

Canon Marketing Japan Inc. Invests in Aeronext, a Company Operating SkyHub[®], a New Smart Logistics Infrastructure System Combining Drones and Land Transportation

Canon Marketing Japan Inc. (President & Representative Director: Masachika Adachi, hereafter “Canon MJ”) announces that it has invested in Aeronext Inc. (Headquarters: Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, Japan; CEO: Keisuke Toji; hereafter "Aeronext"), which operates SkyHub[®], a new smart logistics infrastructure system combining drones and land transportation, through Canon Marketing Japan MIRAI Fund, a corporate venture capital fund ("CVC fund") jointly operated with Global Brain Corporation (President: Yasuhiko Yurimoto).



Aeronext is a startup aiming to solve logistics issues in sparsely populated areas in an era when the population is decreasing using its SkyHub[®], a new smart logistics infrastructure system.

SkyHub[®] is a cooperative delivery method that combines drone transportation and land transportation. Packages from different logistics companies are collected temporarily at a Drone Depots[®] and the most efficient delivery method is calculated and selected using SkyHub[®] TMS, a next-generation delivery control system. Based on the calculation, packages are delivered to consumers' homes via a drone or land transportation.

As the age of workers in the logistics industry is advancing, Japan is restricting working hours, something known as the “2024 issue.”* The shortage of transportation workers is a pressing issue. Many logistics companies are small or medium-sized companies that are part of multiple layers of subcontracting. This poses hurdles in streamlining the logistics work. Sparsely populated areas are the first to feel the impact of the decrease in transportation capacity. By means of (1) to (3) below, Aeronext is working to solve challenges relating to last-mile logistics in local communities, including sparsely populated areas.

- (1) Possess the patent for 4D GRAVITY[®], a proprietary logistics drone technology, and licenses it to drone manufacturers.
- (2) NEXT DELIVERY, a 100% subsidiary of Aeronext, operates SkyHub[®] in local municipalities.
- (3) The expertise, tools and operations accumulated by SkyHub[®] are partly provided to shipping companies via SkyHub[®] Provider Licenses to contribute to streamlining last-mile logistics.

Canon MJ joined this investment because it was impressed by Aeronext’s valuable logistics drone patent, its track record of introducing the novel concept of drone-based logistics in many different places in Japan and its ability to implement policy proposals which lead to regulatory reforms. Through this investment, we aim to create new businesses themed on the realization of logistics infrastructure that supports a resilient society.

*The “2024 issue” refers to problems including the labor shortage in the logistics industry which are a result of work style reform-related laws coming into force in April 2024 that limit truck drivers’ overtime to 960 hours per year in Japan.

■ Overview of Aeronext

Company name	Aeronext Inc.
Established	April 11, 2017
Location	Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Representative	Keisuke Toji
Description of business	Licensing of industrial drone-related technologies Joint development of industrial drones
URL	https://aeronext.com/