



SETTING THE SCENE

The Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce (TVCC) is an established centre of excellence for International Trade helping local companies, large and small, reach their international potential. Businesses have access to a full suite of services relating to trade promotion and facilitation to help them trade successfully with the rest of the world.

To meet growing demand a specialist Japan desk has been launched to work with UK businesses to build working relationships,

identify opportunities and create partnerships. The desk, regularly holds 1-2-1 clinics, that members can book onto.

THE MISSION

TVCC, who have strong regional links with Kansai and the Osaka Chamber of Commerce (OCCI) regularly arrange trade missions for UK companies with relevant Japanese businesses with the prospect of future collaborations. In a Memorandum of Understanding energy sector based businesses were invited to bid for a 'special notice of interest'. Each ran through an intensive assessment process that included submitting a detailed application and two initial interviews with the Chamber.

DriveElectric were part of an early 2016 trade mission to Kansai, Japan from the Thames Valley where delegates had the opportunity to attend a series of high profile seminars, presentations and B2B meetings.

RESULTS

Following the trade mission major Japanese companies Okaya Ltd and Nichicon Corporation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Bucks based DriveElectric. Together they launched one of the first Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) chargers to the UK market, revolutionising the use of Electric

Vehicles (EV). V2G charging equipment allows EV owners to help balance the UK's electricity grid by providing



energy from their vehicle batteries to the grid at times of peak demand. In return for doing this, EV owners will benefit from rewards based on the provision of grid services and energy trading revenue. V2G is expected to be one of the methods to improve the total energy management system.

*"We are honoured to have formed a partnership with OKAYA and NICHICON, **a relationship which would not have happened without the trade mission provided by Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce**, which enables us to bring market-leading Vehicle to Grid technology to homes and workplaces in the UK. Millions of vehicle batteries will be made in the coming years and it is our shared goal to see that these valuable assets are utilised to their full potential for the benefit of the people who buy them.*

A more widespread adoption of electric vehicles now looks certain for the UK. Coping with the largest change in the energy supply system is not so much a problem as a golden opportunity to provide flexibility that can utilise more renewable energy and help minimise additional costs in infrastructure. The introduction to OKAYA and NICHICON through the TVCC trade mission has enabled DriveElectric to create a unique solution.

When the TVCC invited us to join their trade mission to Japan we had already identified that the type of specialist manufacturing requirements could only be found in that part of the world so it provided a perfect opportunity for us to connect with potential partners.

*The network of organisations brought together by the **TVCC trade mission provided an invaluable opportunity for us to meet and share ideas with like-minded individuals from overseas organisations**. The successful partnership between DriveElectric and OKAYA and NICHICON has resulted in a reciprocal business opportunity; in September 2017 OKAYA and NICHICON signed a Memorandum of Understanding with DriveElectric to manufacture V2G charging units for the UK market and DriveElectric will be providing their CrowdCharge technology platform to further develop the energy management products provided in Japan."*

Mike Potter

Managing Director at DriveElectric

Masako Eguchi-Bacon, Japan desk market specialist at the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, who led the mission commented: *"We are continually strengthening regional ties with our Japanese counterparts to secure ongoing business opportunities. This works both ways – not only for companies visiting Japan but also those that are coming to the Thames Valley and seeing everything it has to offer.*

This partnership between the three companies is one of the most fantastic case studies deriving from a regional link between Thames Valley (UK) and Kansai (Japan), which we have been supporting since 2012.

All three companies recently exhibited at LCV2017 (Low Carbon Vehicle show) showcasing their new offering and received an overwhelming amount of interest over the two days. I would encourage Thames Valley businesses to consider the trade opportunities with Japan and reach out to the Chamber of Commerce to discuss how they can support them."

**To find out how the Japan desk can help your business with its international needs,
please contact: export@tvchamber.co.uk**

