

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

eBay is empowering Japanese small businesses and individuals by providing access to over 132 million consumers across more than 190 countries. With this, it is creating a 21st-century export success story that benefits Japan economically, socially, and environmentally.

Japan is renowned for its wealth of high-quality, unique, and vintage goods, thanks to years of superior manufacturing, influential pop culture trends, and established domestic markets for well-kept luxury and vintage items. However, the key to transforming this wealth into global e-commerce success lies in the hands of digitally connected, entrepreneurial individuals and small businesses, using eBay’s marketplace platform.

Previously, international trade was the exclusive domain of sizeable corporations with vast resources. This is no longer the case. In 2021, Japan’s eBay sellers emerged as a virtual global export giant, selling to 207 markets. This achievement outpaced the export reach of many of Japan’s most recognized brands.

eBay Japan is strategically designed for such cross-border success. It offers valuable assistance to sellers, such as personalized guidance, cross-border shipping and payment tools, troubleshooting support for issues like order returns and cancellations, Japanese language support, and aid in overcoming potential regulatory challenges. Hence, small businesses and entrepreneurs on eBay can confidently engage in cross-border e-commerce.

The resulting export-driven success aligns with several Japanese economic and public policy objectives. The growth of small businesses on eBay Japan contributes significantly to the startup ecosystem. In 2021, nearly 70% of eBay small businesses in Japan were newcomers, having used eBay for less than five years. The average annual growth of eBay small businesses from 2017 to 2021 was 19.3%, greatly surpassing Japan’s national GDP growth during the same period.

eBay also provides an avenue for alternative career and work models in Japan. Whether to establish a small business enterprise or as supplementary work, it enables flexible working models, thereby potentially drawing more women into the workforce. Many individual entrepreneurs, including eBay sellers, have reported immense personal satisfaction from their efforts.

Lastly, eBay’s role in facilitating the export of a substantial amount of secondhand and vintage goods promotes sustainability both in Japan and globally. This practice, known as “recommerce,” encourages the sale and use of pre-existing goods instead of newly manufactured products, thus reducing carbon emissions and reducing waste in Japanese landfills or incinerators.

Key Data Highlights

eBay Small Businesses



Share That Export



Average Number of International Destination Markets



Share That Export to 10+ Markets



Share That Export to 4+ Continents



Share That Were Newcomers