

The range of DIY products in Japan currently on sale are selected to meet the demands of both the inexperienced and the experienced handyman. To satisfy consumer demands, DIY stores stock both DIY and handicraft/hobby products. The majority of merchandise in these stores tends to be domestic with a significantly smaller selection of foreign manufactured products. However the larger chains, such as Tokyu Hands, DOITO and Uni Living, market some foreign products.

What tends to be the deciding factor on purchases of foreign products is a product's requirement for parts (after-market service availability), weight, and design. As North American products are designed in size and weight to meet North American market demands, they tend to be heavier than these with which the average Japanese consumer feels comfortable. This usually results in the Japanese consumer considering only domestic products at the time of purchase. (At this point in the discussion, William Kushlick, representing the CHHMA, noted that many domestic products available in the DIY stores appeared to be heavy, almost as if they had been designed for contractor use. In response, Mr. Fujimura stated that while this may be so, the trend by domestic manufacturers is to produce smaller lighter tools for general consumer use.)

In conclusion Mr. Fujimura offered the following recommendations to Canadian manufacturers:

- Canadian manufacturers interested in the Japanese market should undertake a market survey to identify the needs and requirements of the Japanese consumer.
- Exporters should be prepared to offer a wide range of products, but in small quantities.
- To consolidate smaller shipments, Canadian exporters should consider the use of trading companies.
- And lastly, Japanese safety codes and other product standards must be met before such products can be marketed in Japan.

JETRO has produced mini-reports on selected DIY market niches. These include:

Mini-Report No. 17 Your Market in Japan: Wooden
Sept '85 Fittings (Doors and Window Frames)