

# The Oregonian

## Azumano expanding into Seattle locations

**The Portland travel agency plans to buy four Seattle offices, including two in credit unions, focusing on business travel**

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Portland-based Azumano Travel, one of Oregon's largest travel agencies, planned to announce today that it is about to expand into the Seattle area with the purchase of four travel offices there.

The agency hopes to expand its corporate-travel clientele, its main revenue source, said Sho Dozono, Azumano president and chief executive officer. The company's four Seattle-area locations also will include two locations inside credit unions, giving Azumano close access to thousands of potential customers.

"The move supports our long-term business strategy of becoming a major player in the Pacific Northwest regional marketplace," Dozono said.

The four locations are managed by American Express Travel Services and will retain the American Express brand name even after Azumano takes them in December. Terms of the purchase were not disclosed.

Private companies are not required to disclose financial figures to the public, but Azumano says it has more than \$150 million in gross sales and 250 employees, making it one of the largest privately held companies in Oregon.

Two locations, at 600 Stewart St. in downtown Seattle and 7826 166th Ave. N.E. in Redmond, Wash., cater to leisure travelers. Two others are located in the Watermark Credit Union in Seattle and King County Credit Union in Issaquah, Wash.

Although the four offices will be the first retail presence for Azumano in the Seattle area, the company has been active there for many years, Dozono said.

Azumano International, an affiliate of Azumano Travel, has brought thousands of Japanese tourists to Seattle for Mariners professional baseball games. Since 2001, Azumano has been the Mariners' official travel agent.

Azumano's nine offices range from Eugene to Vancouver.

Dozono is co-chairman of Portland's International Air Service Committee, which is attempting to lure nonstop flights between Portland International Airport and Tokyo on Northwest Airlines. In helping to attract nonstop air service between Portland and Europe on the German airline Lufthansa, Dozono's company pledged to buy \$3.5 million in leisure travel tickets in the first year of the service, which started March 31.

Dozono has said similar discussions are taking place with Northwest Airlines.

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