

Staff Roundtable Discussion

KOEI TECMO's Unique Appeal and Diversity: The Driving Force Behind World-Class Entertainment

This roundtable discussion brings together employees from diverse cultural backgrounds who draw on their different perspectives and experiences to deliver new entertainment experiences to players around the world. Joining this roundtable are three employees from overseas who contribute to KOEI TECMO's appeal and world-class game development, discussing what makes working at KOEI TECMO so rewarding.

Roundtable Participants



Planner M
KOEI TECMO SINGAPORE Pte. Ltd.
Joined the company in 2011
Planner
Director
Birthplace: Jinan City



CG H
KOEI TECMO SOFTWARE VIETNAM CO., LTD.
Joined the company in 2014
CG Department/CG Designer/
2D Animation
Team Leader
Birthplace: Bac Ninh City



Marketing S
KOEI TECMO GAMES CO., LTD. (KTG)
Joined the company in 2020
Global Marketing Division/Marketing Department
In charge of overseas marketing for *Nioh 3*
Birthplace: Taipei City

What Led Them to Choose KOEI TECMO From Their Home Countries

Planner M I'm from Jinan City and joined the company in 2011. In mainland China, *ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS* and *Uncharted Waters* series are wildly popular with many fans. I was no exception. I was totally hooked on them as a student, and what really grabbed me was that rich sense of history that is a hallmark of KOEI TECMO games. I joined KOEI TECMO with the dream of working in game development someday, and honestly, that excitement hasn't faded one bit. I started out as a programmer, but after going through training in Japan, I made the switch to game planning. That was partly because it aligned with my own interests, and partly because the company encouraged me to go that direction. Since then, I've worked on a number of titles, including *Samurai Cats*, *Uncharted Waters VI*, and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms Hadou*. And right now, I'm involved in a brand-new title that's still in development.

CG H I'm from Bac Ninh City, and I joined the company right out of college in 2014. Back when I was job hunting, Vietnam's game market wasn't nearly as large as it is now. That's when I came across a job opening at KOEI TECMO SOFTWARE VIETNAM (KTV). I knew KOEI TECMO was behind some huge global titles, had top-tier tech, and was steadily growing. So, I immediately knew that I wanted to work there.

I'm currently responsible for 2D animation on *Romance of the Three Kingdoms Hadou*. I also lead KTV's 2D animation team, overseeing the overall quality of our work. Most recently, I've been working on titles such as *Haruka: Beyond the Stream of Time Ryugu no Miko*, *NOBUNAGA'S AMBITION: Shutsujin*, and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms Hadou*.

Marketing S I'm from Taipei City, and I joined as a fresh graduate in 2020. In Taiwan, KOEI TECMO is widely known for its historical and action games. What really stands out to me is how many of KOEI TECMO's history-based games are crafted so that you naturally pick up historical knowledge just by playing. I believe games can be a gateway to learning, so I was drawn to the idea of creating games that offer that kind of experience, and that led me to pursue a job at the company.

I currently work in the marketing department, where I'm responsible for promoting console and PC titles such as *Wo Long 2: Wings of Ember*.

A Corporate Culture that Turns Fun into a Successful Business

Marketing S KOEI TECMO is a long-established Japanese game company, so before I joined, I expected a pretty stiff corporate culture. But it wasn't like how I expected at all, and I mean that in a good way. I feel that the company never rests on its past

successes and is always pushing itself to create something new. And I think part of the reason the company has been able to keep growing on such a stable business footing is that the culture here values not only making things fun and high-quality, but also whether they actually work as a business. How do you all feel about this?

Planner M I agree. I think the company really has a strong business mindset. When I first joined, I tended to think about game specs and features mostly from the user's point of view, asking myself whether they'd be fun to play. But as I had more discussions with my senior colleagues back then, I learned that it's not just about fun. You also have to look at the bigger picture, like development costs and budget constraints, and ask whether the whole thing actually works as a business.

CG H I think that's the result of all those efforts coming together. But if I had to name one thing that really stands out to me as part of our company culture, it's the drive to keep improving our products so we can deliver better experiences. With each new entry in a series, there's always an expectation that it will surpass the previous one. In internal reviews held after a title is released, people don't just point out problems. They also offer concrete suggestions on how to improve the quality even more next time. I truly get the sense that this is a place where we're constantly encouraged to learn and refine our work, with everyone pulling in the same direction to make better games.

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Coming Together as One Team Across Languages and Distance

Planner M I've also been impressed by how much our IT environment has improved since I first joined, especially when it comes to supporting communication across different languages. Nowadays, we can translate internal chat messages with just one click. That's made a huge difference in smoothing out conversations between people who aren't as comfortable in Japanese and those who aren't as confident in English.

CG H I also had the chance to travel from Vietnam to Japan for training, and that helped me pick up enough Japanese to handle basic communication. The training gave me a much better sense of why things are done a certain way in Japan and what the thinking is behind different instructions. Now I'm able to explain that context to my colleagues back in Vietnam. I think it's really helped us understand each other better, brought us closer to the Japan team, and made everything run more smoothly since then.

Marketing S Another thing I appreciate is that the company actually supports language learning. There's support available with online courses and language exams, so if you ever want to grow your skills, there's always a way to learn. And it's not just languages. The online courses also have a lot of content that's useful for everyday work, which really helps with professional development.

Creating Games That Resonate Worldwide: Bridging Cultures Through Nuanced Localization

Planner M For KOEI TECMO, which has its sights set on becoming The World's No. 1 Digital Entertainment Company, having employees from diverse countries and cultural backgrounds is absolutely essential. Take historical games, for instance. Even when we're marketing the same title, which historical figures we choose to highlight can change depending on the country or region. Zheng Chenggong, who appears in *Romance of the Three Kingdoms Hadou*, is quite popular in Taiwan, isn't he, S-san?

Marketing S That's right. Zheng Chenggong is a very well-known historical figure in Taiwan. In fact, when he was introduced in the Traditional Chinese version of the mobile game *Romance of the Three Kingdoms Hadou*, we announced him as a newly added popular character. That drew a lot of attention from local players and was very well received.

On the other hand, we faced the opposite situation when promoting *Nioh 3*, an action game based on Japanese history, in Europe and North America. Characters like Takeda Shingen just aren't that well known over there, so mentioning his name alone doesn't mean much to players. That's why we tailor our messaging to each region's historical knowledge and cultural context. For instance, we might add a little extra description, like "a Sengoku-period warlord who left his mark on Japanese history."

CG H That kind of approach also extends to the internal guidelines we've been developing, where we've been putting more thought into understanding different countries and regions. One example is hand gestures, where the position or shape of the hands and fingers can convey different meanings. There was one case where a character's dance moves unintentionally included a hand gesture that has an inappropriate meaning in some countries. At that point, KTV consulted with the development team in Japan, and we decided not to use it. Understanding these cultural differences is essential to ensuring that users around the world can enjoy our games with confidence.

Using Your Background to Thrive in a Global Environment

CG H Sometime in the future, I'd like to take on the challenge of becoming a CG director, with the goal of creating even higher-quality CG work. I also hope that our Vietnam studio can become an essential part of KOEI TECMO's game development. Vietnam's gaming industry is growing rapidly, and when I tell people I work at KTV, they often say, "Really? How can I join?" At the end of the day, I just want to keep making better games together with colleagues who love games as much as I do, no matter what country they're from.

Planner M Even when people play the same game, what they find fun—and what feels off to them—can vary widely from person to person. So, if KOEI TECMO wants to reach more players around the world and give them a great experience, I think it's important to value the perspectives of employees with diverse backgrounds. That's another reason why I want to keep learning about different cultures and how they differ. Ultimately, I want to contribute to the company's growth by delivering content that more and more players around the world can truly enjoy.

Marketing S I'd also like to make more use of my skills and background in work aimed at overseas markets. For example, I'd love to try creating new touchpoints with users, like holding in-person events in regions where we haven't had many opportunities in the past. I feel that the local perspective you naturally have from being from a different place can be a real strength.



Online roundtable discussion