



## Chairman's Column

### ***“Why Has Negative Information on the Internet Decreased!?”***

Last week, I caught the flu for the first time in over a decade. After suffering from a high fever and persistent coughing for the first time in years, I was once again reminded of the importance of managing one’s health. For some reason, I had held an unfounded belief that “I’ll be fine,” but falling ill made me regret not being more diligent about everyday precautions, such as wearing a mask and gargling constantly. I hope you all stay well.

Now then, I have many opportunities to meet a wide range of people through my work. When I meet someone for the first time in a business setting, I always make it a point to review their information in advance so that I can better understand them. These days, it is said that about 90% of companies have some form of online presence—such as a website or social media—so we live in an era where it is quite rare to find no information about someone at all.

However, I have recently noticed that even when I search, I rarely come across negative information, which I found rather curious. My impression is that this has become particularly noticeable since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lately, I finally discovered a reason, and now it makes sense to me.

Behind this trend lies the internationally expanding concept of the “right to be forgotten.” In 2014, the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled that it is not appropriate for past private information to continue appearing prominently in search results, establishing a framework under which search engine operators are required to respond to removal requests. In fact, it is said that Google receives hundreds of thousands of such requests each year. In Japan as well, a 2017 Supreme Court decision set forth criteria under which search results may be removed when, after balancing the protection of privacy against freedom of expression, the “interest in not being publicly disclosed” is deemed to prevail.

As a result, the number of so-called “exposé sites” have significantly declined, and search rankings are now more likely to be dominated by reliable news outlets and official sources. At first glance, this may appear to be a healthy development. However, in a business context, it can also mean that there is less material available to help determine whether one should meet with a particular person.

Because only polished, surface-level information tends to remain, it has now become necessary to conduct a more in-depth verification than before. In addition, with the growing recognition of LGBTQ rights and the spread of DE&I initiatives, the diversity of values and backgrounds has expanded, making the traditional approach of forming a standardized or uniform impression of a person less effective.

We live in an era in which information seems abundant, yet certain aspects are increasingly difficult to see. For that very reason, I feel it is more important than ever not to rely solely on surface-level search results, but to take the extra step to truly understand the person in front of us.

*by Kazuhiro Matsuzawa, Chairman*





## REIT

### J-REIT Trends in January

#### 【Listed REIT Information】

(Covered Period) January 1, 2026 – January 31, 2026

<REITs Announcing Financial Results During the Covered Period>

In January 2026, eight REITs announced their financial results (all for the fiscal period ended November 2025).

#### <Property Transactions During the Covered Period>



| Number of REITs Acquiring Properties    | Total Acquisition Amount | Number of Properties Acquired |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 7 REITs                                 | JPY 72.15 billion        | 12 properties                 |
| Number of REITs Disposing of Properties | Total Disposition Amount | Number of Properties Disposed |
| 2 REITs                                 | JPY 36.26 billion        | 2 properties                  |

#### <Property Transactions by Asset Type>

|              |                      | Office            | Residential       | Retail           | Hotel             | Logistics | Other Real Estate | Equity Interests, etc. | Total             |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Acquisitions | Amount (JPY)         | JPY 49.07 billion | JPY 10.81 billion | JPY 1.50 billion | JPY 6.81 billion  | —         | JPY 3.96 billion  | —                      | JPY 72.15 billion |
|              | Composition (%)      | 68%               | 15%               | 2%               | 9%                | 0%        | 5%                | 0%                     | 100%              |
|              | Number of Properties | 3                 | 4                 | 1                | 2                 | —         | 2                 | —                      | 12                |
|              | Composition (%)      | 25%               | 33%               | 8%               | 17%               | 0%        | 17%               | 0%                     | 100%              |
| Dispositions | Amount (JPY)         | JPY 10.00 billion | —                 | —                | JPY 26.26 billion | —         | —                 | —                      | JPY 36.26 billion |
|              | Composition (%)      | 28%               | 0%                | 0%               | 72%               | 0%        | 0%                | 0%                     | 100%              |
|              | Number of Properties | 1                 | —                 | —                | 1                 | —         | —                 | —                      | 2                 |
|              | Composition (%)      | 50%               | 0%                | 0%               | 50%               | 0%        | 0%                | 0%                     | 100%              |

#### <Financial Results Announcements>

March 16 (Mon)

- 2989 Tokaido REIT Investment Corporation
- 3463 Ichigo Hotel REIT Investment Corporation
- 8957 Tokyu Real Estate Investment Corporation

March 18 (Wed)

- 3468 Star Asia REIT Investment Corporation

March 19 (Thu)

- 401A Kasumigaseki Hotel REIT Investment Corporation

#### <Ex-Rights Date>

March 27 (Fri) – REITs with fiscal year-end in March

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by Nguyen Thi Hong, ASA REIT Partners



## Real Estate

### *Private Credit and Real Estate*

Lately, “private credit” has been gaining prominence in the real estate markets of the United States and Europe. This refers to lending conducted directly by institutional investors—such as funds and insurance companies—rather than by banks. It is often pointed out that, amid rising interest rates and tighter banking regulations, traditional bank lending alone has increasingly struggled to meet overall funding demand.

In the United States in particular, some observe that the market is entering a period in which a significant volume of commercial real estate loans are reaching maturity. As interest rates have risen, refinancing conditions have become more stringent, and in some cases it has become difficult to secure financing at the same loan-to-value (LTV) ratio or interest rate as before. Against this backdrop, private credit is increasingly described as an alternative “receiver” of demand replacing banks.

Three primary reasons are often cited.

First is refinancing capital. When bank lending capacity is insufficient at the time of loan maturity, private lenders are said to step in to provide funding.

Second is bridge financing for acquisitions. There are reports that private credit is being utilized in situations where speed is critical and capital must be deployed in line with transaction timing.

Third is greater flexibility in capital structure. It is said that mezzanine or structured loans are being used to complement senior loans where they fall short, enabling an overall more strategic return profile.

Two commonly cited characteristics of private credit are “flexibility” and “speed of decision-making”. LTV ratio and covenants can often be structured more flexibly on a deal-by-deal basis, and in some cases can be arranged more dynamically than traditional banks. On the other hand, interest rates are typically higher than those of bank loans, and it is frequently noted that greater care is required in underwriting property cash flows and designing exit strategies.

In Europe as well, banks have at times adopted a more cautious lending stance, and analysis suggests that non-bank lenders have expanded to fill this gap. International institutions have also pointed out that, alongside market growth, the importance of disclosure and liquidity management is increasing.

In Japan, real estate finance has long centered on a “bank senior loan plus fund equity” structure. However, in light of developments overseas, some suggest that greater attention may be paid to capital that fills the gap within the capital stack. If so, competitive advantage for funds may increasingly depend not only on asset selection, but also on the ability to structure and combine senior debt, mezzanine financing, and equity effectively.

While this is merely an introduction to trends discussed overseas, it will be worth to pay attention whether and how these developments may extend to the Japanese market.

*by Shigeru Hirai, Quality Control Office*





## Monthly Topic

### ASA Group Representative Aguni on a “Connected” Approach to Social Contribution

Under its sustainability policy, ASA Group supports HandsOn Tokyo, a certified nonprofit organization, and works toward achieving the SDGs through ongoing social contribution activities. In this issue, the newsletter team interviewed our group Director Aguni, who serves as an auditor of HandsOn Tokyo, about the organization’s activities, insights gained through volunteer work, and his visions for the future.

#### – The Beginning of His Involvement and His Journey as a Leader

“My appointment as an auditor of HandsOn Tokyo began with an invitation from a lawyer who was serving as auditor at the time. We had known each other previously, and it started with an unexpected phone call asking if I would be interested in hearing more. I have served as auditor since 2017 and am now the longest-serving member of the organization.”

#### – Activities and Distinctive Features of the Organization

“HandsOn Tokyo conducts volunteer activities in both Japanese and English to support people in need of social assistance, including children in foster care facilities, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities. Its activities are wide-ranging, including support in times of disaster, visits to care facilities, and the planning of sports events. The planning and managing of these activities are carried out by approximately 20 core operating members working under the board together with volunteers recruited online.

In many cases, employees of foreign-affiliated companies participate as part of their HR evaluation process, and corporate-sponsored events are also organized. Developing volunteer leaders is one of the organization’s key missions.”



#### – Differences Between Volunteer Cultures in Japan and the West

“While volunteerism is deeply rooted in everyday life in Europe and the United States, it has yet to become fully established in Japan. Japanese companies tend to conduct volunteer activities independently within their own organizations, and collaboration with external nonprofits remains limited. Through the development of volunteer leaders, HandsOn Tokyo aims to help foster a broader culture of volunteerism in Japan. The organization also actively engages with similar groups overseas and participates in global conferences.”

#### – Engagement with Corporations and Social Significance

“Even without directly participating in volunteer activities, companies can still contribute to society indirectly, which is highly meaningful. Serving as a board member has also enhanced brand value and expanded professional networks. Interactions with executives from global companies and leaders active in various fields provide valuable inspiration and learning opportunities. I find that there is much to gain from observing how meetings are managed and how agendas are structured, even from a business perspective.”

#### – Visions for the Future and Message

Looking ahead, I hope that more members of our group participate in HandsOn Tokyo’s activities, and gain new experiences and networks through connections outside the company. Such experiences contribute to individual growth, corporate development, and even organizational innovation and the promotion of diversity. Fostering connections between people and society and contributing to the realization of a better society.

by Public Relations, General Affairs Department