CRI Accelerates Global Expansion of Its Game Business

Thursday 10 April, 2025

CRI Middleware Co., Ltd. (Headquarters: Shibuya-ku, Tokyo; President and CEO: Masao Oshimi; hereinafter “CRI”) is accelerating the global expansion of its game business through three key initiatives.

As a newly added feature, “CRI Sofdec®” video playback middleware will now support the next-generation codec “AV1.”

In addition, as part of our efforts to expand sales channels in Europe and North America, we have signed a distribution agreement with DICO Deutschland GmbH (Headquarters: Cologne, Germany; CEO: Matias Sanchez Elsner, hereinafter “DICO Deutschland”).

Furthermore, in March 2025, we presented at and exhibited at the international Game Developers Conference (GDC) 2025, held in San Francisco, USA. This allowed us to share insights on game development with a global audience and worked to enhance our recognition and presence overseas. CRI will continue to expand its middleware brand "CRIWARE®" internationally, with a focus on CRI Sofdec, in order to enrich content around the world through sound and video.

?CRI Sofdec x AV1 improves compression performance and reduces latency to reduce user drop-off

From April 2025, the CRI Sofdec video playback middleware will support the next-generation codec AV1. CRI Sofdec is middleware that provides video playback functionality in games. In addition to compressing file sizes while maintaining high video and audio quality, it also supports multiple platforms and various video and audio codecs. It offers a comprehensive set of features required for game development and has been adopted in numerous titles, primarily in Japan.

AV1 is an open source video compression codec developed for video distribution over the Internet. AV1 format video can reduce file size by approximately 30% compared to conventional codecs, and is expected to become mainstream in game development around the world in the future.

In recent years, mobile game apps have increasingly featured high-definition graphics, and "live service titles" that receive ongoing content updates have become the mainstream. As a result, app sizes have grown, leading users to delete apps due to storage constraints or deciding against installing them in the first place. By converting in-game videos to the highly efficient AV1 format, CRI Sofdec helps reduce app size and download times, contributing to lower user churn and increased app revenue.

?Accelerating market expansion in Europe and the United States through a distribution agreement with DICO Deutschland

CRI has entered into a distribution agreement with DICO Deutschland, primarily targeting the European and U.S. markets.

DICO Deutschland is the European branch of Japanese game developer DICO. In addition to game development, the company offers a wide range of services to game developers worldwide, including development support, localization, quality assurance, and publishing assistance, with a strong track record in the global market.

With the conclusion of this agency agreement, DICO Deustchland will promote CRIWARE to its extensive global network.

Matias Sanchez Elsner , CEO, DICO Deutschland GmbH Comments

“It is a great honor to be part of the first step in bringing CRI’s proven audio and video technology from Japan to the global game market. This partnership will undoubtedly help elevate game development worldwide to the next level.”

?Strengthening connections with game developers worldwide through presentations and booth exhibits at GDC 2025

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CRI is working to increase awareness of its middleware product brand, CRIWARE, as it expands overseas. As part of these efforts, we participated in the Game Developers Conference 2025—one of the world's largest events for game developers—held in San Francisco in March 2025. Our Fellow, Hiroyuki Masuno, gave a presentation, and we also hosted a booth exhibition at the venue.

During the presentation, Masuno shared insights gained from his 40 years of experience in game sound, while the exhibition showcased CRI's technological capabilities to game developers from around the world. We received comments such as, "I recently tried using CRIWARE, and it significantly improved our development efficiency." "We're seriously considering adopting it," and "We'd love to incorporate the video and audio playback expertise used in Japanese games into our own titles."

?CRIWARE's global standardization of games to utilize animation and movies from around the world

CRI established the Global Business Development Office in October 2024 with the aim of expanding sales in the global market. In the fiscal year ending September 30, 2030, we aim to increase the overseas sales ratio of our game business from the current* ratio of approximately 10% to 50%, and to increase net sales from approximately 150 million yen to 1.5 billion yen. (*Fiscal year ending September 30, 2024)

With CRI Sofdec—an offering with few global competitors—as a cornerstone of its global expansion, CRI aims to promote media mix strategies involving anime and film, support the integration of characters into games, and ultimately contribute to enhancing the value of content worldwide.

CRI aims to support audio and video playback across a wide range of devices around the world using its proprietary technology, delivering a seamless and enjoyable experience to all users. Going forward, we will continue to contribute to society through "sound and video," striving to create a world where everyone can enjoy content without limitations.

?About CRI Middleware, Inc.

CRI's corporate philosophy is "Enriching society through sound and video." We focus on research and development in audio and video technologies. The results of these efforts are delivered across various fields through our middleware product brand, "CRIWARE". Refined in the gaming industry, CRIWARE is now expanding beyond games into the embedded systems sector and the mobility field. Through "CRIWARE," CRI provides technologies and solutions aimed at improving usability and quality, supporting developers in solving their challenges while also enhancing the user experience for end users.

Company Profile

Company name: CRI Middleware Co.

Head Office: 11F Shibuya Infos Tower, 20-1 Sakuragaoka-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo

President and Representative Director: Masao Oshimi

Business Description: Research and development related to audio and video, sales and support of middleware products, and related contract development services.

Established: August 1, 2001

HP?https://www.cri-mw.co.jp/

About DICO Deutschland GmbH

Company Profile

Company name: DICO Deutschland GmbH

Head office: Müllerdorf 5, 51503 Rösrath

CEO?Matias Sanchez Elsner

Business Description: Game development, localization, and related service offerings for the European and North American markets.

HP?https://dicodeutschland.eu/en/english-translation/

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