



Welcome to the World of Japanese Company Histories

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1. What is Company History?

Shashi (社史), or company histories, refer to a selection of sources concerning the history of a corporation. While there is no strict classification for this term, some researchers consider company histories as materials created for and provided by a business, while others broaden the definition to include periodicals and publications by journalists and publishing firms, as well as collections of documents and photographs that concern the business's history.¹ Company histories in Japan are often created for the business itself, so the audience is frequently limited to staff members. While there are few opportunities for the public to view these materials, it has been claimed, "company histories are frequently browsed and borrowed at universities, government agencies, and municipal or local libraries, and the genre has gained prominence," so there is a demand for these materials.² Even at the Business, Science, and Technology Room at the National Diet Library (NDL), there are many questions from users concerning company histories. This is because company histories function as "encyclopedic sources for a company and its industry. These materials are relevant and valuable not only for a company's employees, but also their clients, investors, local residents in the region, government officials, applicants for employment, and competing businesses."³ While few people may read these materials from cover to cover, many readers peruse pertinent sections. Company histories are also frequently consulted as references by authors responsible for writing their own firm's history.⁴ There are several articles concerning company histories that appear in NDL's search engine for journal articles (*Zasshi kiji sakuin*). These articles feature company histories as sources for understanding a company's management philosophy, and even provide information concerning a business that may not be readily obtainable online for job searchers.⁵

¹ Murahashi Katsuko, "Shashi no teigi, tokushoku," in *Shashi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Daiyamondosha, 2002), 2-3.

² Kikkawa takeo, "Bijinesusukūru ryūchiteki busō kōza: kaisha-shi koso inobēshon no kyōkashoda," *Purejidento* 49, no. 8 (2011): 101-103.

³ Ibid.,

⁴ This information originated in interviews with the staff of Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library and the Kaidanren Reference Library.

⁵ For examples, see articles below: Kunisada Fumitaka, "Shashi wa 'bijinesu chi' no hōko, jidai no tenkanki no ima koso yome!" *Tōyō keizai shinpō* 2010 (6294), 53-55. Okamura Masayuki, "Shashi no koe o kiku:

3continue to be vigorously published despite a stagnant business market. The article then featured company histories that serve a practical application in employee training and discussed the arrangement and preservation of company sources. It is estimated that approximately 400 volumes were published per year in the 1980s when there was a peak in the production of company histories. The second peak was in the 2000s when about 200 volumes were published per year.⁶

Company histories are typically published to celebrate pivotal moments, such as the 50th anniversary of a corporation, but in 2012, company histories marking the 100th anniversary significantly increased from previous years. According to an August 2011 report by Teikoku Databank, 1,854 companies marked their 100th anniversary in 2012 – a three-fold increase from 2011.⁷ The NDL has already acquired many 100th anniversary histories from companies such as JTB Corporation and Idemitsu Kosan Co., Ltd.

2. The Characteristics of Company Histories

Company histories record comprehensive information about a corporation and discuss changes in output, revenue, or the number of employees, transitions in the business structure, information on group companies, and include lists of former presidents and directors as well as copies of memorandums and articles of association. A company history created by a prominent business may also provide extensive information on the history of technology, the industry at large, and/or local trades associated with the company's region. If the company's products have relevance to daily life, the company history may also become a valuable resource for research in the history of culture, customs, and folklore.⁸

For example, the history of Canon Inc., *Chōsen no shichijūnen, soshite mirai e* (2012) describes advancements in technology and production systems and includes several photographs of Canon's products and advertisements. The supplementary volume classifies Canon's products into categories such as cameras, camcorders, broadcast lenses, medical and office equipment, and optical instruments and lists the names, sales date, cost, and photographs of major products. This reference material, thus, is a valuable resource when researching discontinued products.

Nomura Co., Ltd. is a major firm in the display business. While the company is noted for large scale projects such as the Expo 2005 Aichi Japan and the Tokyo Sky Tree Town, Nomura Co., originally specialized in stage carpentry for theatres when it was established during the Meiji Period. *Jikū o koete: Nomura Kōgeisha hyakunijūnenshi* (2012) includes several photographs, informational brochures, and posters from events that the

gen'eki shain no tame no shashi no yomikata," *Iguzamina* 291 (2011): 1-7, 20-26. Nihon keidanren shakai honbu, "Kigyō kōhō kenkyū: shashi no igi to kinō o minaosou," *Keizai kōhō* 26, no. 4 (2004): 12-14.

⁶ "Shashi myaku myaku, maitoshi 200-ten hakkan otoroezu, keiki to kankei naku, senjin no kurō kataritsugu," *The Nikkei*, October 20th, 2012, 40. This article features recent company histories with distinctive characteristics. Some of these include the use of Japanese sweets in employee training at the long-standing Nakamura, or the 100th-year history of Chisso Corporation, which received widespread attention for its ties to the Minamata disease outbreak.

⁷ Teikoku Databank, "Tokubetsu kikaku: 2012-nen (Heisei 24-nen) ni 'shūnenkinen' o mukaeru kigyō no jittai chōsa." Last modified December 1, 2011. <http://www.tdb.co.jp/report/watching/press/pdf/p111201.pdf>, accessed June 14, 2013.

⁸ Murahashi, "Shashi no teigi, tokushoku," 19-21.

company facilitated after the Meiji period and it is also a valuable source for the history of culture, customs, and folklore.

The content of *Keihan hyakunen no ayumi* (2011) by Keihan Holdings Co., Ltd. includes time series plots describing an overview of the history of the Keihan Group's business development and many thematic histories, such as the "History of Hirataka Park." The company history also shows developments in housing, restaurants, and leisure industries along railroad lines.

While the format of company histories is often thought to be dry and dense, in recent years, many businesses are concentrating on visual materials by incorporating illustrations in their histories and designing creative layouts.⁹ For Nissin Food Group's *Nisshin shokuhin 50 nenshi* (2008), the materials are placed in a box with ramen noodles printed on all sides and then the box is covered in a parcel resembling a package of chicken ramen, the company's most well-known product. This company history thus received the Marketing Excellence Award from the Japan Marketing Association (*Nihon māketingu kyōkaishō*) for its exquisite book design.¹⁰

Some company histories are composed entirely of electronic materials. Nippon Columbia Co.,'s *Nippon Columbia Hyakunenshi* (2012) is comprised of a DVD, CD-ROM, and booklet set. The DVD features audios and visuals released by the company while the CD-ROM includes PDF files of all company histories published to date. Many businesses also post formal company histories on their websites. Some noted examples include Toyota Motor Corporation's "75 Years of Toyota *Toyota jidōsha nanajūgonenshi*," and Honda Motor Co.,'s "Ōinaru yume no jitsugen" which celebrates the 50th anniversary of the company. Sharp Corporation's "Sharp 100th Anniversary: A Century of Sincerity and Creativity *Shāpu hyakunenshi*" and Oki Electric Industry Co., Ltd.'s "The 120-Year History of Oki Electric *Shinshu no seishin: Oki Denki 120-nen no ayumi*," can also be accessed as a PDF file on their respective websites.¹¹

3. Library Use of Company Histories

How are company histories used in libraries for research? By searching the key terms "*shashi* – company history" and "*nenshi* – annals" in the *Collaborative Reference Database*, one can access records on reference services concerning company histories (i.e. research consultation records with library staff).¹² Many researchers seek guidance

⁹ Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library. *Sharaku 1* (2012). <http://www.klnet.pref.kanagawa.jp/kawasaki/materials/sharaku1.pdf>, accessed June 14, 2013.

¹⁰ Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library. *Sharaku 10* (2012). <http://www.klnet.pref.kanagawa.jp/kawasaki/materials/sharaku10.pdf>, accessed June 14, 2013.

¹¹ The URL for each of the company histories is listed here. Toyota Motor Corporation. "75 Years of Toyota." <http://www.toyota.co.jp/jpn/company/history/75years/>, accessed June 14, 2013. Honda Motor Co., "Ōinaru yume no jitsugen." <http://www.honda.co.jp/50years-history/>, accessed June 14, 2013. Sharp Corporation, "Sharp 100th Anniversary: A Century of Sincerity and Creativity." <http://www.sharp.co.jp/100th/history/>, accessed June 14, 2013. Oki Electric Industry Co., Ltd. "The 120-Year History of Oki Electric." <http://www.oki.com/jp/profile/history/120y.html>, accessed June 14, 2013.

¹² The Collaborative Reference Database is a project established by the National Diet Library and several libraries across Japan. The database stores records of reference services, search guides, and information on each special collection and participating library. All this information can be accessed online. The Collaborative Reference Database. <http://crd.ndl.go.jp/reference/>, accessed September 4, 2013.

in locating library holdings with company histories while others aim to examine the accomplishments and endeavors of a given business. Some researchers also consult company histories to study a particular industry. Researchers frequently begin by examining discontinued products or business services, then select a relevant company to study, and finally, locate and consult a company history as a reference. Topics listed below depend on company histories for research.

- The History of Products: changes in the design of milk bottle lids, the first manufacturer of Japanese mixers and the timeline of the appliance's production, the history of Japanese ice cream from the Meiji period to the Shōwa period, and the materials used in metal sintering at Japan Iron & Steel Co., Ltd.'s Wanishi iron mill
- Cultural History: names of the stars and cast list at a Tokyo kabuki play in November 1895, inventories of serial stories published in *Asashi Shimbun* from the Meiji period to the Taishō era, and the circumstances behind the publication and development of *Kankō manshū* magazine
- Historic Photographs: Photographs of Itami Airport or Hanshin Electric Railway's Deiribashi Station
- Information on Companies: Nicchitsu's formal and current name, information concerning the Keisei Technical School which was operated by the Keisei Electric Railway from 1941 to 1942, the founding dates and names of president-directors of famous department stores (Kintetsu, Hanshin, Hankyu), and the thoughts and ideas of the founders of car companies concerning establishing their businesses

4. Sources Concerning the Content of Company Histories

Listed below are journals featuring company histories and awards given to exceptional publications.

- *Sharaku*: This journal was established in 2012 by the Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library. Articles in this publication describe distinguished company histories, provide a use guide for the genre, and introduce newly published materials. This journal can also be accessed on the library's website.¹³
- *Shashi shōkai*¹⁴ (featured on the Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation's website): This foundation established a company history project called the "Shibusawa Shashi Database."¹⁵ This database provides a general overview of all materials and represented companies.

¹³ Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library. "Sharaku (Shashi shitsu jōhō shi)." <http://www.klnet.pref.kanagawa.jp/kawasaki/materials/sharaku.htm>, accessed June 14, 2013.

¹⁴ Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation Information Resources Center. "Shashi shōkai." <http://www.shibusawa.or.jp/center/shashi/shashi01.html>, accessed June 14, 2013.

¹⁵ Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation Information Resources Center. "Shashi purojekuto no gaiyō." <http://www.shibusawa.or.jp/center/shashi/>, accessed June 14, 2013.

- “Excellent Company History Award (*Yūshū kaisha shi shō*)”: The Japan Business History Institute (*Nihon keieishi kenkyūjo*) established this award in 1978 to improve the quality of company histories. Researchers evaluate and select a recipient based on several criteria such as the material’s adequacy of collected data, significance of disclosed information, and effectiveness in description. A list of awarded publications along with a section of the evaluation report can be accessed on the institution’s website.¹⁶
- *Minna de erabu shashi guranpuri: Tōzai toshokan tōhyō*: At this jointly hosted event by the Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library and the Osaka Prefectural Nakanoshima Library in 2012, public users had the opportunity to select and nominate a company history for an award. *Sharaku* Volume 4¹⁷ and Volume 5¹⁸ feature the awarded recipients from this event along with the voting results.

5. Major Holding Libraries

As of June 2013, the NDL has approximately 12,900 volumes of Japanese materials on the histories of companies and economic organizations. This number is the sum total of approximately 6,500 volumes recorded in the *Kokuritsu kokkai toshokan shozō shashi, keizaishi mokuroku* (National Diet Library, 1986), a catalogue of company histories collected by the institution since the Meiji Period until August 1985, and approximately 6,400 volumes¹⁹ of Japanese materials listed under the National Diet Library Classification (NDLC) as DH22 (Histories of Japanese Companies) or DF238 (Histories of Financial Institutions and Banks). Since the NDL does not have a specific subject heading for company histories, and because some relevant materials are classified under the histories of their respective industries, not all sources appear in a simple catalog search. The library also has a microfilm version of *Nihon no kaishashi* (Maruzen 1994-1996), but it is essential to verify the title of a company’s history with the supplementary microfilm catalog. A portion of the NDL’s company histories can also be accessed online with the National Diet Library Digital Collections.²⁰ For example, the full text and all images of materials like the *Meiji seimei hoken kabushiki kaisha rokujūnenshi* (Meiji Yasuda Life Insurance Company 1942) and the *Minami manshū tetsudō kabushiki kaisha jūnenshi* (the South Manchuria Railway Co., Ltd., 1919) can be browsed online.

In addition to the NDL, many materials can be found at university libraries to aid research on company histories as well as specialty libraries that are required to acquire these types of resources (Table 1 lists these major

¹⁶ The Japan Business History Institute. “Excellent Company History Award.” <http://www.jbhi.or.jp/sakuhin.html#prize>, accessed June 14, 2013.

¹⁷ Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library. *Sharaku* 4 (2012). <http://www.klnet.pref.kanagawa.jp/kawasaki/materials/sharaku4.pdf>, accessed June 14, 2013.

¹⁸ Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library. *Sharaku* 5 (2012). <http://www.klnet.pref.kanagawa.jp/kawasaki/materials/sharaku5.pdf>, accessed June 14, 2013.

¹⁹ This number was calculated based on the sum-total in the NDL-OPAC.

²⁰ National Diet Library Digital Collection. <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/>, accessed June 14, 2013.

(Note from translator: Kindai Digital Library was merged into National Diet Library digital Collection. <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/>, accessed April 26, 2017.)

library holdings). Large scale holdings include the Nagao Collection at the Ryukoku University Library²¹ (approximately 17,000 volumes on the histories of companies, organizations, and industries) and the Kanagawa Prefectural Library²² (approximately 16,000 volumes on the histories of companies, economic organizations, and labor unions). Regional libraries may also acquire company histories as sources representing their local history,²³ and the Osaka Prefectural Nakanoshima Library, with approximately 5,000 volumes, is vigorously collecting materials on this topic.²⁴

It is difficult to compare the size of each institution's collections because the definition of company histories differs based on the library's classification system and method of cataloguing. There is no clear definition for company histories. Therefore, there are cases in which annals of economic organizations, government agencies, public corporations and labor unions may be grouped into the same category as biographies of entrepreneurs.

6. How to Search Library Holdings

Until the 1990s, most collection catalogs were published in print, however, it has become even easier to search library holdings now due to increased bibliographic information in Online Public Access Catalogs (OPACS) and because collection catalogs are more frequently published online. Table 1 lists the URLs of OPACs from libraries with largescale collections of company histories. CiNii Books²⁵ can also be used to cross search collections of university libraries while NDL Search²⁶ can be used for public libraries. The company's name is usually the key term in search engines, however, there are cases in which a company's name changes or only an abbreviated title is known. Researchers can visit the company's website or consult materials such as the *Shuyō kigyō no keifuzū* (Yūshōdō

²¹ Ryukoku University. "Fukakusa campus," <http://www.ryukoku.ac.jp/fukakusa.html>, accessed June 14, 2013.

²² Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library. *Sharaku* 13 (2013). <http://www.klnet.pref.kanagawa.jp/kawasaki/materials/sharaku13.pdf>, accessed June 14, 2013.

²³ Fukui Prefectural Library. "Fukui no kigyō jōhō o shiraberu ni wa." http://www.library.pref.fukui.jp/reference/pathfinder_fukui_company.html, accessed June 14, 2013. Hiroshima Prefectural Library. "Kaisha-shi mokuroku: kyōdo shiryō hen." <http://www.hplibra.pref.hiroshima.jp/hp/menu000000900/hpg000000840.htm>, accessed June 14, 2013. Hamamatsu Municipal Library. "Kyōdo shiryō shitsu." <http://www.lib-city-hamamatsu.jp/guide/kyoudo.htm>, accessed June 14, 2013.

²⁴ Osaka Prefectural Nakanoshima Library. "Nakanoshima toshokan shashi kōnā mokuroku." <http://www.library.pref.osaka.jp/nakato/shashi/shashi.html>, accessed June 14, 2013. Osaka Prefectural Nakanoshima Library. "Minna de erabu shashi guranpuri." <http://www.library.pref.osaka.jp/nakato/event/syashi2012.html>, accessed June 14, 2013.

²⁵ CiNii Books. <http://ci.nii.ac.jp/books/>, accessed June 14, 2013.

²⁶ NDL Search. <http://iss.ndl.go.jp/>, accessed June 14, 2013.

Shuppan, 1986), *Kigyomei henshen yoran* (Nichigaiasoshietu, 2006), *Takokuseki kigyō keifuzuz7*, or the *Ginkō henshen shi dētābēsu* to identify the formal name of a company.²⁸

The Japan Business History Institute's *Kaisha shi sōgō mokuroku: zōho kaichōban* (1996) is a printed union catalog centering on the collections of fifty institutions affiliated with the Japan Special Libraries Association (JSLA). 8,828 volumes on the history of companies and 1,367 volumes on the history of economic organizations, published from the Meiji period until 1992, are arranged by industrial classification and sorted by the company or organization's name. This is a suitable source for a general overview on the types of company histories published in the past. To find a list of company histories published after this date, researchers can consult Volume 34 (1994) and onwards of the *Kaishashi, dantaishi sōgō mokuroku, tsuiroku*, a catalog routinely released by the JSLA.

*The Japanese Company Histories (Shashi) Wiki*²⁹ is a useful tool for researching major international library holdings of Japanese company histories. This online union catalog was created in 2006 by a group of North American Japanese Studies Librarians affiliated with institutions like the Ohio State University Library to register and record company histories located in North American collections. As of January 2011, it is estimated that 2,509 company pages and over 6,000 volumes have been entered in the wiki.³⁰

Library holdings can also be searched by using the NDL Research Navi's "*Shashi, keizai dantai-shi*"³¹ and the pathfinder at Fukuoka Prefectural Library, an institution committed to business support services.³²

²⁷ Kobe University Integrated Center for Corporate Archives. "Takokusekikigyō keifu-zu." <http://www.rieb.kobe-u.ac.jp/center/cdal/takokuseki/keifuzu.html>, accessed June 14, 2013.

²⁸ Japanese Bankers Association. *Database of Transition of Japanese Banks*. <http://www.zenginkyo.or.jp/library/hensen/>, accessed June 14, 2013.

²⁹ The Japanese Company Histories (Shashi) Wiki. http://library.osu.edu/wikis/shashidb/index.php/Main_Page, accessed June 14, 2013.

³⁰ Guddo Nagahashi Hiroyuki. "Danwashitsu (dai 22-kai) Hokubei ni okeru shashi kenkyū no genjō." *Senmon toshokan* 246 (2010): 36-38. http://nihonkenkyu.files.wordpress.com/2011/06/current_status_of_shashi_kenkyu_in_north_america.pdf, accessed June 14, 2013.

³¹ The National Diet Library. "Shashi keizai dantai-shi." http://rnavi.ndl.go.jp/research_guide/entry/theme-honbun-102077.php, accessed June 14, 2013.

³² Fukuoka Prefectural Library. "Kigyō kenkyū no tame no shashi katusyō an'nai." http://www.lib.pref.fukuoka.jp/hp/reference/015_shashi.htm, accessed June 14, 2013.

(Table 1) A list of Open and Public Library OPACs with substantial collections of company histories (Categorized by type and organized in Japanese syllabary order)

※ Please consult university libraries individually for non-student access and use information.

Institution	URL for the Online Public Access Catalog
University Libraries	
Aichi Prefectural Library 愛知芸術文化センター愛知県図書館	http://www.aichi-pref-library.jp/cgi-bin/Sopcsmin.sh?p_mode=1
Osaka University of Economics, Institute of Small Business Research and Business Administration 大阪経済大学中小企業・経営研究所	http://www.osaka-ue.ac.jp/research/chuken/library/
Osaka City University Urban Research Plaza Economic Research Institute Library 大阪市立大学都市研究プラザ経済研究所文庫	https://opac.media.osaka-cu.ac.jp/webopac/topmnu.do
Kansai University Library 関西大学図書館	http://www.lib.kansai-u.ac.jp/webopac/topmnu.do
Kwansei Gakuin University Institute for Industrial Research 関西学院大学産業研究所	http://opac.kwansei.ac.jp/webopac/catsre.do
Kobe University Integrated Center for Corporate Archives 神戸大学経済経営研究所附属企業資料総合センター	http://op.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/opac/opac_search.cgi • Catalog of company histories http://www.rieb.kobe-u.ac.jp/center/mokuroku/gyousyu.html
Shiga University Institute for Economic and Business Research 滋賀大学経済経営研究所	http://sglibopac.biwako.shiga-u.ac.jp/mylimedio/search/search-input.do • Search engine for histories of companies and organizations http://mokuroku.biwako.shiga-u.ac.jp/eml5.asp?mode=COH

Shizuoka Sangyo University Shashi Center 静岡産業大学社史センター	http://ssu-lib002.fujieda.ssu.ac.jp/mylamedio/search/search-input.do
Tokyo Keizai University Library 東京経済大学図書館	http://www.tku.ac.jp/library/cat919/
University of Tokyo, Library of Economics 東京大学経済学図書館・経済学部資料室	https://opac.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/opac/opac_search.cgi • Catalog for the collection of Ernst Engel http://www.lib.e.u-tokyo.ac.jp/_old/engel/index.html
Nagoya Gakuin University Academic Information Center 名古屋学院大学学術情報センター	http://jupiter.ngu.ac.jp/mylamedio/search/search-input.do?mode=comp • References for company histories are classified by industry http://www.ngu.jp/library/data/kaishashi.html
Hitotsubashi University Library 一橋大学附属図書館	https://opac.lib.hit-u.ac.jp/
Fuji University Library 富士大学附属図書館	http://www.fuji-u.ac.jp/lib
Hosei University Innovation and Management Research Center 法政大学イノベーション・マネジメント研究センター	http://riimopac.i.hosei.ac.jp/webopac/topmnu.do
Yokohama National University Business Administration System Center 横浜国立大学経営学部研究資料室	http://opac.lib.ynu.ac.jp/opc/
Yokohama City University Library and Information Center 横浜市立大学学術情報センター	http://opac.yokohama-cu.ac.jp/index.html
	http://rwave.lib.ryukoku.ac.jp/opac/opac_search.cgi?smode=1

Ryukoku University Fukakusa Campus Library 龍谷大学深草図書館	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Nagao Collection Web Catalog http://rwave.lib.ryukoku.ac.jp/opac/nagao/opac_nagao.cgi
Waseda University Research Institute of Business Administration 早稲田大学産業経営研究所商学研究図書館	http://wine.wul.waseda.ac.jp/
Specialty Libraries	
Japan Society for the Promotion of Machine Industry BIC Library 機械振興協会 BIC ライブラリ	http://www.library.eri.jspmi.or.jp/KskLibrary/keyword.html
Japanese Bankers Association Banking Library 全国銀行協会銀行図書館	http://www.zenginkyo.or.jp/library/opac/index.html
Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry Economic Resources Center 東京商工会議所経済資料センター	http://www.db.tokyo-cci.or.jp/zousho/
Japan Maritime Center Maritime Library 日本海事センター海事図書館	http://www.jpmac.or.jp/library/collect-book.php
Japan Securities Research Institute Securities Library 日本証券経済研究所大阪研究所証券図書館	http://www.libblabo.jp/shoken/home32.stm
Matsushita Memorial Library 松下社会科学振興財団（松下資料館）	http://matsushita-library.jp/fl_library/opac/index.html
Public Libraries	
Osaka Prefectural Central Library 大阪府立中央図書館	http://p-opac.library.pref.osaka.jp/osp_search.html

Osaka Prefectural Nakanoshima Library 大阪府立中之島図書館	http://p-opac.library.pref.osaka.jp/osp_search.html • Nakanoshima Library Shashi Corner Catalog http://www.library.pref.osaka.jp/nakato/shashi/shashi.html
Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library 神奈川県立川崎図書館	http://www.klnet.pref.kanagawa.jp/opac/index.jsp • Search engine for company histories, technical reports, and other lectures and collected papers http://www.klnet.pref.kanagawa.jp/kawasaki/search/cole.htm
The National Diet Library 国立国会図書館	「NDL-OPAC」 http://www.ndl.go.jp/

References: Murahashi Katsuko, “Shashi o tasū shozō suru toshokan,” in *Shashi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Daiyamondosha, 2002), 344-353. Senmon Toshokan Kyōgikai. *Senmon jōhō kikan sōran* (Tokyo: Senmon Toshokan Kyōgikai, 2012). Websites accessed June 27, 2013.

Table created by author.

7. Collection Development

How does each library holding collect company histories?

While the NDL acquires company histories through the Legal Deposit System, it is difficult to track the release of company histories because these materials do not follow conventional distribution routes and are usually not articles for sale. Thus, the acquisition cannot proceed without help from publishers. On the NDL’s website,³³ the library requests all newly published materials in accordance with the guidelines of the National Dietary Library Law. Staff members of the Acquisition and Bibliography Department also frequently reach out to regional economic organizations on business trips for their support and request the delivery of materials from specialty libraries.³⁴

In many cases, the NDL acquires materials from members of an economic organization’s specialty library.³⁵ Other libraries, however, collect company histories by posting appeals for donations on their websites, actively searching for new materials, and writing or calling individual companies for contributions. For references on new releases, one should consult the NDL-OPAC and NDL Search, library catalogs from major holdings of company histories and libraries in that specific region, book store catalogs, auction house sites, websites of companies with

³³ The National Diet Library. “Nōhon no onegai.” http://www.ndl.go.jp/jp/aboutus/deposit_01request.html, accessed June 14, 2013.

³⁴ The General Affairs Department of the National Diet Library. “Nōhon seido 60-shūnen o mukaete.” *Biblos* (April 2008) <http://www.ndl.go.jp/jp/publication/biblos/backnumber/2008/04/02.html>, accessed June 14, 2013.

³⁵ Murahashi, “Shashi no teigi, tokushoku,” 349-350.

commemorative events, such as 50th or 100th anniversaries, and various newspaper columns on newly published books. There are also cases in which members of companies donate these materials to frequented libraries or solicit donations from other corporations.³⁶

8. Institutional Support for Compiling Company Histories

This final section will introduce institutions and organizations that support businesses in the production process of company histories. Most authors responsible for compiling company histories in Japan do not receive professional guidance.³⁷ Organizations and institutions listed below, however, offer various training opportunities.

- The Japan Business History Institute (*Nihon keiseishi kenkyūjo*)³⁸: this organization was founded in 1968 to research the history of business administrations and corporations as well as to evaluate the quality of published company histories. The institute provides research and editing services for those interested in compiling a history of a company or organization. They also select and nominate a company history for the previously mentioned “Excellent Company History Award.” The Institute’s Center for Historical Business Materials (*Keiei shiryō sentā*) has approximately 7,000 volumes on the history of companies and approximately 3,000 volumes on the history of organizations in their collection.
- The Business Archives Association (*Kigyō shiryō kyōgikai*)³⁹: this association specializing in archiving company histories was founded in 1981. The organization hosts events such as a “Business Archivist Training Course” to improve the acquisition, preservation, and management of business and company materials.
- Keidanren Reference Library⁴⁰: From 2004 to 2009, this library organized the “Shashi Forum” with lectures by businesses that have experience in writing company histories and discussions by specialists concerning the best tips for creating these materials. The organization has approximately 3,400 volumes on the history of companies and 300 volumes on the history of organizations.

³⁶ Kanagawa Prefectural Kawasaki Library. *Sharaku* 11 (2012). <http://www.klnet.pref.kanagawa.jp/kawasaki/materials/sharaku11.pdf>, accessed June 14, 2013. Nagoya Gakuin University Library. “Kaishashi, keizai dantaishi.” <http://www.ngu.jp/library/data/kaishashi.html>, accessed June 14, 2013.

³⁷ Matsuzaki Yuko. “Shisan to shite no bijinesuākaibuzu: Fuka kachi o umidasu katsuyō no hitsuyōsei to kadai.” *Jōhō no kagaku to gijutsu* 62, no. 10 (2012): 425. Otani Akinobu. “Honpō kigyō ākaibusu no 30-nen.” *Ākaibuzugaku kenkyū* 6 (2013): 38-46.

³⁸ Japan Business History Institute. <http://www.jbhi.or.jp/>, accessed June 14, 2013.

³⁹ Business Archives Association. <http://www.baa.gr.jp/>, accessed June 14, 2013.

⁴⁰ Keidanren Reference Library. https://www.sentokyo-kanto.org/link/index.php?content_id=142, accessed June 14, 2013.

All sources created, acquired, accumulated, and stored by a company can be termed as business archival material. Internationally, these materials – brand strategies, judicial affairs documents, publicity materials and advertisements, as well as business compliance requirements – are perceived as sources adding value and generating assets for the company and these materials are preserved to retain a company-wide record management system.⁴¹ In Japan, company archives are typically interpreted as the foundational data for compiling company histories and researching the history of business administration, however, since the 2000s, the interpretations of company histories have changed. An increasing number of high-powered companies are collaborating with researchers of business history to compile a company history that reflects their own business strategies and accomplishments. There are also cases in which companies combine archival materials and company histories to construct corporate museums.⁴²

The Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation Information Resources Center (*Jōhō shigen sentā*)⁴³ also provides an e-mail newsletter “Bijinesu ākaibuzu tsūshin” (established in 2008) to introduce information from international company archives. The institution also supports companies interested in crafting and managing their own business archives by maintaining the “Kigyō shiryō directory,” which provides a summary of and holding information on company materials (Refer to E1314).

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⁴¹ Matsuzaki, “Shisan to shite no bijinesuākaibuzu,” 422-427.

⁴² Otani, “Honpō kigyō ākaibusu no 30-nen,” 42.

⁴³ Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation Information Resources Center.
<http://www.shibusawa.or.jp/center/>, accessed June 14, 2013.