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# Outlook

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Smartwill



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*The annual listing of 10 companies that are at the forefront of providing Big Data consulting/services and impacting the APAC industry*

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## Designing Relationship between Companies and Customers

**M**any organizations still rely on their past experience to develop measures for customers. On the other hand, with the diversification of sales channels, customer data has become more complicated, and customers who should be valued have not been correctly identified. So there are many cases where even huge investments are not effective. Witnessing these challenges in the retail industry, Masashi Sakamoto, a highly experienced individual in CRM, marketing, and business development, founded Smartwill Inc., a leading big data analytics company. Smartwill takes advantage of big data to better understand customers and creates a customized mechanism for them to innovate their business structure and enhance customer satisfaction and corporate profits.



Masashi Sakamoto,  
 President & CEO

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Sakamoto remarks, “Over ten years, we have contributed to sales improvement of many organizations by analyzing big data and deriving results.” Smartwill moves into the clients’ business by analyzing their big data and identifying the true loyal customers that resonate with each organization’s strategy. The company then supports its clients in building better relationships with their customers by planning measures that will utilize the latest technology and constructing operational systems once the measures are implemented.

Sakamoto considers the differentiating factor of Smartwill to be the unsurpassed knowledge about CRM that cannot be ignored while considering big data. Sakamoto’s expertise in this area can be understood with the book he published,

“The Basics of Customer Relationship Management.” He has also been engaged in CRM promotion activities, such as teaching CRM strategy at a business school with the longest history in Japan. Regarding the application of this expertise in Smartwill, Sakamoto notes, “We promote digital transformation, mainly for real stores by applying the know-how gained in CRM, and provide digital solutions based on AI technology.” Smartwill develops an original method of ‘RFM plus  $\alpha$  model’ to analyze big data and find true loyal customers for client organizations. For example, the company performs a thorough 3C (company, customer, and competitor) analysis in qualitative and quantitative measures, fine-tunes customer definition with a conventional RFM axis, and finally derives a new customer definition based on the viewpoint of ‘+ $\alpha$ .’ And Sakamoto remarks, “Each Smartwill client company, has its own ‘new customer definition’, and further customer retention is being pursued.”

As to reinstate the applicability of these services, Sakamoto narrates a success story of Smartwill with a client in the US fast fashion. As Smartwill collaborated with this client, they had membership programs that had low repurchase rates and were not functioning for retention due to a lack of notable brand characteristics. Smartwill, with the aim to derive the true loyal customers, provide visualization as a dashboard, and design a membership program that helps improve retention, succeeded in raising the rate of excellent customers up to 40 percent and contributed significantly to sales.

Smartwill, considering the pandemic situation, has recently developed an online communication tool for customers in the after-corona era, AICO, which will soon be multilingual. It embodies online face-to-face customer service and creates a virtual shopping experience. As it also embodies credit card payments, Sakamoto finds the key point of AICO to be the payment method incorporated in the system. He says, “We are planning and considering the ‘AICO Payment’ service as an initiative to improve on current payment systems.” Smartwill plans on global expansion and likes to develop and provide digital solutions that will enhance the customer experience value. **AICO**