

The Concept behind  
*“Mottainai”*  
Is Our Starting Point

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Japan's high economic growth and subsequent development in the past were sustained solely by the processes of mass production, mass consumption, and mass disposal. Consumers were never instilled with the importance of recycling and reutilization, and the prosperity people enjoyed was built on unending attempts to introduce new things, which captured consumers' temporary fancy but were disposed of as soon as they fell out of fashion. The depletion of resources and related environmental issues on a global scale, however, are invalidating this traditional cycle.

When Dr. Wangari Maathai of Kenya, who won Nobel Peace Prize for her Green Belt Movement, visited Japan in 2005, she was fascinated by the Japanese word *mottainai*, which means "(do not be) wasteful." She started a campaign to make it a word, and concept, known worldwide. This term is something that USS also believes in. In fact, our auction business can trace its roots back to the concept behind *mottainai*.

In Japan, vehicles represent social status and, to a large degree, they express individual lifestyles. For this reason, car owners take good care of their prized possessions. On top of that, Japanese-made vehicles boast exceptional performance, and even second-hand vehicles remain highly reliable. But about four million vehicles go to the graveyard each year in Japan alone, even though some of them have the capacity to log additional miles. Aside from this, vehicles contain an array of recyclable resources such as iron, glass, rubber, and plastics.

I believe USS' social mission and its reason for existence lie exactly in its efforts not to waste the wealth of resources hidden in vehicles and to keep the chain of reutilization and recycling from breaking.

USS, which has supported sustainable global development since its establishment, is striving to devise a business model that accelerates a shift from conventional society, which thrived on mass production, mass consumption and mass disposal, to one more appropriate for the 21st century, which is driven by reutilization and recycling.

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