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## INTRODUCTION OF VIBRAIMAGE TECHNOLOGY IN JAPANESE MARKET

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**Abstract:** *The article covers ELSYS JAPAN's distribution activities to introduce vibraimage technology into the Japanese market. The marketing strategies, including brand positioning and media appearance, challenges, application cases, and overseas expansion are discussed. The massive expansion of vibraimage products in Japan is expected to be achieved in near future.*

**Keywords:** *Vibraimage, DEFENDER-X, Mental-Checker, marketing strategies.*

It was the chance yet fateful encounter. Our chairman Yamauchi happened to meet the vibraimage technology [1] and intuitively felt that this technology would become needed and the standard of security measures or even other fields. Then our company ELSYS JAPAN was established as the exclusive distributor of vibraimage systems in the Japanese market. Although it has been only about three years since then, vibraimage has started to be recognized as the unique, effective technology among Japanese society, and our distribution activities have expanded into other countries. Today, using this opportunity, I'd like to share our experiences of distribution, including the marketing strategies, like brand positioning and media appearance, challenges, application cases, and expansion into other countries. Now let's get started with the strategies in our sales activities.

The first marketing strategy used is brand positioning. To introduce vibraimage systems into the Japanese market, the function of suspicious individuals detection was named "DEFENDER-X", and that of mental states measurements was named "Mental-Checker". By naming them catchy and straightforward for Japanese sense, it became easier to establish brand images efficiently and position each vibraimage system in the right target. Then they were introduced in one of the most common security exhibitions in Japan. In the past few years, facial recognition technology has been the trend of security measures, and the exhibition was full of similar products recognizing subjects' faces from the preinstalled facial image data [2]. In such a situation, there was no need to seek ways to differentiate DEFENDER-X since its feature was so unique. In fact, many major Japanese electronic manufactures including NEC, Fujitsu, and Toshiba, who could be our potential competitors, were impressed with the vibraimage technology and became our distributors. They have also considered to incorporate its feature into their own recognition technologies to differentiate their original products. The situation is the same with Mental-Checker. Although workers' mental illness is one of the most serious social issues in Japan [3], there was no way to measure human mental states but questionnaires which could be controlled by the subjects' wills. Mental-Checker covers the needs of companies who are willing to observe their employees' states objectively to provide necessary, efficient mental healthcare systems.

Media appearance is the second marketing strategy we have taken. The vibraimage systems have gained media attention because of their uniqueness, and major Japanese TV channels including NHK [4], Japan's only public broadcaster, and newspapers like Nikkei [5], known as the must-read paper for Japanese professionals, have covered the technology. We have actually received media coverage about 40 times in two and half years; it is remarkable that various media cover the same products over and over. As a result of the media appearance, the demand of DEFENDER-X and Mental-Checker has been rising from the end-user side. Whereas our business is growing steadily because of such marketing strategies, we have faced some challenges as well.

The first challenge is the tendency of Japanese society that hedging risks is more important than taking risks. Since many Japanese companies, especially major ones, apply the demerit point system to evaluate their employees, they tend to show cautious attitude to carry new, unknown technology; they take a prudent approach with a long term of the verification phase. Thus, it would take a little more time to achieve the massive expansion of vibraimage products in the Japanese market.

The second challenge we have faced is Japanese safe environment as shown by the most recent Global Peace Index that Japan was ranked as one of the most peaceful countries in the world [6]. Despite the fact that developed countries suffered the highest number of death from terrorism in 2017 since 2001 [7], Japanese people tend to be lack of a sense of danger against terrorism or even other serious crimes like murders. Therefore, we focus more on preventing lighter crimes such as shoplifters to address their current needs. The situation is expected to change as the 2020 Tokyo Olympics approaches.

Despite such challenges, DEFENDER-X and Mental-Checker have been introduced into various areas from retail stores to important facilities. Also, DEFENDER-X has been used as a part of security system at some international conventions and sporting events; PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics is one example. Since we had only several months to give a presentation of the system and prepare for the installation, the introduced area was limited to the VIP sections. Still, key figures of politics and Olympic committees recognized DEFENDER-X because of that, so this achievement is expected to lead to its introductions to the future events including the Tokyo Olympics.

Now our distribution activities have expanded into overseas like the Philippines, Thailand, India, the United States, U.A.E., and so on. Although we need some adjustment for our strategies since each country has its own business style and nationality, we believe that our overseas business would become successful by combining the superior competitiveness of vibraimage products and our sales capabilities.

In conclusion, after establishing ELSYS JAPAN as a solo distributor of vibraimage products in Japan, we have applied marketing positioning and media appearance as marketing strategies to introduce them. While we have faced challenges coming from Japanese nationality during our distribution activities, our business is growing steadily and expanding to other countries as well, so the massive expansion of the products is expected to be achieved in near future. At last, on behalf of ELSYS JAPAN, I'd like

to express deep gratitude to Dr. Viktor Minkin and ELSYS team for your continuous support and patience. We look forward to a continuance of our good relationship and the popularization of vibraimage technology for a peaceful, better world.

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