

Investing in and Entering Business Collaboration with AVITA, Aiming for the Implementation of Avatars in Society

September 7, 2021
Osaka Gas Co., Ltd.
AVITA, Inc.

Osaka Gas Co., Ltd. (President: Masataka Fujiwara; hereinafter referred to as “Osaka Gas”) and AVITA, Inc. (CEO: Hiroshi Ishiguro; hereinafter referred to as “AVITA”), founded to conduct avatar businesses, concluded a capital alliance agreement in August 2021.

The two companies aim to implement avatars in society through business collaboration.

AVITA was founded by Professor Hiroshi Ishiguro of the Graduate School of Engineering Science, Osaka University, and aims to expand the possibilities of people with avatar technology under the vision of "Virtualize the Real World." In order to realize this vision, AVITA will collaborate with CyberAgent, Inc., Shionogi & Co., Ltd., Toppan Inc., and Fujikin Inc., which are also investors in the company, as well as with Osaka Gas.

An avatar is a character that can be controlled in the real world or in a virtual space on a computer network as a representation of the user. In the virtual space, it is expected to be usable as a tool that enables smooth communication, just like in the real world. It is envisioned that, using the avatar technology, next-generation communication will be increasingly implemented in society in the future.

Osaka Gas has been providing various services centered around its energy business and undertaken leading-edge projects for more than 100 years since its founding in 1905. In recent years, it has taken on digital technologies, such as IoT-based gas appliances,^{*1} to offer a wide range of services that please its customers. Going forward, Osaka Gas in cooperation with AVITA will develop and provide innovative services that utilize the avatar technology in order to enhance, among others, communication with various customers.

The two companies will collaborate in avatar-service-related business that will be useful for people's lives and businesses.

*1: Since April 2016, Osaka Gas has sold and enhanced network-capable residential gas equipment (fuel cell Ene-Farm, water heater, kitchen stove, and alarm). Connected to the Osaka Gas platform, these appliances can be remote-controlled by a purpose-built smartphone app. Moreover, users can benefit from remote equipment monitoring and other IoT-based services.

1. Company Profile

Osaka Gas

Established	April 1897
Representative	Masataka Fujiwara, President and Representative Director
Location	4-1-2 Hirano-machi, Chuo-ku, Osaka, Japan
Main business	Production, supply and sale of gas; generation, supply and sale of electricity, etc.

AVITA

Established	June 2021
Representative	Hiroshi Ishiguro, CEO
Location	1-12-2 Shibuya, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Main business	Avatar service business and avatar production business