

Collaborating with ASICS Corporation to Help People with Disabilities Enjoy Sports and the Elderly Increase Their Physical Exercise

Nabtesco Corporation (Head Office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; President and CEO: Katsuhiko Teramoto, hereinafter “Nabtesco”) and ASICS Corporation (Head Office: Kobe City; President and COO: Yasuhito Hirota; hereinafter “ASICS”) have reached an agreement to collaborate with each other in R&D to help people with disabilities enjoy sports and the elderly to engage in more physical exercise. By using ASICS’s long accumulated intellectual technology and Nabtesco’s motion control technology, the two companies aim to create new value in the sport and health promotion field, while examining the possibility of improving the functionality of their respective products.

Under its corporate philosophy, “The Nabtesco Group, with our unique motion control technology, will provide safety, comfort, and a sense of security in daily lives as well as any form of transportation,” Nabtesco will collaborate with ASICS to contribute to the creation of environments in which the elderly and those with disabilities can enjoy sports in safety, comfort, and a sense of security.

Details of the Research Collaboration

- Research collaboration to develop sports shoes for artificial leg users

Nabtesco developed and released the world’s first electronically controlled intelligent prosthetic knee joint in 1993. The knee joint is electronically controlled and bends semi-autonomously. ASICS will conduct research to develop sports shoes suitable for users of this knee joint.

In this collaboration, ASICS will focus on examining the suitability of Nabtesco’s leading-edge, electronically controlled prosthetic knee joint, ALLUX, for sports activities, and work to develop sports shoes in consideration of the characteristics of artificial legs, with an eye toward helping users of the prosthetic enjoy table tennis, badminton and other sports with safety.

Generally, the percentage of people who participate in sports tends to be lower among people with disabilities than the able-bodied. According to the basic sports plan announced by the Japan Sports Agency in March 2017, 19.2% of those with disabilities engage in sports at least once a week, which is lower than with able-bodied adults in general (42.5%) in Japan. The collaborative project is expected to help increase the percentage of the former group to 40% by March 2022, as targeted by the Sports Agency.

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- Examining the possibility of measuring the amount of physical activity conducted by rollator users

Under the project, the possibility of accurately measuring the amount of physical activity conducted by rollator users will be examined by using high-precision satellite positioning technology based on the Quasi-Zenith Satellite System*. Specifically, a positioning function will be added to the CONPAL multifunctional rollator series manufactured and sold by Nabtesco as well as to the electric mobility-assist rollator that is being developed by the company using robot technology. The positioning-related findings accumulated by ASICS through demonstration tests performed in marathon races and by other means will also be utilized for the examination.

One of the factors that hinder the elderly from engaging in physical exercises such as walking is their concerns about safety. Companies in the private sector as well as local municipalities provide the elderly with services to monitor their safety in various ways, but a range of challenges remain to be met, including instability of precision positioning outside of individuals' homes. Also, it is necessary to enable the elderly to quantify the results of their physical exercise as one of the essential elements to help maintain their high motivation.

In the examination process, the Quasi-Zenith Satellite System, which provides higher precision than the ordinary satellite positioning method, will be utilized to obtain more precise positional information about rollator users. The companies will then use such information to provide rollator users with safer environments for physical exercise and to establish a method to measure the amount of their physical activity based on precise traveling distances and time, thereby contributing to the promotion of physical exercise and health among the elderly.

* This Japanese satellite positioning system is composed mainly of quasi-zenith satellites. Using this system in an integrated manner with the ordinary satellite positioning method will improve positioning precision in various regions, including urban centers and semi-mountainous areas where measurement errors tend to occur.

About ASICS Corporation

Since its founding in 1949, the company has been committed to providing goods and services that promote healthy and fulfilling lifestyles throughout the world, under its vision, "Create Quality Lifestyle through Intelligent Sport Technology." In addition to core sports gear, the company also sells products in the lifestyle market under the "Onitsuka Tiger" and "ASICS Tiger" brands, and provides a fitness app. and other services. Presently, the company's sales outside of Japan account for more than 70% of the total.

About Nabtesco Corporation

Nabtesco was launched by the integration of Teijin Seiki Co., Ltd. and NABCO Ltd. in 2003. By conducting business based on its motion control technology developed for "moving it. stopping it.," the company boasts the top market share in a range of fields, including industrial robots, aircraft



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equipment, railroad and other transportation vehicle equipment, and automatic doors for buildings. Since founding the welfare equipment business by releasing the world's first electronically controlled intelligent prosthetic knee joint in 1993, Nabtesco has developed unique multifunctional welfare devices, such as an electric wheelchair named "Assist Wheel," in order to help the elderly and people with disabilities to participate in communities just as they are, thereby contributing to their normalization in society.

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