

For Immediate Release

May 9, 2019

Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd.
MARUI GROUP Co., Ltd.

Sumitomo Forestry Enters Business Alliance with Marui Group
**Sumitomo Forestry invests in subsidiary of Marui Group, and enters partnerships in areas
such as creating spaces**

Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd. (President and Representative Director: Akira Ichikawa; Headquarters: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; hereinafter Sumitomo Forestry) announced that an agreement has been reached with MARUI GROUP Co., Ltd. (President and Representative Director: Hiroshi Aoi; Head Office: Nakano-ku, Tokyo; hereinafter Marui Group) to acquire 40% of the shares of AIM CREATE Co., Ltd. (President and Representative Director: Hajime Sasaki; Head Office: Nakano-ku, Tokyo; hereinafter Aim Create), a wholly owned subsidiary of Marui Group. At the same time, Sumitomo Forestry and Marui Group have signed a business alliance toward partnerships in their groups' respective businesses. Going forward, both companies will use their strengths to jointly work on areas such as the business of creating spaces.

■ **Specific partnership initiatives**

(1) Strengthening the area of creating spaces utilizing the strengths of both companies

The business of creating spaces is the business of comprehensively creating spaces—such as commercial facilities—according to local characteristics and concepts to give birth to facilities with even more added value. Through the two companies' partnership, the Sumitomo Forestry Group's strengths in expertise for design and construction of buildings as well as material procurement capability will be combined with Aim Create's expertise in areas such as planning, interior design, and construction of commercial facilities. This will enable the integrated construction of facilities. Sumitomo Forestry seeks to strengthen its non-residential construction field—such as commercial facilities, childcare facilities, and elderly care facilities—by utilizing Aim Create's expertise, while Aim Create aims to expand its performance through interior furnishing orders and other opportunities present in facilities being constructed by Sumitomo Forestry.

(2) Partnership in service fields

In addition to extending the rent guarantee service offered by Epos Card Co., Ltd.—a subsidiary of Marui Group—to rental properties being managed by the Sumitomo Forestry Group, initiatives to bring convenience to customers and those contributing to marketing, including the issuance of collaboration cards, will also be considered.

(3) Partnership in the field of renewable energy

The Sumitomo Forestry Group undertakes wood biomass power generation business at four locations in Japan, while Marui Group has become a member of RE100, an initiative comprising a collective of companies committed toward procuring 100% of the electricity used in their business activities from renewable energy sources. Both companies adopt the stance of focusing on the field of renewable energy from the perspective of contributing to the global environment. Going forward, the two companies will explore partnership in the field of renewable energy from multiple angles.



In addition to the above, fields where synergy by both companies can be expected—such as Marui Group’s FinTech business, and the Sumitomo Forestry Group’s businesses in housing and construction, timber and building materials, and environment and resources—will also be considered.

■ **Background and purpose of business alliance**

Beginning with its forestry business, Sumitomo Forestry has expanded into a wide range of businesses related to timber—such as the distribution and manufacturing of timber and building materials, and custom-built wooden houses—ever since it was founded in 1691. In recent years, in addition to working with local partners to focus on the housing and real estate business centered on the United States and Australia, Sumitomo Forestry has been further expanding its business areas to include its MOCCA business promoting increased use of wooden architecture in non-residential construction, wood biomass power generation business leveraging unused timber from forests, and other areas.

Marui Group was founded in 1931, and since then, it has evolved its unique business model integrating retail with finance in step with the changing times and customer needs. Together with operating the large commercial facilities Marui and Modi through its retailing business, it also offers services as platforms, such as store interior furnishing, logistics, and building management. In its FinTech business, a variety of financial services—such as rent guarantee, asset accumulation, and insurance—centered on EPOS Card, which has approximately 6.8 million cardholders.

Aim Create, which Sumitomo Forestry is investing in this time, offers various solutions, from planning and leasing to interior design, construction, advertising and promotion, and operation of commercial facilities.

The agreement this time was reached because Sumitomo Forestry and Marui Group assessed it will contribute toward improving their corporate values by mutually leveraging each other’s customer base and expertise. Going forward, the two companies will actively promote partnership initiatives and work on further improving their corporate values.



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■ Marui Group

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Website: <http://www.0101maruigroup.co.jp/en/>

President: Hiroshi Aoi

Main affiliates: MARUI Co., Ltd., Epos Card Co., Ltd., AIM CREATE Co., Ltd., and others

■ Aim Create

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