



Potential of MARUI GROUP's Business from the Perspective of Inclusion

As a provider of fulfilling lifestyles, MARUI GROUP strives to include all customers, regardless of their age, gender, or physical characteristics. We are thus committed to developing products, services, and stores that can bring joy to a wide range of customers.

On the following pages, we will recount a discussion held between the leaders of MARUI GROUP's Retailing and FinTech businesses, in which they discussed the inclusion initiatives being implemented in their businesses, the issues faced in this regard, and the potential for integrated Group businesses.

Yoshinori Saito

Senior Executive Officer (left)
President and Representative Director, Epos Card Co., Ltd.

Hajime Sasaki

Senior Executive Officer (right)
President and Representative Director, MARUI CO., LTD.

- Mar. 1986 Joined the Company
- Jul. 2008 Executive Officer
General Manager, Financial Department
- Apr. 2011 Director and General Manager,
Direct Marketing Department, MARUI CO., LTD.
- Apr. 2013 Director and General Manager,
Collaboration Card Business Department,
Epos Card Co., Ltd.
- Oct. 2013 Director and General Manager,
Sales Promotion Department, Epos Card Co., Ltd.
- Apr. 2015 Managing Director, Epos Card Co., Ltd.
Director, M & C SYSTEMS CO., LTD. (Incumbent)
- Apr. 2016 Senior Executive Officer (Incumbent)
President and Representative Director,
Epos Card Co., Ltd. (Incumbent)
Director, MRI Co., Ltd. (Incumbent)

- Mar. 1986 Joined the Company
- Oct. 2007 Director and General Manager,
Card Planning Division, Epos Card Co., Ltd.
- Apr. 2012 Director and General Manager,
Private Brand Department,
MARUI CO., LTD.
- Apr. 2013 Executive Officer
- Apr. 2014 Managing Director and General Manager,
Specialty Store Department, MARUI CO., LTD.
- Jun. 2014 Director
- Apr. 2015 Director and Senior Executive Officer
Responsible for Retailing and Store Operation Business
Senior Managing Director, MARUI CO., LTD.
Director, Epos Card Co., Ltd.
- Apr. 2016 Senior Executive Officer (Incumbent)
President and Representative Director,
MARUI CO., LTD. (Incumbent)



Broadening of Focus to “Inclusion” After Entrenching “For All Customers”

Sasaki: I think it was around 2007 when President Aoi began using the phrase “for all customers.” At the time, we were limiting our scope of target customers by focusing primarily on providing fashion to youths. Later, we had customers participate in the development process for the Rakuchin Kirei series, which hit store shelves in 2010. I believe this experience is what broadened our focus, drawing it to the idea of “inclusion.”

Saito: The idea of “for all customers” was a drastic departure from standard marketing conventions, which call for clear targets.

Sasaki: This idea was difficult to warm up to at first. I was eventually able to get used to it by considering the needs of people with “non-standard” body sizes, senior citizens, people with disabilities, members of the LGBT community, and others, and thinking about how I could address these needs. In the process of creating successes and hearing the words of satisfied customers, I began to reexamine what our true mission was. It was at this point that “for all customers” went beyond a mere slogan to become a concept entrenched in our business.

Saito: Now, the idea of “for all customers” is just a normal part of conversation.

Sasaki: The results of this change can be seen in the Rakuchin Kirei series of private brand shoes and in the store development approach taken at Hakata Marui. Through these undertakings, we came to realize the fact that this demand had always been present in society; we had just failed to address it. The next step in addressing this demand is the try-on store initiative we are testing with shoes. I now recognize that there are several unresolved issues faced by society and communities.

Shift from Company Perspective to Customer Perspective

Sasaki: Customers do not get joy from buying products; they get joy *through* the products as well as *through* the experiences they have. This realization enabled us to give form to a store development concept that puts the spotlight on the joy customers seek through products, which was a major shift in perspective.

Saito: To put it differently, we shifted from the

perspective of a company that emphasizes efficiency to the perspective of the customers that visit our stores. Similarly, we placed card application centers, which were previously located on the top floors of buildings, in areas that were more convenient for customers.

Sasaki: In the still unfinished process of developing Hakata Marui, we enlisted the aid of Kyushu University, Lifestyle Design Lab, and Mirairo to help us craft the store’s facilities. These universal design specialists put forth many ideas we would not have come up with on our own, such as signs displaying the distance to restrooms and areas for charging electric wheelchairs, which were actually implemented in the store.

Saito: I think some of the issues fixed had been pointed out previously but had gone unresolved. We were able to address these issues as we gained encouragement through ongoing co-creation activities based on the customer’s perspective.

Familiarity with Finance, Growing Potential of FinTech

Saito: The areas targeted by FinTech are, in fact, areas in which MARUI GROUP has always operated. In regard to credit cards, the higher the income—and subsequently credit limit—one has, the more likely they are to have a bank-issued card. MARUI GROUP, meanwhile, has

supplied installment payment services and credit cards to youths and low-income individuals since its founding to encourage them to buy its products, and we created completely unique credit evaluation standards through this process.

Sasaki: Our proprietary system in which customers are provided a credit limit that increases based on their purchase and repayment history is inspired by the founder’s basic belief that creditability should be built together with customers.

Saito: The services currently provided in MARUI GROUP’s FinTech business remain based on this belief and are centered around payment services using credit cards. However, interest in asset management is high among individuals of all ages and genders, and finance needs are diversifying. The most significant change brought about by the advent of FinTech is that consumers who rarely went to banks or securities companies are now becoming familiar with financial services through the Internet. Considering the idea of inclusion, I think that FinTech has real potential to develop into new businesses.

Fulfilling Lifestyles Provided through Union of Retail and FinTech

Sasaki: Looking at our try-on stores for shoes, the size of

shoes is an important factor for grabbing customers. After that, we can encourage them to apply for an EPOS card when they order their products through the Internet. Once customers become used to this method of purchasing, we will be able to encourage more customers to buy our products as they will no longer be restricted to in-store purchases. The stores that serve as a space for experiencing our products as well as our e-commerce and credit card operations are all supported by our in-house IT and logistics operations. If we strategically integrate the Group’s various businesses, we should be able to forge new strengths.

Saito: I believe a major strength of MARUI GROUP is that it handles all functions in-house, allowing us to operate our business in an integrated manner. EPOS Card could not exist without both the Retailing business and our system development company. Perhaps our greatest strength is that employees versed in both retailing and finance are able to accumulate know-how by being transferred between Group companies.

Sasaki: By integrating stores, the Internet, and credit cards to develop a business model that fully leverages the strengths of physical stores, we will be able to include an even more diverse range of customers.

Saito: Pursuing new ways of inclusion through the integration of the Retailing and FinTech businesses is also an undertaking very characteristic of MARUI GROUP. Our strength is, after all, born out of this union of our two major businesses.

Sasaki: When attempting to tackle a new challenge, it can be easy to become preoccupied by pressing short-term issues and lose sight of the uncertain future. However, we cannot create fulfilling lifestyles 10 or 20 years down the line with this shortsightedness. I believe it is important for everyone to envision such lifestyles and actively work toward making them a reality. This endeavor will require all employees to have the courage to change.

Saito: We strive to bring our customers joy through EPOS cards and to give them a chance to pursue various dreams. Our credit cards are not just cards; they give customers access to services at a wide range of locations and act as a reliable ally to help them out in times of need. Our mission is to develop our business based on the customer’s perspective. I hope to create a corporate culture in which MARUI GROUP’s businesses are united in accomplishing this mission.