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Isuzu makes a comeback

Back to the quintessence of a manufacturer

Isuzu, Our Commitments and Activities -Aiming at the World Leading Company

Isuzu is aiming to become the world leading company of trucks and diesel engines, where we have our core strengths. As I speak today, Isuzu holds the No. 1 market position in 23 countries with our commercial trucks. Last year, we once again became the world No.1 medium- and heavy-duty truck producer(*1), for the first time in six years, based on a single country production volume. On the diesel engine front, Isuzu is the only one company in the world developing diesels that meet different varieties of world regulations. As we pursue to be the world's best, we are now committed to strengthen our globalization drive, especially in Asia. Among all the Asian countries, Thailand is the hottest market of all. And, it is the market where Isuzu maintained the No.1 position for the commercial vehicles in the past 21 years in a row. Our market share of pickup trucks in Thailand has been at the No.1 position for the past 8 years in a row (*2). To strengthen our businesses further in Thailand, we have been promoting to consolidate five key affiliates in Thailand. And, I am happy to report that, as of this autumn, all the consolidation initiatives have been completed.

Going forward, Isuzu will take aggressive approach in the region by taking the majority control of our operations in Asia, while embracing associated business risks, investing and re-investing in the region for even greater rewards.

China is also an indispensable market for Isuzu's future growth. In fact, Isuzu spearheaded all other truck manufacturers in 1985 to establish a manufacturing joint venture. After making an early head start, we have steadily been building light-and medium-duty trucks, with the total cumulative number exceeding 450,000 units to date. In deed, Isuzu has been leading the light- and medium-duty truck market in China. Isuzu will strengthen our position, expanding our China operation by enlarging the scope to include heavy-duty truck production.

At this Motor Show, you will see the new, full-model changed D-MAX, which made the first world debut in Thailand, and the new diesel engine designed for pickup truck application. We hope you will get a hands-on feel of Isuzu's dynamism from the new D-MAX, our strategic model for the global market.

For Isuzu Motors, we have one more important driving force for future growth -- our partnership relation with General Motors, the world largest automotive company. GM is a shareholder of Isuzu's, and at the same time, the largest customer, whose businesses account for about 20% of Isuzu revenue. Isuzu, as a key player of GM Group, takes on the diesel engineering responsibilities, and we have joint engine manufacturing companies that have so far built more than 1.5 million engines. Our partnership in North America is also becoming ever more important.

Going forward, we will deepen our collaborative relations with GM on the engineering front. I would like to talk in more details on this topic when we release the Mid-term Business Plan. With all these initiatives and reinforced focus, Isuzu intends to make a significant leap forward and capture the No. 1 position as a manufacturer devoting to diesel engines and trucks.

When I think about the commercial vehicle industry now and in the future, I think that the era of just building hardware and selling it is already over. In order to respond to the greatest extent possible to customers who are operating 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, it is important not only to provide the best vehicles possible, but also to provide support afterwards. To ensure safety, and keep distribution flowing - I believe this is Isuzu's mission as a commercial vehicle manufacturer.

On that score, I would like to introduce you to our three representative examples of how Isuzu engages in the so-called "software" side of businesses, providing services and support to our customers as a "Professional Partner".

The first is the safety driving, economical driving seminars we have been holding for the past 9 years since 1995. These seminars are targeted at managers responsible for truck fleet operation for transportation companies, and teach driving methods that are both safe and fuel-efficient. This kind of activity may not be glamorous, but it is a fundamental part of being a "Professional Partner". So far, we received participants from over 4,500 companies in Japan, attending this program. At Isuzu, as a commercial vehicle manufacturer, we believe this is our responsibility and we have already started implementing these seminars overseas as well, hoping that our activities will expand around the world in the future.

The second example is the "Mimamori-kun Online Service" commercial vehicle telematics system. The system has a great potential for a wide-spread use in the future. We began introducing the system in February this year for the heavy-duty trucks first. Now, more than 350 units of Isuzu trucks are equipped with the system, and we are going to expand the system application to light- and medium-duty trucks.

The third example is the "Ohayaku - Quick Oustomer Response Service". Nation-wide, we have a network of 250 dealer outlets an