

Commercial Development of Suburban Railway Stations

Tokyo Akabane Station

TU VIENNA

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1. Akabane station

Akabane station is a major train station in Kita district, Tokyo. It incorporates shopping areas and acts as a meeting point for tourists and local residents. Specifically, railway lines Keihin-Tōhoku, Utsunomiya, Takasaki, Saikyō and Shōnan-Shinjuku have a stop at this station. A Shinkansen line passes through without a stop. Additionally, the station serves as a bus terminal.



Illustration 1: Akabane station

The area around the station accommodates 480,000 residents, which generates 180,000 boarding passengers per day. The number of exchanging passengers using the station amounts to 400,000 daily. Such a station user turnover provides for a commercial potential that is being utilized by 2 shopping areas incorporated within the

station. Local residents have access to the shopping centre „Beans“ that is located outside the ticket gates, whereas „Ecute“ is aimed at exchanging passengers who stay inside the gated area. Both are owned by JR East. All the shareholders are private companies. The average rent price is 10,000 JPY/m² monthly, which is a heavy burden for a number of shops. Consumer goods are delivered to the shops in the morning by lorries. Besides shopping areas, an underground office complex is, too, integrated in the facility. A recent goal for shopping areas set by the Japanese government is to reduce electricity consumption by 7%. One measure that is expected to help in achieving that is disabling air conditioning outside shops.



Illustration 2: A lorry in the logistics department of the station



Illustration 3: A car park for customers of the shopping centres

„Beans“ opened in 1990. After the renovation in 2015 it hosts 37 shops, employs 1200 workers and generates 1,5 billion JPY turnover per year. A car park with 140 parking spaces (disabled spaces included) is provided, albeit most customers come on foot. The most profitable business is the supermarket „FUJI GARDEN“: the daily turnover amounts to 12,000,000 JPY, whereas its fish department (most profitable) makes up for one third of the turnover (4,000,000 JPY). A delivery service by electric vehicles launched in 2016 targets elderly customers of the supermarket.



Illustration 4: Entrance to the "FUJI GARDEN" supermarket

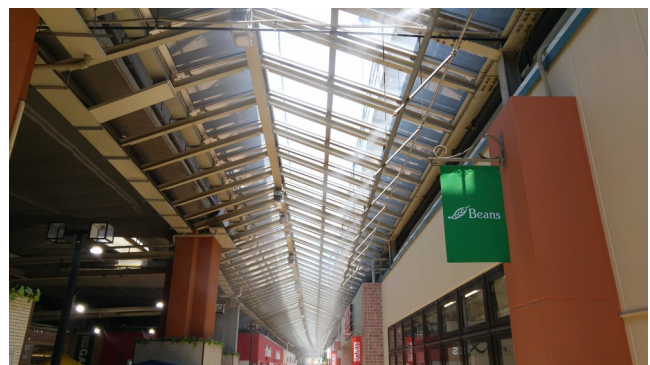


Illustration 5: An automate moisture system inside the shopping centre "Beans"

„Ecute“ opened in September 2011, a few month after the planned opening date in March. The delay is connected to an earthquake and a subsequent blackout. It currently hosts 47 shops and employs 850 workers. The turnover is 5,5 billion JPY a year. Parts of the shopping centre are located beneath railways, which means that the operation of the trains above will have to be halted in case of fire inside the shops. Therefore fire protection plays a crucial role in the development of the station.



Illustration 6: A restaurant inside the shopping centre "Ecute"



Illustration 7: Products sold at the sweets department of the "Ecute"