

Expert in stamping!

tel. +48 56 652 46 49
fax +48 56 652 46 20
ptom@ptom.com.pl
www.ptom.com.pl