

During this visit one of the chain's managers took the occasion to stress that foreign manufactured products must conform to Japanese size requirements. The manager also discussed Japanese building safety and electrical codes, and the importance of product instructions for DIY use being translated into Japanese.

Mission members then travelled to East Ohmiya to tour a DOITO Store (part of the Hinode Corporation), and then to the Shibata Garden Tool Company.

Observations of the First DIY Mission Members

The debriefing of mission members took place at the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo. Their observations and comments included:

- Although Japan's DIY market is in its infancy, the market is growing. The time to break into it is now.
- While there exist good opportunities in Japan, Canadian exporters would need a clarification of the Japanese distribution system and how it applies to the import of foreign manufactured DIY products. The typical mark-up appeared to be 30 to 50 percent from the importer through the wholesaler to the retailer, although final store mark-up was based on how much the consumer would be willing to pay. The cost of advertising, which is mostly through newspaper and in-store flyers, is added to the store-shelf price of the product.
- Given how expensive housing is in Japan, the Japanese would prefer products of quality and prestige.
- In general, the Japan DIY Show was assessed as being less sophisticated than the Canadian Hardware Show in Toronto, in terms of a Canadian understanding of trade shows. Perhaps the main difference between the two shows was in the number of recreational products on display at the Japan DIY Show, and the fact that that show is specifically designed to meet the needs of consumer traffic and education.