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CONTENT BY THE WORLDFOILIO

Kaji Tech providing safe plastic snaps for a variety of garments

From sports apparel and working uniforms to baby garments, Kaji Tech is providing the best materials to ensure high-quality apparel.



"It is our mission to provide safety to babies and children, both in Japan and worldwide. That is our goal for the future."

Noboru Kajiura, President, Kaji Tech Co., Ltd.

The 100-year history of Kaji Tech is a story of evolution and adaptation. The company, which celebrated its centenary in 2022, started out as a supplier of secondary material for shoes for the Japanese Army before becoming a manufacturer of children's shoes. Later, it decided to focus on babywear and today Kaji Tech is a leading supplier of plastic snaps for baby clothes, as well as general clothing, electronic components, bags, sports equipment and more.



Sustainable mushroom leather

"I believe that the essence that underlies our 100-year history is that the founder of the company, who was my grandfather, always insisted on three keywords for our business. The first is 'sincerity', the second is 'making efforts' and the third is 'gratitude'," says current third-generation president, Noboru Kajiura. "On top of that, when my father became the



Kaji Tech's billion-unit seller: safe plastic snaps for babies and kids

president, he made the company credo to respect the past and respect tradition, but to always be innovative and cater to the current needs of society. When I became the president, I made the company credo to weave, connect and attach the smiles of people all around the world."

Kaji Tech's most important innovation to date has been the plastic snaps for babywear that have replaced metal snaps, which can be more dangerous, more easily swallowed or cause metal allergies due to babies' sensitive skin. By converting these snaps to plastic, Kaji Tech is providing safer babywear, not only in Japan but also throughout the world. Testament to the quality, reliability and safety of its products is the fact that the company's snaps are widely used in garments that are manufactured by the biggest SPA brand in Asia, which has thousands of retail stores and the No.1 baby brand in Japan.

As a company committed to the environment, Kaji Tech has managed to develop eco-friendly solutions, such as snaps made from recycled resin, Mycel, a sustainable leather material derived from mushrooms, as well as apple leather and wood leather, in which wood powder is used to make the leather. Kaji Tech has also been collaborating with a fellow Japa-

nese company, FUKUI TAIYO, to up-cycle used EVA foam for the manufacture of saddles.



Japanese-made snap DIY kit

"Within our corporate philosophy, we have four core values. One of those values is coexistence with the environment. Our mission is to supply products that are friendly to both humans and the environment. We have acquired ISO9001 and ISO14001 which are environmentally related ISO standards, as well as GRS, which is the global recycling standard," explains Mr. Kajiura.

"Most of our plastic snaps have been certified with Oeko-Tex certificates. Having said that, the advantage of manufacturing snaps with plastic compared to metal is that it creates zero waste and does not require any water in the process of manufacturing. Therefore, it is more eco-friendly in terms of processing."

With Japan's dwindling domestic market due the aging population, diversification and global expansion are key to Kaji

Tech's strategic plans moving forward. In terms of diversification, the company is developing new applications for its products and materials, which includes the development of materials for batteries.

"Finding new applications and new markets is crucial for us," adds the company president. "For example, when it comes to the shackle, we were recently able to apply it to the logistics area, which is a new market development for us. Our main customers are in the apparel field and babywear in particular. However, we also have sports apparel, work uniforms and outdoor-related applications.

"During the pandemic, when people were staying at home and social distancing, handicrafts became a popular activity. So, we started to provide products for the handicrafts market not only in Japan but also in Taiwan and the U.S. too. We want to continue strengthening this field going forward."

When it comes to global expansion, India, South and Southeast Asia are prime target markets for Kaji Tech, which is always on the lookout for partners with local knowledge when entering new regions.

"Partnering with local companies is crucial. Learning and understanding the local culture is important when entering into a new market. Therefore, we have partnered with an Indian and Bangladeshi local company that does sales and provides machinery maintenance. We want to take this business model and enlarge it so that we can expand across Southeast Asia," says Mr. Kajiura.

"We want to thrive together as a team working with all of our partners. Enhancing our status globally is the key to growth."

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