

《阿里巴巴进军足球界获恒大50%股权》

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Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group is to join the soccer industry, having agreed to buy 50 percent of shares in Guangzhou Evergrande, the defending Chinese Super League champion said on Thursday. Alibaba will pay up to 1.2 billion yuan (\$191.9 million) to acquire the shares, club sources said.

The club, owned by Chinese property giant Guangzhou Evergrande Real Estate Group, last season became the first Chinese club to win the Asian Football Confederation(AFC) Champions League.

At a joint press conference, Alibaba founder and chairman Ma Yun and real estate tycoon Xu Jiayin announced this much anticipated co-operation.

Evergrande's blitz to conquer the Chinese top league has left many dumbfounded. Promoted to the Super League in 2011, the Guangzhou club won the title in the very season before they went on to dominate 2012 and 2013.

In 2013, the club claimed the AFC Champions League crown, becoming China's first Asian champion since the country launched the professional league in 1994.