



Tourism Development Challenges in a Craftsmanship City

Echizen City Tourism Association

About Echizen City



Echizen City

Population: 80,137 Area: 230.7 km²



Trends in Tourist Numbers

2023: 3,379,000 2024: 4,307,000

Travel Time

- From Tokyo Station to Echizen Takefu Station: 3 hours 6 minutes
- by Hokuriku Shinkansen
- From Kanazawa Station: 44 minutes by Hokuriku Shinkansen
- From Osaka Station by Thunderbird: 1 hour 38 minutes
- From Kyoto Station by Thunderbird: 1 hour 14 minutes

An area where five traditional craft production centers, rare even within Japan, are concentrated

< Traditional craft production areas surrounding Echizen City >



Echizen Tansu
(since the 19th century)

Echizen Forged
Blades(since the
13th century)

Echizen Washi
(since the 6th century)

Event Highlights



The Direction of Echizen City Tourism

- With a focus on enhancing local appeal, promoting settlement, and fostering pride in the community, efforts are being made to contribute to the region's sustainability.

Vision for the Future

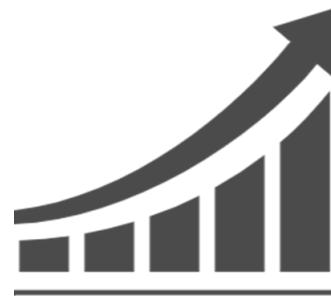
Distributing tourism spending and attracting customers who appreciate “handcrafted work” contribute to the maintenance and development of various businesses that uphold the culture.



Culture

A wide range of products and services that leverage the value of “handcrafted work” enhance the area’s appeal as a tourist destination.

Economy



Customers acquired through tourism are purchasing products and services offered by the region.

Tourism



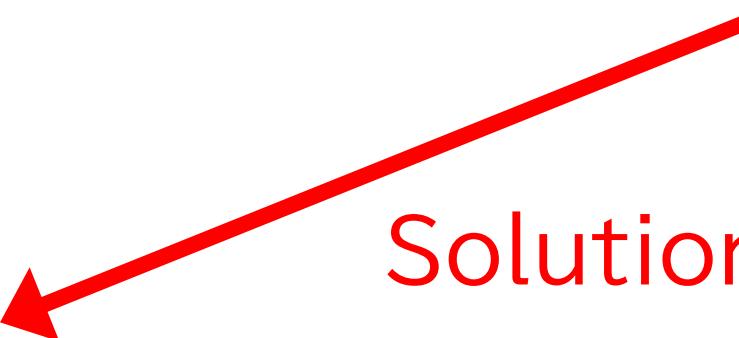
Local
Resources



and Tourism

Regional
Challenges

Solutions



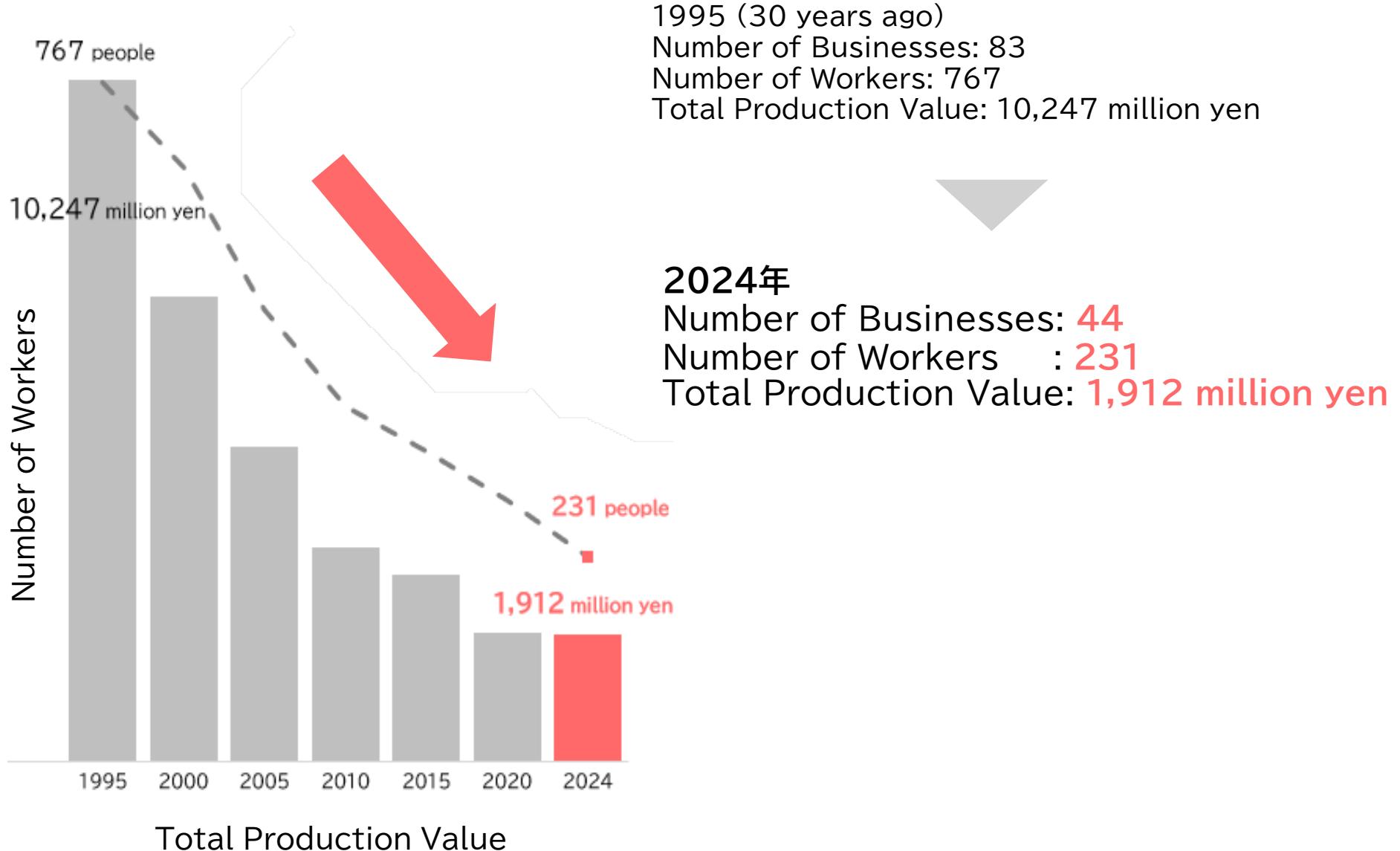
Local
Resources

Traditional Crafts and Tourism

Regional
Challenges

Solutions

Trends in Echizen Washi Businesses



Large-scale promotion and mass tourist attraction efforts (unsuccessful)

Creation of tourism content without any organization



Tours designed solely to increase visitor numbers



Extensive PR in major cities



Attracting more visitors than the production site can accommodate (overtourism), with tourists showing little interest in the workshops or products

Tourism had a detrimental impact on the production area, resulting in resentment among the business operators.

Initiatives for addressing challenges

Interviews with Local Business Operators



Field Study of Advanced Industrial Tourism Destinations



Based on preliminary surveys, interviews were conducted and rules for tourism programs were established.

Example

- Unannounced visits → Introduction of **a reservation system**
- Mass visits → Implementation of **a capacity limit**
- No consumption → Introduction of **a factory tour fee**

Exchanged views with domestic workshop operators to share the importance of industrial tourism, recognize current challenges, discuss future directions, and reaffirm the value of Echizen City's traditional industries.

Traditional Crafts and Tourism



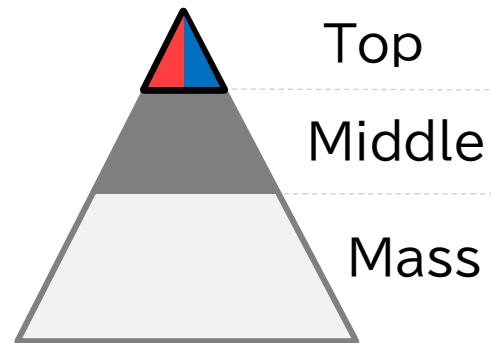
Work



Leisure

It is important to understand the “work (primary business)” and promote tourism in a way that minimizes the burden on host operators while efficiently providing benefits to their “work (primary business).”

Target Customer Segments for Echizen City



- The target segments are classified into three groups based on number of customers and spending.
- This segment empathizes with and understands Echizen City's traditional industries. Aiming to benefit both the production area and visitors, two specific groups within the top segment have been targeted.



Professional

Luxury Travelers

Initiatives for the Professional Segment

Experts are invited to study how to appeal to the professional segment alongside traditional craft operators, including key points and phrasing, as well as the design of tours around the production area (material tours).

Using that knowledge, exhibits are held at venues where the professional segment gathers, such as interior material trade shows, to promote the appeal of Echizen Washi and related tours.

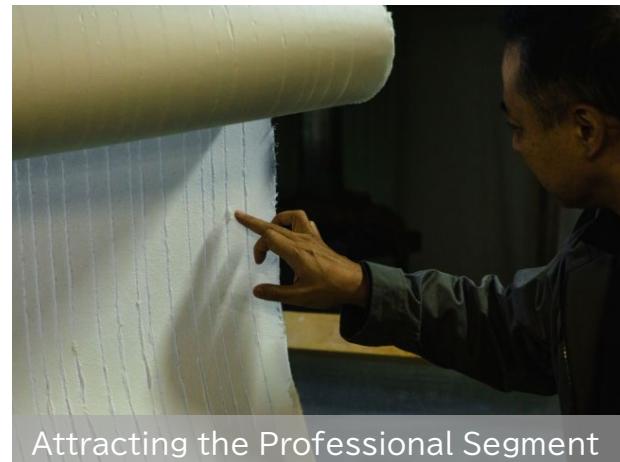
Traditional crafts have reached creators in fields previously unconnected, including art, interior materials, and printing resources.



Studying How to Convey Value with Business Operators



Introduction and Business Negotiations for Products and Production Area Tours

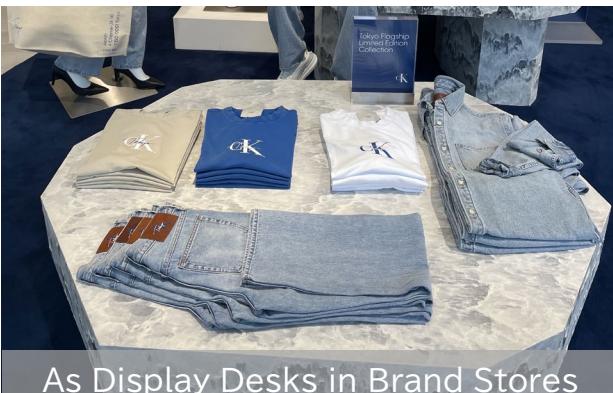


Attracting the Professional Segment

Leading to an Order !



As Exhibits in Department Stores



As Display Desks in Brand Stores



As Interior Walls in Showrooms

Initiatives for Luxury Travelers

- To accommodate high-value travelers, initiatives include creating consistently themed content, training guides to ensure accurate understanding of history and culture, and exchanging views with domestic and international DMCs to build networks, while utilizing subsidies from the Japan Tourism Agency.
- Visitors who are interested in and understand traditional crafts are gradually coming to Echizen City, with not only increased tours but also higher product purchases.



Development of content at sushi restaurants using Echizen forged blades



Training guides to respond flexibly to luxury travelers



Detailed consultations with monitors and travel agencies

Gradually attracting visitors!



To the Echizen Washi production area



To the Echizen Forged Blades production area



To the Echizen Tansu production area

Professional



An increase in industrial spending in the production area, as orders for interior materials and art lead to business transactions.

Luxury Travelers



An increase in tourism spending in the production area through visits, hands-on experiences, and shopping.



Tourism is helping to offset the decline in production value, which has become a regional challenge.

Through “Traditional Crafts × Tourism”

○Through initiatives targeting the professional segment and high-value travelers, various impacts are emerging, including increased community well-being, cultural preservation, and local employment creation.



Fostering Civic Pride



Increase in Production Area Visitors



Preservation of Cultural Practices, Such as Shinto Rituals



Increase in Volunteer Tourism Guides



We will continue our efforts to link the power of travel with industrial tourism, ensuring that such travel remains sustainable for visitors, business operators, and local residents.

Taking a step to carry forward what has been handed down since ancient times from our era to the future

Echizen City Tourism Association