

Special
Feature

AEON MALL Co-Creation Program

Transforming the Community, Building the Future

AEON MALL, in collaboration with a diverse range of companies, has implemented the AEON MALL Co-Creation Program with the aim of creating innovative businesses and services. Representatives from two of the three companies selected to participate in the program, Mr. Satoshi Sakai, Representative Director of NEWROPE Co., Ltd. and Mr. Kunehito Nakahara, Representative Director of souco Inc., spoke to us about their enthusiasm for future co-creation with our company.



Further Added Value Through AI
Analysis of Information Gathered from
Physical Stores

Satoshi Sakai
NEWROPE Co. Ltd.
Representative Director

Can you give us an overview of NEWROPE Co., Ltd., as well as some of its defining characteristics?

Since its founding in 2014, NEWROPE has been developing its business in the fields of fashion and technology. I started the company with an eye towards creating a business that fused IT and design, both of which I had been interested in since my student days. We are currently striving to provide a recommendation service that uses fashion-focused AI to analyze trends, and improve the EC user experience.

Please tell us about your vision for the future.

In the future, I believe that by gaining an understanding of not only fashion, but also consumer hobbies, interests, and lifestyles, we will be able to expand our coverage to interior design, cosmetics, and dining & entertainment.

I also believe that we can reduce the burden on the environment as we solve issues in the fashion industry and revitalize it by delivering the right product to the right customer, optimizing inventory, and reducing the amount of unsold merchandise.

Our goal is to foster a thriving fashion industry that leads to forward-thinking investment in our next creation and creates a virtuous cycle with consumers.

Please tell us about what you hope to accomplish by being selected for the Co-Creation Program.

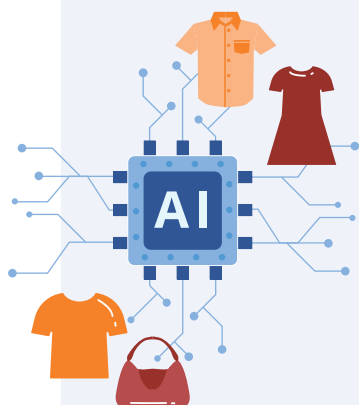
Up until now, we have accumulated a huge amount of data from things like SNS and EC, but going forward, we'll be able to add real customer information that AEON MALL collects from actual retail sites all over Japan.

We hope to be able to build a highly original and more nuanced trend database by supplementing information regarding diverse trends in each region across a wider range of age groups. It would be difficult for us to obtain that kind of information on our own.

We hope that AEON MALL tenants will utilize this database and that this will lead to better product lineups and more enjoyable shopping experiences.

How do you plan to use your company's strengths in the Co-Creation Program?

Our strengths are not limited to simple image recognition—we can verbalize that information through more precise analytical accuracy. By carefully analyzing real information that apparel manufacturers did not have access to in the past, we can respond to the diversification of rapidly changing trends, predict what customers across a wide range of age groups in Japan “want,” and create connections between products and customers.



The AEON MALL Co-Creation Program

AEON MALL's philosophy is to design the future of community living that goes beyond shopping by stepping outside the commercial facility framework and implementing initiatives that focus on individual customers as they experience different stages of their lives. Taking into account issues in local communities and major changes in the consumer landscape, and based on the themes of (1) solutions for social and regional issues that leverage AEON MALL resources, (2) creation of next-generation shopping malls, and (3) creation of new business domains, the program recruited start-up companies with whom we could create new businesses. The results went far beyond our expectations, with applications received from 123 companies.

We are now preparing to conduct trials with the three selected companies, and build new businesses while verifying the effectiveness of the program.

Changing the Nature of Logistics with a Local Production-Local Consumption Platform



souco



Can you give us an overview of souco Inc., as well as some of its defining characteristics?

We are a start-up company that has developed a share-type logistics platform on which information about companies with vacant space in logistics facilities and warehouses and shipping companies that need space is aggregated, and transportation can be arranged.

The service was launched in June 2019, consisting of more than 1,500 registered warehouses across Japan (as of June 2022). By utilizing our database of registered warehouses, we offer short-term, small-scale, and convenient services to a degree never seen before.

Please tell us about your vision for the future.

It is commonly thought that there is a shortage of trucks in Japan, but the loading efficiency is actually only 40%. People think that there is a shortage of warehouses, but the reality is that 20% of warehouses are empty. This contradiction is largely due to the centralized structure of logistics in Japan, where so-called logistic hubs are established.

In order to eliminate this unreasonableness, wastefulness, and inconsistency, we need to achieve local production-local consumption logistics, and to create a decentralized logistics network, we believe that systems and platforms need to be standardized, and concepts, such as

optimizing shipping bases according to shipping destinations and types of goods to be shipped, need to be embraced.

Please tell us about what you hope to accomplish by being selected for the Co-Creation Program.

We have built a platform using our database of logistics resources nationwide and have every expectation that by teaming up with AEON MALL, which operates malls nationwide, we hope to be able to transform services that were being provided on an individual basis into services that make use of our network.

How do you plan to use your company's strengths in the Co-Creation Program?

Through the combination of AEON MALL, which operates a retail platform, and souco, which operates a logistics platform, we hope to create a new reality in logistics. In the logistics industry, problems such as soaring costs and labor shortages are becoming apparent, and delivering products on time and at the lowest possible price is a societal issue. The mall business is inextricably connected to logistics and through co-creation with AEON MALL, which has a nationwide network and whose corporate philosophy is "creating a future where we live together with local communities", we expect that we will be able to realize our goal of local production-local consumption logistics.



Kunehito Nakahara
souco Inc.
Representative Director

