

Bringing biopharmaceuticals to the world



By reducing the cost of expensive biopharmaceuticals through its unique advanced chromatography technology, YMC foresees making biopharmaceuticals available to more people globally.

In the world of chromatography – a technology for the separation of molecules critical to the pharmaceutical industry – few companies can offer a one-stop-shop; from lab-scale analytical columns to high-volume purification packing materials, from consumables to large-scale chromatography equipment. Fewer still can offer optimized methodologies that enable customers to understand how to employ their products more efficiently.

YMC Co., Ltd. specializes in this one-stop-shop business model for the world's pharmaceutical organizations, having expanded its presence globally to geographies where many of the world's top firms operate.



YMC
www.ymc.co.jp/en

"Whereas most manufacturers can only offer a single chromatography product, such as separation media 'packing materials', specialized loading devices for the packing materials 'columns', 'HPLC systems' or other instruments that run and document the processes, the greatest strength of YMC's business model is that we are uniquely positioned to offer our customers a platform that allows them to determine which packing materials, which devices/systems/instruments, and which methods can be applied to achieve maximum production efficiency," says Ryuji Yamamura, President of YMC.

The company's diverse set of services for the pharmaceutical industry in the niche field of chromatography – and a gradual international expansion that has allowed it to get a foothold in the competitive global market – has proved a highly successful strategy. With offices and production facilities across Japan, USA, Germany, India, China, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Switzerland, overseas activity today accounts for over 70% of the Group's chromatography sales.

"We have been able to achieve this growth by working closely with our customers to refine the use of our purification technology specific to their unique processes and then provide them with the high-performance products they need. This customer-intimate approach is the very essence of Japanese manufacturing," explains Mr. Yamamura.

In order to further expand such activities in the future, YMC is actively investing in research facilities and recruitment at its main overseas bases. One such initiative is the construction of a laboratory at YMC America (Massachusetts) which is slated to carry out joint

research with its USA-based customers. The new R&D facility is targeted to be operational from the second quarter of 2021.

One particular area of research focus in which YMC has invested heavily is improving the efficiency of biopharmaceutical production. Biopharmaceuticals are medical drugs based upon large molecules such as antibodies, peptides and nucleic acids, and are considered to have a very high direct effect on the treatment of disease, unlike traditional low-molecular-weight drugs.

"For this reason, the market for biopharmaceuticals has grown significantly in recent years," says Mr. Yamamura. "On the other hand, the cost of production is very high and so it is important to improve the efficiency of the chromatographic purification process."

By reducing the cost of expensive biopharmaceuticals through its unique advanced chromatography technology, YMC hopes to make biopharmaceuticals available to more people around the world. To achieve this goal, YMC plans to invest 10 billion yen globally over the next five years to improve its research facilities and to recruit new technicians. In doing so, YMC looks to continue its culture for co-creation, expansion, and joint development, including increased collaboration internationally with new partners.

"YMC has been very active in forming alliances with other companies," says the YMC president. "For example, we have worked with Bristol-Myers Squibb at their Boston site to develop a continuous purification platform. Similarly, in Japan, we started working with PeptiDream and PeptiStar to develop a platform to dramatically improve the productivity of specialty peptide drug manufacturing.



"We forecast that our purification platform, based on our continuous chromatography technology, to soon be recognized as the global standard technology for the most cost-effective production of biopharmaceuticals"

Ryuji Yamamura,
President of YMC

As YMC is still a growing company, we intend to actively leverage our partnerships with leading global pharmaceutical companies, in order to promote our revolutionary continuous chromatography technology globally and rapidly."

Within five years, Mr. Yamamura states that the Group's ambition is to double its current consolidated turnover to 20 billion yen and more than double its global workforce to around 1,000 people. An initial public offering (IPO) is also being planned within three years, he confirms.

"We want our purification platform centered around our continuous chromatography technology, to soon be recognized as the global standard technology for the production of biopharmaceuticals, with traditional, outdated purification equipment replaced by our latest technology. And when this happens, our next five-year plan may well be to achieve sales of over 100 billion yen."