

MPower Partners announces its investment in Mantra



June 26th, 2024; Tokyo, Japan: MPower Partners Fund, Japan's first ESG-focused global venture capital fund, has invested in Mantra Inc. (Tokyo, Japan), a Manga-focused machine translation technology company.

Manga has been a much sought-after content worldwide. Currently, the Japanese domestic comics market is estimated to be approximately 700BN JPY, with consistent sales growth in historical years observed despite the general downtrend we see in publishing. However, less than 10% of Japanese manga content is translated into foreign languages real time, leaving many international readers without authentic access to the latest content. Traditional manga translation processes require significant manpower and are extremely time-consuming. Accurately translating manga's unique expressions and cultural nuances is particularly challenging, creating huge lead times until translation rollout. Consequently, many works remain untranslated, leading non-Japanese readers to seek pirated versions. It is estimated that manga piracy sites in North America and Asia receive 1 billion cumulative visits in a given month, more than the total global access to TikTok.

Mantra offers an AI-powered cloud translation tool "Mantra Engine", which includes proprietary image processing technology tailored for manga formats and high-precision translation using the latest LLM (Large Language Model). Mantra Engine, which can understand context throughout the pages and appropriately translate unique Japanese expressions and cultural nuances, has been adopted by domestic and international publishers, translation companies, and distribution businesses. To date, the tool has streamlined the translation workflow of approximately 100,000 pages (500 volumes) of manga per month.

For their innovative Engine, Mantra has successfully partnered with major Japanese publishers, who hold the intellectual property rights to blockbuster titles. This early market trust serves as a powerful foundation for Mantra Engine's further technological growth, as access to a wide content catalog will allow for exponential translation accuracy improvement.

MPower led this equity fundraising round, believing in Mantra's mission of "delivering manga across language barriers." Mantra's technology is sure to bring significant growth in the overseas manga market and contribute to a fair compensation mechanism to content holders and creators, not to mention unprecedented speed of access to readers worldwide. MPower is excited to support Mantra's growth, through business strategy development and instilling of long-term corporate values and sustainable growth through ESG implementation.

Comments from Shonosuke Ishiwatari, Mantra CEO

We will be focusing on expanding global business in the near future, in this context, we feel very encouraged to have received support from MPower Partners, who's an investor with strengths in global connection and ESG integration. Even before the investment, we received a lot of constructive advice about our business from the MPower team, particularly from Seki Miwa and Ye Xia, and each discussion was very exciting. With this funding, we aim to further deepen our collaboration with our investors and accelerate the R&D as well as business promotion of entertainment AI translation.

Mantra's Press Release regarding this round (Japanese)

<https://prtimes.jp/main/html/rd/p/000000032.000059295.html>

About Mantra

Location: Hyogo, Kobe, Chuo Ward, Minatojima Minamimachi, 2 Chome-1-11 3F

Japan, Tokyo, Bunkyo City

CEO: Ichiwatari Shonosuke, Ph.D.

Business: Research and development of machine translation technology for manga

Corporate URL: https://mantra.co.jp/index_en.html

About MPower Partners

MPower Partners Fund is Japan's first ESG-integrated global venture capital fund that aims to support entrepreneurs providing solutions to societal challenges through the power of technology, and to promote sustainable growth by incorporating ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) into their core business strategies.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.mpower-partners.com>

For inquiries, please contact: info@mpower-partners.com

This press release has been prepared for the purpose of providing information to qualified institutional investors and potential portfolio companies of the Fund, and is not a disclosure document pursuant to the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act, and does not constitute a solicitation or recommendation to purchase the Fund.