

Various Turning Points in Our 80-year Journey

In September 2019, NHK Spring celebrated its 80th anniversary. During the journey from our founding in 1939 to today, we have faced various important turning points. We will forge directly ahead with manufacturing as we look forward to becoming a centennial company.

1939 NHK Spring founded, moved from Shibaura to Isogo

Our founding began with the purchase of the Shibaura Spring Seisakujo in Shibaura, Tokyo. As a private company, Shibaura Spring Seisakujo began with manufacture of springs used in automotive repair, then expanded its business operations.

On September 8, 1939, the company name was changed to NHK SPRING CO., LTD. Since ships were, at the time, the main means of shipment, we relocated our headquarters and plant in November 1940 to Isogo, Yokohama City, where we began production of leaf springs in a modern state-of-the-art plant. While subsequently overcoming a period of difficulties including World War II, we continued to accumulate development and production innovations such as the adoption of shot-peening, making forward strides backed by a high level of technological capability.



1961 Entry into the seating business

We had been producing seat springs for the occupation army in Nagano Prefecture since 1949, but as business operations expanded, we faced the necessity of production site location adjacent to automotive manufacturers in order to reduce transport costs.

We thus established our new Nagoya Plant (current Toyota Plant) in 1961, and our Kawasaki Seat Plant the following year. Thanks to a technology partnership with the U.S. firm Rockwell, we switched production from drum-shaped springs to S-shaped springs for greater productivity and lightweight design in advance of other companies. We subsequently began production of urethane foam seats in 1964, robustly expanding our seating business operations.



1930

1940

1950

1960

1970



1957 After a merger, we became the top manufacturer of springs

While the years following 1955 saw an economic boom period that came to be called the "Jinmu Keiki," the spring industry was characterized by increasingly intense market share competition. Apprehensive about mutual collapse, NHK Spring took on active leadership of a restructuring of this industry. In the spring of 1957, we took the step of merging with the spring division of Daido Steel, one of the industry's top three firms.

In December of that year, Daido Steel founded Daido Spring in anticipation of the merger with NHK Spring. The merger between our company and Daido Spring was then effected in May of the following year. This resulted in change in ownership of the Daido Spring plant in Kawasaki to the NHK Spring Kawasaki Plant. At that time, we increased our capital to ¥500 million, cementing our status as the top spring manufacturer.



1963 Establishment of first overseas base: NHK Spring Thailand

In 1963, NHK Spring became the first automotive parts manufacturer to move into Thailand*. At the time, we had already received inquiries for leaf springs from Southeast Asia and South America, and this gave us an initial foothold in overseas production. At this time, demand in Southeast Asia was mainly for springs used in repair work. In 1959, we were exporting 100 to 150 tons of products, compared with our domestic demand of 300 tons. It was amid these circumstances that we received approval for the establishment of NHK Spring Thailand after much hard work.

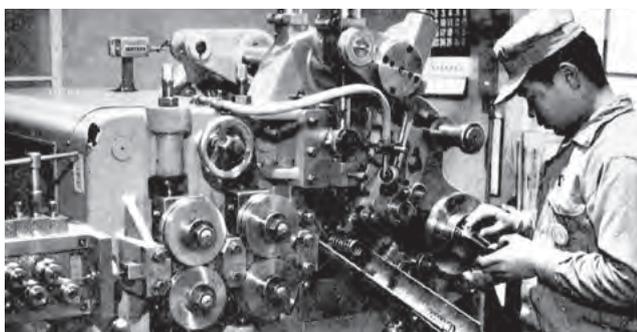
Since then, NHK Spring Thailand has established sites in various places, expanding its business operations beyond the automotive field, and making tremendous progress as one of our Group's most crucial operational hubs.

*Yazaki Corporation began operating in Thailand before NHK Spring, but we were the first to establish ourselves there as an automotive parts business.

1970 Strengthened precision spring business operations

Since 1960, demand for both wire springs and flat springs has been on the increase. In order to make a full-fledged entry into the field of precision springs, we built up a two-plant system including the Ina Plant (renamed from Miyada in 1963) and the Kawasaki Plant.

In the small spring business, however, numerous small-scale companies crowded the field due to the ease of starting the business with small capital. NHK Spring introduced state-of-the-art facilities and established production technologies to compete decisively by offering more precise products and using more advanced production technology. In 1970, the precision spring operation at the Kawasaki Plant was relocated to the Atsugi Plant. In this way, we continued to expand our precision spring business operations.



1991 Major relocation to the new Yokohama Office

Since the start of the planning for Metropolitan Expressways Bay Shore Route which had begun in the mid-1960s, was to pass through the property on which our headquarters and Yokohama Office in Isogo Ward were located, we were provided with an alternate property in Kanazawa Ward, Yokohama City, whereupon our relocation began in earnest.

The relocation started in 1987 when we began construction on our automotive suspension coil spring plant, and the start of construction on our seating plant followed the next year. In tandem with these projects, we have built a headquarters building, a development and testing building, welfare building, and Welfare Pension Fund Hall (current gymnasium).

In 1991, our corporate headquarters, Yokohama Plant, Kawasaki Plant, each department in our Negishi Annex Office, and NHK Spring R&D Center (later merged with the Research and Development Division) all relocated to the new Yokohama Office, where they are situated today.



1980

1990

2000

2010

2020



1980 ~ Pioneering non-automotive fields

In our Mid-term Business Plan released in 1976, we clearly stated that we had arrived at an era of thoroughgoing diversification of business operations: "We will increase sales from products other than existing automotive-related products until they represent 40% of our total sales."

We developed and produced industrial machinery and equipment related products including pipe hangers and mechanical multilevel parking systems, and chemical products business followed as the next pillar of plant division. In 1986, we established Electronic Components Department, and embarked on the manufacture of metal substrates. We launched brazing operations in 1990, and developed our data device related business into security business operations, receiving high marks worldwide for our anti-counterfeiting technology.



2010 ~ Proactive NHK Group global deployment

Although the first decade of the 2000s saw a variety of difficult struggles, including the Lehman Brothers collapse and associated financial crisis, the Great East Japan Earthquake, and large-scale flooding in Thailand, NHK Spring Group pulled together to achieve solid growth.

During the 2010s, we established new business sites in Asia and Central America, accelerating our global business activities. In 2015, we established a production site in Hungary, our first one in Eastern Europe, providing us with a foothold for expanded sales to European manufacturers. Based on the concept of local production for local consumption, the aim of our global business deployment is to form local affiliates that are affectionately received in their local communities, and this thinking will never change.