



For immediate release



January 15, 2019

Sony Network Communications Inc.

Vector, Inc.

## **Sony Network Communications Inc. and Vector, Inc., Conclude a Joint-Venture Agreement to Establish an AI-Driven Marketing Company**

Sony Network Communications Inc. (Headquarters: Shinagawa Ward, Tokyo; president & representative director: Hirokazu Takagaki) and Vector, Inc. (Head Office: Minato Ward, Tokyo; president & CEO: Keiji Nishie) have agreed to jointly invest in the establishment of a new marketing services company (hereafter, “the new company”) that will utilize artificial intelligence (AI), and have concluded a joint-venture agreement for this purpose.

With the rapid proliferation of data sources today, major advancements are being made in data-driven marketing that makes use of AI, and the value of this market in Japan is projected to exceed ¥60 billion by 2021 (according to Yano Research Institute Ltd.). The utilization of AI in the marketing industry is a growing trend amid efforts to prepare for the full-fledged integration of AI more broadly, such as the Japanese government’s recent seven-point policy for utilizing AI.

As one of Japan’s largest comprehensive PR companies, Vector offers a wide range of communication services as a one-stop service while pursuing a communications strategy of promoting good things to people everywhere. Vector has been adopting the latest marketing techniques, including online media management and strategic videos utilizing social media tools and advertising technology.

Sony Network Communications is the Sony Group’s internet service provider in Japan, offering services branded as So-net Hikari and the ultra-high-speed NURO Hikari internet service. Driven by a mission of “Connecting to a brighter future,” Sony Network Communications is currently stepping up initiatives to launch new ventures as well as Internet of Things (IoT) businesses. In that context, it has been accumulating expertise in providing services that make use of AI, drawing on its track record of incorporating AI-based data analysis tools and developing and maintaining an integrated development environment for deep learning.

The new company will draw from both the expertise of Sony Network Communications' services that utilize AI and the strategic marketing capabilities of the Vector Group, a comprehensive PR enterprise. In doing so, it will aim to optimize corporate marketing campaigns—which are becoming increasingly sophisticated by the day—and maximize their effectiveness. The new company is scheduled to be established in the spring of 2019 and then begin offering new services.

**Overview of Sony Network Communications Inc.**

Address: 4-12-3, Higashi-shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 140-0002, Japan

Established: November 1, 1995

President and Representative Director: Hirokazu Takagaki

Capital: ¥7,969 million (As of August 31, 2018)

Main business: Provision of internet, IoT, and other services

Website: <https://www.sonymetwork.co.jp/corporation/en/>

**Overview of Vector, Inc.**

Address: Akasaka Garden City 18th Floor, 4-15-1 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Established: March 30, 1993

President and CEO: Keiji Nishie

Capital: ¥2,195 million (As of August 31, 2018)

Main business: Strategic PR services in the marketing industry

Website: <http://www.vectorinc.co.jp/en/>

**Enquiries regarding this press release**

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