

To: Correspondents

Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd.  
Nippon Travel Agency Co., Ltd.  
Mitsubishi Corporation  
Credit Saison Co., Ltd.

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### **Inauguration of Services by Lastminute.com Japan Announced**

The inauguration of services by Lastminute.com Japan Ltd. (headquarters: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo), an e-commerce company holding the brand of UK-based Lastminute.com, was announced after agreement among a business group comprising Lastminute.com UK, an online-based solution provider focusing on travel and leisure information; Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd.; Nippon Travel Agency Co., Ltd.; Japan e-Fund Investment Partnership; Mitsubishi Corporation/MC Capital Investment Partnership; and Credit Saison Co., Ltd.

Koji Nagasawa, general manager of the Planning Office of Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd., is to be appointed representative director of this provider of a new type of service. Both Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd. and Nippon Travel Agency Co., Ltd. will provide package products designed specifically for last-minute services and other last-minute products for both the domestic and foreign markets using their travel industry network and know-how. The two companies will market the products on their Web sites and via the conventional sales routes.

Lastminute.com UK will sign an exclusive license contract with Lastminute.com Japan to supply the product database held and used by them worldwide, conduct cooperative activities for brand-building in Japan and provide other support during the initial period. To this end, two directors will be dispatched from the UK.

Credit Saison Co., Ltd. will pursue synergistic effects by marketing these last-minute products to the more than 12.5 million Saison cardholders, supplementing the existing travel and entertainment services.

Mitsubishi Corporation and MC Capital Investment Partnership will assist the company, in conjunction with Japan e-Fund Investment Partnership, in mapping out business strategies and exercising management by sending one director each.

Lastminute.com Japan, which was jointly established by Mitsubishi Corporation, the coordinator of the entire scheme, and Lastminute.com UK some time ago as a planning company, will come into operation to provide various last-minute online products including air tickets, package tours, hotels, entertainment and gifts. Preparatory work will begin soon, but an official business commencement date has not yet been fixed.

**Profiles of Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd. and Nippon Travel Agency Co., Ltd.**

Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd. is the nation's second-largest travel agency and Nippon Travel Agency Co., Ltd. ranks third.

**Profile of Japan e-Fund Investment Partnership**

Headed by Hiroyuki Iketani, who formerly worked for a major Japanese investment company (Jafco), Japan e-Fund is an investment partnership specializing in the IT field. The company provides know-how concerning new business expansion, acquisition of foreign technology and business model incubation.

**Profile of Mitsubishi Corporation and MC Capital Investment Partnership**

Mitsubishi Corporation is making investments in various fields nationwide and conducting an extensive range of business operations on a global scale. MC Capital Investment Partnership is an investment partnership run by a corporate investment unit in charge of private equity investment business in Mitsubishi Corporation.

**Profile of Credit Saison Co., Ltd.**

Credit Saison Co., Ltd. is a major credit card issuer with a strong card-membership base including more than 12.5 million Saison cardholders. The company has acquired a great deal of know-how in the travel and entertainment business fields through the operation of Entertainment Plus Inc. (online ticket sales), a joint venture with Sony Corp., and also Pacific Tour Systems Co., Ltd., a travel agency of the Saison Group.

**Profile of Lastminute.com UK**

Based on the principle that demand should be met with supply, Lastminute.com UK offers various last-minute products such as air tickets, hotels, package tours, entertainment tickets, restaurant reservations, specialty services, gifts and auctions. It operates in the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Spain, Holland, Australia and South Africa.

The company acquired DegriFTour, major French online travel agent, in October 2000. As of September 2001, it has more than 4.2 million registered members to which it sends weekly newsletters. It has signed contracts for alliances with more than 9,300 companies in the service industry including Lufthansa German Airlines, Air France, Alitalia Airlines, British Midland, United Air Lines, Virgin Atlantic Airlines, Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Kempinski Hotels, Sol Melisa, Six Continents, Thompson, JMC and First Choice, the British National Ballet, the Royal Albert Hall, Kunlun Restaurants and We're Ahead Box Office.

According to Jupiter MMXI, Lastminute.com is the travel Web site accessed most in the UK. Its site is ranked in the top five in France, Germany, Italy and Spain, making it one of the most popular travel sites in Europe.

**For further information:**

Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd., Public Relations Office (Mr. Sato):	Phone 03-3257-1661
Nippon Travel Agency Co., Ltd., Public Relations Office (Mr. Torigoe):	Phone 03-3572-8180
Mitsubishi Corporation, Public Relations Department (Mr. Iwata):	Phone 03-3210-2169
Credit Saison Co., Ltd., Public Relations Office (Mr. Sakamoto, Ms. Kojima):	Phone 03-3982-0700