



Prise Communication Co. Ltd.

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- Head Office
2-9-25 Oshima, Koto-ku, Tokyo
- Main focus of business
General printing work (offset printing, binding, advertisement production, SP work, Supadan etc.)



- Established
November 1973
- URL <http://www.prise-com.co.jp/>
- Purchased cutting tables
Kongsberg XL24, Kongsberg XN22



Prise Communication Co., Ltd.
CEO
Ayako Ono



Prise Communication Co., Ltd.
Production Department
Manager
Koichi Iijima



Prise Communication Co., Ltd.
Commercial Operations
Manager
Kota Taki

Standardization of display business with Kongsberg machines sales from featured "Supadan Workshop" have grown 400 since last year

Prise Communication, with a track record of over 40 years in the commercial printing business, saw the potential for new work and moved into the display business 8 years ago. A strong mentality and proactive investments in plant, including a Kongsberg, to aid expansion have enabled the company to get the display business on track. The "Supadan Workshop" newly set up 3 years ago has allowed Prise to cleverly combine the know-how of an experienced operator with the functionality of the Kongsberg to develop attractive products, and dramatically grow sales.

[Background to Introduction]

Change of business style resulting in beginning of new "display business",
Standardisation of business by proactive capital investment.

8 years ago, against a background of ever more ubiquitous internet advertising, reduced demand for commercial printing services and lower rates for commercial printing, Prise Communication entered the high-added-value "display business" to complement its conventional printing work. The company invested in a UV inkjet printer, "Artios CAD" software for 3D design, and a Kongsberg cutting machine. Despite a lack of firm knowledge and know-how in this field, the whole staff, from the CEO to the employees, came together and battled to establish this new business, which now forms a major part of its operations, complementing the main commercial printing operations. Ayako Ono recalls the decision to move into the display business, saying "As market conditions were changing, I keenly felt the need to supply products and services with high added-value in addition to conventional printing services, which tend to be price-competitive. Naturally, there were risks, but we decided that there was not hope of results with the old management style."

Founded in 1973, Prise Communication has a long history as a printing company. However, 17 years ago, it had the bitter experience of near-bankruptcy due to 30 billion yen of debt run up through poor management. Ms. Ono, the financial director at the time, took over the business with a plan to rebuild. Ms. Ono conducted a comprehensive review of the companies operations and implemented improvements, restoring results and finally paying off the debt in 2010. This succeeded in dispelling the company's negative image. Perhaps born out of these circumstances, a certain strength of will can be felt in the reforming attitude and readiness for challenge in the culture of this company.

[Reason for selection]

After much research, the Kongsberg was selected for its cutting accuracy.

The selection of a cutting machine, a major piece of equipment and a critical issue, took a year and a half of careful consideration. Focusing on the major manufacturers, the company carefully investigated a number of products, eventually selecting the ESKO Kongsbergs for its high cutting accuracy. And in 2008, the Kongsberg XL24 arrived together with Artios CAD design software. Following the arrival of the machine, the staff acquired a entire series of skills, design, layout and production by self-learning. After an uncertain start, the company accumulated know-how as it became more experienced and now has a system in place to enable a rapid response to customer orders.

As Production Department Manager, Mr. Iijima, who oversees the production for the display business, recalls "We had no experience whatever with the creation of 3D objects and we where creating 3D data for the first time. But maybe because I was fortunate enough to have experience working in the design office, it didn't take too long to learn the whole series of operations. From his experience of the Kongsberg, he gives it a glowing assessment, "Apart from anything else, it's very tough and never breaks down.

Sometimes consumables such the belt need to be replaced but in the 8 years we've had it, there has only been a single occurrence of an event you might call a fault. Its simple to operate and very user-friendly." In 2016 the company purchased a second Kongsberg, the XN22, to strengthen its production capabilities. This purchase was due to the bright outlook for the display business going forward. "Going forward, we have to think about developing our staff, doing things like increasing the number of Kongsberg operators" (Ms. Ono, CEO) and the plan is to continue to strengthen the company.



[Benefits of Introduction]
Boost to sales capabilities thanks to Kongsberg, "Supadan Workshop" sales up 400% on last year

The Kongsberg is mentioned as a key element of the strategy to maintain favourable conditions, but what specific benefits does it bring? "Introducing the Kongsberg allowed us to take on jobs with 3-dimensional work such POP displays and fixtures, in addition to normal 2-dimension printing work such as leaflets and brochures. Also, because it allows us to handle small lots in-house, we've been able to keep costs low and take on work with short deadlines" (Ms. Ono, CEO). It seems that having a Kongsberg in-house has served both to strengthen sales appeal and allowed the company to respond to customer needs in a flexible way.

As it seeks to to continue expanding its display business, the company has recently launched another new business which has caused the market to sit up and take notice. This is the "Supadan Workshop", started 3 years ago. "Supadan Workshop" is the brand name for a venture which involves the development and sale of products made of lightweight, reinforced cardboard.

Examples of the product include "Wan-clo", a closet for dogs, "Wan-room", a kennel, and "Pet Sheet Box", a storage box for pet sheets. The brand is aimed at women with cute designs and product that are easy to carry around. To market these products, the company began by actively participating in trade exhibitions and trade fairs to raise awareness, and gradually gaining an understanding of consumer needs by conducting surveys etc. Although it was felt that some things were effective and others less so, the marketing work was successful in gradually raising awareness. After initially catching the eye of distributors, the brand was taken up by major distributors, eventually gaining sufficient traction to enable product tie ups with Disney. Recently promotion has continued via social media, by means of tweets from celebrities, etc. The company's own e-commerce website is currently under construction, but is schedule to go live in the near future. In addition, the product line itself is scheduled for expansion. Besides dog products, products for cats are now being developed.

Ms. Ono predicts a bright future for the Supadan Workshop brand, saying "In 2017, the sales of the Supadan Workshop brand are up 400% on last year. All the effort we put in is now paying off and the line has become a valuable asset for the company. While the products developed under the Supadan Workshop name are the culmination know-how and techniques acquired over many years in the printing industry, it has always be reassuring to know that we have the Kongsberg to realise our ideas. And so the products have an advantage that is not easily imitated."



Besides establishing the Supadan Workshop band, Prise Communications has expanded its operations to include both B to B and B to C. Two years ago the company was awarded "Koto Brand" certification which is given to companies based in Koto ward, Tokyo that operate an innovative business with excellent products and technologies. The award serves as proof of the high regard in which the company's revolutionary product planning and business development are held.



Contribution to community using Kongsberg, becoming a creative company that adds value through creativity

In addition, as part of its corporate activities, the company actively contributes to the local community. As part of these efforts, the company got together with associates in the printing industry to create picture books using a grant from Koto ward, Tokyo. The completed book was presented to local libraries and read out loud at "Picture Book Readings" for kindergarten students and people with learning difficulties in Koto. So far two picture books have been created, one about "Festivals" and the other about an "Island of Dreams". In association with the book about festivals, the company created a "Kami Oshiki" (literally "portable shrine made of paper" made out of cardboard and gold leaf using the Kongsberg. The staff bring the Kami Oshiki to book readings and have the children carry it in the manner of a real portable shrine. It has also been supplied to the famous local shrine, Tomioka Hachiman-gu, for festivals. These volunteer activities have continued with for 4 to 5 years with the CEO at the centre of everything, and play a significant role in the business. As Ms. Ono explains, "The Kami Oshiki is just one example, but the staff often use the Kongsbergs to make other things besides deliverables. Not all of these lead to business opportunities, but that kind of work can provide hints for future product development. For several years, I've often had people not associated with the company come up to me and say "You're doing interesting things at Prise", which is always nice to hear".

Prise Communication is a company is sensitive to the changing conditions in the market, continuing to progress from being a simple printing company to becoming a creative company that adds value through creativity. It will interesting to see where this readiness for the next challenge will take this business.

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