



TA-Q-BIN Marks Its 40th Anniversary

Thanks to the support of its customers, *TA-Q-BIN* celebrated its 40th anniversary on January 20, 2016. While initial sales came from delivering 1.7 million items in its first fiscal year, *TA-Q-BIN* has now grown to handling 1,000 times that figure: more than 1.7 billion items in a year. In this section, we look back on the history of *TA-Q-BIN*, which has achieved such significant growth.



TA-Q-BIN manual

Birth of TA-Q-BIN

The principle of “*service first, profit later.*” Thinking and acting from the position of its customers, the Yamato Group has been developing products and services from the particular perspective of the recipient. The father of *TA-Q-BIN*, then President Masao Ogura, believed that while the unit price per kilogram for small-lot shipments is expensive, revenue would be high if handled in large numbers. With this belief, Mr. Ogura announced the “Main Points of *TA-Q-BIN* Development” for the Company in the summer of 1975.

Using these points as a compass, a working group comprising primarily young employees advanced new product development. Under the principles of “pickup with a single phone call and pickup of even just one item from a private residence; next-day delivery; inexpensive and clear rates; and easy packing,” *TA-Q-BIN* was launched on January 20, 1976.

Main Points of TA-Q-BIN Development

- (1) Consider aspects from the consumer's point of view
- (2) Regard *TA-Q-BIN* as a lasting and developmental system
- (3) Maintain a uniform standard of service that is better than others
- (4) Target an unspecified number of shippers or cargo
- (5) Rationalize thoroughly

TA-Q-BIN's Evolution

Ski TA-Q-BIN

Ski TA-Q-BIN, launched in December 1983, was the first added-value *TA-Q-BIN* service. *Ski TA-Q-BIN* originated in the apple-producing area of Nagano, where the volume of shipments was extremely small after the apple season was over. A local employee's attention was attracted by a group of skiers walking while carrying bulky skies—this was a time in Japan when the number of skiers was increasing. From the local employee's idea for new shipments that would allow customers to enjoy time at the ski resorts unencumbered by their skis, *Ski TA-Q-BIN* started as the first service to link *TA-Q-BIN* and a leisure activity.



Ski TA-Q-BIN

Cool TA-Q-BIN

Cool TA-Q-BIN, launched in 1987, is an added-value service through which parcels are delivered with their freshness and taste reliably maintained in two temperature zones, refrigerated and frozen. *Cool TA-Q-BIN* is a representative example of creating demand from the recipient's standpoint. In addition to the sender, Yamato has come to place the utmost emphasis on the convenience of the receiver, which in turn has led to the satisfaction of the sender. In this way, rather than chasing demand, *Cool TA-Q-BIN* has realized the creation of demand. Yamato's constant awareness of the need to improve convenience for the recipient is a point that sets the Company apart from its competitors.



The Company launched its international small-lot refrigerated transportation service, *International Cool TA-Q-BIN*, in 2013 in response to calls from overseas customers who had said they would like to eat fresh Japanese food as well as from Japanese operators and producers who expressed interest in extending their sales channels overseas.

Challenge Undertaken with TA-Q-BIN

The Company is confronting the challenges of developing services that meet needs when receiving packages that are diversifying in accordance with changes in lifestyles. The key is to increase the number of channels for communication with customers. As a typical example, the *Kuroneko Members* service allows members to use convenient services when they send or receive parcels. In addition to receiving package delivery schedules and notifications if away from home, members have the option to change the date, time, or location of delivery. The *Kuroneko Members* service is actively collaborating with the services and apps of other companies. From January 2016, the services have been working with the communications app LINE. Members are now able to receive delivery notifications and change the date, time, or location of delivery via LINE.

While strengthening communications with *TA-Q-BIN* users in these ways, the Company is focusing on diversifying the act of receiving a parcel. In addition to the more than 4,000 *TA-Q-BIN* offices throughout Japan, receiving points such as collaborating convenience stores have become a significant strength in the receiving process, and efforts are being made to utilize and expand parcel lockers even further. In May 2016, the France-based Neopost Group and the Yamato Group established the joint venture Packcity Japan and commenced the operation of open-type parcel lockers that can be used jointly by numerous operators. In addition to reducing the number of re-deliveries, which is a social issue, it is anticipated that this venture will contribute to a trend in responding to the needs of customers for not only Yamato Transport but also the entire industry.

The services that are evolving in response to changes in people's lifestyles are not confined to receiving services alone. In recent years, opportunities for the exchange of small packages among both professionals in the mail-order industry and individuals are increasing with the expansion of the mail-order market, as well as flea market and auction markets. Not only is the Company responding to the needs of customers to send small packages at more reasonable prices with *TA-Q-BIN Compact* and *Nekopos*, it is also further evolving its services in such ways as commencing an anonymous delivery service in collaboration with certain flea market sites, which allows sellers and successful bidders to complete exchanges of goods without exchanging personal information.

Positioning *TA-Q-BIN*'s 40th anniversary as a new departure point, amid the changes that are rapidly occurring around the world, we will continue to listen to customer requests and further evolve our *TA-Q-BIN* services.



International Cool TA-Q-BIN

 Please see also p.43 about the recent initiatives of *TA-Q-BIN*.



Open-type express delivery parcel lockers

Nationwide Network Completion: Struggles with Regulations

In 1980, four years after the launch of *TA-Q-BIN*, the service was growing to the stage where it was being used by a large number of people.

However, Yamato received feedback from customers such as "since you only operate in areas with a high population density, we cannot send packages to rural locations. As a parcel delivery product, *TA-Q-BIN* is incomplete." From that time on, the Company began to regard the establishment of a nationwide network as a significant issue.

However, the problem of route licenses stood in the way of establishing such a network. Even though Yamato Transport submitted license applications to the former Ministry of Transport, due to the negative reactions of local transport companies, a delay in the

ministry's review of the applications, and a hesitancy by the ministry to issue licenses, the Company struggled to receive these licenses.

Then President Ogura continued to make appeals for the services, stating: "*TA-Q-BIN* will benefit consumers. It is not a product that will take work away from local transport companies."

After creating a door-to-door delivery service from the ground up with a focus on being constantly aware of customer requests and, at times, struggling with regulations, the *TA-Q-BIN* nationwide network gradually expanded and was completed in November 1997 with the commencement of *TA-Q-BIN* in the Ogasawara Islands.