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Dentsu Announces “2015 Hit Products in Japan”

*—Binge shopping / inbound tourism, professional tennis player Kei Nishikori
and the Japan National Rugby Team’s performance at Rugby World Cup 2015
chosen as the top three—*

Dentsu Inc. (Tokyo: 4324; ISIN: JP3551520004; President & CEO: Tadashi Ishii; Head Office: Tokyo; Capital: 74,609.81 million yen) announced today the release of its “2015 Hit Products in Japan” report. Produced as part of a series that has been chronicling hit products since 1985, the latest report examines major trends that represented the Japanese people’s mindset in 2015. It is based on an Internet survey of the general public in Japan carried out at the end of October and early November 2015 by Video Research Ltd.

The following top 20 products (which include some popular content and social phenomena) were selected from 120 popular items and services by 2,000 Internet survey respondents aged between 15 and 69.

2015 Hit Products

- No. 1: Binge shopping / inbound tourism
- No. 2=: Kei Nishikori (Japanese professional tennis player)
- No. 2=: Japan National Rugby Team’s performance at Rugby World Cup 2015
- No. 4: Matsuko Deluxe (transgender Japanese celebrity)
- No. 5: *Hibana* (Akutagawa Prize-winning book written by Japanese comedian Naoki Matayoshi)
- No. 6: Universal Studios Japan
- No. 7: Hokuriku Shinkansen (bullet train that started operations in March 2015)
- No. 8: Premium product vouchers issued by local municipalities
- No. 9: Hometown contribution tax system
- No. 10: Instagram
- No. 11: Drones
- No. 12: Japanese Nobel Prize laureates
- No. 13=: Selfie sticks
- No. 13=: Food festivals

- No. 15: Halloween
- No. 16: *Futon* (Japanese bedding) cleaners
- No. 17: Shuzo Matsuoka (television sports commentator; former professional tennis player)
- No. 18: iPhone 6s
- No. 19: Gaucho pants
- No. 20: Monster Strike (mobile action role-playing game)

2015 was a year in which signs of change were evident. Although there were some bright spots such as the emergence from deflation due to rising stock prices at the beginning of the year and other factors, it was also a year where uncertainty caused by cost-of-living increases and concerns about future prospects created a less than favorable consumption environment. The increase in inbound tourism consumption, however, an example of which is binge shopping by Chinese and other foreign tourists, had a considerable impact on Japan's consumption figures, and this is also reflected in this year's hit product rankings.

Binge shopping / inbound tourism, which took first place in this year's rankings, drew attention to the Chinese New Year (also known as the Spring Festival) holiday which was celebrated in February. Through the mass media's frequent reports on the buying of Japanese products by foreign tourists on their holiday trips, attention was also drawn to other holidays celebrated by people of other nationalities, such as the National Day of the People's Republic of China, and this media coverage had a significant impact on the Japanese public. As their eyes were drawn to the binge shopping by inbound tourists, the Japanese people rediscovered the charm of Japan and once again focused on local products, as can be seen in the No. 7 ranking for the Hokuriku Shinkansen and the No. 9 ranking for the hometown contribution tax system, which enables people to make a donation to the local or prefectural government of their choice and receive gifts of regional products in return.

The second equal ranking shared by tennis player Kei Nishikori and the Japan National Rugby Team's performance at Rugby World Cup 2015 shows the Japanese public's surprise at and admiration for their world-class performances in areas where Japan felt that it was facing a big wall. It can be said that with each success on the world stage, there were many people who gained courage as they saw how their athletes competed outside of Japan.

The following "2016 Expected Hit Products" list was compiled using the products selected for the "It has been popular this year / It is popular now." category as a base and then focusing on those selected for the "It will become popular." category.

2016 Expected Hit Products

- No. 1: Hydrogen-powered automobiles
- No. 2: 3D printers
- No. 3: SIM-free mobile phones
- No. 4: Communication robots
- No. 5: Missed TV program webcast services
- No. 6: 4D theaters
- No. 7: Genetic testing kits
- No. 8: Sharing services (such as cars and homes)
- No. 9: The "My Number" social security and tax number system
- No. 10: *Star Wars*

Dentsu "Hit Product Recognition Survey" Overview

- Survey period: October 31 to November 2, 2015
- Survey subjects: Men and women nationwide aged between 15 and 69
- Sample size: 2,000 (responses received)
- Survey type: Internet survey
- Survey company: Video Research Ltd.
- Survey content: Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following four statements about 120 items and services:
 - "It has been popular this year / It is popular now."
 - "It will become popular."
 - "It is not popular, and will not become popular in the future."
 - "I have never heard of it."

Top Five Hit Products in Earlier Years (2014 to 2005)

2014

1. *Frozen* (Walt Disney animated movie)
2. Talking mascot characters
3. Tokyo Skytree
4. Free voice call apps (such as LINE)
5. Yo-kai Watch (games, manga and toys)

2013

1. Tokyo Skytree

2. Hybrid cars
3. Smartphones
4. Robot cleaners
5. Vehicle collision prevention systems

2012

1. Smartphones
2. Tokyo Skytree
3. SNSs such as Facebook that require real name registration
4. Robot cleaners
5. Salted rice malt

2011

1. Smartphones
2. LED light bulbs
3. Tokyo Skytree
4. Nadeshiko Japan (the Japan women's national football team who won the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup Germany™ tournament)
5. AKB48 (48-member all-girl theater/idol group with its own theater in Akihabara, Tokyo)

2010

1. Smartphones
2. Twitter
3. Munchable chili oil
4. Digital broadcasting-equipped widescreen flat-panel TVs
5. Ryoma Sakamoto (1836–1867; popular historical figure and visionary who played a key role in bringing about the Meiji Restoration. "The Legend of Ryoma" TV drama series also became a hit this year.)

2009

1. Hybrid vehicles
2. Flu masks
3. Low-priced domestic fashions
4. Vehicles eligible for tax reductions and eco vehicle purchasing subsidies
5. Eco-point energy-saving home appliances

2008

1. Innovative remote-controlled TV games
2. *Gake no Ue no Ponyo (Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea)*
3. Digital broadcasting-equipped widescreen flat-panel televisions
4. Bargain products (private brand products/outlet malls)
5. Touch pen portable games

2007

1. Touch pen portable games
2. Innovative remote-controlled TV games
3. *Billy's BootCamp™*
4. Digital cameras
5. Widescreen flat-panel televisions

2006

1. Brain training products
2. Widescreen flat-panel televisions
3. *The Da Vinci Code*
4. HDD-equipped DVD recorders
5. High-performance portable game machines

2005

1. Portable digital audio players
2. HDD-equipped DVD recorders
3. Blogs
4. Widescreen flat-panel televisions
5. Agar weed gelatin

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