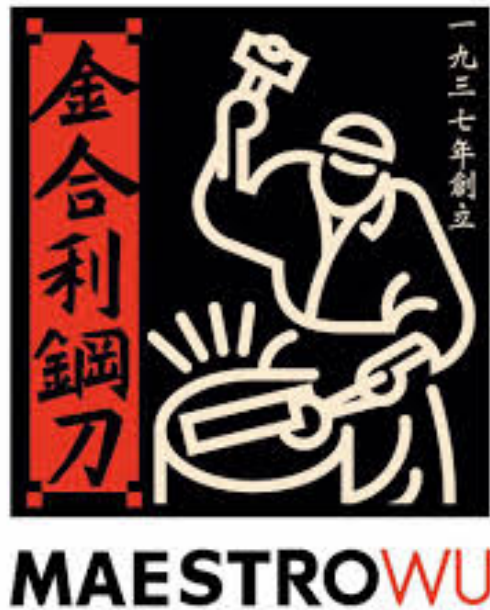


Maestro Wu Knives

Marketing Strategies to Japan



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Agenda

I. Introduction	3
II. Objectives	3
III. Marketing Strategies	3
A. The Targeting Segment	3
B. Product	5
C. Pricing	6
D. Position	7
E. Promotion	8
F. Service Support – 3Ps	9
IV. Conclusion	10
V. References	11

I. Introduction

Maestro Wu Jinheli's steel knife is famous for its blade made of steel from shell cases during the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis. Maestro Wu insists on making knives by hand, and they also combine Japanese industrial techniques to improve the quality of knives. Maestro Wu produces many kinds of knives, in addition, it also offers custom-made service for those who have special needs.

II. Objectives

The main objective is to make the strategies to market our products to Japan. Below are the four sections of our group's objectives :

1. Choosing the target segment for our products.
2. To Understand the process of making Maestro Wu knives and their characteristics.
3. Making Maestro Wu knives prices and finding ways to promote our products.
4. Concluding and giving some points of view on how to sell our product to Japan.

III. Marketing Strategies

A. Target Segment

Our target market comprises Japanese consumers who value high-quality, handcrafted products with a rich history and cultural significance.

1. Geographic

Japan's proximity to Kinmen is advantageous for transportation logistics, enabling efficient and cost-effective shipping of Maestro Wu knives. The shorter distance not only reduces transportation costs but also ensures timely delivery, enhancing customer satisfaction and reliability.

We can separate Japan's marketing into 8 regions : Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku, Shikoku, and Kyushu. According to World Bank Organization statistics in 2022, Japan has a population of 1,251 million people, and there are about 36 million people in the Tokyo metropolitan area (Density: 6,372/ km²). Therefore, we chose Kanto to be our target marketing place, since many people live in the Kanto region. It's more possible that we can make more profit in this region.



2. Demographic

According to the diagram, the average salary in the Kanto Region is the leading place in Japan, so we decided to sell our products in this area, especially in the first and the second place, Tokyo, and Kanagawa-ken.

Besides, Japanese culinary tradition, particularly its mastery of sashimi preparation, necessitates the use of exceptionally sharp and durable knives. Our primary demographic includes professional chefs and culinary enthusiasts who require precision tools for their craft. The historical and cultural appreciation for samurai swords also aligns with the craftsmanship and heritage of Maestro Wu knives, making them appealing to those who value tradition and superior craftsmanship.

2021年日本平均年収(都道府縣)			
地區	都道府縣	全體平均	
		全體平均	vs東京
關東	東京都	438萬日元	100.0%
關東	神奈川縣	422萬日元	96.3%
關東	千葉縣	408萬日元	93.2%
關東	茨城縣	399萬日元	91.1%
關東	栃木縣	398萬日元	90.9%
關東	埼玉縣	397萬日元	90.6%

3. Psychographic

Japanese consumers tend to pursue high-quality and personalized products, reflecting their appreciation for meticulous craftsmanship and attention to detail. Maestro Wu knives cater to this psychological niche with their handcrafted craftsmanship and customizable options. Made from cannonballs, these knives have a unique historical background that adds an element of exclusivity and storytelling that appeals to customers looking for more than just a functional tool. Combined with a personalized knife design, this is particularly attractive to Japanese chefs who have precise requirements for their tools.

Why We Choose the Japanese Market

Cultural Appreciation for Craftsmanship

Japan has a long-standing cultural appreciation for craftsmanship, particularly in culinary arts and traditional crafts. The meticulous handcrafting process of Maestro Wu knives and their historical significance align perfectly with Japanese values of quality, precision, and tradition. This cultural alignment makes Japan an ideal market for our products.

Demand for High-Quality Culinary Tools

Japanese cuisine, especially dishes like sashimi and sushi, requires extremely sharp and durable knives. The local market has a strong demand for high-quality, specialized culinary tools. Maestro Wu knives, known for their sharpness and durability, are well-suited to meet these demands, providing professional chefs and cooking enthusiasts with the tools they need for precise and refined food preparation.

Proximity and Logistical Advantages

The geographic proximity between Kinmen and Japan facilitates efficient and cost-effective transportation. This closeness allows for reduced shipping times and costs, ensuring that Japanese customers receive their products promptly. Efficient logistics enhance customer satisfaction and make our business operations more sustainable and competitive.

Premium Market Potential

Japanese consumers are willing to pay a premium for products that offer exceptional quality and unique features. The market skimming pricing strategy aligns with this willingness to invest in superior products. By positioning Maestro Wu knives as premium items, we can attract a segment of the market that values exclusivity and craftsmanship, maximizing our revenue and establishing a strong brand presence.

B. Product

Historic meaning and the handmade process are our important features. In 1949, Kinmen came under heavy artillery attack. Bombshells have become the best natural material for making knives. At a time of economic growth, Maestro Wu discovered this business opportunity, and the reputation of Jinheli Steel Knives began. Therefore, we sell not just ordinary knives, but also carry the symbolic meaning of peace and the memory of Wu's family. Wu's knives focus on hand-made. The following is a simple knife-making process.

Step1 cutting bombshell

Step 2: According to the knife's usage. divide and cut bombshell

Step 3: Steel sheet charcoal furnace heating

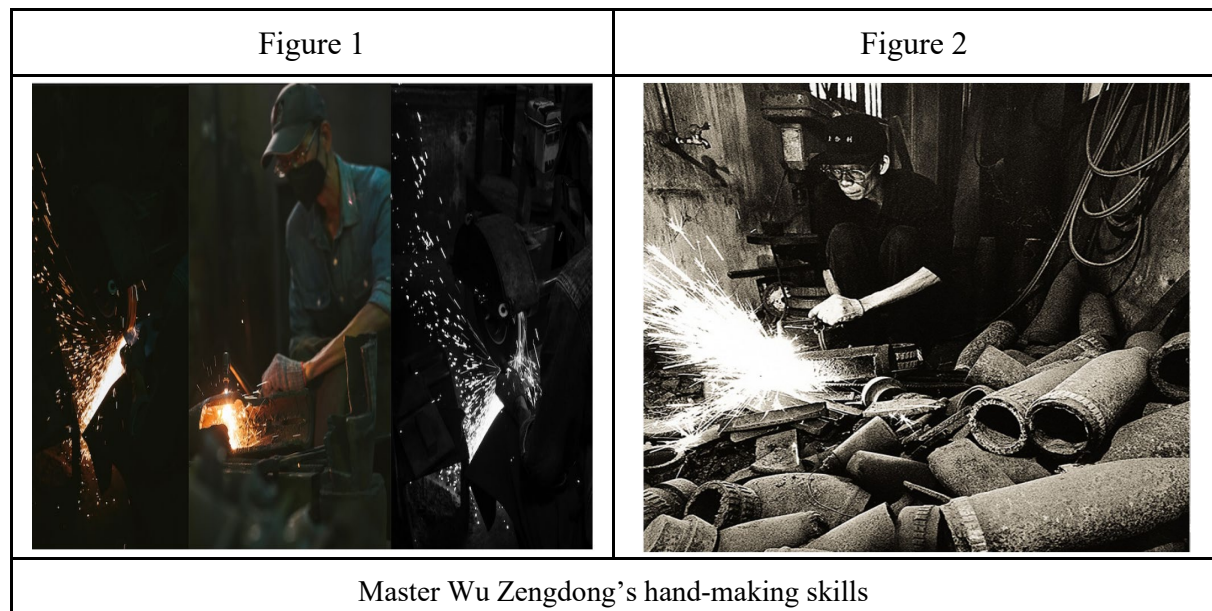
Step 4: Root cutting

Step 5: Knife-shaped pruning, after heat treatment

Step 6: Grinding and polishing

Step 7: Carefully selected finished products

Compared with other companies that make kitchen knives, Maestro Wu's knives can better demonstrate the spirit of traditional skills. Workers need to face the stove with temperatures as high as thousands of degrees, they must be beaten back and forth as soon as they come out of the oven. This is extremely dangerous, so it requires perfect protective measures. Maestro Wu Zengdong said “The heat treatment of a steel knife after forging can make its tissue density more solid, thereby improving its sharpness and toughness. Therefore, back-and-forth forging is indispensable. "So we say that a good sword must be. It's been hard work and the intention is here.”



International Marketing

As mentioned earlier, Wu's knives can be customized. In addition to the blade, the comfort and feel of the handle are also factors that consumers will consider. The following will introduce three different types of knife handles, their characteristics, and applicable audiences, respectively.

1. Product number D-4

The bakelite handle is designed to be ergonomic and effortless to use, and the handle material has excellent corrosion resistance, is durable, and is easy to clean, making it one of the must-have kitchen knives at home. The unique bakelite handle design makes the tool stable and has a good grip.



2. Product number F-4

This new steel handle is lightweight, effortless to use, and can be easily controlled by women. The handle also incorporates unique anti-slip etching and adopts high-tech anti-slip treatment. It has a comfortable grip and is ergonomic. It can effectively reduce hand fatigue during use and provide a very stable feel. It pays attention to practicality and functionality.



3. Product number A-MA-2

This new handle provides the consumers with a stable feel, is ergonomically designed, is effortless and effortless, and can effectively reduce hand fatigue during use. The handle has good corrosion resistance, is durable, and is easy to clean. It is a knife that is very good for cooking. It conforms to the principle of a good grip and a stable knife.



Our main target market segments are **demographic, geographic, and psychographic**. First, Japan is close to Kinmen and is good to transport by ship. This can save a lot of transportation costs. Secondly, Japan's seafood is very fresh, so sashimi is quite famous. Local chefs need good knife skills and a sharp sashimi knife. Finally, Maestro Wu's knives emphasize high quality and can also be customized to meet the needs of customers. The above two points are of great help to our target market.

C. Pricing

As we learned from the week 15 videos, there are four methods to formulate our product's price: market skimming, penetration pricing, market holding strategy, and cost-plus escalation. Our group has decided to use the market skimming method because we believe our customers will view the Maestro Wu knife as a delicate tool for their daily use. Consequently, they will consider purchasing this knife at a premium price as worthwhile. Conversely, if we set our prices as low as regular products in Japan, it would not only lead to a decline in our profits but also result in the loss of our true customers—premium users seeking an exceptional cooking experience. Additionally, the market skimming method can help us maximize revenue on limited volumes and strengthen customer loyalty to high-quality products. Since every Maestro

International Marketing

Wu knife is entirely handmade by professional craftsmen, the quantity produced is lower than that of non-handmade products. To achieve maximum profit, we must set a higher price.

To set our premium price, we referenced another well-known knife brand, MUSASHI, as our comparison. MUSASHI also makes various types of knives in Japan and sells their products at higher prices. Moreover, they differentiate their knives to cater to different cooking needs. For example, MUSASHI offers knives specifically for cutting meat, with prices ranging from 13,000 to 40,000 yen (2,700~8,300 NTD), depending on the steel quality and the level of decoration. A brief comparison is listed below.

The similarities and differences between the two brands:

	Similarities	Differences
Procedure	100% handmade	MUSASHI has more craftsmen than Maestro Wu, which means they can make more high-quality knives.
Category	Both of them are categorized into different uses.	MUSASHI knife develops different uses, for example, the Sashimi knife.
Target customer	Have similar targeting customers.	MUSASHI uses higher price on their products.

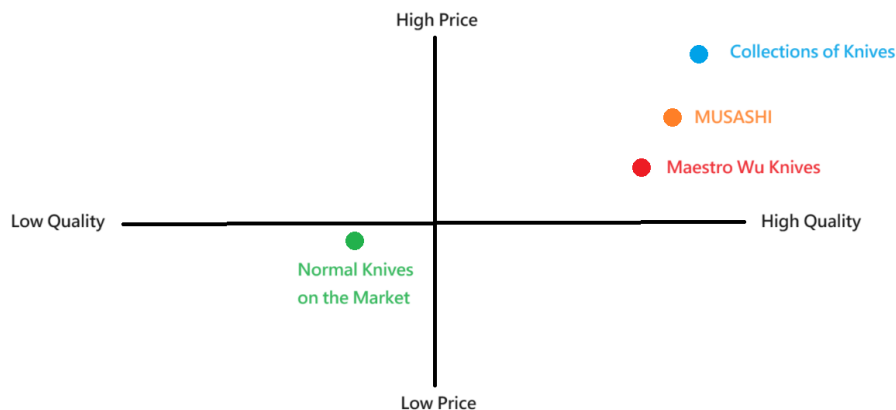
Our price floor will be 16,000 yen, slightly higher than MUSASHI's basic knife product. This is based on Maestro Wu's mid-level product. Given the customized nature of our product, we have decided to offer free delivery to every customer who adds a customized decoration to their knife. There will be no price ceiling because our products offer customized options, which incur significant manufacturing costs. The final prices will depend on what our customers are willing to pay.

D. Position

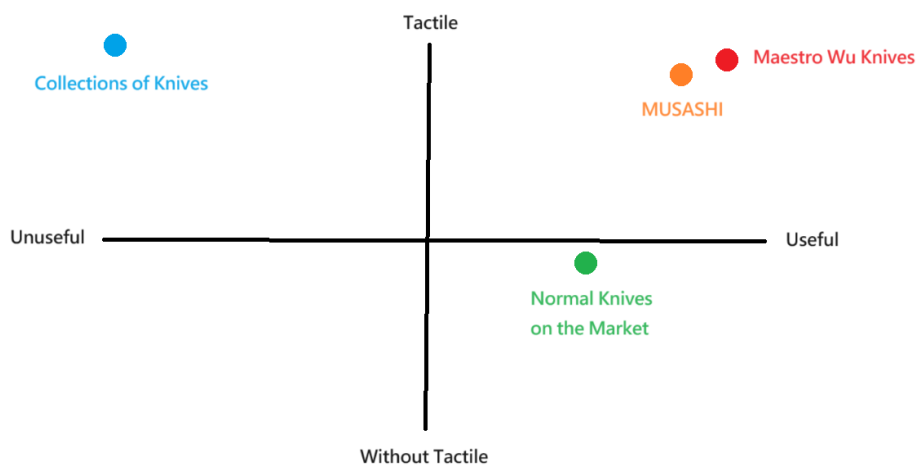
As stated above, we segment the market in which Japanese consumers value high-quality, handcrafted products with a rich history and cultural significance. Besides, we choose to price our products by comparing them to the brand MUSASHI. Furthermore, we try to make Maestro Wu knives to become symbolic of peace. Therefore, we think that Maestro Wu knives are a good choice since it's not as expensive as a collection of knives. The other reason is that it's **affordable** for those who care about the quality and want to use knives to cook.

We assume that the Japanese who buy Maestro Wu knives would be amazed by their durability. Although its prices are slightly high for consumers who want to use knives to cook meals, they can enjoy cooking with tactile handles and sharp blades. Secondly, the consumers who own Maestro Wu knives might tell their friends that the knives are wonderful, even if they aren't made in Japan. Below are the maps of Maestro Wu Knives' positions on the market, drawn by our group.

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Price vs. Quality



Tactile vs. Useful



E. Promotion

- **Content marketing**
“No War but a Knife”

We want to bring meaning to selling the shell case steel knife so that we can let people know our brand spirit and build better customer recognition.

Our slogan is “No War but a Knife”. Looking back at history, if steel were used to make knives rather than produce missiles as the weapon of war, the world would be more peaceful and less sorrowful.

- **Event Marketing**
Culinary World Cup, Who is the Master Chef?

Holding the Annual Culinary World Cup with the name of Masero Wu and attracting chefs from worldwide to participate ; moreover, we will also work with the photographic team to shoot the process of the competition and produce a TV series. In the competition, all of the contestants will be required to use the knife tools of Masero Wu so it can show how useful the knives are and stimulate more potential buyers.

International Marketing

- **Digital Marketing**

- Search engine optimization (SEO)

- As we Strengthen the aspect of SEO to increase website visibility, more and more potential customers can see our brand by searching the keyword "knife".

- Cooperate with online channel

- More online selling channels mean more opportunities to contact customers to buy our products, and as a result, we will cooperate with Amazon Japan and Rakuten Ichiba.

- Official website optimization

- As we mentioned above, There are many kinds of knives on Maestro Wu's official website home page, and the most special one is a customized knife. We want to add a new page for viewers, offering them to create their dream knife. Customers can choose the material of the handle, the length of the blade, and so on, and directly send the order.

F. Service support – 3Ps

Product Customization

1. Personalized Knife Design: Offer customization services that allow customers to specify the knife's design, handle materials, and engraving options. Japanese chefs, especially those preparing sashimi, are highly particular about the precision of their tools and may have specific requirements.

2. Professional Knife Types: Provide a variety of knife options used in Japanese cuisines, such as deba (fish filleting knife), usuba (vegetable knife), and yanagiba (sashimi knife).

Cultural Integration

Storytelling and Heritage: Emphasize the historical significance and handcrafted process of the knives in marketing materials. This resonates with Japan's appreciation for craftsmanship and tradition.

Localized Customer Support

1. Japanese Language Support: Ensure customer service can handle inquiries, customization requests, and after-sales support in Japanese.

2. Local Representatives: Have local representatives collaborate with Japanese retailers and culinary schools to facilitate better communication and service delivery.

Efficient Logistics

Establish efficient distribution channels to ensure that tools can be delivered to Japanese customers on time and minimize waiting time. Local warehousing options can also be set up to speed up delivery and reduce shipping costs.

Marketing and Engagement

Work with famous Japanese chefs to recommend knives and demonstrate their effectiveness in preparing Japanese meals.

International Marketing

Corporate Social Responsibility

Use sustainable and environmentally friendly packaging materials to attract environmentally conscious Japanese consumers. You can also highlight the environmental aspects of recycling artillery shells, as well as the company's commitment to sustainability and peace.

IV. Conclusion

We did the STP analysis, Marketing mix 4P, and Service support – 3P against the Japanese market. And in the STP analysis, we use Geographic, Demographic, and Psychographic aspects to segment the market.

First, Japan's proximity to Kinmen is advantageous for transportation with lower cost. Second, Japanese culinary tradition, particularly its mastery of sashimi preparation, necessitates the use of exceptionally sharp and durable knives. In addition, the historical and cultural appreciation for samurai swords also aligns with the craftsmanship and heritage of Maestro Wu knives. Third, Japanese consumers often pursue high-quality and personalized products, reflecting their appreciation for meticulous craftsmanship and attention to detail.

In Marketing mix 4P, Jinheli Steel Knives' historic meaning and the handmade process are their important features ; furthermore, they also offer customized products. According to different uses, there are various types of knives that customers can buy.

Regarding the strategy of pricing, our group decided to use the market skimming method because we believe our customers will view the Maestro Wu knife as a delicate tool for their daily use. To more specifically define the market position of MaestroWu knife, we chose to price our products by comparing them to the brand MUSASHI. In conclusion, Maestro Wu knives have high durability, variety, and lower price.

To promote our products and gain more potential customers, we applied Content marketing, which contains the slogan “No War but a Knife” and advocates peace ; Event Marketing, holding the Annual Culinary World Cup with the name of Masero Wu ; Digital Marketing, concluding Search engine optimization (SEO), Cooperate with online channel, and Official website optimization.

In Service support – 3Ps, we are concerned with the concepts below, Product Customization, Localized Customer Support, Efficient Logistics, Marketing and Engagement, and Corporate Social Responsibility, devoted to winning the customers' hearts and a better word.

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