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Expediting Growth of Business for Air-to-water Heat Pumps for Europe

First Japanese manufacturer ¹ releases new product for homes using natural refrigerant

Investment of approximately 50 billion yen investment to increase production and boost technology development and marketing

Osaka, Japan – [Panasonic Corporation](#) today announced that its Heating & Ventilation A/C Company is expediting its growth strategy for its air-to-water (A2W) heat pumps business in Europe. The company plans to release three new environmentally conscious models for homes (with different heating capacities) using natural refrigerants in Europe in May 2023, a first for a Japanese manufacturer, ¹ and to more than double the lineup by fiscal year ending in March 2026. To meet active demand it is investing approximately 50 billion yen up to fiscal year ending in March 2026 to enhance production capacity at both its factories in the Czech Republic and Malaysia and to boost technology development capabilities at its new R&D Center and expand its cloud-based maintenance solutions business and marketing.

A2W is a heating system that captures heat from the air to create hot water for use in homes. Demand in Europe is growing owing to its lower environmental impact due to less CO2 emissions compared to fossil fuel-using heaters.

Panasonic began sales in Europe in 2008 of its A2W Aquarea, developed based on energy-saving technology refined with its Eco Cute² and air conditioners. Key features include its heating function which remains unchanged even in cold regions and can be used for cooling in warmer areas. Remote monitoring services are provided via the cloud. The growth strategy of the A2W business is as follows.

1. [Environmental technology] 2023 to see the first release by Japanese manufacturer¹ of product using natural refrigerants, with the lineup to more than double to fiscal year ending in March 2026

The global warming impacts of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs),³ used as the refrigerants of air conditioners, A2W, and similar equipment, led to them being designated for gradual production and consumption phaseout under the Montreal Protocol⁴ (Kigali Amendment) in October 2016, which came into effect in January 2019. Air conditioner manufacturers now must rapidly switch to refrigerants with low greenhouse impacts.

In May 2023 Panasonic will be the first Japanese manufacturer¹ to release three new home models (with different heating capacities) of A2W using R290, a natural refrigerant with extremely low greenhouse impacts. The plan is to more than double the lineup by fiscal year ending in March 2026.

2. [Organizational reform] Approximately 50 billion yen will be invested to boost production and enhance technology development and marketing.

Panasonic will invest approximately 50 billion yen up to fiscal year ending in March 2026 to boost production and enhance technology development and marketing to meet the active demand for A2W in Europe. Currently it manufactures A2W at its factories in the Czech Republic and Malaysia. In the medium term, it will broadly expand its production capacity, aiming for a structure capable of 1 million units. Up to fiscal year ending in March 2026 the company will expand 50% of its training centers and showrooms to supply installation workers with the necessary techniques and know-how for R290 and other natural refrigerants to form a comprehensive program.

Furthermore, in 2023 it will open an R&D Center in Europe for the air quality and air conditioning business including A2W to heighten technology development capabilities, enabling it to swiftly meet local needs.

3. [Enhancing ongoing customer touchpoints] Expanding the maintenance solutions business using the A2W cloud and increasing the number of engineers

Currently Panasonic operates its own remote monitoring in Europe utilizing the cloud to constantly track the operating status of A2W and detect anomalies instantly. The company has also built a service structure in Denmark to rapidly inspect the condition of equipment and perform repairs onsite. This maintenance solutions business will spread to other European countries to enable the use of the products with long-term safety, reliability, and comfort. The team of engineers with expert knowledge and sales and customer services staff will also be expanded.

Looking toward the future, the company will add functions such as failure prediction via the cloud and use of the AI to reduce heat loss with heat exchange units and total control of air quality and air conditioning equipment according to air quality sensing, achieving both improved comfort and energy saving with the best solutions for the customers' needs.

Panasonic is striving to create spaces that are pleasant to be in while being fully conscious of the global environment, making the maximum use of its technological and manufacturing capabilities as well as its know-how of people's lifestyles refined through its many years of business.

1. For home A2W with heating and cooling functions using the R290 natural refrigerant in all of Europe. Research by Panasonic, as of October 03, 2022.
2. Heat pump water heater that uses natural refrigerant so called "Eco Cute" in Japan.
3. Examples include R410A, an alternative to CFCs, which has a high greenhouse gas impact.
4. An environmental agreement aiming to protect the ozone layer. Its goal is to reduce the production and consumption of substances that may destroy the ozone layer. It has a defined schedule to reduce use of these substances.

[Images]



A2W new product



A2W installation image



The Czech factory



A2W cloud image

Photos in the above article can be downloaded from the pages of individual releases from Panasonic Newsroom Japan (Link: <https://news.panasonic.com/global/>).

About Panasonic Corporation

Panasonic Corporation offers products and services for a variety of living environments, ranging from homes to stores to offices and cities. There are five businesses at the core of Panasonic Corporation: Living Appliances and Solutions Company, Heating & Ventilation A/C Company, Cold Chain Solutions Company, Electric Works Company and China and Northeast Asia Company. The operating company reported consolidated net sales of 3,647.6 billion yen for the year ended March 31, 2022. Panasonic Corporation is committed to fulfilling the mission of Life Tech & Ideas: For the wellbeing of people, society and the planet, and embraces the vision of becoming the best partner of your life with human-centric technology and innovation. Learn more about Panasonic: <https://www.panasonic.com/global/about/>

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