

Alibaba is to land at Japan, as planned

Tokyo, Japan, October 17, 2002 - Alibaba.com - Jack Ma, CEO of Alibaba, announced in Tokyo, Japan today that Alibaba Japan Website was to be formally launched on Oct. 18. This is an important measure of Alibaba to structure its worldwide online trading market. Established in 1999, Alibaba has become the world's largest e-marketplace for global trade, with over 1,500,000 registered members from more than 200 countries.

Why put out Alibaba Japan Website today? Jack Ma analyzes that as to China and Japan enterprises, there exists an enormous disparity between their online and offline business. He refers to statistics from Ministry for Foreign Economic Relation and Trade of China, that Japan has become the biggest trading partner of China for 9 years in succession; Sino-Japanese total import and export volume is 87,700 million dollars last year, accounting for 17% of China's total import and export volume the year. It is hopeful to top 100 billion dollars this year. However, the Japanese enterprises carrying on online business at Alibaba website are much less than the enterprises from Europe, India, South Korea, and U.S.A. Jack Ma points out that language has become a main obstacle. In addition, an investigation on Chinese Alibaba members shows that 84% of them plan to expand the volume of trade with Japan over the next year.

"Chinese and Japanese entrepreneurs have a digital ditch on the Internet." says Jack Ma, "we want to help them stride this ditch with Alibaba Japan Website."

In view of the strong demand for economic cooperation between both sides, Jack Ma visited Japan for times since 2000 to make the market survey and sets up extensive China and Japan online trade channel connection for putting out Alibaba Japanese Website. He frequently keeps in touch with the officials from Japan Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO); meets with well-known figures of Japanese financial circle, business circle and press; participates in the forums and seminars on Sino-Japanese trade and e-commerce.

Japan also demonstrates strong enthusiasm to Alibaba Japan Website. Famous Japanese papers and magazines such as Asahi Shimbun, Nikkei Business Daily, make reports by a wide margin to Alibaba Japan Website. Asahi Shimbun reports that "Chinese SMEs marching into international market through Alibaba.com - with more than 1 million members, Alibaba has been their effective intermediary already"; Nikkei Business Daily makes the front cover report entitled "Know yourself and your enemy, you can fight a hundred battles without a defeat",

telling the story of Alibaba. Trade agencies of Japan are planning to recommend Alibaba to Japan enterprises, "to try the new swift way of trading with low cost and high reward."

Alibaba marching into the Japanese market causes the extensive domestic concern too. A few days ago, Jack Ma was invited to participate in an important activity of 30th anniversary of the normalization of relationship between China and Japan - the Sino-Japanese economic forum held by both sides together. This forum has been broadcasted already in "Dialogue", a famous program in CCTV. In the forum Jack Ma discussed with Sony president Nobuyuki Idei and other entrepreneurs on the topics of China and Japan enterprises development and bilateral cooperation in the future, etc.

Except putting out Alibaba Japanese station on the net, Alibaba is expanding cooperation with government departments and organizations related to the Sino-Japanese trade to better the cooperation of the China and Japan markets through both online and offline channels.

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