

March 21, 2024

Sojitz Corporation
SAKURA internet Inc.

Sojitz and SAKURA internet Conclude Business Alliance for Expanding the
Cloud Service Business
– Collaborating on Sojitz Group’s Digital and AI Fields and GPU Cloud Services –

Sojitz Corporation (Head Office: Chiyoda-ku Tokyo; Representative Director: Masayoshi Fujimoto; “Sojitz”) and SAKURA internet Inc. (Head Office: Osaka-shi, Osaka; Founder & CEO, President: Kunihiro Tanaka; “SAKURA internet”), a cloud computing service provider, have concluded a business alliance on March 21, 2024. Under this business alliance, Sojitz and SAKURA internet will partner together to offer GPU cloud services as well as collaborate together to advance Sojitz Group’s businesses in the digital and AI fields.



[Sojitz President Masayoshi Fujimoto (right) and
SAKURA internet Founder & CEO, President Kunihiro Tanaka]

While overseas markets are leading the way with generative AI development and utilization, Japan must confirm the safety of the foundational technologies and expand computational resources from an economic security standpoint. Specifically, development of a Japanese large language model (LLM) is an urgent issue to be addressed. In January 2024, SAKURA internet began providing a cloud service equipped with high performance GPU (graphic processing units) for generative AI use at Ishikari Data Center. SAKURA internet is one of the first Japanese domestic providers to have received government certification (contingent on technical requirements) in November 2023.

Sojitz and SAKURA internet have continued to collaborate together following the conclusion of a capital and business tie-up in 2008. Through this alliance, the companies aim to further strengthen their partnership by expanding SAKURA internet's services that utilize foundational high performance GPUs with Sojitz's market-building capabilities in order to provide services to a broader range of customers. The companies will collaborate by leveraging Sojitz's expansive networks with customers across multiple business fields to co-create new business models and conduct joint development of use cases and sales of SAKURA internet's computational resources. Additionally, Sojitz and SAKURA internet will partner to promote cloud service businesses, including government cloud services, as well as consider joint investment to expand functions in related businesses.

SAKURA internet and Sojitz will pursue business synergy to raise mutual corporate value while contributing to the development of Japan's digital society.

[Content of Business Alliance]

1. Collaboration on cloud service businesses
 - Joint partnership to create a new business model for SAKURA internet's GPU cloud services and develop use cases
 - Mutual cooperation on creating systems to promote cloud services (including government cloud services) and new customer acquisition
2. Support, joint project advancement, and joint investment for new projects that align with SAKURA internet's growth strategy
3. Collaboration for the provision of computational resources for Sojitz Group's AI-related businesses

Comment from Sojitz President Masayoshi Fujimoto

We strive to pursue value creation through the power of digital technologies, which is one of pillars of Sojitz's growth strategy* under our next medium-term management plan. Through this business alliance, Sojitz will utilize computational resources to promote digital transformation within existing businesses and to realize new business while accelerating SAKURA internet's growth. By extension, Sojitz Group aims to contribute to Japan's digital society.

Comment from SAKURA internet Founder & CEO, President Kunihiro Tanaka

Since SAKURA internet's founding and the dawn of the internet era, we have focused our attention on cloud services. Looking ahead, I believe cloud services will become more and more indispensable to social infrastructure. SAKURA internet strives to be a digital infrastructure company that supports social infrastructure, and we will continue to collaborate together with Sojitz Group and other companies in the field.

* Under Medium-term Management Plan 2023, Sojitz announced its commitment to utilize digital technologies to transform business models, human resource development, and business processes in order to create corporate value. Medium-term Management Plan 2026 will start from this new fiscal year, and Sojitz will continue to pursue digital transformation with a "Digital in All" approach as part of the next Plan's basic outline for "Creating the Sojitz Growth Story."

[For questions, contact:]

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