

NEWS RELEASE

March 5, 2019

### **Announcement Regarding Acquisition of the Material Group**

We are pleased to announce that on February 27, 2019, funds served by Advantage Partners (“AP Funds”) acquired Material Inc. and affiliated companies (“Material Group” or the “Company”), a Tokyo-based public relations agency and staffing agency for marketing professionals.

The Company takes a unique approach in the industry by providing upstream professional services directly to company management to "Maximize clients' earning potential by crafting great relationships between the public and clients' brands." The Company's proposals are routinely selected over its competitors' because of its distinctive method of "storytelling" - proposing a story that affects "emotions" currently driving global economic activity. As a result of its popularity with its clients, the Material Group has successfully maintained rapid growth over the past several years.

Widely recognized as a leader in the industry, the Company has won various advertisement awards from globally recognized originations such as AD FEST, Spikes Asia, the ACC TOKYO CREATIVITY AWARDS, the Japan Marketing Awards, and was recently ranked #18 in the 2018 Cannes Lions Global Creativity Report for best PR agencies in the world. In addition, according to the same report, the Material Group is the only PR company in Asia to achieve a ranking.

AP Funds were attracted to the Material Group because of the excellence of its services and its large, highly satisfied customer base - a result of the quality and dedication of its professional staff. We believe that Advantage Partners is well positioned to accelerate the Company's growth by supporting the Material Group's entrance into adjacent business sectors and the development of new products and services.

AP Funds look forward to working with all stakeholders, including the Company's founder Mr. Yoshikazu Azuma, who will continue to be involved with the company as a shareholder, to further develop the Material Group's overall business platform in preparation for a potential listing on the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

AP Funds have invested in and supported numerous Japan-based high-growth growth businesses in a wide range of fields such as Riraku, Net Protection, and Oishii Promotion. We believe this type of investment contributes to the overall health of the Japanese economy by supporting innovation and by supplying capital to serial entrepreneurs who are eager to start new businesses.

**Details of the Material Group**

Company Name: Material Inc.  
Representative: So Aosaki  
Location: Tokyo, Japan  
Business Description: Professional services focused on public relations and staffing for marketing professionals

**About Advantage Partners**

Advantage Partners is a private alternative investment firm that provides services to private equity and other funds. Since our founding in Japan in 1992, Advantage Partners has built one of the strongest alternative asset platforms in Asia and we remain dedicated to nurturing portfolio companies into firms that remain resolutely competitive even after they have left our funds with our unique consulting-based approach. Advantage Partners maintains offices in Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai.

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