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‘Our vision
is to solve
inequalities
and disparities
throughout
the world’:
Toda Yoshiki,
Founder
and CEO of
TRADFIT

Toda Yoshiki, Founder & CEO

'Our vision is to solve inequalities and disparities throughout the world': Toda Yoshiki, Founder and CEO of TRADFIT

In Japan, the working population has been shrinking due to today's declining birthrate and aging population. But TRADFIT's service is working on solving these problems that society has been facing, such as the widespread shortage of labor, by improving the efficiency of operations by multiplying the intuitive interface of "voice" with technologies such as cloud AI, biometric authentication, and IoT.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many industries, including the travel industry, are experiencing financial difficulties. While exploring and researching to find out which industries and sectors have major challenges and pains, TRADFIT hypothesized that the service industry has the major social challenges and pains that voice services could solve. *"We have conducted the verification by interviews and prototypes. We discovered that the accommodation and restaurant industries have a widespread labor shortage and high mobility of human resources due to the industry structure where the employment rate and turnover rate are almost equal,"* said Toda Yoshiki, Founder and CEO of TRADFIT. While testing the above hypothesis, the company determined that the tourism and accommodation industries had the highest affinity. In addition to multilingual support, labor shortages, and a high turnover rate, issues such as difficulty in maintaining a work-life balance and many other painful issues were clarified through discussion with people in the field and guests. *"By observing the real voices of those in the field, we were convinced that these were major social issues that needed to be resolved today."*

TRADFIT's service is non-contact as it is operated by voice, and it can be operated and managed remotely from browsers with only a few people. Its service provides safety and security to guests and staff and offers a service that can reduce costs and increase revenues while protecting employment. The company is developing services using voice, AI, biometrics, and IoT technologies for the travel, tourism, and accommodation industries and the real estate industry that have suffered from the COVID-19.

Before COVID-19, many of the lodging facilities had a large number of overseas tourists, but the shortage of

"Rather than chasing short-term disadvantages, we will work with our partners to solve social issues from a medium to long-term perspective, while creating employment and contributing to and giving back to society and the national interest." – Toda Yoshiki, Founder and CEO of TRADFIT

About the Founder

Toda Yoshiki graduated from Waseda University, Faculty of Political Science and Economics. Prior to founding the company, he worked at Nomura Securities Co. After working in asset consulting services for individuals and corporate high-net-worth individuals at the head office in Osaka, and in the investment banking division in Osaka, including domestic and overseas M&A for listed companies, associate work in finance and branch planning, he was transferred to the Group Public Relations Department of Nomura Holdings, Inc. After working on public relations for the entire Nomura Group for both domestic and international media, he was assigned to the Investment Banking Division of Nomura Securities Co., Ltd. for the Vice President position as IPO RM banker mainly in the TMT (Telecom, Media, Technology), Industrials, Material, and Renewable energy sector. He was also working under the same department as global investment banking strategic planning. He has a wide range of experience from programming for front-end and server-side, DB, API, cyber security, etc. He is well versed in both development and business domains, including PaaS and SaaS such as AWS and GCP. He is also familiar with the essence of successes and failures of a wide range of domestic and international technologies and startups from his previous work experience.

Toda Yoshiki
Founder & CEO

staff and a high turnover rate and issues such as multilingual support and improving profitability were still big problems. The pandemic is now attracting "attention-as-a-service" that can significantly reduce costs and increase revenues while protecting employment. TRADFIT provides concierge applications that can be used with multilingual AI speakers with images and hybrid multilingual chatbots that combine AI and manned services to solve the above issues. Since the service can be operated by voice, it can be used to prevent the spreading of viruses through a non-contact, hands-free, and remote service that can be used by guests, employees of accommodation facilities, cleaning companies, and others without touching various devices.

By introducing these services, TRADFIT is helping lodging facilities reduce costs and increase revenues significantly while protecting their employment. The company utilizes data obtained from the system that does not specify personal information, ensure improvement in operational efficiency, services, and marketing.

Helping the Tourism Industry

The tourism and accommodation industry is an extremely hard one that operates 365 days a year. Among services industries, its job separation rate is on the same level as the restaurant industry. There are chronic personnel shortages and aspects of coping with languages, high personnel costs, and issues with operational efficiency. According to the data from Japan's Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare on the job separation rate, the hiring rate is almost equal to the turnover rate, which is the same as for bars and restaurants.

Regarding languages, the accommodation facilities are unable

to cope with multiple languages, leading to lost opportunities. It is also costly to allocate staffs who can serve foreign customers. Moreover, in terms of travelers, they feel language and communication and many other difficulties during and after the trip.

TRADFIT provides the solution that allows facilities to function as hubs and further extend to regional revitalization and smart cities. *"We use AI speakers with graphics supporting multiple languages, and multilingual chat functions, to improve profitability for accommodation facilities. It can also enhance their services still further, be useful for marketing, and give a better work-life balance for employees,"* explained Toda Yoshiki.

By attending to various types of orders and FAQs from accommodation guests and providing recommendations inside and outside the accommodation facilities, TRADFIT can raise the unit price of the accommodation facilities and improve the experiences of guests, allowing the facilities to function as a hub of local activity.

Furthermore, the accumulated acquired data can be held and analyzed in a secure manner where individuals cannot be identified and can be used for further business, service, and marketing improvements. TRADFIT believes it is important to share data without monopolizing it and to create a platform that anyone can use. They are promoting collaboration with each prefecture in order to lead to a recycling-oriented society and regional revitalization that matches the characteristics of each region.

As a response to the recent COVID-19 pandemic, TRADFIT's system is now contactless and uses browser management, allowing remote and small group

operation, which reduces costs while protecting employment. In addition, home appliances can be operated by voice, contactless operation without touching various devices. Because various staff and cleaning companies can also handle hands-free and remote support, it is possible to implement countermeasures to COVID-19 in the service. This service will lead to the provision of safety and security for accommodations, guests, and staff.

Solving Major Social Issues through Collaborations

There is definitely a limit to what a single operating company can do when it comes to truly solving the world's problems, creating jobs, contributing to the interests of prefectures, governments, local governments, and the nation, and promoting international cooperation with other countries. And TRADFIT knows this. As a business entity, the company values "people, relationships, and luck" and is working with partner companies in Japan and abroad in the form of open innovation to solve the social issues that were exposed at COVID-19.

TRADFIT's policy is to collaborate with business companies, local governments, and educational institutions on an open platform in areas where they can demonstrate their strengths and characteristics. *"We are currently working with the Sony Group, JTB, NTT Docomo, and others to solve social issues in the world,"* mentioned Toda Yoshiki, Founder of TRADFIT.

"We believe 'three goods' principle (good for the seller, good for the buyer, and good for society), plus 'four goods' principle which includes 'good for partners.' Rather than chasing short-term disadvantages, we will work with our partners to solve social issues from a medium

to long-term perspective while creating employment and contributing to and giving back to society and the national interest."

As for TRADFIT's work culture, it has a multicultural, flat international team. It has team members from diverse backgrounds, which prevents the company from having a one-sided view. TRADFIT has a diverse culture and works with industry experts formerly from Google and Apple who have expertise in speech recognition and natural language processing and machine learning to strengthen its products.

Under TRADFIT's inspiring and creative company culture, engineers are encouraged to handle cutting-edge technologies such as voice interfaces, natural language understanding solutions, human-computer interaction technologies, and more to make SaaS products of excellence. In addition, TRADFIT has continuously rolled out better services and business insights by analyzing various big data using machine learning and artificial intelligence.

"Our vision is to 'solve inequalities and disparities throughout the world.' There are always issues to be tackled at any age, but we hope to contribute in our way with our partners to solve the problems that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed. As for our future prospects, we plan to contribute not only to the tourism and accommodation industry, but also to the aviation, restaurant, retail, and healthcare industries," said Toda Yoshiki, Founder and CEO of TRADFIT.

TRADFIT already has a large track record of implementation of its services, and with inbound tourism expected to return to Japan in the near future, the company is receiving more inquiries from business operators in each of the prefectures of Japan and even from other countries. But TRADFIT is not just focused on growth. *"Overly focusing on growth alone would trap us in seeing nothing but sales and causing us to deviate from the 'three goods' principle (good for the seller, good for the buyer, and good for society) that we value."*

TRADFIT is steadily working on its business together with various partner companies and the policies of the prefectural governments, focusing on solutions to social issues in Japan. With domestic and overseas collaborative partners, TRADFIT aims to bring its word-first and industry-first business to other countries and aims for an IPO soon. *"But an IPO is only one path to growth and not a goal in itself. We are building our business realistically without pursuing easy money. We wish to collaborate openly with our partners to solve problems in the world based on the 'three goods' principle and the concepts of the SDGs and ESG,"* concluded Mr. Toda Yoshiki.

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