

New Markets for an Aging Society

By JEF Editorial Section

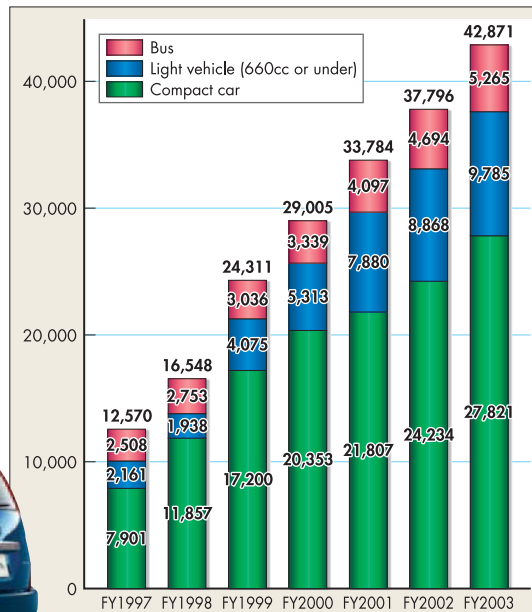
ALONG with the aging of Japanese society, assisted-mobility vehicle sales are also increasing year by year. Vehicles with a fully detachable side lift-up seat, which can also be used as a temporary wheelchair, are expanding the field of activities for those who need care. Major car manufacturers also produce a range of specially adapted vehicles.

After the barrier-free transportation law was enacted in 2000, elevators and escalators have to be installed in railway stations and “non-step buses” are being adopted for transport. **JS**



Toyota Isis

Figure 1 Sales of Assisted-Mobility Vehicles



Source: Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, Inc.

Anti-Aging Market

COENZYME Q10 (COQ10), a coenzyme found in intracellular mitochondria and sold in Japan since 1974 as a drug that improves myocardial metabolism, has been gaining worldwide attention for its anti-aging effects. Although its popularization among the general public was delayed in Japan, after winning approval in 2001 for use as a supplement, COQ10 has become increasingly popular, especially among the middle-aged and seniors. It is now being used in foods and cosmetics. The raw ingredients for COQ10 are produced domestically by four Japanese companies, which hold a near monopoly on the world market. In response to strong demand, manufacturers are currently enhancing their production lines and ramping up production quantities.

COSMETIC surgery such as facelifts and botox treatments are continuing to gain acceptance. Organizations are being formed that consider aging from a medical perspective, and even the hospital affiliated with the University of Tokyo has a department that specializes in cosmetic surgery. The anti-aging market promises to continue expanding. The 2004 market share for anti-aging products that target signs of aging such as wrinkles, facial sagging and dull complexions is expected to reach ¥263.2 billion.

(Fuji-keizai Co., “2004 Functional Cosmetics Marketing Digest”)



Toyota's welcab concept car (above)
A non-step bus (below left) and a mobile bathing car (right) from the Tokyo Motor Show, 2004
Photos: Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, Inc.