



## Keio Business School

### **Weava Japan Inc.**

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In August 2010, Motokuni Takaoka, President of Weava Japan Inc., was reviewing future growth strategy for Airweave. This is an overlay-type mattress developed by Weava Japan incorporating President Takaoka's concept of "realizing a new sleep environment with mattresses." In recent years, while high-grade bedding such as Tempur and Magniflex brands has been attracting attention, Airweave has also come to the front as it is used by Olympians and other athletes. Airweave has recently grown to become profitable.

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Motokuni Takaoka, President of Weava Japan, is the second president of Nippon Koatsu Electric Co. Ltd. (NKE), known as a time-honored manufacturer of electric power equipment delivered to power companies. During the recession in the late 1990s, he took on a plastic injection-molding machine<sup>[1]</sup> manufacturing company managed by one of his relatives, which led him to launching Airweave.

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For President Takaoka, who had deployed business at NKE for the business-to-business (B2B) market, it was necessary to clarify how to develop growth strategy for Airweave, which had been successful to a certain extent, and to determine the conditions of success of the product in the business-to-consumer (B2C) market. This was urgently required in order to ensure further development of Airweave.

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### **History of Weava Japan**

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The history of Weava Japan Inc., headquartered in Obu City in Aichi Prefecture, can be traced back to the Chubu Chemical Machinery Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (Chubu), founded in 1962 (Attachment 1). Chubu

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[1] Plastic injection molding is a molding process in which plastic in liquid state is poured at relatively high temperature (180–450°C). This process is similar to metallic mold casting for metals.

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 This case study was prepared by Takuro Yoda of the Graduate School of Business Administration, Keio University and Shohei Ohshima (MBA), based on publicly available information that was used for class discussions at the graduate school. Although the content of the study is based on published information, media coverage, analysts' reports, and so on, some of it describes circumstances surmised by the authors, and therefore may not be completely accurate. The case study is also not intended to serve as an illustration of skillful management.

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