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# France



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## Japonismes 2018: les âmes en resonance

The “Japonismes 2018: les âmes en resonance” (“Souls in resonance”) festival was successfully launched yesterday (July 12) in Paris.

Cities across France will host events showcasing Japanese culture, including ancient Jomon Period pottery, contemporary drama and technology-driven art installations.

“‘Les âmes en resonance’ means ‘souls in resonance.’ This comes from the words of Paul Claudel, who was a great writer and served as French ambassador in Japan in the 1920s,” explained H.E. Masato Kitera, ambassador of Japan to France.

The term “Japonismes” describes the wave of Japanese



H.E. Masato Kitera, Ambassador of Japan to France

culture that swept across France in the 19th century and influenced French masters such as Debussy and Monet.

“As we celebrate 160 years

since the establishment of Japan-France diplomatic relations, our ties are better than ever. We call it an exceptional partnership,” said Kitera. “Many Japanese companies are doing business in France, and they have developed cordial links with the communities and local authorities where they are based.”

Fumito Kobayashi, president of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in France, noted, “Out of all the countries in Asia, Japan invests the most in France, creating 74,000 jobs here.”

“Japan and France share the same spirit and values. We have both benefited from the

intertwining of our cultures and the consequent interaction among our people. I want to witness even closer mutual understanding and exchanges within a wide range of areas, including economic, cultural, art and sports. I aim to take Japan-France relations to a new level, encompassing all aspects — even the spiritual,” said Kitera. “In this spirit, Japonismes 2018 will surely introduce a new, more intimate dimension to our relations. It will help our souls resonate with each other.” ♦

<https://japonismes.org>

Read the full France-Japan report at: [www.synergymediaspecialists.com](http://www.synergymediaspecialists.com)

## WeAre Pacific – combining family values and strengths to ensure success

Toulouse-based WeAre Group is the result of a shared vision between five family-owned industrial companies from the aeronautics industry.

“Our goal was to create a leading, integrated and diversified industrial group with a global footprint able to meet all of our customers’ challenges,” said Philippe Riviere, CEO of WeAre International, the group’s international arm tasked with expanding activities overseas.

In March of this year, the company’s Asia-Pacific business grew further. The group merged with Japan’s Yamaichi Group — a world-class raw materials handler and precision molds and parts manufacturer serving the automotive, defense and rail industries.

Headed by Mike Teranishi, CEO of the newly formed WeAre Pacific, the company’s nine facilities in Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and Singapore focus on high-tech molds, detail parts and subassembly manufacturing for the medical, aeronautics and automotive industries.

“With partners such as Airbus, we are experts in the aerospace industry in France, while Yamaichi’s expertise lies in the automotive sector,” said Riviere. “The strengths of both groups allow us to diversify our capabilities and provide our customers with added value technologies and services.”



Philippe Riviere, CEO of WeAre International

The company’s successful entry into the medical sector was achieved through the acquisition of Singapore’s Globaltronic Group.

Symbolic of the group’s commitment to the Asian region, the company renovated a four-story multipurpose building in Tokyo dedicated to industrial innovation and the further development of the group’s regional activities in April.

“The four floors of our building serve different functions,” said Riviere. “One area is for our administrative headquarters, the second is a ‘French Fab’ that promotes technologies, industrial know-

how and temporary exhibits open to the public. The third one is a ‘French Tech’ incubator for niche startups and the rooftop area symbolizes that there is no limit to our relationship and what we can achieve together.”

The remarkable growth of the company in such a short period of time is testament to the strength of family-owned small and medium-sized enterprises with the right approach to doing business.

“Japan is a complex market, which is why we need to be there,” said Riviere. “Tokyo is similar to Paris’ role in Europe in that if you are truly committed to developing your business in Asia, it is necessary to be in Tokyo. Our vision is to create a long-term global footprint and perhaps, in the future, develop our business in North America once we have successfully affirmed our position in the dynamic Japanese market.” ♦

**YAMAICHI**  
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[www.weare-aerospace.com](http://www.weare-aerospace.com)  
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## Delivering high-quality products designed to benefit customers

A pioneer in the production of compact construction machinery, hydraulic excavators, track loaders and industrial agitators, Takeuchi Manufacturing has set the global standard in the compact excavator market. By developing the world’s first compact excavator and compact rubber track loader, the company transformed the global construction equipment market.



The new Takeuchi TB225 is a market first 2.5-tonne class mini excavator with expandable tracks, allowing it to become the new performance leader in towable mini excavators.

In Europe, the company remains one of the largest players in the industry and has leveraged France as their base in the region due to the European country’s receptiveness to compact machinery.

“When we saw how French customers accepted Takeuchi’s concept of small excavators, we decided to establish our European office here in 2000,” recalled Hiroshi Komatsu, managing director of Takeuchi France SAS.

Takeuchi machinery is developed with an emphasis on comfort and mobility for the needs of a wide-range of customers, including general contractors, utility contractors and landscapers. The recently launched TB225 compact hydraulic excavator is a market-first, 2.5-tonne class machine with expandable tracks, allowing it to become the new performance-leader in towable mini-excavators.

“Our machines are developed with the purpose of providing comfort and convenience to our customers,” said Komatsu. “Our founder, Mr. Takeuchi is an engineer and recognizing that manual work was difficult, he specifically designed compact machines to assist individuals in their work. We also constantly make improvements inside our machines to ensure they are comfortable for personal use.”

A vast distribution network across Europe ensures the company remains a leader in the segment, but Takeuchi is committed to strengthening its position in France, the market that started it all for them.

“France has historically been a very important market for



Akio Takeuchi, Founder of Takeuchi Mfg. Co., Ltd. and Hiroshi Komatsu, Managing Director of Takeuchi France SAS with customers at INTERMAT PARIS 2018

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“France has historically been a very important market for

us,” said Komatsu. “We are performing well across Europe and will ensure our success in France by strengthening our position and brand image. We currently have 28 official dealers here and customers who understand the concept of our machines is increasing. We have a long-term approach here and will continue to deliver high-quality products designed to benefit our customers.” ♦

**TAKEUCHI**

[www.takeuchi-france.com](http://www.takeuchi-france.com)

## Toray Carbon Fibers Europe - A French-Japan success story

Located in Lacq in the department of Pyrenees-Atlantiques is Toray Carbon Fibers Europe (CFE) S.A. As one of the largest Japanese investors in France, CFE is the only production unit of Toray’s Carbon Fiber business in Europe and a France-Japan success story.

Overseeing the expansion of the company for most of its three decades is the Japanese subsidiary’s Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer Jean-Marc Guilhempey.

“Over the years, we have expanded our investments in France six times and in 2014 we began production of polyacrylonitrile in our carbon fiber raw material (precursor) plant,” said Guilhempey. “With integrated production capabilities, this is the largest precursor facility in the world and that enables us



Jean-Marc Guilhempey, CEO of Toray Carbon Fibers Europe

to be more competitive and also supply various Toray Group production bases.”

CFE’s other facility produces and sells Torayca® carbon fiber-branded products, composites and prepreps used in various applications, including sport and leisure, industry and aerospace.

“In addition to our production

capabilities, we have a research and development technical center,” said Guilhempey. “This allows us to support our customers by offering tailor-made, innovative solutions while guiding them through the manufacturing process.”

The company’s 5,200-ton capacity facility is meeting the demands of its customers in Europe, a region that has the highest demand for carbon fiber in the world, accounting for 44 percent of the global market.

The automotive and industrial sectors represent most of CFE’s sales in volume, while the aeronautic sector is being developed and sports and leisure remains stable.

“While we are experiencing an upward trend in the aeronautics industry anchored by our close relations with leading aircraft

manufacturers, our strategy has been to strengthen our activities with our core customer base and to develop the energy, rail, civil engineering and space sectors,” said Guilhempey.

With France as the driver for growth, Guilhempey is committed to developing its markets and promoting Toray Carbon Fibers Europe as an integrated global carbon fiber leader. “We’ve strengthened our marketing efforts recently and our aim is to establish a more structured approach toward innovation and technical support for our customers in Europe,” he said. ♦

**‘TORAY’**

Toray Carbon Fibers Europe

[www.toray-cfe.com](http://www.toray-cfe.com)

## Igniting the automotive industry through expertise and innovation

NGK SPARK PLUG CO. LTD. is igniting the engines of French automotive giants Renault, Peugeot and Citroen. The 80-year-old Japanese company, a world leader in spark plugs and lambda probes, is committed to delivering solutions to its French partners.

“As an innovation leader in our industry, it is important to supply our spark plugs to almost all

car manufacturers in the world,” said Hisaki Sanoi, president of NGK Spark Plugs France S.A.S. “Our role as an original equipment manufacturer to Renault and Groupe PSA represents 70 percent of our sales in France. We are also active in the aftermarket and spare parts segments and encourage customers to use our high-quality products to enhance their vehicle’s performance and fuel consumption.”

NGK Spark Plugs France supplies the French market with spark plugs, glow plugs, coils, ignition beams, lambda probes and temperature sensors. The company also markets technical ceramic products under the NTK brand for the telecommunications and industrial production sectors.

“We are not limiting ourselves to the automotive sector and promote our full range of products in Europe through our NTK brand,” said Sanoi.

The company’s other main function and a vital part of the group’s European supply chain is their production facility located in Meung-sur-Loire.

“France is the only production base in Europe where we manufacture spark plugs for the region,” said Sanoi. “The spark plugs are exported to our German office and distributed across Europe.”

While sales of NGK’s glow plugs used in diesel engines were recently affected by Volk-



Hisaki Sanoi, President of NGK Spark Plugs (France) S.A.S.

swagen’s “dieselgate” scandal, the company is focusing on sales of other high-quality products and strengthening its position in France.

“We are a Japanese company and we are proud to contribute to France’s economic growth,” said Sanoi. “I also want to increase our corporate social responsibility activities while continuing to play a role in the dynamic French automotive industry.” ♦

[www.ngkntk.fr](http://www.ngkntk.fr)



## On French roads, Honda takes a leading position

“Power of Dreams” represents Honda’s dedication to innovation, style and engineering. French customers have shared Honda’s dream ever since the company entered the French market in 1967.

Over the last 50 years of having a presence in France, Honda has built their brand reputation based on product quality, innovation and customer satisfaction.

In 2017, Honda cars scored “best in class” in the industry for customer satisfaction.

As a result of this achievement, Honda France initiated creative marketing campaigns using loyal Honda customers as brand ambassadors.

“Our ‘Honda Next Door’ campaign featured Honda



Takeharu Aoki, President of Honda France

car owners and we transformed their garages into pop-up dealerships to promote our line-ups,” explained Takeharu Aoki, president, Honda France.

Honda is committed to an “electrical future” in Europe and later this year a major sales initiative will be launched focusing

on the hybrid version of the fifth generation CR-V compact SUV.

Honda France is also active in power equipment covering gardening and marine markets. The company’s only power equipment manufacturing facility in Europe, Honda France Manufacturing S.A.S., produces lawnmowers, generators and tillers, supplying 200,000 units a year to markets across Europe.

Established in Japan 70 years ago, Honda began its journey as a motorcycle manufacturer. Honda motorcycles remain one of the leading bike brands in France with the American-made Honda Gold Wing GL1800 as one of Honda’s most popular bikes on French roads.

“We are active in the FIM Endurance World Cham-

pionship,” said Aoki. “Our F.C.C. TSR Honda France team, a partnership between Honda France and one of the top Japanese teams, is currently in first place and a serious contender for the world title with one race to go at the end of July, the Suzuka 8 Hours in Japan. With these initiatives in place, we plan to strengthen our motorcycle business and continue to increase our market share,” said Aoki.

“I want Honda to be loved by our customers in France as we strengthen our company and our brand to better serve our growing fan base.” ♦

**HONDA**  
The Power of Dreams

[www.honda.fr](http://www.honda.fr)



# France Business Report

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## Explore the future now

Specializing in analysis, measurement and control instruments, HORIBA was founded by the late Dr. Masao Horiba in 1945. On the other side of the world, JOBIN YVON, a French manufacturer of analytical spectroscopic systems and components with a history dating back to 1819, caught the attention of Dr. Horiba.

“Our founder was looking for innovation and he learned about this company through its global reputation, so it was his dream to collaborate and acquire it,” said James Thepot, president of HORIBA France SAS. “In 1997, when the opportunity presented itself, his son, Mr. Atsushi Horiba, acquired JOBIN YVON, and the company became part of the HORIBA Group.”

A year earlier, Mr. Atsushi Horiba purchased ABX SA (today, HORIBA ABX SAS), a hematology analyzer manufacturer



James Thepot, President of Horiba France SAS

specialist and one of the leading in vitro diagnostic devices and reagent manufacturers.

These acquisitions are the pillars on which HORIBA's expansion into medical diagnostics instruments, systems and scientific instruments are founded.

“ABX was a French niche company manufacturing high-end products, and Mr. Horiba wanted to complement the original offer with these products to customers,” said Thepot. “These two investments were his French dream and led to further investments in the country.”

In 2012, Mr. Horiba continued to invest in our country and the 7,500-square-meter HORIBA Europe Research Center was established in Palaiseau. The facility hosts the company's scientific engineering team and is part of the Saclay Plateau Research and Innovation Cluster.

The Saclay facility was also selected to host HORIBA's Automotive Test Systems' activity in France, a great location for vehicle innovation, so close to key car and equipment manufacturers established in the region,” said Thepot. “We have seen the

Paris-Saclay cluster develop since then and are proud of its reputation.”

Supplying over 200 types of scientific instruments to universities, research institutes, governments and manufacturers, HORIBA France SAS has a global market share of 30 percent.

Thepot concludes, “The investments we made in France in the '90s led to the group's expansion and remain the foundations on which we will grow our business in the future.”

Interestingly, HORIBA will celebrate the 200th anniversary of JOBIN YVON next year, the year after celebrating the 160th anniversary of Japan-France diplomatic relations. ♦

**HORIBA**

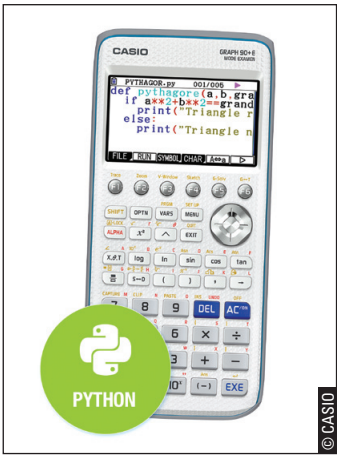
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## Creativity and contribution — the core of Casio's business in France

Casio — one of Japan's most iconic consumer electronics brands that celebrated its 60th anniversary last year — is deeply embedded in French society. With a product range that includes watches, calculators, musical instruments, cash registers and mercury-free hybrid video projectors, Casio's contribution to France encompasses lifestyle, business, culture and education.

Its corporate creed of “creativity and contribution” expresses the company's commitment of contributing to society by offering innovative, original and useful products that enhance people's lives.

Since inventing the world's first compact all-electric calculator in 1957, Casio has become a technology front-runner. In France, Casio has a dominant market position in the calculator market and has been developing strong part-



The G90+E Python is the new innovative graphing calculator for high school students which includes the Python programming language.

nerships within the French education sector.

“Our ‘user first’ approach ensures we collaborate closely with teachers and schools, and that we adapt our prod-

ucts for the French curriculum,” explained Minoru Takahashi, president of Casio France.

“This year we are launching the G90+E calculator, which complies with the new curriculum in high school, and our FX-92 scientific calculator includes SCRATCH — a basic programming software,” said Takahashi. “This allows students to learn the fundamentals of programming and create small programs.”

Casio's globally recognized watches such as the G-SHOCK include the GMW B5000 (a revamp of the iconic G-Shock that debuted 35 years ago) that boasts a full-metal shock resistant structure and smartphone link functions via Bluetooth.

With over six decades of providing customers with socially innovative products that have enhanced people's lives and almost two decades in France working closely

with various sectors through its diverse range of products, Takahashi concluded: “France is our No. 1 market in Europe and as a commercial company, we are not simply chasing profit. It is important for us to continue contributing to French society through our products, creativity and ‘user first’ campaign.” ♦

**60<sup>th</sup>**  
**ANNIVERSARY**  
**SINCE 1957**  
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www.casio.fr

## Strengthening partnerships with French industrial players and European customers

Osaka-based VESSEL Group is both a leader and a pioneer in the manufacturing of screwdrivers, driving bits, industrial tools and electrostatic discharge-related products.

With bolts and screws found in everything from consumer goods to large-scale industrial projects, there is an array of hand, electrical, pneumatic, industrial and gasoline engine tools on the market — a market in which VESSEL continues to make a name for itself.

Established in 1916, the company opened its European office on the outskirts of Paris in 2010 to better serve its European customers.

“I was handling the company's export business from Japan and recognized that in Europe, France was the preferred market for us to



Kazuko Tokuoka, Managing Director of Vessel Europe

establish an office,” recalled Kazuko Tokuoka, managing director of VESSEL Europe.

“Our customers are at the very heart of what we do, and setting up in France proved to be the right decision for us as a company due to the sizeable market, our ability to be close to our established part-

ners and the country's advantageous geographic location within Europe.”

VESSEL's products are manufactured in Japan and meet all European compliance and specification requirements. The company's best-selling products in Europe include railway track maintenance impact wrenches, precision-fastening products and cutting tools for robotics used in the automotive and material handling industries.

Some of VESSEL's local customers include national, state-owned railway company, SNCF, automobile manufacturer Renault and automotive parts manufacturers Valeo and Schneider Electric.

“Considering a single screwdriver can be used to tighten tens of thousands of screws, our customers demand quality products that

can do the job,” said Tokuoka.

In order to be close to customers, the company's distributor network consists of 140 dealers in Europe, eight of which are in France.

As France and Japan celebrate 160 years of diplomatic ties this year, Tokuoka is keen to assert that VESSEL will continue to play a part in bringing France and Japan closer together.

“I hope our success, in a small way, triggers a more heartfelt partnership between both of our countries as we continue to strengthen our partnerships with French industrial players and all of our European customers.” ♦

**VESSEL**  
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## Light solutions shine bright in France

A leader within Japan and Asia's photonics industry for 40 years, optical and optomechanical component manufacturer, Sigma Koki Group established a presence in France in 2014.

“As the director of the International Division in Japan, we saw an opportunity to sell to the European market and be in closer proximity to our customers,” said Guy Ear, president and chief executive officer of OptoSigma Europe and North America. “So I was tasked with opening our office in France in order to expand our European sales network.”

The company has since grown between 40 to 50 percent year on year and offers over 20,000 components to European laboratories and leading industrial companies. OptoSigma Europe's French



Guy Ear, President and Chief Executive Officer of OptoSigma Europe and North America

customer-base includes Thales, Safran, Observatoire de Paris and the French National Center for Scientific Research.

“We are particularly strong in the astronomy and medi-

cal sectors, especially in ophthalmology and our optimized ‘e-commerce’ platform facilitates fast-delivery to all our customers,” said Ear.

The company's component-parts business represents 50 percent of sales with the other half centered on customization solutions. “Globally, we have six factories and design centers to assist all our customers with their optics and in opto-mechanics customized requirements,” said Ear.

As OptoSigma Europe celebrates its fifth anniversary next year, Ear wants to become Europe's supplier of choice for optical and optomechanical components.

“Most of our products were created for Japanese researchers, and to achieve our targets in Europe, we need to establish a research and develop-

ment center in France,” said Ear.

“To help our customers accelerate their work, we also want the ability to assemble ‘sub-systems’ as an added-value service. I am happy Sigma Koki entrusted me to establish the business here as we have successfully contributed to the expansion of our group's global business. With demand in Europe and the United States increasing, our facilities in Japan are operating at close to 100 percent capacity and we look forward to further developing our capabilities, global sales and reputation as an industry leader.” ♦

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