



Koichiro Hirata

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Koichiro Hirata is a Japanese lumberman and the CEO and Chairman of Nice Holdings, Inc. He was born in Tokyo on April 17, 1948, the eldest son of Shuji Hirata and Nobuyo Hirata. The Hirata family has a long history in the lumber business. The family's original company, Zeniya, was founded in the early Edo era (1603-1868).

Koichiro Hirata grew up in a house surrounded by forest and adjacent to a lumber market where, in 1950, his father, Shuji Hirata, the ninth generation of the Hirata family, founded a lumber auction company. Over time, this evolved into Nice Holdings Inc.

Koichiro graduated with a master's degree in economics from Keio University. His first job was with the Housing Material Division of the Panasonic Corporation, and he eventually joined Nice Holdings in 1977 to support and contribute to his father's business. Koichiro was appointed President in 1988, and Chairman and Chief Executive Officer in 2015.

In 1962, Nice Holdings, Inc. became a publicly traded company on the Tokyo Stock Market. Under Koichiro Hirata's leadership, the company is now the largest lumber distributor in Japan and has expanded its group companies, including general distribution and trading of building materials, residential single and multi-home housing projects, cable TV and more.

Key to their lumber business, Nice Holdings has obtained a number of forests and maintains them as sustainable properties. They sell certified lumber products, manage sawmills and processing plants, and have created an international distribution network. They value sustainability, embracing "cascading" or "downcycling" to reduce consumption and ensure no part of the tree goes to waste.

A leader in building technology, Nice Holdings is known for creating a innovative new post and beam method using metal brackets and engineered wood (called the Power Build System). It is also a forerunner on CLT (cross-laminated timber) technology in Japan. Using this advanced technology, Nice has expanded the capabilities of large wooden buildings and brought wood construction methods to a greater variety of projects.

Today, Nice Holdings is expanding worldwide, with interests in the United States, Asia, Europe and Oceania.

Koichiro's business activities and relationships in the United States are robust and enduring. In 1973, Nice was the first company to export 2x4 housing materials from the United States to Japan. Nice opened its Portland, Oregon office in 1985 and has grown into one of the largest lumber exporters from the United States to Japan. Nice continues to ex-

pand its purchase of wood from the U.S. by working with local forest operators, lumber producers and distributors.

In 1990, Nice furthered its investment in Portland's economy by obtaining the Benjamin Franklin Plaza Building (currently Umpqua Plaza Building) in the center of downtown Portland.

Each year, Koichiro Hirata gathers leaders from Japan's forestry and housing industries to visit the United States to strengthen economic and cultural ties and understanding. During these visits, he organizes academic city tours that focus on unique architectural designs, including those of Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright, who was well-versed in Japanese culture. Koichiro Hirata and his teams study urban development patterns across the country. They also visit the Portland Home Builders Association's Street of Dreams. Promoting engineering, design, economic and cultural exchanges has become a significant part of Koichiro's life work.

Currently, Koichiro Hirata is leading efforts to build homes with cross-cultural influences that also reflect the core values of Nice. The result is Nice's own line of SUTEKI homes. The homes are built to be environmentally sustainable, contribute to health and well-being of home buyers, and are designed to stand safe even during earthquakes – a concern shared by both Japanese and West Coast families.

For the 2017 Street of Dreams, Koichiro is building a house under the brand name, SUTEKI, which is the Japanese word for natural and comfortable. The name conveys a philosophy of connectedness and excellence.

This future-forward, sustainable, concept house was designed by world renowned architect Mr. Kengo Kuma and perfectly melds the cross-cultural influences of both Japan and the U.S. It is important for Koichiro Hirata to positively impact the local economy, culture, and lives of the people where he builds, and he hopes this new approach to homebuilding will further unite his two favorite countries.

In addition, Koichiro Hirata is focused on expanding zero-energy housing and Life Cycle Carbon Minus (LCCM) energy-saving construction in the North America. He is concerned about global climate change and understands the connection between sustainable wood-based construction and creating an environment that fosters healthy forests and healthy people.

Under the leadership of Koichiro Hirata and through innovative ideas, such as the SUTEKI brand home, Nice Holdings will continue its cross cultural exchange of ideas between North America and Japan, and help to ensure a healthy, safe, and sustainable future.