

Yakult appoints Shinji Yamaguchi as Managing Director of Yakult UK and Ireland

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Yakult UK & Ireland has appointed Shinji Yamaguchi as Managing Director (MD), replacing Hiroaki Yoshimura, who moves to the company's European headquarters in the Netherlands, as Managing Director of Yakult Europe.

Having worked in the UK for eleven years, with eight of those as MD, Yoshimura leaves a strong legacy in the UK and Ireland through an expanded product range, pan-European campaigns such as "My Yakult", and increased consumer awareness of gut health. Yamaguchi's appointment builds on this momentum while bringing a fresh perspective and direction for the UK & Ireland business.

Shinji Yamaguchi brings over three decades of experience within Yakult to his new role. Having begun his career in home deliveries, the bedrock of Yakult's direct-to-consumer model, he has since held positions across markets and functions. This includes the United States, where he helped build the initial Yakult business across sales, logistics, and operations. Most recently, he worked within Yakult's International Business Division in Japan, leading market development plans and contributing to strengthening capabilities across the business globally.

This breadth of experience across start-up environments, cross-functional teams, and international markets gives Yamaguchi the rare combination of frontline understanding and strategic perspective required to help maintain a leading edge in this highly competitive market.

On his appointment, Yamaguchi says: "Having worked in several international markets, I'm excited to now lead the continued growth of Yakult across the UK and Ireland. These are mature markets with strong foundations where Yakult has earned a position of trust through its unmatched expertise in the field of probiotics.

My focus is to build on that by making clear, informed decisions that strengthen trust with consumers, customers and the wider category. It's particularly encouraging to see the strong awareness of gut health here, not only among consumers but also within the scientific and medical communities who already work closely with our European Research Centre for

Microbiology and science team based in the UK.â•