

NEWS RELEASE



August 19, 2020
avatarin Inc.
Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.

avatarin Inc. and Mitsui Fudosan to Begin Pilot Testing avatar MICE to Run Event Using Avatar Robots

~A New Event Experience in Nihonbashi that Connects Participants Worldwide Using Avatars~



ANA Group company avatarin Inc. (headquartered in Chuo-ku, Tokyo; President and Chief Executive Officer: Akira Fukabori) and Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd., a leading global real estate company headquartered in Tokyo, announced today that they will begin a pilot test of avatar MICE with the goal of running groundbreaking events that allow participation from around the world using avatars. avatar MICE is a new form of MICE* that combines an existing conference facility with avatar robots. By using avatars to convey the serendipity of chance encounters in real life, communication with a truly human quality, and physical space itself, it aims to create a totally new way of holding events that would be difficult to achieve with current online meeting tools.

The first stage of the pilot test will take place as part of BG2C FIN/SUM BB organized by the Financial Services Agency and NIKKEI Inc. At some sessions scheduled for August 24 and 25 at Muromachi Mitsui Hall & Conference in Nihonbashi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, the popular communication avatar newme, an original model developed by avatarin Inc., will be installed for use by some participants, including session speakers and ticket holders. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has made it challenging for participants to meet in person, they will be offered opportunities to take part in remote sessions and networking opportunities, while media partners can attend remote, informal group interviews.

For the pilot test, avatarin Inc. will plan and design the service and provide the avatarin avatar platform (including newme), while Mitsui Fudosan will provide the venue (Muromachi Mitsui Hall & Conference) to facilitate networking between speakers and participants.

Virtual academic meetings and conferences are on the rise amid the spread of COVID-19, creating challenges such as sharply reduced communication between participants compared with live events.

Japan is actively seeking to host MICE, which are events that attract many people and a mass of information. Hosting these events could generate a sizeable economic effect and spur innovation. avatarin Inc. and Mitsui Fudosan will help to grow the MICE business by providing the experience of remote communication using avatars.

The two companies plan to deploy avatar MICE at conference venues in the Nihonbashi area other than Muromachi Mitsui Hall & Conference, such as Nihonbashi Mitsui Hall and aerospace business center X-NIHONBASHI, setting them up as conference facilities with avatar-enabled infrastructure. They will showcase avatar MICE as a new form of communication that blends the physical and digital worlds throughout the Nihonbashi district, which aspires to create new industries in the aerospace sector.

* MICE is an acronym for Meetings (company meetings, etc.), Incentive Travel (training tours, etc.), Conventions (meetings of international organizations, academic societies, etc.), and Exhibitions/Events (trade fairs, etc.). It is an umbrella term for business events.

Source: Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) <https://mice.jnto.go.jp/about-mice/whats-mice.html>

◆ Outline of BG2C FIN/SUM BB

Title: Blockchain Global Governance Conference -BG2C-
FIN/SUM Blockchain & Business -FIN/SUM BB-

Organizers: Financial Services Agency, NIKKEI Inc.

Participants: Japanese and foreign government and public organizations, blockchain startups, research organizations, researchers, university personnel, financial institutions, IT companies, media, and students

Dates: Monday, August 24, 2020 and Tuesday, August 25

Venue: Muromachi Mitsui Hall & Conference

Special sponsorship: Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.

◆ About avatarin Inc.

avatarin Inc. launched on April 1, 2020 as ANA Holdings' first startup with a mission to expand humanity's potential by offering new abilities through avatars.

avatarin is focused on developing a next-generation mobility service platform that will enable anyone to connect, communicate, and collaborate with others from a distance by connecting to a remote robotic avatar. The deployment of robotic avatars around the world will help to overcome the issue of physical distance to help solve many of the world's global challenges. To help accelerate the development of advanced robotic avatar systems, the founders of avatarin proposed and launched the ANA AVATAR XPRIZE in 2018. avatarin is currently helping with the management of the global competition.

<https://www.anahd.co.jp/group/en/pr/202004/20200401.html>

◆ What is an avatar

A robotic avatar is a system that can be remotely operated to transport the senses, consciousness, and skills of anyone by combining advanced technologies such as robotics, AI, VR, and telecommunications. Operators of these robotic avatars will be able to communicate, explore, and share their skills over great distances without physically needing to travel to those locations.

◆ What is avatarin?

"avatarin" (URL: <https://avatarin.com/company/en/>) is the world's first avatar service platform that anyone can use freely to access avatars installed in various locations around the world. avatarin will enable users to reserve time on robotic avatar systems and connect with them remotely.

◆ What is newme

"newme" (URL: <https://avatarin.com/avatar/newme/>) is a communication avatar robot developed by avatarin. It was developed and designed based on the feedback received from numerous market field tests. This avatar can be accessed by anyone via the avatarin service platform.

newme video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cf0fcDp4qo>

◆**About the Nihonbashi Revitalization Plan**

The Nihonbashi Revitalization Plan is a joint public-private-community neighborhood creation initiative led by Mitsui Fudosan. As part of the third stage of the plan unveiled in 2019 with a focus on creating aerospace industries, Mitsui Fudosan launched a co-creation project with avatarin Inc. that aspires to implement on Earth the latest technologies for exploring space. As part of this project, the two companies plan to introduce avatars in diverse settings in the Nihonbashi area (including conference facilities) to present a new form of urban communication.

Third Stage of the Nihonbashi Revitalization Plan: : https://www.mitsuifudosan.co.jp/corporate/news/2019/0829_02/

◆**The Mitsui Fudosan Group’s contribution to SDGs** https://www.mitsuifudosan.co.jp/corporate/esg_csr/

The Mitsui Fudosan Group aims for a society that enriches both people and the planet under the principles of coexist in harmony with society, link diverse values and achieve a sustainable society, and advances business with an awareness of the environment (E), society (S) and governance (G), thus promoting ESG management. By further accelerating its ESG management, the Group will realize Society 5.0, which the Japanese government has been advocating, and contribute significantly to achieving the SDGs.

* The initiatives covered in this press release are contributing to two of the UN's SDGs:

Goal 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
--

