

## Sales Strategy for Cactus

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Thirty years have passed since the start of our retail cactus growing business. Such direct sales are limited with little chance to increase the business. Later we tried sending plants to the auction market. At the auction, we received prices equal to those from direct sales, and this changed the direction of our marketing in favour of the auction.

Production of cactus had to be increased which caused several problems, such as the difficulty of flower forcing, the spilling of sand-compost during transport, and other problems. A new product, "petit-cactus", targeted towards young girls as consumers, was introduced in 1983. They were decorated with small dry flowers and with sand solidified with special paste to prevent spillage. This unique product became a big hit, and set a record by selling a million units in 3 months. It will be difficult for anyone to break this record in the future.

At present, 80% of our business goes to the auction market and 20% to other outlets. These other outlets include Daiei Co. (one of the biggest supermarket companies in Japan), Takara Co. (a famous toy company in Japan), and several wholesale traders of confectionery, all non horticultural businesses. Daiei Co. purchases a cheaper grade of cactus for Takara Co., we produce original designs under a Micky Mouse brand for their shops in Tokyo's Disney Land, and a combination of chocolate and cactus for the confectionery traders.

The best opportunity to increase the sales of our cactus is to broaden our range of innovative products to appeal to various kinds of shoppers, instead of having limited sales of potted plants through florist shops. In the future, our company will advertise on the internet to increase business opportunities. I believe the cactus business still has a chance to increase further, so I try to keep the business vital by foreseeing future trends and creating new products to appeal to various age groups.