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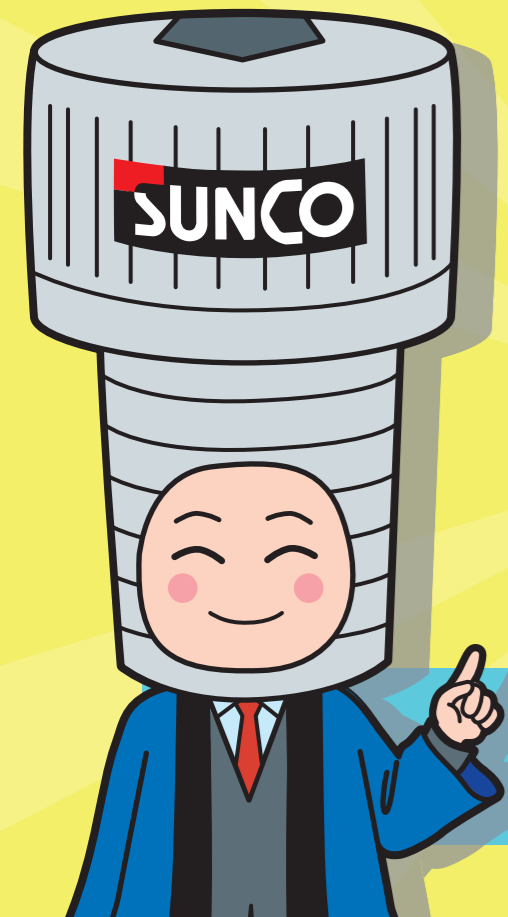
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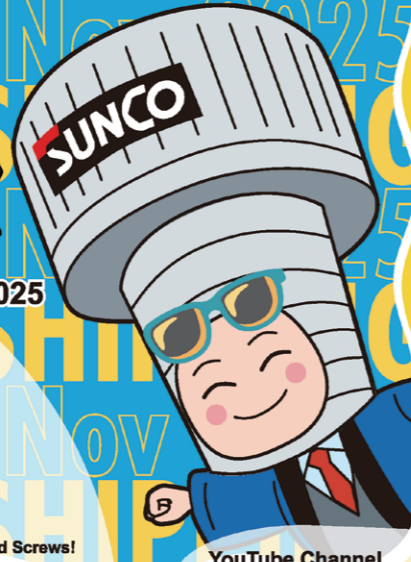
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Special Feature

Latest News

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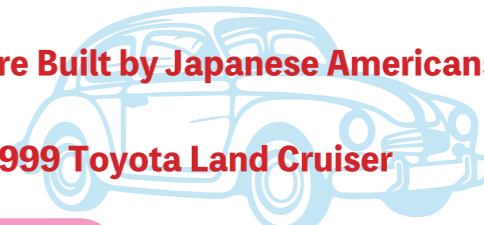
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This article introduces how great and varied fasteners are.



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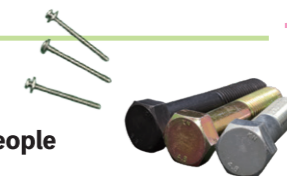
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Manufacturing companies that build the future with people and skills that we witness at the exhibition



Socket Boy Japan

8th issue

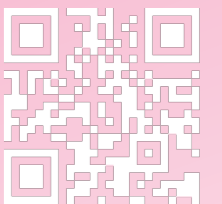
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Published by:
Sunco Industries Co., Ltd.
[Head Office]
1-9-28, Itachibori, Nishiku,
Osaka, 550-0012, Japan
Email: export@sunco.co.jp

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March 2026 Issue



SEMA SHOW 2025 Feature Interviews With 5 Companies Attending America's Biggest Car Festival

In this edition of Socket Boy, we are featuring interviews with five companies who attended the SEMA SHOW 2025, the world's largest vehicle aftermarket exhibition, held in Las Vegas from 4th to 7th November 2025. The selected companies featured range from an innovative fastener manufacturer to classic-car restoration specialists to a racing apparel manufacturer. You can find more interviews with other companies attending the festival that we were unable to include in this edition online – do have a read!

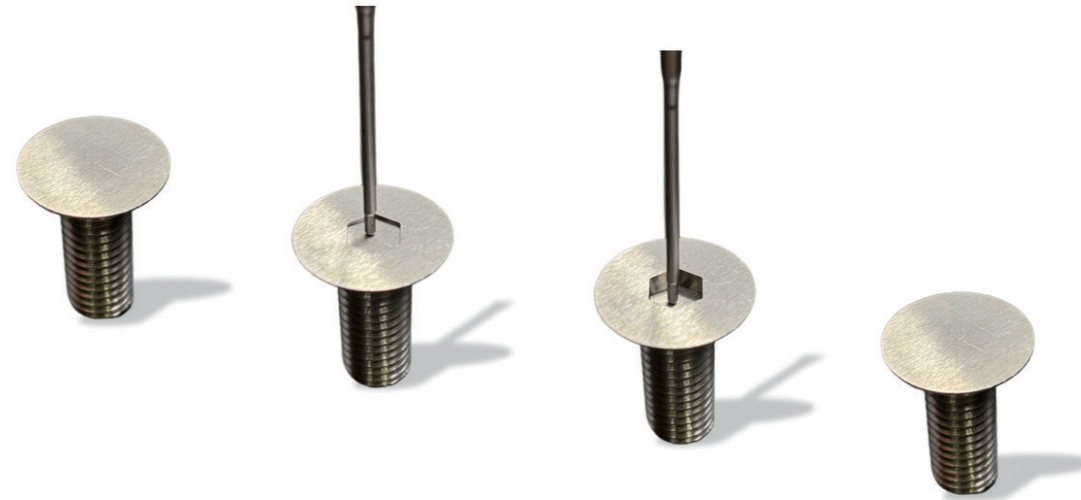
About the SEMA SHOW

The SEMA SHOW is the premier event in the automotive aftermarket industry, bringing together vehicle manufacturers, parts brands, engineers, buyers and media professionals. Hosted by the Special Equipment Market Association, the show has more than 50 years of history, dating back to its inaugural event in 1967. In 2025, around 2,400 companies exhibited, showcasing the latest customized cars, performance parts and aftermarket innovations. Over the four-day event, more than 150,000 visitors attended and the vibrant automotive culture meant that the exhibition halls were buzzing with new business opportunities.

#01 Flush Fasteners

Fasteners with Invisible Drive Function
F-Head™ - An Innovative Design Created from Medical Need

F-Head™ triumphs
with the iF DESIGN AWARD 2026 Gold



Flush Fasteners is an American fastener manufacturer established in 2022. As a young company, it has developed its own patented products with its flagship being the F-Head™ (F-Head flush fastener), a unique fastener that shows no drive function when fully tightened. At first glance, the fastener appears to have a completely flat head. However, the drive function appears when pressure is applied to the head. Made from stainless steel, F-Head™ can be tightened using ordinary tools, just like conventional fasteners. The drive function is available not only in hexagon socket shapes but also in Torx-type shapes that allow higher torque transmission.

A product born from the challenges of medical environments

The F-Head™, the fastener without a visible drive function, was created to deal with cleanliness issues in environments where hygiene is absolutely essential. Mr. Jeff Serle spent 35 years working for a manufacturer of medical and laboratory equipment and he explained that long-standing problems in these settings inspired the invention. In medical facilities and research laboratories, hygiene control is paramount. Typically, the drives of fasteners used in these environments are filled with silicone to prevent dust and debris accumulating. However, the chemicals used during cleaning often dissolve the silicon, increasing the risk of contamination. According to Mr Serle, when the F-Head™ sits flat, the indentation beneath the surface is thinner than a human hair.

Internal cleanliness tests show that this design reduces bacterial growth by 98% compared with conventional cross-recessed or countersunk screws.

Used in many industries beyond medical

Although F-Head™ was originally developed for use in medical environment, its elegant look has proved attractive and is now increasingly used in fields where design matters – including automotive interiors and luxury furniture. A video introducing the product, posted on Instagram in March last year, had more than 15 million views, significantly boosting interest in its design. With the indentation barely visible when the head is flat, the product creates a clean, sophisticated appearance – ideal for design-sensitive applications.

Meeting future challenges

Mr. Serle identifies manufacturing cost reduction as a major challenge for the company. While the F-Head's™ innovative structure places it in a premium price bracket, this hasn't deterred significant sector interest. The company is poised for major growth, with partnerships set to launch shortly with the biggest distributors in Europe and USA/Canada. To support this expansion, Flush Fasteners' UK sales office has recently strengthened its team with new staff dedicated to developing these distribution channels - a strategic move that Mr. Serle anticipates will drive further economies of scale as production volumes increase.



Mr. Jeff Serle, who developed the F-Head™

Currently, the company's strong B2C presence demonstrates proven market demand, and Flush Fasteners is now leveraging this success to expand into B2B markets. With its unique combination of hygiene suitability and refined appearance, the F-Head™ is attracting interest from diverse industries worldwide - extending well beyond its medical sector origins into new applications across multiple sectors.

#02 Classic Industries Corporation

Turn Classic Cars Back to 'As They Were Then' with Restoration Parts



Head side emblem for Ford F-100 in 1963 to 1965

Founded in 1976, Classic Industries Corporation manufactures restoration parts for American classic cars. Their extensive product range – covering everything from engine components and body panels to interior products and electrical components, helps enthusiasts restore their vehicles to their original condition. The first model the company worked with was the Chevrolet Camaro, followed by Firebird and Nova. Today, according to President Mark Vogt, they supply parts for more than 120 different car models, growing into one of the leading companies in the classic car industry.

Restoring parts using 100 sample cars

Classic Industries keeps around 100 classic cars as reference vehicles across its seven warehouses in California, enabling them to reproduce high precision restoration parts. In the world of classic car restoration, original parts are often no longer available to use as samples. By owning 100 of the original vehicles, the company has solved this issue.

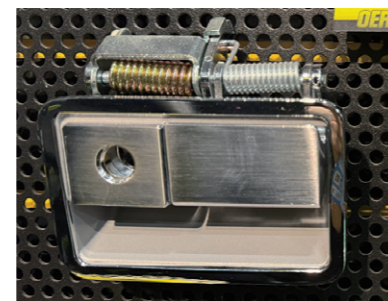


Door panel emblem of 1967 Camaro

These sample cars are invaluable not only for studying original components but also for testing the newly manufactured restoration parts. By fitting the parts onto actual vehicles and checking their performance, the company can guarantee high product reliability. Their commitment to accuracy and authenticity is at the core of their manufacturing philosophy.

Current trends in classic cars

We asked Mr. Vogt, who has worked for the company for over 35 years, about the current trends in the classic car market. He explained, "The majority of our sales now comes from parts for pickup trucks*." Their popularity, he noted, stems from practicality; pickup trucks can carry large loads and are often passed down from parents to children, creating ongoing demand for repair parts. He also believes nostalgia plays a significant role. Many people purchase the same pickup truck models they grew up with or admired when they were younger.



1970-1974 Model Plymouth Barracuda cube-shaped external door handle (with gasket)

Looking ahead

Looking to the future, Mr. Vogt said the company aims to expand production lines and add new vehicle models to meet customers' needs. They continuously monitor customer feedback and track trends in the classic car market. Participating in trade fairs like this is also an important part of their market research.

*Pickup truck

A vehicle with a passenger compartment at the front and a cargo bed at the rear for carrying goods.



Classic Industries President, Mr. Mark Vogt

#03 Associated Electric

Developing Radio-Controlled Cars Built to Win Turning Racing Experience into Product Innovation



RC cars made by Associated Electrics

Founded in 1964, Associated Electrics manufactures radio-controlled (RC) cars for both racing and general use. The company has its own in-house engineering team responsible for designing and developing its models, and Mr. Curtis Husting, interviewed for this article, is one of its key members. Since 1977, Associated Electrics has produced 35 IFMAR world champions*. Some of these champions have now retired from racing and work full-time for the company, while other company employees continue to be actively involved with racing. Thanks to their expertise, the company can design truly competitive racing models.



Mr. Curtis Husting,
An Associated Electrics engineer

'Ready-to Run' - popular across all generations

The company offers two types of RC cars: Ready-to-Run, fully assembled models that can be used straight out of the box and the Builder's Kit, models that customers assemble themselves. Ready-to-Run models are popular with all age groups, Mr. Husting noting that even his grandchild enjoys them. He added that Monster Truck, with its large tires and the possibility of dynamic movement, such as jumps, is especially popular with children.

Product development driven by racing experience

Looking towards the future, Mr. Husting emphasized the importance of continuous improvement saying, "We improve our products quality every year by applying the knowledge and skills we gain from competitions." The VINTAGE BASH 3.0, an RC competition held in Australia from late October to early November last year was one such competition. The event took place on an outside track with mud and sand providing more challenging conditions than indoors. Heavier RC cars struggled to maintain speed due to increased friction. Based on this experience, Mr. Husting refined the model's transmission, improving how the motor's power is delivered to the tires and enabling the cars to maintain speed.

These enhancements, directly informed by real competition conditions, contribute to the development of even more advanced reliable products. As Mr. Husting explained, "Of course we want to win races, so we adjust and improve our RC cars for each competition. But we also apply this knowledge to create higher-quality racing RC cars for the public."

*IFMAR Championships

The IFMAR Championships are world-level RC cars competitions held by the non-profit organization, IFMAR, every two years in locations about the world, including the United States, Europe, and Asia. Categories include on-road, off-road, engine-powered and electric cars. World Champions compete for the title of the best RC driver in the world.



Mr. Masami Hirotsuka, the most successful RC car driver, at their booth

#04 Mooneyes USA, Inc.

**Custom Car Culture Born in California
The Journey So Far and Future Challenges**

Founded in 1950, Mooneyes USA, Inc. is a manufacturer of parts and accessories for custom cars, hot rod cars* and motorbikes. Their product range spans from car parts and accessories, such as fuel tanks and hubcaps, to merchandise including T-shirts and stickers. Based in California, the birthplace of hot rod culture, the company operates both physical shops and an online store, making it possible for customers around the world to purchase their automotive parts and branded items.

Parts development that began in school days

President Chico Kodama shared the story of how the company began. “The founder, Mr. Dean Moon, made parts to repair his own car when he was still a student, and then began selling them to his friends.” The original company name, MOON Equipment, came from ‘Moon Cafe’, where Mr. MOON worked as a student. While working there, he developed parts such as the Fuel Block (Photo 1) and Foot Pedal (Photo 2); components designed to organize and divide fuel lines. Alongside product development, Mr. Moon also took part in drag racing – a sport where two cars compete to cross a designated finish line first. His passion for motorsport led him to develop lightweight fuel tanks specifically for racing.



(Photo 1) Fuel Block

(Photo 2) Foot Pedal

Industry changes and commitment to the future

Speaking about current industry trends, President Kodama noted that, “The industry is shrinking due to the influence of an aging society.” He explained that the younger generation tends to prefer imported Japanese cars over American-made ones. As a result, when younger customers visit their shops, they often find no compatible parts for their cars and end up purchasing only small items such as keychains or stickers. Despite this situation, Mr. Kodama expressed a strong passion for safeguarding Mooneyes’ identity. “We will continue to value the products we have long produced, designed specifically for the American market and we will keep developing in the areas where we excel.”

*Hot rod
Hot rods are remodeled cars particularly popular in the US, featuring modified engines and exterior designs. Often built for drag racing, they are lightweight, powerful and serve as a symbol of American custom-made car culture.

#05 Radical Race Gear

**Delivering Handmade Racing Suits
to the World with Special Care**



A popular brightly-colored design (left) Radical Race Gear’s racing suits.

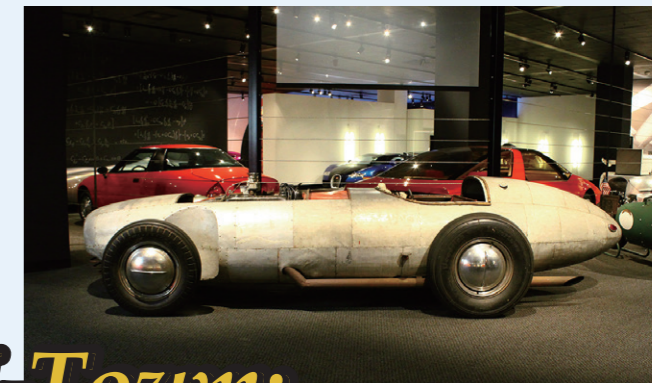
Based in North Carolina in the US, Radical Race Gear manufactures safety equipment, racewear and accessories for the motorsport industry. Their flagship product is a fire-resistant racing suit designed to protect drivers in the event of an accident. As a family-run business with a team of just seven people, the company takes pride in offering high-quality products at reasonable prices. By keeping labor cost low while maintaining exceptional craftsmanship, they have built a reputation for reliability. Every racing suit is handmade and sold not only across the US but also in Europe, Australia and Japan.

Features of the popular model and the production process

According to Mr. Butch Lamb, who was interviewed for this article, brightly colored designs are particularly popular. Visibility is crucial for drivers on the track, so bold colors - such as pink - are often requested. When creating a suit, the design process begins with the designer producing a draft that matches the customer’s preferences and complements the look of the racing car. Once the customer approves the draft, production begins. Production starts with cutting the special fabric imported from France and the entire process – from design approach to final stitching – takes around four weeks.

Expanding sales while maintaining exceptional customer services

Looking to the future, Mr. Lamb explained that the company aims to grow further while maintaining the high level of customer service they have prioritized for the past 20 years. Unlike many industries that rely on automated responses, Mr. Lamb personally answers all calls and emails, valuing direct communication with customers. During the winter seasons, the company exhibits at trade shows such as this and the PRI Trade Show, which focuses on the racing industry. These events provide valuable opportunities to meet customers face-to-face and better understand their needs. Radical Race Gear also plans to increase its marketing activities, making fuller use of social media platforms such as Instagram and X. Through more active engagement and wider promotion, they hope to reach a broader audience and continue expanding their business.



Cruising J-Town:

**Car Culture Built by
Japanese Americans**



Exhibition Background

Held at the ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena, near Los Angeles, from July to December last year, Cruising J-Town drew significant attention as an exhibition that showcased the unique Japanese American car culture and their communities. A book titled ‘Cruising J-Town: Japanese American Car Culture in Los Angeles’ was also sold at the venue, focusing particularly on the Japanese-import car culture embraced by young Japanese Americans from the 1970s onwards.

Oliver Wang, guest curator of the exhibition presented by JAMN, explained that he wondered why so few books or studies documented the Japanese American car culture, despite its long history. With no formal record available, he and his best friend, Hau Hsu, decided in 2016 to create one themselves. After nine years of research, this exhibition opened and with the support of Angel City Press, the book ‘Cruising J-Town’ was published.

The History of a Community – Revealed Through Cars

Among the displayed vehicles, the Meteor hot rod, a modified car based on a 1939 model, attracted particular attention. Owned by George Nakamura between 1940 and 1942, it is a rare pre-war roadster known to have been owned by a Japanese American. Many visitors were deeply moved to learn that this car was confiscated when the Nakamura family was sent to an internment camp during WWII.

The exhibition aimed not only to showcase the speed, craftsmanship and design but also to illuminate the lives of the families and friends who owned these cars. For example, the customization of the 1951 Mercury known as the Purple Reign, owned by a passionate Japanese American custom-car enthusiast, was completed by his friends after he died. Most of the displayed items were collected from local communities rather than from museums, capturing the lived history and shared memories of Japanese Americans.

The Role of Cars for Daily Life and as Symbols of Freedom

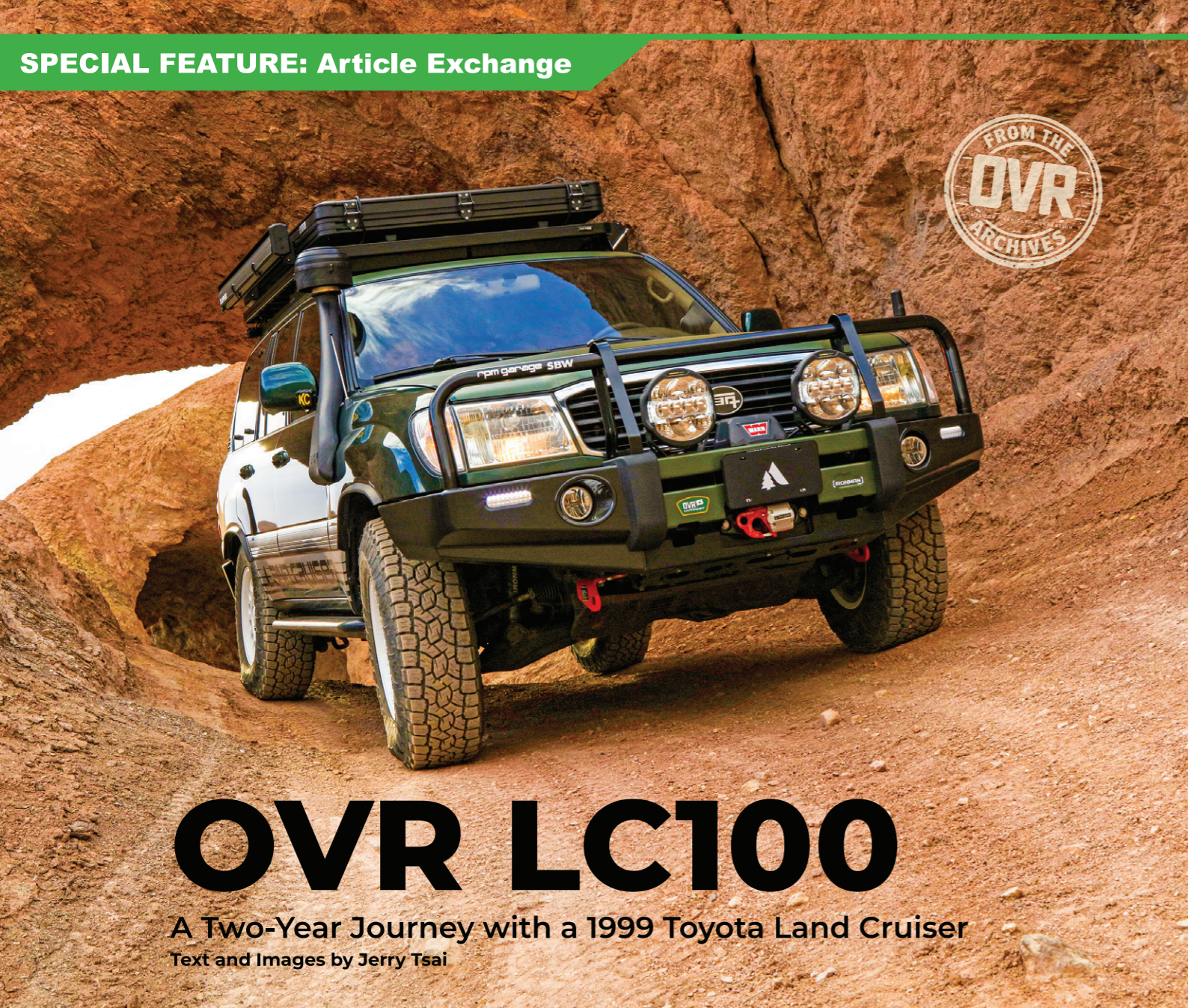
For Japanese Americans, cars have long been more than simple means of transportation. Before and after WWII, racism severely limited career opportunities for Japanese Americans. Many worked as gardeners, farmers or food wholesalers – jobs that required vehicles for mobility. Cars were essential tools that allowed individuals to maintain financial independence, particularly for those who were self-employed.

At the same time, for younger generations, cars created a culture of freedom and connection. From the 1970s, young Japanese Americans developed street-racing and cruising scenes centered on Japanese import cars. According to Oliver, “Cars were a way to express your identity in American society and they also represented a way to connect with your community.”

Japanese Cars and Japanese Americans’ Modification Culture

One of the most talked-about vehicles in the exhibition was a 1937 Datsun 510, loaned by Tod Kaneko, a former Mazda engineer who has long been involved in the Los Angeles car culture. The Datsun 510, a Japanese small sport sedan, was extremely popular in US modification circles at the time. This particular Datsun 510 boldly blended components from multiple Japanese manufacturers, including Mazda’s rotary engine (13B), the RX-7 Turbo II’s gearbox, and parts originally designed for Suzuki’s GSX-R motorcycle. According to Oliver the car exemplifies the imported, modified cars shaped by Japanese Americans, vehicles that reflect both high quality Japanese engineering and a culture of creativity and reliability.

The displayed cars were not simply means of transport, they were powerful representations of Japanese American society and culture. They left a lasting impression on visitors, showing how deeply these vehicles were connected not only to young people’s lives but also to expressions of identity, resilience and community.



OVR LC100

A Two-Year Journey with a 1999 Toyota Land Cruiser
Text and Images by Jerry Tsai

Overlanding—vehicle-based travel that blends road trips, camping and off-pavement exploration—has grown rapidly in recent years. Instead of racing to a destination, the focus is on the journey itself: backroads, scenic campsites and self-sufficient travel.

That spirit is at the heart of OVR (Outdoor Vehicle Recreation), a magazine dedicated to vehicle-based adventure. As OVR's Editorial Director, I spend a lot of time testing gear and traveling to trails and events. My 1999 Toyota Land Cruiser—nicknamed the OVR LC100—has become my trusted companion for all of it. Ironically, it started as a whim.

A HIGH-MILEAGE GAMBLE

In 2023, after selling my previous SUV, I wasn't sure what vehicle would come next. A compact truck or older Jeep seemed likely. Then I stumbled across a 1999 Land Cruiser with nearly 300,000 miles (480,000km). It had cosmetic flaws, a faulty fuel gauge and plenty of wear.

But the test drive changed everything. The truck felt solid, comfortable and surprisingly tight for its age. Land Cruisers have a global reputation for durability, and I decided to take a chance. My goal was simple: build a budget overland rig

and use it to test products for OVR. The "budget" idea didn't last long, but the reliability goal did.

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

Rather than jumping straight into accessories, I started with maintenance. A trusted mechanic sorted out the fuel gauge and checked the truck's overall health. From there, a specialty shop refreshed fluids and addressed wear items so the vehicle had a solid baseline.

Inside, small updates went a long way. A restored steering wheel and fitted seat covers revived the cabin without a full reupholstery job. Outside, I experimented with a DIY clearcoat restoration that brought tired paint back to life. It wasn't a show finish, but it suited a travel vehicle perfectly.

TRAIL-READY, NOT TRAIL-ONLY

The Land Cruiser's first mountain trips highlighted why these vehicles are so respected. It was quiet on the highway, comfortable for long drives and roomy enough to sleep inside when needed. That balance matters in overlanding, where vehicles often serve as both transport and shelter.

A suspension upgrade added a modest lift and improved load handling for camping gear. Protective bumpers, rock



sliders and a winch increased durability and self-recovery capability. An onboard air system made it easy to air tires up and down for different terrain—one of the most practical upgrades on any off-road vehicle.

SENSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

Instead of wide tires, I chose a narrower "pizza cutter" setup. These slice through soft terrain more effectively and often track better in snow and dirt. It's a functional choice many seasoned travelers prefer.

Electrical power evolved over time. What began as a simple dual-battery system grew into a more robust setup capable of running a fridge, small appliances and camera gear. Solar panels help recharge while camping. For extended trips, that self-sufficiency is invaluable.

Storage drawers, a roof-top tent and an awning transformed the Cruiser into a comfortable micro-camper. Nothing extravagant—just practical gear that makes life on the road easier.

OLD SUV, NEW PURPOSE

Despite its age, the LC100 has proven incredibly dependable. It's carried me across deserts, mountains and coastlines for assignments and personal trips alike. It's not the flashiest build, but it consistently does its job without drama.

It has also introduced me to the passionate Land Cruiser community and deepened my appreciation for Toyota's engineering. Many owners keep these vehicles for decades, and now I understand why.

No project vehicle is ever truly finished. Needs change, gear evolves and new ideas appear. But in its current form, this Land Cruiser represents a sweet spot: comfortable, capable and ready for the next trip.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Looking back, trusting that first impression was the right call. The Cruiser spoke to me on day one—and two years later, it still does. ▲



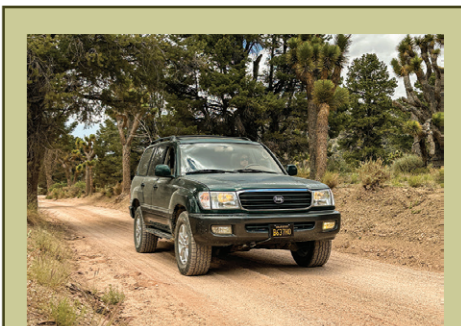
Home is where you park it. The OVR LC100 is set up to explore the backcountry and create a comfortable place to stay, anywhere you find yourself.



Inside the Overland Vehicle Systems rooftop tent, bedding is ready with desert views framed through the windows.



An Iceco APL35 fridge/freezer keeps food fresh and a storage drawer system helps organize camping essentials.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE OVR LC100

Follow the ongoing Land Cruiser build at OVRmag.com. Scan the QR code to access articles covering upgrades, DIY installs, gear tests, maintenance tips and trip reports featuring this vehicle.



Hello Socket Boys and Girls Around the World!

There are still many fastener companies around the world that we don't know about. Let's say hello...



Bus 4x4 is an Australian engineering innovator specialising in transforming Toyota Coaster and HiAce vehicles into capable 4WD and AWD people movers designed for the world's toughest environments. Founded in 2011 and based in Rocklea, Queensland, the company began in response to a growing demand for safer, more reliable off road transport solutions for industry. What started as a practical solution for challenging worksites has since evolved into a market leading manufacturer with a global reputation for durability, safety and technical excellence.

A major turning point arrived in 2014, when Bus 4x4 identified the Toyota platform as the ideal foundation for its conversion systems. This decision enabled the company to refine its engineering, ensuring consistent quality and unlocking the ability to supply complete converted vehicles. Between 2016 and 2018, the business expanded its product range. It built strong distributor networks across Australia, introduced new accessories while forming early international partnerships in regions such as Africa and the UAE.

Today, the company employs a team of 30-40 specialists dedicated to R&D, manufacturing and continuous improvement. Their conversion kits serve demanding sectors including mining, tourism, government, emergency response and remote area transport industries that depend on reliable off road mobility. Bus 4x4's commitment to exceptional service is reinforced by triple ISO certification, demonstrating its high standards in quality, environmental responsibility and safety.

Its vehicles are now used across Australia and increasingly throughout the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

With a vision focused on global growth and ongoing innovation, Bus 4x4 continues to help customers move more people to more places with confidence - and, as their slogan proudly states, with MORE GO.



Bus 4x4

Building Australia's Toughest
People Movers



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OVR Magazine

A Magazine Built for Real World Exploration

OVR
OUTDOOR • VEHICLE • RECREATION

OVR Magazine is a U.S. based media company dedicated to the world of outdoor vehicle recreation, celebrating the growing culture of overlanding, off-road exploration and vehicle-based travel. Founded by a collective of long-time automotive and outdoor media professionals, the company was created to tell richer, more authentic stories about how people truly use their vehicles to experience the outdoors. Rather than focusing solely on products or trends, OVR emphasises real journeys, genuine adventure and the individuals behind the builds and destinations.

From its beginnings, OVR has aimed to bridge the gap between automotive enthusiasm and outdoor exploration. A key milestone in its development was expanding beyond print and digital publishing into experiential activations, including the OVR Outpost installations at major auto shows and enthusiast events across the United States. This evolution brought the brand into closer contact with its community, strengthening its identity as both a publication and an active participant in adventure culture.



Each issue of OVR Magazine showcases high-quality photography, in-depth vehicle features, destination stories and carefully selected gear coverage. The team prioritises authenticity when deciding what to feature, seeking out vehicles that are genuinely used, journeys that have truly been undertaken and equipment that has been tested in real conditions. Their philosophy is simple: vehicles are more than machines - they are platforms for discovery and personal stories.

Beyond publishing, the team builds and uses its own project vehicles, ensuring that the content remains grounded in firsthand experience. As OVR continues to grow, its ambition is to evolve into a long-lasting lifestyle brand that champions curiosity, thoughtful adventure and a deeper connection to the world beyond the pavement.

Who's the next Socket Boy or Girl?
SEE YOU NEXT TIME...



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Email: info@ovrmag.com
Website: www.ovrmag.com

Creating Products in Response to Customers' Needs.

**Mr. Yuki Kariya,
Director and Branding Chief**

Yuki Kariya joined Kyushushinjo in 2001. Kariya's father also worked at Kyushushinjo, as Company Director, so he knew the company well. Originally from Kagoshima Prefecture, Kariya spent around three years training in Osaka before returning to his hometown. He has ensured that he has been able to gain experience across a wide range of roles, including manufacturing, quality control and sale management. When Kyushushinjo merged with Pias Sales in 2013 and was renamed as QP Fastening Works, Kariya was appointed as its Director. Today, he is responsible for the company's overseas business, ensuring efficient worldwide delivery.

The Origin of PIASTA - a Flagship Product

One of the company's major flagship products is PIASTA, a bi-metal drill screw renowned for its exceptional rust resistance. It is a bi-metal product, combining a stainless-steel head and thread with a hardened steel tapping section and drilling tip. The idea for PIASTA originated from a German client's request: "Could you manufacture drill screws that do not rust?" At that time, Europe faced widespread corrosion issues from acid rain, leading to problems with roofs due to rusted fasteners.

Determined to solve this problem, the then-Director, Katsumi Shinjo, prioritised customers' needs and within just seven days, he developed and was able to deliver a prototype. Reflecting on Mr. Shinjo's approach, Mr. Kariya commented: "He dedicated himself entirely to product development." And that commitment has paid off. Today, PIASTA is in great demand in Europe.



Mr. Yuki Kariya, Director and Branding Director



- The Road for Those Living in the Fastener Industry -

Expanding Abroad

Along with sales, the company has also expanded its manufacturing operations overseas. Its first overseas manufacturing hub was established in China in the 1990s but after a decade, the company closed when the area was redeveloped to accommodate IT firms. However, Japan's major earthquake in 2011 and the rapid appreciation of the Japanese yen made it increasingly difficult to produce goods for overseas markets within Japan. Dovon Co. Ltd, a manufacturing hub established in 2008 in Vietnam proved to be the ideal company to work with in these circumstances and is now extensively used.

Looking Ahead

When discussing the company's future, Mr. Kariya stated: "We aim not only to increase sales but also to help promote customers' safety by providing reliable products." One of the company's core philosophies is 'for society to see them as a company to be trusted as a result of the care they take with their fastening business' and they remain committed to upholding the values passed down by their predecessors.

Product Recommendation

QP Fastening Works recommends its ONIBA PIAS. ONIBA PIAS, known for its exceptional sharpness, is a drilling screw that was developed in collaboration with Sunco Industries. Despite being made from SUS410, it can penetrate SUS steel plate (up to t=3.0) without the need for a pilot hole. It requires no special tool bit so the users can simply use a standard cross bit, making installation quick and convenient.



PIASTA, drilling screw with bi-metal structure

Article by Ikumi Shinomiya

Improved Competitiveness: Achieved Through an Integrated Production Structure - Outlook for Nippon Fastener's overseas business



Warehouse storing 300 to 400t of wire rods

High Quality Bolts manufactured on rotary type, thread rolling machines

Mr. Tateo Murakami, Deputy General Manager, Fastening Division

Mr. Tateo Murakami, Deputy General Manager, Fastening Division

Tateo Murakami, Deputy General Manager of Nippon Fastener, has worked in research, logistics and sales giving him broad knowledge of the company. Originally, after graduation from university, he studied fasteners as a researcher at Kobe University. Later he joined Sunco Industries, working for a year at the Nagata Centre and two years at the Tokyo branch before being assigned to the Osaka head office of Nippon Fastener Corporation, a partner company of Sunco Industries.

Manufacturing Strength

Nippon Fastener's ability to carry out fully integrated production - from wire rod to finished bolts - stems from its strong relationship with JFE Steel Corporation, one of Japan's largest steel manufacturers. Since its founding, Nippon Fastener has developed both technically and commercially having received personnel and technical expertise from JFE. Even today, the two companies hold monthly meetings to discuss skills improvement and sales expansion, reinforcing their long-standing partnership. Nippon Fastener's deep knowledge of materials and forging, supported by a close relationship with this major steelmaker, continues to enhance its manufacturing capabilities.

Quality Central to Overseas Business

Currently, Nippon Fastener is exploring expanding its business overseas, with the United State identified as a promising market. Although fasteners made in China or Taiwan are widely used in the US, the company believes that there is a room for high-quality Japanese fasteners as an attractive alternative.

Going forward, their long-term aim is to pursue overseas development, carefully monitoring political conditions and market trends. China is also an important market. Nippon Fastener began exporting bolts to China last year and found that Japanese bolts are often used in high-spec machinery. Mr. Murakami noted, "The company wants to identify markets where Japanese quality is valued more than low cost".

Future Goals

A major challenge highlighted by Mr. Murakami is that of securing staff. Japan's working-age population continues to decline each year, as does its crude steel production - with the pace of decline accelerating. Under these circumstances, maintaining the company's QCD guiding philosophy - Quality, Cost and Delivery - has become a concern. As a result, Nippon Fastener plans to increase recruitment and better articulate its corporate philosophy to reduce mismatches between applicants and the company.

Product Recommendation

Nippon Fastener highly recommends its high-strength hexagon socket head cap screws. Mr. Murakami explained that although there are a lot of manufacturers in China, Taiwan and India who use Japanese heat treatment furnaces, they do not always operate them to their full potential. In producing high strength hexagon socket head cap screws, heat treatment operation is critical - it determines the hardness and overall strength of the final product. Nippon Fastener's advanced heat-treatment expertise has earned it an impressive reputation with major domestic manufacturers.



Article by Nono Kobayashi

中川家と博士の ねじねじの 世界

it's a screw world!

What is 'it's a screw world'?

The program features what many people have never thought about - how fasteners are made and the many interesting ways of using them. This small TV show shows how great and varied fasteners are!

Broadcaster: Kansai Television Co. Ltd.
Broadcasting time: 11:09-11:25 PM on every Sunday



Episode 1

Q. Why do most fasteners have cross-shaped heads?



A. Because slotted head fasteners are difficult to make.

Cross-shaped head fasteners can be mass produced by molding while slotted head fasteners are more difficult to produce, requiring more detailed manufacturing.

At Nishioka Byoura Co. Ltd.



Nishioka Byoura manufactures high quantity slotted head fasteners. The advantages of slotted heads are that they are easy to remove even when clogged with debris and can be installed without using tools. They are often used in areas where they are likely to get dirty - such as manholes and inspection holes.

Nishioka Byoura Co. Ltd.
Address: 20-29, Takaramachi, Higashiosaka City, Osaka

Episode 2

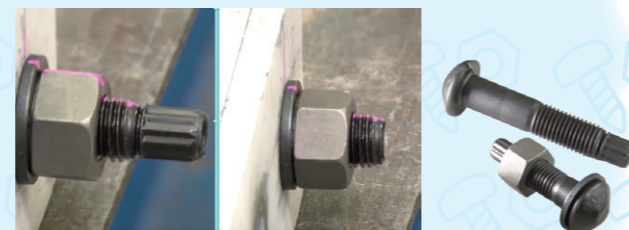
Q. Do construction workers ever forget to tighten all those fasteners?



High-rise buildings and apartments are supported by fasteners. Failure to tighten the fastener could be disastrous!

At Unytite Inc.

You will find fasteners with an anti-'forget-to-tighten' function!



Unytite manufactures fasteners that are used for large-scale buildings such as bridges and high-rise buildings. In particular, Torshear bolts are an excellent product with this anti-'forget-to-tighten' function. When tightened with the right amount of force, a part of the fastener breaks and the length of the fastener changes, making an obvious difference, ensuring zero possibility of failing to fasten.

Unytite Inc.
Address: 3-1-12, Takatsukadai, Nishi-ku, Kobe City, Hyogo

Manufacturing Companies in Higashiosaka



Osaka Seikan Co. Ltd.
2-3-28, Iwatacho Higashiosaka city Osaka

A Cafe in the Field of the Can Can Factory
1-1-15, Wakaehigashimachi Higashiosaka city Osaka
Please purchase tickets from the official website.
For business days and holidays, please refer to the official website.
<https://www.teamlab.art/e/field/>

The Bijou tin is like a jewel. Confectionery shops use them to sell their chocolates and cookies.

Confectionery Tin Maker,

Osaka Seikan Co. Ltd.

Creating dynamic profile and collaborating with art collective, "teamLab"

Founded in 1948, Osaka Seikan Co. Ltd. is a long-established manufacturer based in Higashiosaka. Located in an area known for the rhythmic sounds of metalworking factories, the company specialises in producing tins, particularly for confectionery.

The president, Mr. Yuichiro Shimizu inherited the business from his father and grandfather, who established the business - making him the third generation leader.

Their signature products include luxurious tins for cookies and other confectionery. Utilising decades of craftsmanship, in 2010 they launched a website offering custom-designed tins, opening up new business opportunities through

online channels.

Despite their success, the company faced a challenging period with many confectionery brands shifting from tins to paper packaging. During this downturn, President Shimizu created a cute character, 'Can-Can Man', a tin-loving hero who was then used in promotional campaigns to reinvigorate the brand. At the same time the company also renovated its canteen, transforming it into a gallery-like space to showcase tin designs and inspire employees.

Today, Osaka Seikan operates the website "Okashinomikata", a platform where confectionery shops can purchase beautifully designed tins from existing stock. This initiative continues to add new value

to tins as industrial art.

In 2024, the company collaborated with renowned Japanese art collective, teamLab, to launch two permanent installations: 'teamLab: Field of Wind, Rain and Sun' and 'A Cafe in the Field of the Can Can Factory'. Located in a cafe attached to the factory, the art explores the theme of environmental phenomena, offering visitors a unique experience that blends industry with nature. The artworks are exclusively available to cafe patrons, and reservations are required.

Osaka Seikan remains a shining example of Higashiosaka's craftsmanship, constantly evolving and creating new value.



The café looks very different in the evening from during the day. Visitors can enjoy seasonal desserts.



President Shimizu standing in the meadow of the café.



The main factory.

Ikomasanjo Amusement Park

Breathtaking Views from the Flying Tower with a 90 Year History



Perched 642 meters above sea level on the summit of Mount Ikoma, Ikomasanjo Amusement Park straddles the border between Higashiosaka City in Osaka and Ikoma City in Nara. Since opening its gate in 1929, the park has delighted visitors for over 90 years. Due to its mountaintop location, the park is seasonal and closed during the winter months, due to the winter weather conditions.

Despite Japan's declining population, the park saw 370,000 visitors in 2023, with numbers steadily increasing each year. While many amusement parks focus on introducing thrilling new roller coasters to attract younger crowds, Ikomasanjo Amusement Park remains dedicated to its core mission; providing safe, family-friendly entertainment. Most of its attractions are designed for children and families, offering a warm and welcoming atmosphere. At the heart of the park stands its iconic symbol – the Flying Tower, believed to be Japan's oldest operating amusement ride. It has been in continuous operation since 1929. The tower itself was ingeniously constructed using short steel segments, allowing it to be transported up the mountain and

assembled on site. The Flying Tower features a gondola that gently rotates and ascends around 30-meter-tall steel tower, offering a serene five-minute aerial ride. Combined with the mountain's elevation, the ride reaches heights surpassing even the Tokyo Skytree (634 meters), providing sweeping views of the cityscapes of Nara and Osaka and even the distant Awaji Island.

'The number of international visitors has also been on rise to enjoy this location,' says Mr. Fumihiko Mori, a long-time staff member. Originally, the Flying Tower also served as an observation deck accessed by an internal lift. The lift car functioned as a counterweight to the gondola, so when the gondola ascended, the lift would descend. During World War II, many large amusement rides were dismantled under the Metal Recovery Act. However, as the Flying Tower was repurposed as an air defence observation post by the naval aviation forces, only the gondola and lift were removed and the tower itself was spared from demolition. The dome-shaped control room, just large enough for one person, is believed to have stored machine guns during the war.

Since then, the tower has undergone several renovations, but its foundation and main structure remain unchanged from when the park first opened. It is widely regarded as the oldest existing large-scale amusement ride in Japan. In 2021, the Flying Tower was recognised as a 'Civil Engineering Heritage Site' by the Japan Society of Civil Engineers.

The Flying Tower at Ikomasanjo Amusement Park has been loved by generations of visitors for over 90 years. Looking ahead to its 100th anniversary in 2029, Mr. Mori reflects 'The mission of an amusement park is to have people arrive with smiles and leave with smiles. We are committed to ensuring safety and peace of mind for every visitor.'

Ikomasanjo Amusement Park

Address: 2312-1, Nabata, Ikoma City, Nara
 Operating Season: Saturday 7th March to Sunday 6th December (2026)
 Closed: Every Thursday (Except 13th August), 8th May, 12th August, 8th, 9th & 25th September
 Opening hours vary depending on the season. Please check the official website.
 Admission Fee: Free
 Attraction Fee: Please check the official website
<https://www.ikomasanjou.com/>

Techno Messe Higashiosaka 2025

Evolving with the Employees

- Sumida Byora Manufacturing Co. Ltd.

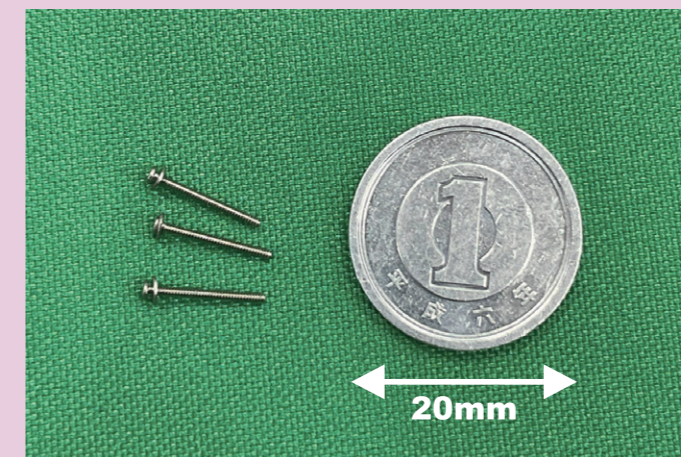
Sumida Byora is a new style of manufacturing company - not manufacturing itself, instead working with over 300 partners and 10 distribution centers to manufacture and distribute high quality fasteners, mechanical components and made to order products, so building a strong foundation to respond to their customers' needs.

Employee Opinion Drives the Company Forward

Sumida Byora believes that creating an employee-friendly environment directly contributes to better product quality and improved service. To achieve this, the company has established systems that actively encourage employees to share their thoughts. Suggestion boxes are placed throughout the company, enabling staff to submit ideas or comments on even the smallest concern. Many improvements to the working environment have come from these suggestions. For example, when employees pointed out that the pathway between the main office and the warehouse became slippery on rainy days, a non-slip surface was promptly installed. In this way, employees' voices directly shape and improve their workplace.

Self-determined Goals Lead to Success

At Sumida Byora, departments set their own goals rather than following a top-down management approach. Targets are not limited to numerical achievements but often include action-based objectives. For example, Mr. Tsushima, who was interviewed for this article, belongs to a department where staff have goals such as 'gaining new customers through trade fairs', 'increasing sales of specific products' or 'obtaining a forklift license'. He noted that, "We feel more responsible for achieving our targets because we set them ourselves". In fact, their department has indeed seen results surpassing expectations, particularly in the shipbuilding and construction market. Looking ahead, they aim to further increase sales in the shipbuilding, construction and farm machinery industries. They also plan to continue expanding their business by strengthening engagement through trade fairs.



The smallest pre-assembled screws - no need to assemble

Aiming to Become a 100-year Old Company

- Kongo Byora Co. Ltd.

Kongo Byora headquartered in Higashiosaka City, is a fastener manufacturer producing hexagon bolts, washer assembled hexagon bolts and special cold-forged parts. As they approach their 70th anniversary in 2026, they are looking ahead with the ambition of becoming a '100-year corporation', supported by three pillars: Quality, People and Equipment.

Manufacturer that pursues +Alpha quality

Kongo Byora considers meeting customers' needs a matter of course and beyond that, the company is committed to achieving added value quality. For example, even if a product passes inspection based on numerical standards, such as the screw surface roughness, the company demands further meticulous visual quality checks. Also, during production, numerical controls are combined with manual visual inspections, ensuring that products meet internal company standards while exceeding customers' expectations.

Efficiency and Expansion in Manufacturing

Kongo Byora operates two manufacturing sites—the Higashiosaka head office and the Nara factory. The Nara plant features a workflow-optimised layout, with linear production lines for each size range, covering everything from material input to final processing. This structure reduces labour requirements and boosts operational efficiency. According to the person in charge, it only needs ten workers at the Nara factory to produce roughly one third of the company's total output. Since its opening three years ago, the plant has expanded year on year, by continuously adding new equipment and widening the range of bolt sizes produced.

Of the company's full product range of M3 to M24 hexagon bolts, the Nara factory currently handles the main sizes—M4 to M14. At present, the factory occupies 3,382 m² of the company's 16,212 m² site, and further expansion is planned to increase production capacity.



Hexagon bolts: large lineup from M3 to M24 (3mm to 24mm)