



Discussion

One Sumibe
Activities Promotion
Leader



General Manager of
Global Marketing
Division

DIALOGUE

Building strong internal and external co-creation partnerships to create new value

Managing Executive Officer Atsushi Tanaka and General Manager Toyoaki Kishi of the Global Marketing Division have been promoting co-creation with customers from both a practical and strategic point of view, through One Sumibe Activities.

In this conversation, the two discuss their perspectives on co-creation, aiming to achieve “customer delight”: where we are now, and what lies ahead.



Atsushi Tanaka

Managing Executive Officer
One Sumibe Activities Promotion Leader



Toyoaki Kishi

General Manager of
Global Marketing Division



Creating new value through co-creation with customers

Tanaka:

Tanaka: The idea of Customer Satisfaction (CS) has always been very important to our Group, but since FY2024 we have taken it a step further, aiming to go beyond customer satisfaction and achieve “customer delight.” This means working with customers to uncover latent needs that they are not even aware of themselves, and leveraging our Group’s technical capabilities to provide solutions that surprise and delight them beyond their expectations. Based on this spirit of customer satisfaction, we started our One Sumibe Activities in 2017 to encourage horizontal collaboration between multiple divisions to respond to customers. Mr. Kishi, we regularly discuss the direction of future co-creation projects at bi-monthly meetings of the One Sumibe Promotion Committee. How do you feel about this initiative?

Kishi:

In these rapidly changing times, it is difficult for us to create new value on our own, so it is becoming more important than ever to work on co-creation: combining our Group’s expertise with that of customers to create new value together. As part of this, our One Sumibe Activities have been very well received by customers. We have built a smooth internal collaboration system thanks to the One Sumibe Promotion Committee, where the general managers of each department meet and can freely exchange opinions. The system means decisions made by the Committee can be communicated to the people concerned and implemented right away. I think this is key to creating products with new value.

Setting KPIs to make co-creation results visible

Kishi:

It is essential for co-creation with customers to produce output in the form of new projects. That’s why we have set KPIs to quantitatively evaluate our actions. Two key indicators are the number of co-creation projects with customers, and the number of cross-department based in-house exhibitions held per year. The first of these KPIs indicates the results of co-creation. The second is seen as an important activity to support this process.

We hold in-house exhibitions at customer facilities to showcase our Group’s technologies and products, providing a valuable opportunity for engineers from both sides to meet and exchange opinions directly. By showcasing appropriate products and technologies after investigating and understanding the customer’s business and challenges in advance, this allows us to build deeper relationships of trust. These exhibitions have sometimes contributed to customers’ development and to the creation of their business roadmaps.

Tanaka:

In-house exhibitions are one part of our One Sumibe Activities, where the entire Company works together to tackle customers' challenges. We have always given presentations to customers, but setting in-house exhibitions as a clear KPI has raised awareness within the Company and enabled everyone to see specific actions toward our targets, which I believe is a major step forward. What targets have you set at the Global Marketing Division?

Kishi:

Our targets for FY2024 were to conduct 10 co-creation projects and hold eight exhibitions. We achieved both of these targets. In the mobility field, one of our Group's strategic areas, we have started working with customers on projects including development of an axial gap motor to help make motors smaller. We have also seen results in other areas, such as ICT and sensing in healthcare. A secondary benefit of these exhibitions is that our developers can talk directly with customers, which speeds up research and development and broadens the horizons of developers. This makes it very meaningful from the perspective of cultivating our human resources, too.

Market development using open laboratories

Kishi:

The Global Marketing Division is made up of members with in-depth understanding of our Group's technical expertise and business domains. We are responsible for opening up and developing markets with a global perspective. Our activities focus on "new": creating new markets and entering new domains. Open laboratories play an important role in this. These facilities provide customers with an opportunity to prototype and test products, which enables customers without development facilities of their own to proceed with joint development, checking the evaluation results of prototypes at our Group's facilities. As well as Japan, we have laboratories in the United States, Belgium, Singapore, Taiwan, China, and now India (from spring 2025). In the US, we are currently exploring joint testing and mass production of next-generation motors with a major OEM. At the Global Marketing Division, we want to continue strategically strengthening partnerships with customers, centered around our open laboratories.



Promoting and establishing One Sumibe Activities within the Company

Tanaka:

In FY2025, we will continue with our One Sumibe Activities to propose solutions to customer issues through cross-organizational initiatives. The Priority Customer Practical Team, which aims to strengthen relationships with key customers, has formed teams targeting specific companies and deepened collaboration. These activities have strengthened networks within our Company. Increasingly, members are making use of cross-departmental connections in their subsequent work. In FY2024, the Power Module Working Group met with customers around the world to identify their technical challenges. The members from each business division then investigated solutions by combining their technologies, with the Power Electronics Solution Development Department officially being made part of the organization in April 2025. We have also formed an Influencer Team within the Company to take our One Sumibe Activities to the next level. Made up of core members from each business division and corporate department, they use in-house information-sharing platforms and the intranet to showcase creative ideas and case studies, helping us to promote One Sumibe Activities. Going forward, we will continue to strengthen connections within the Group by planning and implementing initiatives that encourage autonomy of each employee.

Accelerating co-creation relationships and raising our ability to create value

Kishi:

The Global Marketing Division plays a unique role within the Group in terms of opening up new markets with a view to the future. To create new business domains, it is important to launch co-creation themes with many customers. That's why we are strengthening our efforts in the global market, not just in the Japanese market. From 2025 onwards, focusing on the Indian market in particular as the new key region following on from China, we plan to take our co-creation activities to full scale.

Tanaka:

One Sumibe Activities have spread to many departments and employees over the past year or two. A wave of change is coming. Going forward, I will continue to cooperate with Mr. Kishi to further accelerate this trend and work to ensure our activities take root in Japan and abroad, across departments, and locations. Ultimately, I want to create a system in which internal collaboration naturally leads to co-creation with customers, raising the level of the entire Company's ability to create value.

● [Customer Satisfaction \(CS\) Enhancement](#)