



ONE-ON-ONE WITH CHEN GUANG

Honorary Ambassador of Foreign Investment Promotion for Korea / CEO, UMIDO Group

INVESTMENT

INTRODUCING INVEST KOREA PLAZA (IKP)



INVESTMENT NEWS

- PEUGEOT-CITROEN OPENS 1ST AUTO MUSEUM OUTSIDE FRANCE ON JEJU ISLAND
- SOFTBANK INVESTS ADDITIONAL USD 2 BN INTO COUPANG

IKMP PITCHING ROOM

INVESTMENT
OPPORTUNITIES
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KOTRA

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KOREA

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ZONE

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Dear Readers,

2019, the year of the Golden Pig, has dawned upon us. I'd like to sincerely thank all of you for the interest and support you have shown KOTRA last year.

Despite various difficulties including the rise of neo-protectionism, the Korean economy remained strong in 2018. Exports reached USD 605.5 billion, up 5.5 percent from the previous year, and foreign direct investment (FDI) in declared amount reached an all-time high, surpassing USD 20 billion for four consecutive years.

However, it seems as though 2019 will not promise us stable global trade conditions. Trade disputes and industrial protectionism between countries will likely continue, and the fast pace of digital

innovation, also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, will change the fundamentals of traditional trade methods and structures.

Amidst such conditions, KOTRA will remain at the forefront of the global economy and focus on revitalizing trade, investment, technological cooperation and people-to-people exchange. We will expand overseas marketing of Korea's major local industries such as auto-manufacturing and shipbuilding. At the same time, KOTRA will foster a new growth engine for exports based on new industries, services and consumer goods.

On top of export-centered strategy, KOTRA will increase the number of projects that create mutual benefits such as technological cooperation. In line with the restructured foreign direct investment system, we will offer more support to attract investment to new industries and startups. Furthermore, KOTRA will concentrate our capabilities on the expansion of global businesses and people-to-people exchange which will in turn contribute to job creation.

To accomplish such tasks, we will innovate our services by establishing a big data platform and by strengthening cooperation with private and related organizations.

There's a Korean saying that goes, "A bright sky appears when the clouds are cleared." Overcoming difficult times will lead to success. The environment is ever-changing, but KOTRA will turn crises into opportunities, and will strive to support the advancement of Korean SMEs to overseas markets and the creation of global jobs.

I wish for closer cooperation with you in 2019. May joy and prosperity be with you all in the New Year. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kwon Pyung-oh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kwon Pyung-oh

President & CEO of the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA)



Invest KOREA takes Korea's foreign business community on a cultural experience

Twice a year, Invest KOREA, the national investment promotion agency, provides foreign investors, foreign members of the diplomatic corps, members of the foreign press in Korea along with their families, an opportunity to indulge in the country's rich history and culture. Get to Know Korea (GTKK) has been held since 2008 to deepen participants' understanding of Korea and make them feel more at home.



The 26th installment of Get to Know Korea was held on December 8 at the Korea House and Namsangol Hanok Village in Chungmuro, Seoul. A total of 50 participants attended the event, including staff members of foreign-invested companies such as Bosch Korea and Solvay Korea, journalists from the foreign press such as the New York Times, as well as foreign diplomats and their families.

At the Korea House, participants took part in a hands-on cooking class, where they made a traditional Korean dish called Gujeolpan. Gujeolpan literally means “a plate divided into nine sections,” and was one of the main dishes of royal court cuisine during the Joseon Dynasty. Participants learned how to prepare the meat and vegetables and wrap them up in a thinly fried flour crepe, then enjoyed the finished dish by dipping it into a sauce made from mustard, soy sauce and vinegar. The cooking class served as a valuable experience for participants to get a glimpse into the world of Korean cooking.



Next, they visited Namsangol Hanok Village and took a tour around the traditional Korean houses, also known as hanok. The Village is a collection of five hanoks from the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910), recovered from different parts of the city and re-located to the northern foot of Namsan Mountain. During the tour, participants were able to see the houses of Korea’s important historical figures, including Queen Yun, who was the Queen Consort to King Sunjong, the 27th king of the Joseon Dynasty; Lee Seungeop, who was charge of constructing Gyeongbokgung Palace; and Kim Chunyeong, a prominent military official.



Lastly, event attendees enjoyed a networking luncheon over a traditional Korean meal. Head of Invest KOREA Shawn Chang said, “Get to Know Korea celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, and has played a vital role in deepening the foreign business community’s understanding of Korea by giving them an opportunity to experience Korea’s culture and history,” and added, “KOTRA and Invest KOREA will continue to make efforts in various ways to raise awareness of Korea.”

*By Grace Park
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JANUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		2019 Briefing Session on Global Market Entrance Strategies				
		CES 2019_Korea Pavilion				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
			ISPO Beijing_Korea Pavilion			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	The 36th Khartoum International Fair 2019_Korea Pavilion					
			BETT Show 2019_Korea Pavilion			
27	28	29	30	31		

Upcoming KOTRA Events

2019 BRIEFING SESSION ON GLOBAL MARKET ENTRANCE STRATEGIES**Date:** January 9, 2019**Location:** Grand InterContinental Seoul Parnas, South Korea**Host:** Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE)**Organizer:** KOTRA**Speakers:** Wonsik Choi, Managing Director of McKinsey & Company Korea; KOTRA's Regional Director Generals for North America, Europe, Japan, China, Central and South America, Africa, Middle East, Southeast Asia, Southwest Asia, CIS**Main Topics:** Opportunities and challenges in the 4th Industrial Revolution; Entrance strategies by region; Q&A sessions**Contact:** 218079@kotra.or.kr (+82-2-3460-7598)**THE 36TH KHARTOUM INTERNATIONAL FAIR 2019 (KOREA PAVILION)****Date:** January 21-28, 2019**Location:** Khartoum Fair Ground, Sudan**Host:** KOTRA (Korea Pavilion)**Industry:** Manufacturing (equipment, machinery, hardware), agriculture, IT, energy & mining, architecture, services, medical devices, cosmetics and other consumer goods**Participation:** 150,000 visitors; 680 companies from 24 countries (470 Sudanese, 210 overseas companies)**Contact:** egchu@kotra.or.kr (+82-2-3460-7597)***Note:** The fair is expected to attract high interest from local buyers and related companies due to it being the first exhibition to be held since the lifting of the U.S. economic sanctions on Sudan**BETT SHOW 2019 (KOREA PAVILION)****Date:** January 23-26, 2019**Location:** ExCel London, United Kingdom**Host:** MOTIE (Korea Pavilion)**Organizer:** National IT Promotion Agency (Korea Pavilion)**Industry:** Education technology, e-learning**Main Programs:** Seminars (2018 Bett Innovation Index: emerging trends in EdTech; Embracing diversity with education technology; From learning labs to maker labs; Building bridges with education data; Leveraging cloud innovation in education, etc.), exhibition booths of education technology and e-learning companies**Contact:** jemma@nipa.kr (+86-43-931-5633)

FDI IN KOREA REACHES ALL-TIME HIGH IN 2018

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in Korea reached an all-time high of USD 26.9 billion in 2018, up 17.2 percent from the previous year, continuing the upward momentum of more than USD 20 billion in FDI for four consecutive years.

By country, the U.S. most actively invested in Korea, followed by Japan and the Netherlands. In particular, China showed a surge in investment at USD 2.74 billion, a whopping 238.9 percent

rise from the previous year.

By sector, the manufacturing industry drew in USD 10.5 billion, with machinery equipment, precision medical equipment, and transport machinery displaying strong growth. The service industry attracted USD 15.58 billion, led by the information and communications industry such as e-commerce and FinTech.

*All figures in declared amount.

GLOBAL CHINESE COMPANIES SEEK MUTUAL GROWTH WITH KOREAN COMPANIES THROUGH TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION

On December 5, the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) and the Ministry of Science and ICT jointly hosted “K-Global China 2018” in Shenzhen, China to help Korean ICT startups and SMEs attract investment and advance into the Chinese market.

Leading ICT export companies and 45 start-ups from Korea as well as 250 companies from China including buyers, VCs and accelerators participated in the event.

Through the event, Korean compa-

nies and Chinese ICT companies sought opportunities for partnerships and mutual growth.



KOTRA OPENS 3 OVERSEAS OFFICE CHIEF POSTS TO PUBLIC

On December 14, KOTRA completed the hiring process of private sector experts for the chief posts at three of its overseas Korea Business Centers (KBCs), in Washington D.C., U.S.; Warszawa, Poland; and Quito, Ecuador.

Possessing excellent capability and abundant experience, the experts will provide hands-on support to busi-

nesses in dealing with their current agendas and facilitate related business projects.

Additionally, they will help companies diversify channels for business relations and provide management support that would aid companies advance into the local market while producing tangible results.

KOTRA PRESIDENT AND CEO SAYS “EXPORT IS THE KEY TO ULSAN’S INDUSTRIES”

On December 12, KOTRA hosted the “Conference for Ulsan’s Export Companies” at the Ulsan Economic Promotion Agency.

10 SMEs in the three mainstream industries of shipbuilding, auto parts and machinery participated in the event.

The companies requested active

support for their overseas advancement as a solution to the local economic crisis which has been ongoing since April 2018.

In response, KOTRA said it would diversify its trade partners and invite 100 foreign buyers in 2019 to help Ulsan in its track towards economic recovery.

KOTRA Overseas News

To support domestic companies seeking to enter overseas markets, KOTRA provides an information portal which delivers tailored information on the current conditions of various markets outside of Korea. As the only portal of its kind, it offers in-depth and accurate information in a systematic manner on different countries and their markets through information gathered from KOTRA's 127 overseas offices.

Main contents consist of news on the industries, products, economy, trade, regulations and investment of countries all over the world. Additionally, readers have access to interviews on companies that have succeeded in entering overseas markets, columns by contributors, and employment trends. The portal, already packed with photo news, card news, as well as videos of seminars and briefing sessions, also offers a thorough overview on the business environments and economic indices of 97 countries. Furthermore, readers can view and download in-depth reports on current issues as well as strategies for entering different markets by country or region.

KOTRA Overseas News is offered on various platforms including web (news.kotra.or.kr) and mobile (m.news.kotra.or.kr), as well as through social media networks like Facebook ([koreaoverseasnews](https://www.facebook.com/koreaoverseasnews)), Instagram ([@kotraoverseasnews](https://www.instagram.com/kotraoverseasnews)) and Twitter ([@globalkotra](https://twitter.com/globalkotra)).



Website Image: news.kotra.or.kr

Introducing Invest Korea Plaza

Invest Korea Plaza

Invest Korea Plaza (IKP) is the first business incubation complex in Korea for foreign investors. Designed to meet 21st century business needs, IKP offers furnished offices and conference facilities, in addition to on-site comprehensive services ranging from investment consultation provided by representatives of Invest KOREA and numerous government agencies.

IKP Offices for Lease

A. Office exclusively for foreign investors

- Long-term lease: Office lease by a foreign investor seeking to establish a domestic company in Korea
- Lease period: Up to two years, on a yearly basis (lease can be extended after deliberation)
- Short-term lease: Short-term lease of an office by a foreign investor seeking to enter the Korean market
- Lease period: Up to two months (lease cannot be extended)



B. Office for related organizations

- Organizations and administrative entities for attracting and supporting foreign investors

Qualifications for Occupancy

A. Long-term lease for foreign investors

- Companies that completed FDI notification: Companies with FDI of USD 300,000 or more that have completed foreign investment notification in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the Foreign Investment Promotion Act
- Required documents: IKP occupancy application form, overview of company and business, FDI notification form
- Companies that plan to notify foreign investment: Companies that are expected to notify FDI of USD 300,000 or more within six months of moving in
- Required documents: IKP occupancy application form, overview of company and business, letter of recommendation by KOTRA's KBC
- Companies that have executed foreign investment: A foreign-invested company with notified subsequent FDI of USD 200,000 or more
- Required documents: IKP occupancy application form, overview of company and business, FDI notification form

B. Short-term lease for foreign investors

- For foreign investors conducting market research and business feasibility study to enter the Korean market
- Required documents: IKP occupancy application form, a letter of recommendation by KOTRA's KBC or documents certifying the planned business and market research
- * Occupancy counseling is required as lease may not be permitted depending on the type and content of the business.

The Latest on Korea's Investment Environment



What's Trending



European private-investment firm, Ardian, opens office in S. Korea

Ardian, one of Europe's largest private equity investment firms, has opened an office in South Korea as part of its global expansion strategy.

The branch, located in central Seoul, will tap into the growing appetite for its funds and private-equity by Korean investors, according to the firm.

It is the Paris-based firm's fourth office in Asia, after Singapore, Beijing and Tokyo, the company said, noting that the advance into the South Korean market will serve as a "major growth opportunity."

Ardian has USD 82 billion in assets across the globe with around 10 offices across Europe and the United States.

Korean e-retailer Coupang pulls in another USD 2 bn from SoftBank

South Korean e-commerce leader Coupang drew in fresh funding of USD 2 billion from its major shareholder SoftBank Group of Japan in a show of timely confidence and ammunition buildup in the company against mounting challenges from traditional retail majors.

The unlisted company will issue new shares worth USD 2 billion to the SoftBank Vision Fund, a special fund launched by SoftBank to aid companies developing innovative and disruptive technologies and platforms. This would be SoftBank's second investment in Coupang after the USD 1 billion in 2015.

"The vision and leadership of Coupang's founder and chief executive Bom Kim has made the company an e-commerce giant in Korea and one of the most innovative tech companies in the world," said Masayoshi Son, founder of SoftBank. "We're proud to join hands with Coupang so that it can continue to deliver amazing services to customers."

The latest investment would go into scaling up Coupang's logistics center and financing new technologies such as the development of its own payment platform, according to the Korean online retailer.

Yozma Group to invest in next-generation energy and nano-fiber industry of Gyeongbuk

Gyeongbuk-do has signed an MOU with the Yozma Group and TOPTEC on investment in next-generation energy and nano-fiber industry.

Yozma Group, a global venture capital established in Israel in 1993, will make an investment of KRW 18 billion in Lemon Co., LTD. and TOPTEC, and cooperate with the Province to foster nano-fiber industry and the next-generation energy field.

The Yozma Campus in Gyeongbuk-do will provide technological support and support commercialization of the technology.

TOPTEC has been implementing key projects related to the fourth industrial revolution, including factory automation and energy storage equipment. Lemon Co., LTD. produces nano-fibers, nano membrane masks and beauty treatment masks.

The Province has signed an MOU with the Yozma Group on fostering small and medium-sized ventures in October last year. It also built Gyeongbuk Yozma Campus in Gyeongbuk Techno Park in April this year and has been operating programs to help regional companies enter the global market.

Peugeot-Citroen opens 1st auto museum outside France on Jeju Island

Peugeot-Citroen has opened its first overseas automobile museum outside of France on Jeju Island.

The French carmaker invested KRW 11 billion in the three-story museum on the popular resort island off South Korea's coast to promote its vehicles and offer test-drive opportunities to visitors. Hanbul Motors, the official importer and distributor of Peugeot vehicles, said in a statement.

The museum opened at a 2,500-pyong site in Seogwipo, the southern part of the island.

Currently, 20 models are displayed at the museum, with 14 classical models to be added in due course.

S. Korea's first for-profit hospital gains approval from Jeju provincial gov't

South Korea's first for-profit hospital received the final approval from the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province last month, putting an end to 16 years of controversy over the introduction of investor-owned medical institutions.

Jeju Gov. Won Hee-ryong announced the approval of the Greenland International Hospital as a for-profit hospital on condition that it caters only to foreign patients.

"The Greenland hospital has been given conditional approval. Its treatment of domestic patients is prohibited. The hospital can cater only to foreign medical tourists visiting Jeju," Won said in a news conference.

The governor emphasized that the hospital's medical services will be limited to four departments -- plastic surgery, dermatology, internal medicine and family medicine.

He said the for-profit hospital would not affect the nation's public medical service system, as the national health insurance would not be applied there.

Under law, the South Korean government permits for-profit hospitals with a foreign investment share of more than 50 percent or capital of more than USD 5 million in Jeju Province and eight free economic zones.

Also called open-investment hospitals, these medical institutions are created to generate profit for their shareholders and permit the repatriation of earnings. At present, all hospitals in South Korea are non-profit and obliged to reinvest operating profits into facility expansions and personnel and research expenses.

In December 2015, the Ministry of Health and Welfare permitted China's Greenland Group to build the Greenland International Hospital in the island province's Jeju Healthcare Town. The construction was completed last year at the expense of KRW 77.8 billion and the hospital applied for permission for operation, saying it has 47 beds and a staff of 134, including nine doctors, 28 nurses and 18 international medical coordinators.



ONE-ON-ONE WITH CHEN GUANG

Honorary Ambassador of Foreign
Investment Promotion for Korea /
CEO, UMIDO Group

From a young age all the way up to her college years, Chen Guang studied dance. Then, upon recommendations from her professors, she decided to change course from dance to business, furthering her studies at the Beijing International MBA Program at Peking University. Since then, she has grown her businesses and is now operating them around the world, including Korea. Like many others, Chen Guang first encountered Korean culture through the spread of K-pop and K-beauty, and naturally became interested in the Korean Wave and its tremendous business potential. KOTRA Express sat down with the Honorary Ambassador of Foreign Investment Promotion for Korea and the CEO of UMIDO Group to hear more about her experiences and what she plans to accomplish as Honorary Ambassador of Foreign Investment Promotion for Korea.

You have been doing business in Korea for about three years. What kinds of changes have you seen here during that time?

When I first came to Korea, I felt that many Korean companies had interest in the Chinese market. Since then, numerous Korean firms have succeeded in making inroads into China, and now, that number seems to be increasing by the day.

The most significant change I've noticed during the past few years while doing business here is that an increasing number of Korean companies have come to accept overseas businesspeople and seek opportunities to cooperate with them.

While expanding my business to Korea three years ago, I had to proactively seek out cooperation opportunities with Korean businesses, but now, Korean businesspeople reach out to me first for opportunities to collaborate. As a result, my schedule is packed with meetings with various business partners during my monthly visits to Seoul.

What kind of investment opportunities are Chinese companies looking for?

A lot of Chinese firms hold high regard for Korea's technology, accounting, and

finance sectors. Chinese companies are not yet well aware of all the advantages of partnering with Korean businesses in these sectors, but if they can find Korean companies that combine technology and accounting, they will be able to have access to more opportunities.

I think Korea is a very dynamic country. Many Korean industries are among the top in the world and equipped with advanced technologies. As you know, K-pop is extremely popular in China; therefore, there's great potential for related entertainment, fashion and beauty industries to make investments into Korea. There's also investment potential for the gaming, sports, leisure, and premium real estate markets. But what I value the most is Korea's advanced technologies and outstanding products. With Korea's exceptional resources and China's broad markets, the two countries can complement each other and reap mutual benefits.

What kind of advice would you give investors from your country looking to do business in Korea?

First, I think it's important for investors or companies targeting Korea as an investment destination to conduct thorough market research. They need accurate information on what the business environment is like and whether or not it is in line with their investment direction. It's also important to set a timeline and follow through with plans in order to be as efficient as possible. Also, building relationships with partners is crucial, and it's important to keep promises including those regarding investment and agreement conditions.

Here are three tips that I learned through my investment experiences in Korea over the years:

1. You should have a good understanding on the overall market, and make the purpose and goal(s) of your investment clear. Korea has a unique market, so it may be difficult to completely avoid any challenges during the investment process. In such cases, you'll need to make wise decisions based on your investment purpose and goal(s).

2. It's critical to set detailed, concrete investment and execution plans to successfully enter the Korean market.

3. A long-term commitment to the market is essential.

What can the Korean government do for foreign companies to make them feel more welcome?

Most of the world knows that the Korean government has already made great efforts in policy formulation and tax reduction, as well as for increased transparency and the improvement of the investment environment.

With regard to what else the Korean government can do, from my perspective, I'd suggest the introduction of exchange platforms and seminars specialized for Chinese companies, which can help deepen the understanding of Chinese firms of the Korean market.

Moreover, when small and medium-sized companies, rather than large ones, enter the Korean market, they often face obstacles. So, strengthening information sharing is of utmost importance. It would be beneficial for Korean government agencies, such as KOTRA, to have consultations with Chinese companies investing in Korea to provide information on effective investment methods and incentives. In addition, since most



promotional efforts are focused on products, more detailed promotional methods offering information on what the benefits would be and how companies can combine their existing businesses with new ones, would be helpful.

What are your hopes for future relations between Korea and China?

Korea and China have maintained mutual exchanges for the last 30 years. The two countries have more cultural commonalities than any other Asian countries, and are closely related in many areas like politics, diplomacy, economy and trade. Recently, the bilateral relationship has weakened a bit, but I believe that the Korea-China ties can be strengthened further if the two countries continue to build upon the existing connection.

At a time when the global economy is tightly interconnected, we are more dependent on one another than ever before. In the future, I hope that Korean and Chinese companies, in particular, will actively carry out various exchanges under the principles of mutual trust and a win-win relationship, and seek close cooperation on another level.

What would you like to accomplish during your time as Honorary Ambassador of Foreign Investment for Korea?

I feel honored to be appointed as an Honorary Ambassador of Foreign Investment for Korea, and I will do my best to fulfill my mission by actively supporting exchanges between Korean and Chinese companies, as well as helping Chinese firms invest in the Korean market, where they can create a variety of platforms and opportunities.

More specifically, I'd like to focus on

the following issues:

First, I hope my own investment experience in Korea can serve as a successful business case for Chinese companies. For example, NextEye Co., Ltd., a Korean company I invested in, has not only introduced premium Korean products to the Chinese market but has also made inroads into 10 countries throughout Asia in just three years, while producing shared benefits.

Second, I'd like to invite Chinese businesspeople to Korea through various platforms, distribution channels and events. Through communication with Korean firms, we can strengthen our understanding of the market and offer cooperation opportunities. For instance, I invited 12 heads of major companies in China to Invest Korea Week 2018, and so far, I've received lots of positive feedback from them on the Korean market and the investment environment. Ultimately, the better they understand Korea, the more likely it is that they will invest.

Third, in line with government's initiative for innovative growth, I'll explore areas where we can strengthen cooperation in the future industries, broaden industrial developments, and build a mutually beneficial business model for partnerships. Through these efforts, Korean and Chinese companies can deepen their friendships, enhance their exchanges, and push for new collaboration, which will eventually bring about win-win results for both countries.

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IKMP Intro

Invest KOREA Market Place (IKMP) is a project designed to help discover and support new investment projects for Korean SMEs, start-ups and local governments seeking foreign investment. Invest KOREA aims to use the IKMP platform to promote the globalization of Korean companies and institutions by utilizing KOTRA's 36 overseas offices devoted to attracting foreign investment.

Every year in March, June and September, the project notice is available on KOTRA's website at www.kotra.or.kr. Additionally, project information detailing investment opportunities in Korea is available on the Invest KOREA website at www.investkorea.org.



Investment Opportunities

Below are two Korean companies currently available to receive foreign investment.
(some information remains confidential)

1. Business Service Company: Digital Transformation and Content Solution

Investment Highlights: Electronic documents, instead of paper documents, are used to enhance work efficiency, safety and profitability. Paper documents cause problems such as cumbersome document storage and search, exposure of personal information, loss of paper documents, lengthy processing times, manual data input, and etc. The company's paperless solutions resolve such problems and achieve business innovation through digital documentation, improved security of personal information and documents, safe storage and online search, shortened business processing times, and automatic data input.

Product and Technology



Company Profile: The company was founded in April 2002 and holds intellectual property rights and trademark rights related to paperless solutions. Its clients consist of major financial institutions such as ING Korea, Kyobo Life Insurance, Samsung Life Insurance, Hyundai Capital Services, and so on. The company also works with public institutions and government agencies including Seoul Metropolitan Government, Presidential Archives, and the Ministry of Public Safety and Security.

Investment Requirements:

- Investment method: Minority (financial investment)
- Amount: USD 10 million
- Region: China, Japan, Southeast Asia

2. Renewable Energy/Environment Company: Natural Gas Fuel Containers for Vehicles

Investment Highlights: Due to the increasing global awareness on environmental preservation, many countries are putting stronger restrictions on harmful exhaust gas emissions. As a result, the company offers fuel containers that can store and transport industrial gas more efficiently. Also, the more frequent occurrence of industrial accidents, such as safety accidents, has led to an increasing demand for efficient and safe extinguishers. In response, the company has been increasing the production of fire extinguisher parts.

Product and Technology



Company Profile: The company was established in 2005 and achieved a sales record of USD 59.5 million in 2017 through its existing gas container family. It has applied for 14 patents involving its cooling device and its method for manufacturing high-pressure gas cylinders and high-pressure gas containers such as heating devices, pressure testing equipment, and etc. It has also applied for four patents for ozone ballast water treatment apparatus.

Investment Requirements:

- Investment method: Minority (financial investment)
- Amount: USD 5 million
- Region: All available

For more details, please contact Seo Dong Hyun, Senior Investment Consultant of the New Industry Investment Promotion Team, at dhseo@kotra.or.kr.

K-beauty, a New Growth Engine for the Economy

Korea's beauty industry has become one of the country's new growth engines. Even the current U.S.-China trade dispute cannot undermine the industry's growth potential, which has only demonstrated an increase in the amount of exports and production for the last 6 years since 2012. According to the Korea Health Industry Development Institute, the annual average growth rate of the Korean beauty industry is at 10.8 percent. The size of the global cosmetics market amounted to USD 397.1 billion in 2017, and Korea took up about 2 percent of it, ranking 11th in the global market share. Korea's cosmetics exports in 2018 is estimated at around USD 5.95 billion, up 22 percent from the previous year. The steep increase is due to Korea's efforts to diversify its cosmetics export markets, stretching from China to the U.S., EU, and Central and South America.

Korea's cosmetics clusters are concentrated in the Greater Seoul Metropolitan Area, but one can say that Myeongdong sums it all up. Myeongdong is a highly populated district in Seoul overflowing with cosmetics shops. Dubbed as the shopping mecca, Myeongdong is the most visited site by tourists. According to Seoul City's survey data, 88 percent of 1,500 foreign tourists said that they had visited Myeongdong. The most popular items for purchase at Myeongdong were, in fact, cosmetics. Foreigners visiting Seoul from January to October in 2018 totaled 9.99 million, and the number was expected to reach over 12 million by the end of the year.

At the heart of Korea's beauty industry lies the K-beauty craze, powered by the high tide of the Korean Wave. The K-wave refers to the growing popularity of Korean culture such as K-pop, K-drama and K-food. While K-beauty is also a part of it, the immense popularity of K-pop has boosted the growth of Korea's beauty industry. For example, the global sensation of the K-pop boy band BTS has transcended the boundaries of culture and has had a significant impact on Korea's economy. As a matter of fact,

the annual economic value generated by BTS is estimated at around KRW 4 trillion (USD 3.54 billion), according to Hyundai Research Institute. As the band's popularity index increased, Korea's cosmetics exports also increased. Furthermore, more than 800,000 foreigners have visited Korea annually to see the band's performances since 2013, and 7.6 percent of 10.4 million visits to the country in 2017 was related to BTS in one way or another. The Seoul City government released a series of videos promoting tourism in October last year, featuring BTS members introducing various elements of Seoul, making the city a more attractive place to visit, at least to their millions of fans. The increasing volume of tourists visiting Seoul, and the Myeongdong area being the most popular tourist attraction for tourists suggests a solid growth prospect of Korea's cosmetics industry due to the enormous boost in cosmetics sales.

The ongoing K-wave sweeping the globe remains as the strong backbone of the K-beauty industry, and has contributed to shaping today's K-beauty products and services. In Myeongdong, it's hard to miss the streets covered with posters of K-pop artists and famous Korean celebrities advertising cosmetic products. However, research data indicates that the K-wave is only a contributing factor to Korea's increasing cosmetics sales and not the determinant factor. According to the Seoul City government's survey data, buyers from China appreciate the design, quality and reliability more so than the price competitiveness of products. More respondents chose design, quality, as well as corporate trust and brand as the key reasons behind Korea's cosmetics competitiveness, compared to just 10 percent choosing price competitiveness. In short, the K-wave motivates people to look for K-beauty and its products, but what drives the continuous growth of the market is the overall competitiveness of the products, not the advertisements by pop stars.

Chinese buyers and tourist groups visiting Seoul, and in particular, Myeongdong,

are largely responsible for the sharp increase in both the production and sales of Korean cosmetics. When China put travel restrictions on visits to Korea in 2017 in response to a diplomatic conflict over a U.S. anti-ballistic missile system, duty free stores and street shops in Myeongdong saw their sales revenues decline. In addition, the shift in consumers' shopping patterns from street shopping to online shopping contributed to the declining number of customers making physical visits to department stores and single brand retail shops. While the annual average rate of growth of single brand shops slowly declined, shops selling products from multiple brands, such as Health and Beauty (H&B) stores, have seen double the growth. Now, there are over 1,350 H&B stores throughout Korea, which has grown over 20 percent annually for the past three years.

In order to attract consumers, single brand retail stores are transforming themselves, adding features like studios and virtual reality (VR) make-up demonstrations to enhance user experience. Businesses are diversifying their channels for sales and promotion, adapting to the lifestyle of social media users. Duty free stores in Korea started inviting Chinese social media celebrities, also known as Wanghong, and started implementing new marketing strategies like influencer marketing. For example, a major duty free brand invited one hundred Chinese Wanghong with a total of over 200 million followers, and ran a 20-hour live broadcast to promote Korean cosmetics. Amid the improving relationship between Korea and China, foreign visitors to Korean duty free shops reached over 1.5 million in the last four months, fueling the market once again with a new annual sales record surpassing the previous year's figure. The prospect of Korea's cosmetics industry remains promising, as the industry continues to strive forward to meet the needs of the market. Perhaps Amazon's added feature of the "Korean Beauty" section on its website is a sign that well-represents K-beauty entering the world's mainstream market.

Anticipating Another Triple-Double for 2019

A triple-double refers to the achievement of a double-digit number in certain categories of a game. The most common way to achieve a triple-double in a basketball game is through points, rebounds, and assists. Oscar Robertson in the 1960s and the incumbent Russell Westbrook of the Oklahoma City Thunders are the only two players ever to average a triple-double during a season in the NBA. As a hallmark of success in the game, a triple-double is indeed as hard to achieve as is admired.

Analogous to a basketball game, the concept of a triple-double can be extended to a national economy striving for quality performance, especially in time of economic difficulties. Here, the triple categories would be the percentage rate of change in investment, exports, and inflows of foreign direct investment. Had it been the 1960s or 1970s, one of the three categories would have been the real GDP growth rate, but a double-digit real economic growth has become almost obsolete in Korea since the 1990s under normal situations.

2017 was indeed a remarkable year, achieving a triple-double record; investment grew 14.6 percent, exports 12.8 percent, and foreign direct investment 40.9 percent. Looking back at the last 18 years, 2017 was the one and only triple-double year. There were five double-double years: 2000, 2003, 2004, 2008, and 2010, but no triple-double year other than 2017. With such extraordinary performances, the real economic growth rate peaked at 3.1 percent that year.

It has been easy for the export growth rate to reach a double-digit level. Throughout the last 18 years since 2000, 10 cases recorded double-digit growth rates. But it seems very difficult to achieve a double-digit performance in the rate of growth in either foreign direct investment or facility investment. In fact, numerous years demonstrated not positive, but negative growth rates in those investments since 2000. In particular, domestic facility investment indicates grim statistics. As slug-

gish investment either from the inside or the outside being the true endemic problem of the Korean economy for the last two decades, all government policies must be directed toward tackling the malaises in investment to achieve a triple digit performance.

First, all of the regulations shackling free entrepreneurs should be dismantled right away. Regulatory sand-box policies should not be confined to the so-called new industries such as ICT, nor to the special industrial areas. The policies should be extended to all traditional industries which have long been withering and lackluster. Innovation is definitely expected in the new industries, but it can, more often than not, come from the traditional industries, too.

Second, government should trust the good-will of the corporate sector. Not just because they are creating most of the decent jobs and value-added for society, but as a crucial entity constantly supplying new technology and new inspiration to a dynamic community. It was always the corporate sector that developed new marketable products enhancing welfare and utility in society. It has been a constant engine of growth and prosperity for a lively economy. Government has neither the authority nor the legitimacy to hamper its freedom and creativity. In that regard, the government should ponder deeply upon how obstructive policy has been, and at the same time, why the decision on deregulation at the top political level has not been perfectly percolating down to the bottom floor.

Most politicians at the top level are very serious about the policy mandates because, above anything else, their re-election is at stake. But most of those in the middle or lower echelons, heuristically called the bureaucrats, are neither anxious nor interested about the critical deregulation issues, because nothing is at stake for themselves on the one hand, and all blame will be bestowed upon them if something goes wrong after deregulation. If innovation is so imperative for economic growth, then

it must be given supreme priority and all other aspects give way to it. Conformity to the existing system and innovation are mutually exclusive arguments and cannot go hand-in-hand. If one is taken, the other should be forgone. Bureaucrats should be allowed a broad based disclaimer right regarding deregulatory actions.

In this regard, the 2019 policy direction recently issued by the Ministry of Economy and Finance is right on point. There, the ministry emphasized, above anything else, the prime importance of revitalizing corporate investment, which was put at the forefront. The government promised to remove intricate regulations and conflicts of interests blocking several mega projects. Also, the government pledges to help provide a vast amount of financial resources to SMEs for ICT related projects. The government plan also rightly stresses the importance of competitiveness in the export industries, including the two new frontier initiatives. But all of these government pledges are not new. Most of the agendas were included in last year's policy directives for 2018. Amid the expectation of a more challenging environment than 2018, 2019 would require much more determination on the part of the government as well as the private sector to achieve a triple-double performance. As the triple-double record in 2017 was hardly expected to occur, a repeat of a triple-double is anxiously anticipated with some unheralded chain of events. Who knows?



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**The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not reflect the views of KOTRA*

Trade News

**S. KOREA'S EXPORTS
EXPECTED TO SURPASS
USD 600 BN IN 2019**

According to the trade ministry, South Korea's exports are expected to exceed USD 600 billion for the first time this year on upbeat sales of memory chips, machinery and petrochemical products.

Total trade volume is set to reach over USD 1.1 trillion by the end of this year, the ministry said. The nation's trade volume accounted for 3.1 percent of total global trade in the first eight months of this year, up from 2.6 percent in 2008.

Overseas sales of semiconductors, general machinery and petrochemical products

all reached record-highs this year, boosting overall growth for Asia's fourth-largest economy.

Exports to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations also expanded to their highest-ever level, led by booming manufacturing in the fast-rising economic bloc.

The government vowed to take proactive measures to enhance competitiveness of the local industry to maintain growth momentum next year, stressing the role of exporters amid lackluster domestic demand and the tight job market.

**S. KOREAN COSMETICS
FIRM NATURE REPUBLIC
MOVES INTO ITALY**

Nature Republic Co., a South Korean cosmetics firm, has opened four pop-up stores in Italy as it moves to its expanded presence in overseas markets.

Nature Republic said it has signed an agreement with local department chain operator Coin to operate the outlets in Rome, Milan, Torino and Bari.

The Italian cosmetics market reached

EUR 10 billion last year according to the company.

The company said it has been preparing to enter the Italian market for the past two years.

Nature Republic currently has stores in 19 overseas countries, including China and Vietnam.

Government and Policy

**ICT MINISTRY TO SPEND
KRW 14.85 TN IN 2019**

The Ministry of Science and ICT said it will spend KRW 14.85 trillion in 2019, with a focus on developing technology for data and artificial intelligence (AI).

Next year's budget, which was endorsed by the National Assembly, is set to gain 5.1 percent on-year from 2018, also slightly up from the KRW 14.83 trillion proposed by the government, officials said. Of the total, KRW 720 billion will be spent on research and development (R&D) for indigenous AI and data technologies, up 58.9 percent from a year earlier.

The ministry said such new technologies are forecast to generate business opportunities and profits worth KRW 560 trillion by 2030.

The government said it will allocate KRW 1.2 trillion, up 23.5 percent from a year earlier, to up-and-coming researchers who possess good potential to make breakthroughs. Another KRW 1.2 trillion, up 3 percent from a year earlier, will be allocated to securing core technologies, such as in bio and health-related know-how.

**S. KOREA BUILDS 'K-CITY'
FOR AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE
TESTING**

South Korea has completed work on a "K-City," an unpopulated city for autonomous vehicle testing based on next-generation 5G mobile networks.

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport has invested KRW 12.5 billion to build the 320,000-square-meter mock urban area at the Korea Transportation Safety Authority in Hwaseong, southwest of Seoul, the ministry said in a statement.

The K-City has five major testing environments -- highway, downtown road, suburban street, parking lot and community facilities

-- for autonomous vehicles, the statement said. In particular, the 5G networks will allow companies, universities and research institutes to test a variety of connected car services in those different environments.

In March, 188 companies, including Hyundai Motor Group, Samsung Electronics Co. and SK Telecom Co., set up a consultation committee for the development of autonomous vehicles, and they are expected to test their vehicles, products and connected technologies.

Status and Prospects of the South Korean Cosmetics Industry

Market Size of the Korean Cosmetics Industry

The Korean cosmetics market is estimated to be at around KRW 14 trillion as of 2017. It is the eighth largest market in the world, larger than that of Italy or Russia, and similar to the French market. Korea's cosmetics industry has been growing rapidly since 2010 on the back of the growing Chinese cosmetics market and is considered to be one of its major industries.

Ranking	Country	2015		2016		2017 (E)		2018 (E)	
		Amount	Share	Amount	Share	Amount	Share	Amount	Share
1	US	67,469	19.4	70,645	19.4	74,124	19.2	77,315	18.9
2	China	41,178	11.8	43,632	12.0	46,912	12.2	50,631	12.4
3	Japan	32,436	9.3	32,742	9.0	33,573	8.7	34,308	8.4
4	Brazil	22,760	6.5	23,510	6.4	25,630	6.6	28,162	6.9
5	Germany	14,767	4.2	15,034	4.1	15,420	4.0	15,811	3.9
6	UK	13,663	3.9	14,188	3.9	14,875	3.9	15,670	3.8
7	France	12,368	3.6	12,278	3.4	12,444	3.2	12,690	3.1
8	Korea	10,435	3.0	10,926	3.0	11,495	3.0	12,059	2.9
9	Italy	8,863	2.5	8,937	2.4	9,083	2.4	9,263	2.3
10	Russia	6,741	1.9	7,420	2.0	7,939	2.1	8,501	2.1
Global market		348,370		364,928		385,894		408,792	

* Source: Beauty and Personal Care, Euromonitor (2018) and Korea Health Industry Development Institute (2018)

* Korean cosmetic standards applied; (E) means an estimate

In particular, annual cosmetics production, which can be seen as the index of the domestic cosmetics market size, soared to KRW 13.5 trillion in 2017, up about 70 percent compared to the KRW 7.9 trillion in 2013. As such, the cosmetics industry is dynamically growing more than any other industry.

Domestic Cosmetics Production by Year

(Unit: KRW 100 million, %)

Item	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2012-16 CAGR
Gross production	63,856	71,227	79,721	89,704	107,328	130,510	135,155	88,775
YOY growth rate	6.17	11.54	11.92	12.52	19.64	25.91	3.55	13.31%

* Source: Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (yearly production data, 2018)

Along with the growing market, the industry is also expanding. In 2017, the number of cosmetics manufacturers surpassed the 2,000 mark, up 70 percent from 2014. The number of brand holders exceeded 10,000, which is a whopping 200 percent greater when compared to the numbers in 2014, proving that the industry is indeed at its peak.

Export Status of Korean Cosmetics

Korea's cosmetics industry was in the export-deficit category until early 2010 but has since grown rapidly, thanks to the Korean Wave that brought cultural awareness, such as dramas and K-pop, to surrounding Asian countries including China. In 2017, the exports of Korean cosmetics amounted to USD 4.96 billion, more than four times that of 2013, with Korea emerging as one of the leading cosmetics exporters in the world.

Cosmetics Exports by Country

(Unit: USD 1 million)

Ranking	Country	Exports					Average Annual Increase (5 years/%)
		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
1	France	13,994	14,532	12,682	12,928	14,863	0.5
2	US	8,011	8,351	8,510	8,607	9,266	2.7
3	Germany	8,115	8,079	6,975	7,165	7,486	-3.0
4	Korea	1,219	1,854	2,848	4,087	4,860	40.3
5	Italy	3,776	3,931	3,762	4,290	4,784	5.1

* Source: UN Data (2018) and Korea Cosmetic Industry Institute (2018)

* Classified according to Korean cosmetic standards / excluding re-import and re-export

Based on 2017 export data, Korea became the fourth largest exporter of cosmetics in the world, surpassing top cosmetic producers such as Italy and Japan. However, the growing trend appears more evident when looking at the export-growth rates by country in the last five years where Korea was the only country whose average annual increase exceeded 40 percent.

Export and Import of Korean Cosmetics

(Unit: USD 1 million, %)

Year	Export		Import		Trade Balance
	Exports	YOY Growth rate	Imports	YOY Growth rate	
2013	1,231	25.9	1,275	2.9	△44
2014	1,873	52.2	1,386	8.7	487
2015	2,910	55.3	1,397	0.8	1,513
2016	4,183	43.7	1,433	2.6	2,750
2017	4,952	18.4	1,523	6.3	3,429
2018 (Jan-Nov)	5,808	-	1,486	-	4,322

* Source: Korea Customs Service and Korea Cosmetic Industry Institute (Korean cosmetic standards applied, 2018)

※ Last five-year (2013–2017) Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)
- Export: 41.6% / Import: 4.5%

Cosmetics exports (preliminary value) from January to November 2018 stood at approximately USD 5.8 billion, already well above the USD 4.9 billion of 2017, and the trade balance is also expected to break its record set in the previous year.

Growth Factors and Outlook of the Korean Cosmetics Industry

The global cosmetics market has grown every year since the official compilation of data began and the market deemed it a promising industry with high growth potential. K-beauty has been leading the global cosmetics market growth in recent years with its various strengths and is expected to continue its steady growth for the following reasons.

First, China remains strong. The Chinese market and its consumers have already become the backbone of K-beauty. China has enjoyed an annual average growth rate of 5.5 percent over the last five years and still has immense growth potential. Therefore, it is regarded as a positive factor for the Korean cosmetics industry. After Korea beat out France and became the largest exporter to China in 2016, it was temporarily set back because of diplomatic conflicts between the two countries. However, Korea reclaimed its no. 1 status in China soon after because of the continuing popularity of Korean cosmetics among Chinese people. The number of Chinese tourist groups, the so-called “big hands” who buy large quantities of Korean cosmetics, has also been steadily rising after the diplomatic crisis, and this is expected to play a positive role in the future.

Second is the growth of non-Chinese export markets. With China accounting for almost 70 percent of Korean cosmetics exports at one point, there has been growing concern on whether the industry needs to diversify its export markets. Recently, however, Korean cosmetics have become popular not only in China and Southeast Asia (ASEAN) but also in Japan, the U.S., Russia, France, and other countries. Furthermore, cosmetics consumers are increasing in emerging countries as their economic growth has led to the expansion of the middle class while advanced markets are further developing into the youth, men, and elderly categories.

□ Korean Cosmetics Exports to Major Countries

Ranking (Unit: USD 1 million, %)	2015			2016			2017		
	Country	Amount	Share	Country	Amount	Share	Country	Amount	Share
1	China	1,172	40.3	China	1,570	37.5	China	1,937	39.1
2	Hong Kong	687	23.6	Hong Kong	1,248	29.8	Hong Kong	1,222	24.7
3	US	238	8.2	US	347	8.3	US	449	9.1
4	Taiwan	139	4.8	Japan	183	4.4	Japan	225	4.5
5	Japan	138	4.7	Taiwan	136	3.3	Taiwan	154	3.1
6	Thailand	93	3.2	Thailand	118	2.8	Thailand	151	3.0
7	Singapore	66	2.3	Singapore	94	2.2	Vietnam	141	2.8
8	Vietnam	54	1.8	Vietnam	71	1.7	Singapore	104	2.1
9	Malaysia	48	1.6	Malaysia	61	1.5	Russia	96	1.9
10	Russia	36	1.2	Russia	48	1.1	Malaysia	67	1.3
	Total (125 countries)	2,910	100.0	Total (122 countries)	4,183	100.0	Total (128 countries)	4,952	100.0

* Source: Korea Customs Service and Korea Cosmetic Industry Institute (Korean cosmetic standards applied, 2018)

Third, the new Korean Wave or Hallyu craze, thanks to social media and mobile devices, will further spread K-beauty across the world. The first generation Korean Wave led by millennials had been disseminated mainly through mass media, such as TV, before online media truly began to grow in earnest. Now, the new Hallyu, which is rapidly spread by the post-millennial generation through mobile and social networking sites (SNS), has been leading the global trend. As a result, Hallyu has been spreading online, thus having a wider impact, extending its reach not only across Asia but also to North America, Europe, and South America. With this, more and more consumers are becoming interested in the beauty of Korea beyond Korean products like cosmetics.

Fourth, the Korean market will serve as a bridgehead for entering the Asian market. Cosmetics brand mergers and acquisitions (M&A) can be used as a way for global companies to effectively enter the market. Such access to Korea also serves as an intermediary bridge to effectively make inroads into the Asian markets. Recently, as several Korean cosmetics firms have been acquired by global companies, the domestic industry is undergoing rapid restructuring. Carver Korea and Style Nanda were acquired by Unilever and L'Oréal, respectively. This shows that the Korean cosmetics market and industry are regarded as attractive investment targets in the world market, implying that the growth of Asian markets will also increase the marketability of Korean cosmetics.

Finally, the government's investment and support will be able to boost the industry's growth. Currently, the Korean government is actively providing support in all directions including research and development as well as direct and indirect export assistance in its efforts to help the Korean cosmetics industry increase its competitiveness across the globe. In particular, industry deregulation and the reinforcement of small and medium enterprise development are expected to continue to improve the domestic business environment.

Conclusion

In early 2010, even when the Korean cosmetics industry began to grow in full force, no one expected it to grow as rapidly as it has today. But times have changed. Now, K-beauty has become more than just a trend but a mainstream of the global cosmetics market. As a researcher in the cosmetics industry, I am cautiously curious about how far the Korean cosmetics industry will grow.

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***The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not reflect the views of KOTRA*

Korea and China: Trade and Investment Status

Chen Guang, Honorary Ambassador of Foreign Investment Promotion for Korea, described that with South Korea's exceptional resources and China's broad markets, the two countries can complement each other and reap mutual benefits. On that note, let's take a closer look at where the trade and investment relationship between Korea and China currently stands.

01 Korea-China FTA

After nearly three years of negotiations, Korea and China signed a bilateral free trade agreement on June 1, 2015, with the aim to eliminate tariffs and other barriers in trading goods and services, promote economic growth, and strengthen economic ties. The agreement went into force on December 20, 2015.

02 Korea-China Trade

In 2017, total bilateral trade between Korea and China amounted to USD 239.9 billion.

Imports

Korean imports from China stood at USD 97.9 billion in 2017, up 12.5 percent from 2016. Main import items included integrated circuit semiconductors, fine chemicals, computers and flat panel displays.

Exports

In 2017, Korean exports to China stood at USD 142.1 billion, up 14.2 percent from the previous year. Main export items were integrated circuit semiconductors, flat panel displays and synthetic resin.

03 Korea-China Investment

Korean investment to China in 2017 reached USD 2.96 billion in declared amount, while Chinese investment to Korea stood at USD 809 million in declared amount.

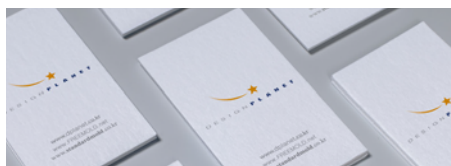
Source: Korea International Trade Association; Export-Import Bank of Korea; Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy



Every month, KOTRA Express introduces a Korean SME that seeks to expand its network by working with foreign partners. In the January issue, we take a look at one of Korea's most promising companies in the cosmetics consulting sector.



In 1998, designers from AmorePacific and Coreana Cosmetics established Design Planet with the goal of becoming Korea's top design company for cosmetics containers and packaging.



Design Planet does more than simply design containers for cosmetics products. It provides a one-stop total solution consisting of the initial planning, product branding, package design, and consultations. As a result, major Korean brands such as Coreana Cosmetics, MISSHA, TONYMOLY, the SAEM and CLIO are

a part of the company's clientele. Design Planet has also worked on brand-naming and design projects with Chinese cosmetics brands such as PROYA, JALA and CARSLAN.



The company is capable of providing a tailored solution to the needs of each company. Its customized business solution enhances the business experience for the client as well as the company's work efficiency.

In April 2005, it launched an online shopping mall (freemold.net) related to cosmetics containers and subsidiary materials. Since then, the mall has not only helped Design Planet's sales revenues but also contributed to Korea's domestic cosmetics containers and subsidiary materials industry.



Furthermore, Design Planet provides a multilingual business platform that makes the company and its quality products easily accessible for foreign firms, leading to more business opportunities with multinational companies such as Pfizer Inc. and GSK.

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Operated by KOTRA, buyKOREA is Korea's premier e-marketplace. If you want to find out more about the products mentioned above, please visit www.buyKOREA.org



WEB VER.



IOS VER.



ANDROID VER.



Economic Indicators

(Unit: USD million)

GDP	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Nominal	1,305,400	1,411,000	1,382,400	1,414,700	1,530,200
PPP	1,644,777	1,704,458	1,795,917	1,877,123	1,972,971
GDP Growth Rate (Y-o-Y) (%)	2.9	3.3	2.8	2.9	3.1

Source: The Bank of Korea, November 2018

(Unit: USD)

GDP Per Capita	2015	2016	2017	2018 (Estimate)
Nominal	27,105	27,608	29,938	32,046
PPP	36,501	37,810	39,548	41,416

Source: International Monetary Fund, October 2018

(Unit: USD million)

Foreign Trade	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Jan.-Dec 2018
Exports	559,632	572,665	526,757	495,426	573,694	505,244
Imports	515,586	525,515	436,499	406,193	478,478	444,247
Trade Balance	44,046	47,150	90,258	89,233	95,216	60,997

Source: Korea International Trade Association, November 2018

(Unit: KRW)

KRW-USD Foreign Exchange Rate	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	1,126.9	1,095.0	1,053.2	1,131.5	1,160.5	1,130.8

Source: The Bank of Korea, November 2018

(Unit: USD million)

Balance of Current Account	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	50,835.0	81,148.2	84,373.0	105,939.6	99,243.0	78,460.2

Source: The Bank of Korea, November 2018



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