

Kao

Kirei—Making Life Beautiful



Kao Consumer Communication Center Annual Activity Report 2026

January 1, 2025—December 31, 2025



Creating a future of smiles by deepening engagement with consumers and enriching everyday life through “Kirei”—a concept that embraces beauty, cleanliness, well-being and thoughtful living

Kao's Consumer Communication Center emerged from the Nagase Housework Science Laboratory, established in 1934. For nearly a century, we have listened closely to the needs and desires of consumers, influencing corporate activities and the development of products and services on consumers' behalf. Last year was filled with social and economic uncertainty. Changes unfolding across the world had a profound impact on people's lives, from rapid advances in digital technology and diversifying values and lifestyles, to frequent occurrences of climate-related natural disasters and a growing awareness of environmental issues. Through it all, we have continued to take on new challenges in pursuit of a world where everyone can lead lives filled with peace and be true to themselves.

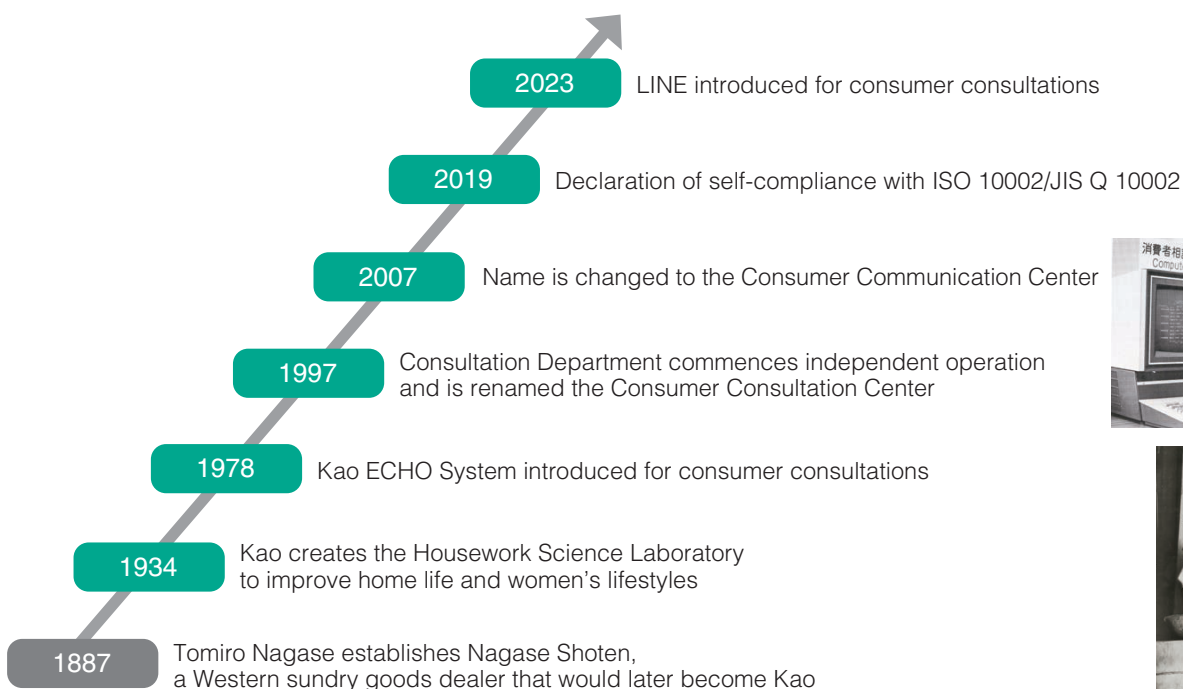
In this report, we highlight a number of initiatives carried out in 2025, including efforts to deepen our engagement with consumers through digital initiatives, as well as exchange and educational activities for communities and the next generation. We feature key topics drawn from the many inquiries we receive daily, focusing on ways to ensure people's health and safety every day. We also present examples of how the valuable feedback we receive from customers is shared with relevant departments, driving continuous improvements in products and services and generating new value. Please take some time to read through the report.

We will continue to incorporate consumer perspectives, create value by improving people's lives and contribute ever more to society.

April 2026

Consumer Communication Center

History of the Consumer Communication Center



Kao Group's corporate philosophy—The Kao Way

See here for more information www.kao.com/global/en/about/purpose/kaoway/



The “Kao Way” embodies our corporate philosophy, and is the foundation of the business activities of the Kao Group.

As our cornerstone, the Kao Way provides consistency to Group activities from the formulation of mid- to long-term business plans to each business decision that we make every day.

Kao Declaration of Consumer-orientation

See here for more information (in Japanese) <https://www.kao.com/jp/sustainability/klp/policy/customer-first/>



Kao announced this declaration in 2017 and revised it in 2023 to align with our ESG strategy. Activities are now being carried out in line with the Kirei Lifestyle Plan.

In addition, in May 2019, we declared that the Kao Group's initiatives regarding customer inquiries will comply with ISO 10002, “Quality management—Customer satisfaction—Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations.”

In February 2025, Kao received an award at the 2024 Commendation in the Good Practices of Consumer-oriented Management Awards, hosted by Japan's Consumer Affairs Agency. The award was given in recognition of Kao's consumer-oriented product development that encourages environmentally friendly actions, informed by consumer needs and rising environmental awareness. Such products include a dishwashing detergent refill container made with less plastic and a gas-free, mist-spray sunscreen, with a dedicated refill bottle, that is easy to reapply on the go. In addition to consumer-oriented products, the award also recognized Kao for its high-durability asphalt modifier made from waste PET.



Kirei Lifestyle Plan

See here for more information <https://www.kao.com/global/en/sustainability/klp/>



This is Kao's ESG strategy for realizing a sustainable society. Formulated in 2019, the strategy comprises 19 key leadership actions designed to improve quality of life through our products and services, address social

issues by developing products and brands that take the environment and human rights into consideration, and reduce environmental impact through the full life cycle of a product to achieve our target of carbon zero.

CCC's Roles and Activities

We listen closely to consumers, engaging in dialogue to identify and deliver solutions, strengthen trust and co-create a prosperous, inclusive society

The Consumer Communication Center responds promptly to feedback from a wide range of channels with care and consideration. We engage in respectful, situation-appropriate dialogue with consumers to provide understanding and reassurance—leading to inspiring consultations that exceed expectations.

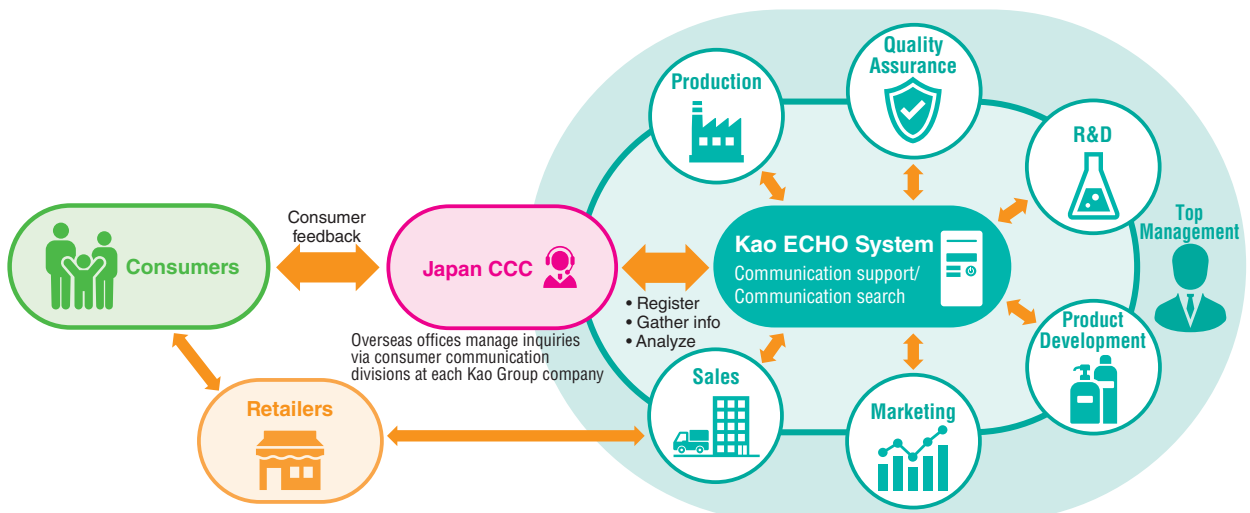
Consumer feedback is collected in the Kao One ECHO System and shared daily with relevant departments, who incorporate it in many ways—by improving

or developing new products, services or information, improving quality and enhancing marketing. We also gather feedback from the field in distribution and sales to continuously drive improvements.

Furthermore, by actively disseminating information to and engaging with government agencies, local communities and NPOs, we are steadily strengthening our bonds of trust with society.



Kao One ECHO System collates worldwide consumer feedback



About 160,000 consultations in 2025 (9% YoY decrease)

The number of toll-free inquiries continues to decline.

New channels for feedback, such as consultation services via LINE and an anonymous online suggestion box, continue to grow.

The number of consultations from older age groups via a toll-free line is declining. This may be due to our efforts to help consumers resolve issues on their own by expanding our product Q&A website section, for example. At the same time, we will continue to carefully monitor the impact of increasingly advanced AI functions in browsers and apps on future consultation numbers.

Types of consultation

In addition to a decrease in complaints over the discontinuation of selected cosmetic brands and Merries baby skincare wipes, the number of consultations decreased in part due to our withdrawal from customer service responsibilities following the transfer of the *Healthya* business.

On the other hand, there was an increase in consultations regarding the use of our improved laundry detergent series, our newly launched toothpaste with carbonated foaming action and our bathroom sink cleaner, all of which drew significant public attention.

Age of consumers making inquiries

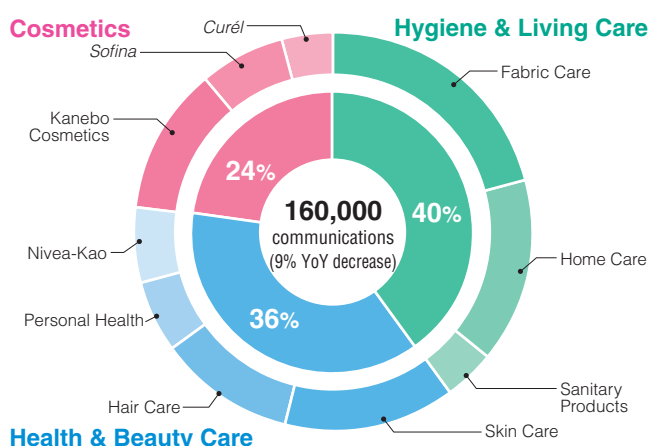
Little change was seen from the previous year in comparing the age groups of consumers making inquiries, with consumers in their 60s and older accounting for almost half of all consultations.

Method of consultation

Telephone consultations accounted for 74% of all consultations, down one percentage point from the previous year. The total number of phone inquiries was 90% of the previous year's total.

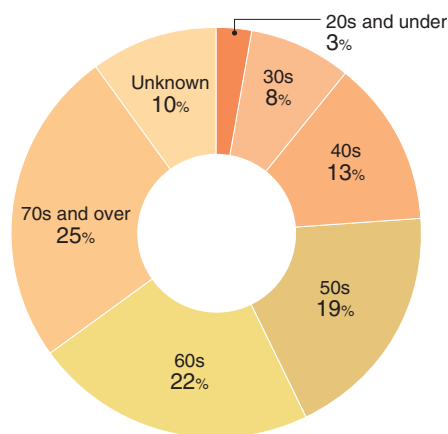
Meanwhile, consultations were up two percentage points via e-mail and one percentage point via chat (LINE), while submissions to the suggestion box on the website also increased, indicating that the use of digital channels of engagement is on the rise.

Ratio of consultations by business type

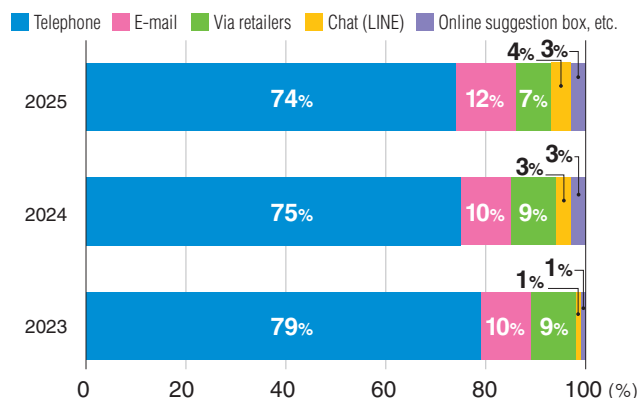


Ratio of those making consultations by age group

★Age groups include estimated ages and only count general consumers



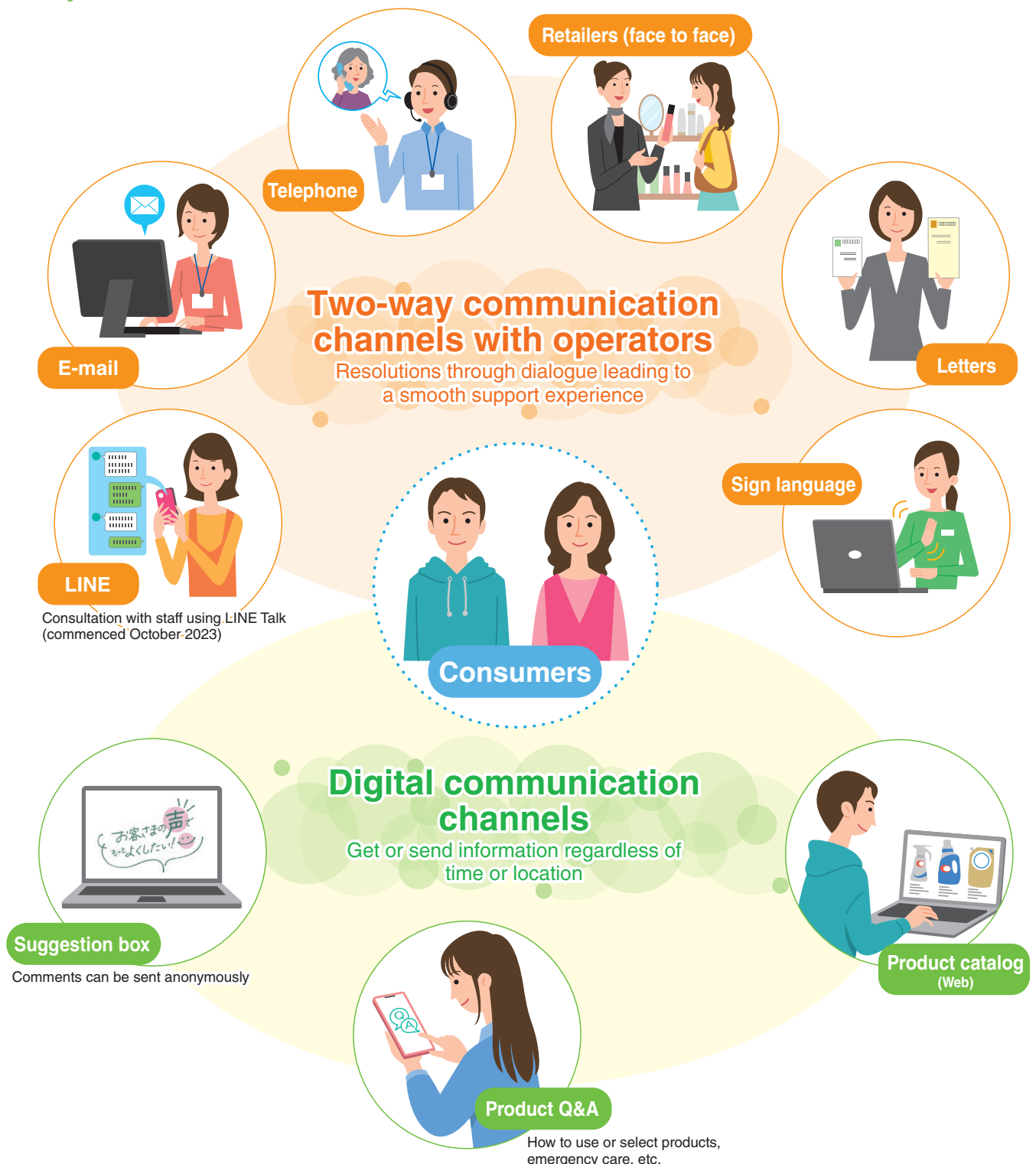
Change in the ratios of consultations methods



Wide Variety of Communication

Offering diverse channels of communication

Kao has established various communication channels to engage with consumers, including operator-assisted options such as telephone, e-mail and LINE, as well as self-directed online channels like the product Q&A website section and online suggestion box. These options allow consumers to contact, gather information and share feedback in ways that fit their needs and circumstances.



Enhancing consumer engagement capabilities through digital initiatives

We are strengthening channels that allow consumers to engage with Kao easily and at any time, such as expanding the product Q&A section on our website and offering consultations via LINE. At the same time, we are enhancing support for consumers who are less comfortable with digital technology.

Product Q&A website section: A digital customer self-service option

We have implemented various measures that are helping consumers resolve issues on their own.* These include the use of videos and images to amplify written text, offering clearer explanations—released upon a product launch—as well as publishing trending topics from social media in Q&A format. * Based on survey responses from website visitors

Trending social media content addressed through cross-departmental sharing

In August, “keratotic plug removal” became a trending topic on Japanese social media, and we identified consumer needs based on the buzz. Through collaboration with relevant departments, we quickly posted a Q&A on our keratotic plug disintegrating and cleansing (KPDC) technology. Soon after publication, the content appeared at the top of search results in Japanese and was cited in AI-generated summaries.



Responding to inquiries and quickly releasing instructional videos

“How to Use Clear Clean Dental Rinse”

We received reports that “the liquid won’t come out,” so we released an instructional video with audio explaining how to open the cap—previously a point of confusion.



Strengthening our customer feedback system

Launching “What you want is here!”—a new space where customers can feel that their voice has been heard

In December, we launched a new section on our Japanese website, “What you want is here!,” on the “Making things better with customer feedback” page. This section introduces existing products that match customer needs based on the feedback we receive. This helps people discover Kao products that are right for them and reassures them that their voice has been heard and that their feedback is being accepted and acted on.

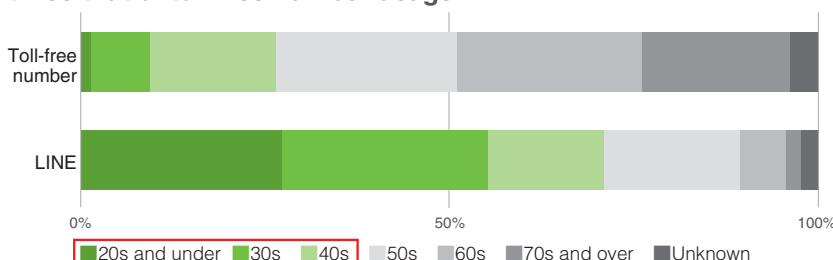
See here for more information (in Japanese)
www.kao.com/jp/support/products/yokimonodukuri/



Expanding consumer touch points through a new cosmetics channel on LINE

To build engagement with a broader range of consumers, including younger demographics, and increase the number of consultations, we launched a new LINE channel for cosmetics in June 2025, following the launch of our household goods channel. We are improving our infrastructure to meet the growing demand for chat-based communication at any hour, independent of location.

Ratio of consultations by age group and channel
LINE usage rate among people in their 40s and younger is 63%, twice that of toll-free number usage



A Dialogue with Society

Community engagement

TSUKISAI 2025 WINTER @Sumida

We hosted an experiential event at our Sumida Office for young families in the surrounding area with the aim of building a fan base for Kao and strengthening our relationship with the local community.

Arranged by themes of History, Daily Life, The Earth, Society and The Future, it was an opportunity for children and adults alike to have fun learning about Kao's *Yoki-Monozukuri*—an excellent creation process that enriches the lives of all.

Note: TSUKISAI is an experiential event held irregularly at commercial facilities and other venues, where employees serve as a hospitality team to guide participants. Two events were held in 2024.



Attendance: 5,000 people over two days



Sponsored by Sumida City. 20,000 flyers were distributed to elementary schools and childcare facilities in the cities of Sumida and Koto.

Student engagement

Visits to Kao and dialogues at outreach classes

Japan's Ministry of Education (MEXT) curriculum guidelines for the "period for inquiry-based cross-disciplinary study" emphasize fostering student initiative. Partly as a result, we have seen an increase in the number of students contacting Kao directly by phone over the past two years. In the career education sessions we run, rather than delivering one-way lectures, we encourage students to interact with us and ask questions throughout thereby fostering an atmosphere of active participation and dialogue.



Leveraging Kao's expertise in support of research projects (inquiry-based learning, theses)

We provide constructive, forward-looking information to support students in advancing their research, offering assistance through in-person interviews and by e-mail.

Even for research areas with little connection to Kao products, we introduce relevant industry association websites and public information sources.

Public seminars

We conduct seminars at the request of government agencies, consumer affairs centers, industry associations, associations for people with disabilities and social welfare councils. These seminars support equitable access to information for elderly customers and customers with disabilities, and we incorporate the feedback from these sessions into our products and services to enhance customer satisfaction and improve the way we provide information. We also supply, upon request, materials such as warning stickers to prevent accidental ingestion, braille stickers and switch identification stickers. Based on metrics such as the number of sessions conducted and the volume of feedback handled, we review plans for the coming fiscal year and pursue continuous improvement.



Warning stickers to prevent accidental ingestion



Raku-raku Switch identification stickers



Braille stickers

Corporate ad series to promote a sustainable society: “Wastefulness—Mottainai. Never today, nor tomorrow.”

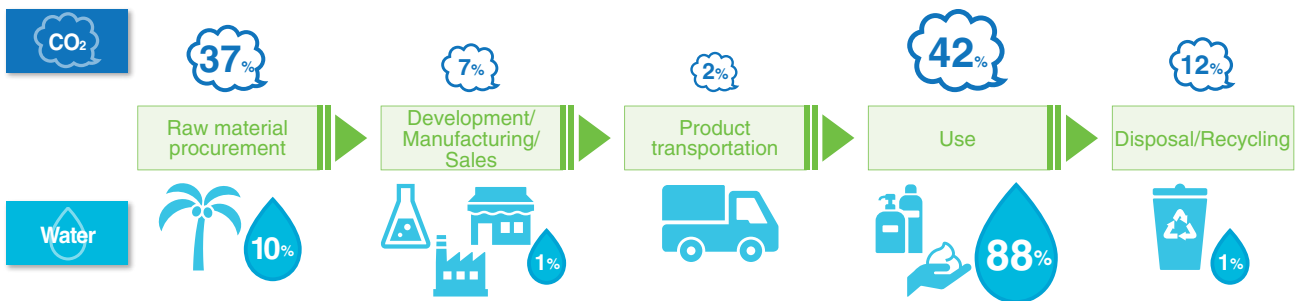
Kao focuses on the “mottainai” moments in everyday life to help spark actions that reduce waste and in turn foster widespread shifts across society.



“Wastefulness—Mottainai. Never today, nor tomorrow.” (website)
<https://www.kao.com/jp/mottainai/>
(in Japanese)



For Kao products, 42% of CO₂ emissions and 88% of water discharge across the product lifecycle occur during use. This makes consumer cooperation essential for reducing environmental impact.



Let's save water

Many of the laundry detergents sold by Kao are designed for a single rinse cycle. However, only 43% of users actually rinse just once (according to a 2020 survey by the Japan Soap and Detergent Association). Rinsing just once not only saves water but also shortens the washing machine's runtime, which can help save electricity. Additionally, using dishwashing detergents that rinse off easily can also help conserve water.



Use the right amount

Use the correct amount of detergent. Using more won't significantly improve cleaning performance. Measure the amount based on your washing machine's water levels and the load size. With concentrated detergent, using too much is especially wasteful. So try not to use more than necessary. That will also reduce the environmental impact of household wastewater.



Here, we would like to share four important precautions to help you stay safe and healthy. These are issues that have been with us for some time, but keep resurfacing as our society and environment changes. Please review the points below to avoid getting in trouble.

Important notice regarding false advertising, counterfeit products and subscription services

▶ Don't fall for suspicious messages on social media

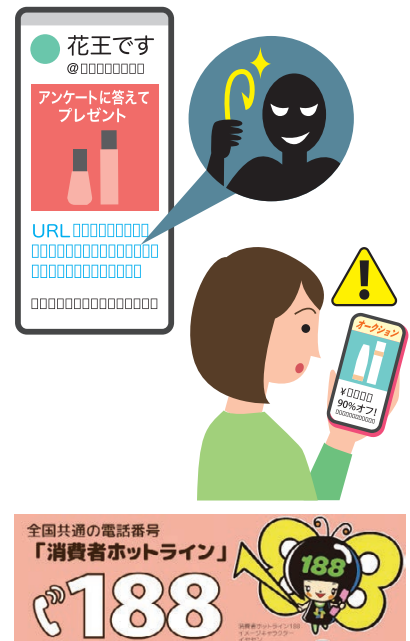
We have confirmed cases of false Kao ads or individuals claiming to be Kao employees on social media. They try to get you to join a campaign, redirect you to a fake website and then dishonestly obtain your personal information or even ask you for money. If such activity is reported to us, we request the platform operator to remove the content and will post warnings on the Kao website.

▶ Watch out for counterfeit products

Counterfeit products have been found on online shopping and flea market sites. Kao does not guarantee the authenticity of, or provide compensation for, any counterfeit product. Because of potential health risks, we recommend purchasing our products only from authorized retailers or our official online shop.

▶ Cancelling a subscription

A subscription is a contract with the seller. If Kao is not the seller, we cannot stop the shipments. Check who the seller is and contact them directly to cancel your subscription. If you have any concerns, please consult your local consumer affairs center. If you do not know their contact information, please use the Consumer Hotline in Japan by dialing 188.



This is a nationwide three-digit phone number that will direct you to a local consumer affairs consultation office when you follow the prompts and enter your postal code.

Be aware of allergies to hair color

In rare cases, people may experience allergic reactions to hair color, depending on physical factors and skin condition. In most cases, the reaction is caused by oxidative dyes (diamine-based dyes) in the product.* With our oxidative dye-free color treatments, hair manicures and hair mascaras, you can still manage gray hair and enjoy coloring your hair even if you have had an allergic reaction to hair dye in the past. Some of our products are also labeled with statements such as "Suitable for those who cannot use conventional (diamine-based) hair color."

If the product label states that a patch test is required, be sure to perform the test 48 hours before use. If you experience redness, itching or other irritation, do not use the product and consult a doctor. Always read the label and instructions carefully and use the product as directed. Do not use if you feel unwell, have a skin condition, or have a history of kidney or blood disorders.

* Please note that other ingredients may also cause allergic reactions.



Blaué
Foam Dye



Blaué
Aroma & Gloss
Hair Color



Blaué
Tint Color Gel



Blaué
Naturila



Blaué
Color Treatment



Blaué
Hair Manicure



Blaué
Retouch Magic

Products containing diamine-based dyes

Products containing NO diamine-based dyes

Precautions for storing aerosol products

As a result of extremely hot summer weather recently, we received inquiries about whether it is safe to keep aerosol products in a room. Aerosol products contain a product concentrate and a propellant (liquefied or compressed gas) sealed under pressure. When the spray button is pressed, the mixture is released rapidly, and the propellant expands as the pressure drops, turning the contents into a fine mist or foam. Because flammable gases such as liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and dimethyl ether (DME) are often used as propellants, improper use or storage may lead to ignition or explosion when exposed to heat or open flames. Extra caution is therefore required during the intense heat of summer.

Aerosol products are designed to meet Japan's High Pressure Gas Safety Act and industry standards, including a pressure resistance test at 50°C to verify container integrity. Under normal indoor conditions, even if temperatures reach 40°C, there is generally no risk of rupture or leakage. However, please do not store products in places where temperatures may exceed 40°C, such as in direct sunlight or near stoves or fan heaters.

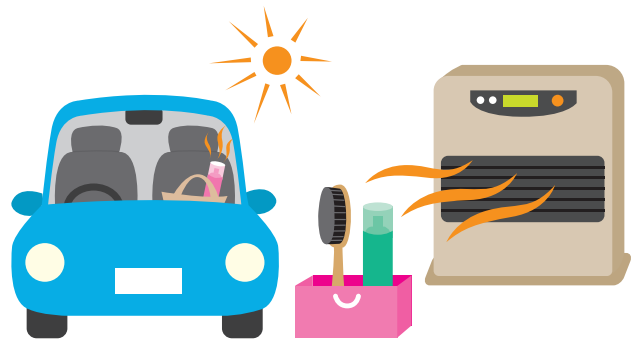
Do not leave aerosol products inside a vehicle, which can become extremely hot when exposed to sunlight. To ensure safe use, be sure to follow the "Precautions for Use" indicated on each product.

火気と高温に注意

高圧ガスを使用した可燃性の製品であり、危険なため、下記の注意を守ること。

①炎や火気の近くで使用しないこと。②火気を使用している室内で大量で使用しないこと。③高温にすると破裂の危険があるため、直射日光の当たる所やストーブ、ファンヒーターの近くなど温度が40度以上となる所に置かないこと。④火の中に入れないこと。⑤使い切って捨てること。
高圧ガス：LPガス

●缶がさびると破裂の原因になるので、湿気の多い所に置かないでください



Danger! Do Not Mix!

The mixing of chlorine-based and acidic products can generate chlorine gas, which is very dangerous. Because of this risk, products capable of generating a certain amount of chlorine gas when mixed with other products are required by law to display a warning such as “まぜるな危険” (Danger! Do Not Mix!) When using such products, always check the instructions first. Do not mix them with other products or use them one after another in the same spot where the liquids might mix.

Also, with chlorine-based products, chlorine gas may be released if the solution comes into contact with vinegar, alcohol, or a chlorine-based

slime-removing cleaner or large amounts of food waste. Before use, be sure to rinse the area thoroughly with water to remove any vinegar or alcohol, remove any slime-removing cleaners and dispose of food waste.



Example of “Danger! Do Not Mix!” labels (chlorine-based)

Incorporating Customer Feedback into *Yoki-Monozukuri*

Leveraging customer feedback across departments

Individual feedback from customers is shared across all departments involved in product development—including marketing, product planning, R&D, production, customer service and quality assurance—through the Kao ECHO System. Employees review this feedback daily to identify areas for improvement and opportunities to deliver better products. Here, we present examples of how customer feedback has led to tangible product improvements.



Turning the wishes of loyal users into reality

**KANEBO CREAM IN DAY III
CREAM IN NIGHT II**

Improved container design that enables use down to the last drop

In response to feedback from loyal customers who want to use every last bit of the product, we redesigned the container on the inside, as well as the spatula, so the cream can be scooped out completely, down to the very last bit.

VOICE

I'm so happy now! The wider opening makes it easy to scoop out every last bit of cream.

Previous product



Improved product



Refinements that make period care easier

Laurier Slimguard

Labeling on individual packaging to improve identification

In response to feedback that “it’s hard to tell the length and type once it’s removed from the bag,” we added length and type information to the individual packaging.

VOICE

I was pleasantly surprised to see the size printed on each one—so thoughtful!

Previous product



Improved product



Refinements that preserve the design while responding to loyal users' needs

TWANY Lotion N/Emulsion N

Making life easier with more user-friendly, stress-free containers

In response to feedback such as "it's hard to open" and "I can't tell how much is left," and specifically the request for a container that's easy to use every day, we redesigned the container's shape and used new materials, creating a more compact, translucent design.

Previous products



Improved products



VOICE

The smaller cap makes it easier to handle. It's great that both the contents and the container have been improved.



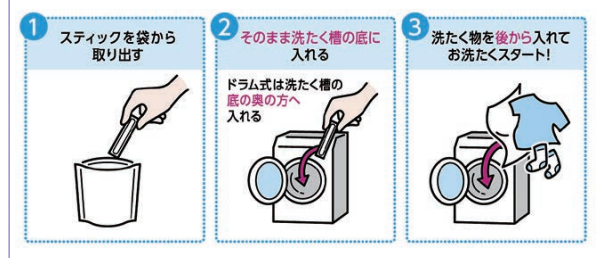
Easy-to-understand instructions to prevent problems

Attack ZERO Perfect Stick

Measures to prevent mistaken use

In response to feedback such as "the stick didn't fully dissolve when placed on top of the laundry," we added clear instructions—with both text and illustrations—showing how to place the stick at the back of the drum first and then add the laundry.

Previous product



Improved product



Incorporating Customer Feedback into *Yoki-Monozukuri*

Leveraging customer feedback across departments

No more purchasing the wrong type

MegRhythm package redesign

Redesigning the packaging to clearly communicate product value and prevent mistaken purchases

In response to feedback such as “it’s hard to tell what the product is and I bought the wrong one,” we redesigned the packaging to coincide with product improvements. The new design features illustrations that clearly show the intended area of use at a glance, as well as color-coding by product type. This redesign helps prevent mistaken purchases while clearly conveying each product’s unique value.



Cooling products for leisure activities are now even more fun and stylish

Bioré Cooling Sheets

Introducing a new color to expand style choices

In response to feedback such as “I want colors other than white to match my outfit” and “colored or cute patterns would be more stylish,” we released a limited-edition color, Salty Blue, to complement the standard white for *Bioré Cooling Sheets*.



Salty Blue
(Limited edition)

White
(Standard color)

Messages of Thanks from Customers

Our support desk receives many questions and comments from customers, including some heart-warming words of thanks.

Curél Intensive Moisture Care Carbonated Foam Gel Cleanser

I never thought washing my face could be this enjoyable!

Whoever came up with this—thank you so much. When I first tried the foam gel cleanser, my immediate reaction was, “This is amazing.” I used to wash my face only at night, but now I look forward to doing it every morning as well. I never imagined washing my face could be this enjoyable. I decided to try the foam serum, too, and all I can say is, “Wow.” I can’t imagine using anything but *Curél* anymore. I use it every day, hoping with all my heart that it never goes out of production.



Bioré UV Aqua Rich Airy Hold Cream

It feels so light and airy —it’s a whole new experience!

This product is really excellent. The sunscreens I’ve used in the past always felt sticky. This one is different—it comes out light and airy and doesn’t feel sticky at all. It’s a whole new experience. From now on, this is the only one I’ll use. I feel like I’ve found a truly great product. Please let the people responsible for it know that I really love it.



8x4 Deodorant Putty

A complete game changer —it keeps me dry and odor-free all day.

I’ve struggled with heavy sweating and underarm odor year-round, and nothing I tried ever really worked. I’d almost given up, but since this product was getting so much buzz, I decided to give it a shot. On the very first day I used it, I noticed after work that I didn’t smell of sweat at all. My underarms, which used to feel sticky, stayed dry the whole time and odor-free! It was a total surprise—honestly, a game changer for me. I’m grateful beyond words.



PureOra Carbonated Toothpaste

Brushing my teeth has gone from a chore to something I look forward to.

I never liked brushing my teeth, but since switching to this toothpaste, now I really like it. The fizzy sensation is pleasant, the soda flavor tastes great and my teeth feel incredibly smooth. It really lifts my spirits. What used to feel like a chore has become an enjoyable way to end my day. I’m truly grateful—this product has changed my life.



Opening

CCC's Roles and Activities

Wide Variety of Communication/
A Dialogue with Society

Topics






Incorporating Customer
Feedback into Yuki-Monozukuri

Messages of Thanks
from Customers

Contact Us (Kao Consumer Communication Center)

Contact information for inquiries regarding Kao's household products, cosmetics and corporate information is available on the official website below.
www.kao.com/jp/support/ (in Japanese)





<p>Telephone </p>	<p>0120-165-690 (in Japan)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hours: 9:00–17:00 (Except for Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays) * The telephone number for product inquiries varies by product. The correct number is indicated on the product or appears on the official website.
<p>LINE</p>	<p>We answer questions on LINE.</p> <p>Scan the 2D barcode using your smartphone or tablet and add us as a friend.</p> 
<p>E-mail </p>	<p>Please use this online form to make inquiries by e-mail.</p> <p>https://sampleform2.kao.com/n/form/qngb/pkzbKfu69Au7JH665JDLQ</p>
<p>English, 中文, 한국어 Call Center </p>	<p>03-6837-5778 9:00–17:00 (Except for Saturdays, Sundays, Public holidays and other holidays specified by Kao Corporation)</p>
<p>Letter </p>	<p>2-1-3 Bunka, Sumida-ku, Tokyo 131-8501 Kao Corporation Consumer Communication Center</p>

* Support desk hours may change depending on circumstances.

For customers with hearing impairments

Please use the telephone relay service for communication via sign language or text-based chat.
 Telephone relay service provider designated by the Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications
 The Nippon Foundation Telecommunication Relay Service
 Tel: 03-6275-0912 Fax: 03-6275-0913 Sign language and text-based chat (in Japanese): <https://nftrs.or.jp/contact/>

Official Websites

<p>Kao Corporation</p>	<p>www.kao.com/global/en/</p>
<p>Household Product and Cosmetics Q&A </p>	<p>A collection of questions frequently received from customers and their answers is available in a Q&A format. You can search for answers by brand, category, purpose and first aid, including accidental ingestion. www.kao.com/jp/qa/ (in Japanese)</p> 

Personal information protection The Kao Consumer Communication Center handles various kinds of personal information. We recognize that personal information is a valuable asset and adhere to the Privacy Policy of Kao Group Companies in Japan.

[Details of the Privacy Policy of Kao Group Companies in Japan](http://www.kao.com/jp/corporate/privacy/privacy-en/) www.kao.com/jp/corporate/privacy/privacy-en/

Kao Corporation

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