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ANTHONY FENSOM



Hometown: Brisbane, Australia or Tokyo, Japan

Languages: English & (average) Japanese

Years in Japan: 6

Favorite place in Japan: Tokyo

Role model: People who achieve their dreams

Places of inspiration: Libraries, bookshops, lookouts, scenic spots

Currently reading: *"The Ugly Game"* by Heidi Blake & Jonathan Calvert

Social media: Twitter: @a_d_fensom

Secret skill: Craft beer fan

Thoughts on print journalism: Journalism is alive and well, even if the format may change.

RICHARD SMART



Hometown: Sheffield, Britain

Languages: I speak and read English and Japanese.

Most memorable interviewee: I've interviewed a number of prominent figures, but always found average people in absurd situations to give the most meaningful comments that create the best narratives for stories.

Years in journalism: Living and writing in Japan since 2002

Currently reading: I like to read the writers in nonfiction and fiction that point out the way the world works, or often doesn't. I currently have books open by Theodor Adorno, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and Daniel Kahnemann. I may not finish any of them.

Currently listening to: I am a regular listener to jazz DJ Gilles Peterson's show and podcasts such as *In Our Time*, which covers the thinkers that helped us get to where we are today.

Thoughts on print journalism: I'm hopeful for the future of print media, but perhaps that's because I am excessively optimistic in a lot of situations.

XIMENA CRIALES



Hometown: Mexico City, Mexico

Languages: Spanish, Italian, English, Portuguese, and Japanese

Years in design and in Japan: Designing six years, in Japan five years

Favorite place in Japan: Miyajima, Hiroshima and Wakkanai, Hokkaido

Role model: My parents, and in terms of design, Lance Wyman, an American graphic designer and creator of the logo and icons of the 1968 Summer Olympic Games in Mexico. I had the pleasure of listening to a speech he gave at my university when I was a student in Mexico.

Most memorable design in *The Journal*: The February issue was the first magazine I designed from cover to cover.

Currently reading: *Happiness: A Guide to Developing Life's Most Important Skill*, by Matthieu Ricard, considered the "happiest person in the world," and *Like Water for Chocolate*, by Laura Esquivel. There is a film with the same title based on this popular Mexican novel.

Hobbies: Reading, photography and long walks with my husband.



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THE AGE OF SOCIAL— A CLIMATE OF CHANGE



John Amari
john@custom-media.com

Regular as clockwork. As one season in Japan seamlessly gives way to another, September sees summer bid adieu and fall take its rightful place in nature's fixed, yet flexible, merry-go-round.

Like its seasons, Japan is a country of change, contrasts, and constancy: tradition rubs shoulders with modernity; the old walks hand-in-hand with the new; custom often meets with innovation.

This issue of *The Journal* takes a magnifying glass to these issues. The lead story, (page 10), considers some of the challenges facing the country's best-known marques, as they seek to stay relevant in the "age of social."

The theme of Japan's place in a fast-changing world is taken up again in an examination of corporate governance reform (page 18). A sharp contrast is drawn between Japan's efforts to reform its business environment and those of competing countries.

What's more, a key element in the country's drive to be more competitive is its human resources capital. Can Japan internationalize and learn the lessons of cutting edge organizations (page 21)? Or will its long, illustrious, and often change-averse culture keep progress at bay?

Once again, a Japan native—who has learned to shine both domestically and internationally—is the subject of our regular column, "Voices of Japan" (page 24). As founder of the International Conference for Women in Business, Kaori Sasaki is the embodiment of many conversations in this edition: she is a trailblazer and an agent of change, who is steeped in the best of Japan.

And if the country can be described as being at the center of a tug of war between the forces of globalization and the guardians of heritage, the collaboration between YouTube and Toei (page 30) suggests a third way. That path enables both sides to be winners.

The Journal sat down with some of this nation's leading entrepreneurs of the Internet age for a behind-the-scenes look at how a Japanese heritage brand and a sprightly US company have bridged cultural and generational gaps to create something new.

The intertwined themes of cross-cultural relations, US-Japan collaboration, and challenging or changing mindsets permeate even the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) section.

The Chubu-chapter writes of the mind-boggling bid to fly around the world using only solar power (page 44), and gives us good reason to attend the 2015 Chubu Diversity Summit in October (page 45).

We take another peek at the building, beneficial US-Japan relationship that is being crafted through the Furusato Project (page 47), while ACCJ leaders capture the sense of occasion they witnessed when Carnegie Hall came to town (page 48) and the Special Olympics went to Los Angeles (page 54).

Rounding out the September issue are a few words about the close collaboration between the ACCJ and the Japan Market Expansion Competition (page 52). The chamber's involvement with the community at large is underlined by both Emeritus President Tom Whitson, and ACCJ President Jay Ponazecki (page 43). As always, we wish readers an enjoyable read, and encourage your feedback. ■

CORRECTION: On page 29 of the August issue, the caption should be—"Bloomberg is animating stories online, including this one resembling a video game."

A flagship publication of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ), *The Journal* (formerly the *ACCJ Journal*) is a business magazine with a 52-year history.

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FROM JAPAN

Tweets in Japanese from people and media



TOP HASHTAGS

This month: Popular tags from the top 40 list



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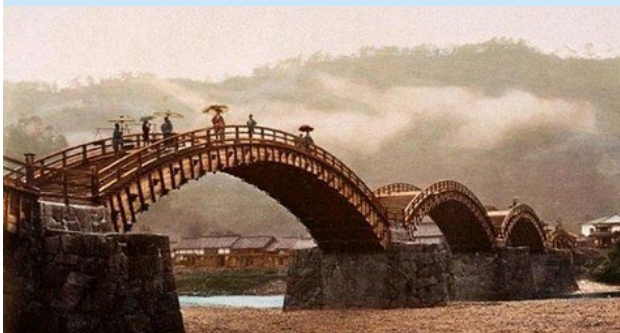
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30 Photos of Japan a Century Ago

In 2013, a photo album by photographer Kozaburo Tamamura (1856-1923), created by the request of an American publisher, was sold at an auction in Britain. These pictures portray the scenery as well as people's lives in Japan over 100 years ago.

<http://grapee.jp/en/38391>



多くの職場で今、課題になっている「女性の活躍」。

その実現は、企業として働きたい女性の気持ちに応えるだけでなく、人口減少が進むなかで貴重な働き手を確保する重要な「経営戦略」でもあります。

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/business_tokushu/2015_0813.html

NHKニュース

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For women to stay in employment longer

One of the challenges that many workplaces face nowadays is achieving "women's success." By achieving it, companies are not only meeting women's demands; they are also developing an important "management strategy" to retain workers despite a population decrease.*

* Translations of original content in Japanese

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15 #jobs

26 #news

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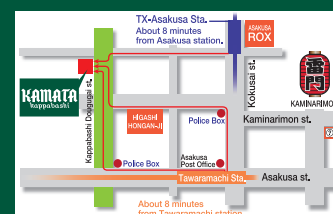


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Is BRAND JAPAN trending?

By Anthony Fensom



Back in the 1980s, Japan did not need an official Cool Japan campaign to prove its global street credibility. Every kid wanted a Sony Walkman or a Nintendo games console, among a seemingly endless stream of hit products from Japanese companies. But with the post-bubble slide costing Japanese corporations billions of dollars in lost brand value—not to mention the damage caused to the national image by the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster—can Japan get its cool back?



“Sony’s [co-founder Akio] Morita and Nintendo’s [former President and CEO Satoru] Iwata were creatives who understood what consumers wanted. They built products with broad appeal because they approached the development process from the standpoint of the guy on the street.

“Morita wanted to take his music with him wherever he went, and we got the Walkman. Iwata wanted fun, challenging games that everyone could enjoy, and we got the Super Mario Brothers video game.

“That’s not possible at Toshiba or Panasonic or Hitachi. Japan is capable of producing more Moritas and Iwatas, but the question is where should we be looking for them?” asks Daniel Fath, vice president of Tokyo-based Total Communications K.K.

IS JAPAN BACK?

Complacency and arrogance are two of the charges leveled by brand experts at some of Japan’s fallen tech giants. But at least at a national level, there is evidence that the nation of anime, manga, and a myriad mascots is starting to win back fans.

For the first time in the ranking’s history, Japan took top spot in FutureBrand’s 2014 Country Brand Index, which measured 75 countries on metrics that include value system, quality of life, business potential, heritage and culture, and tourism,

based on the opinions of more than 2,500 respondents.

Japan overtook Switzerland to gain top place, with respondents rating it highly for technology, consumer electronics, automotive, household appliances, transportation, and luxury goods.

According to FutureBrand, a strong national brand provides a tangible competitive advantage. The brand strategy and design consultancy asserts that, “people are more likely to visit, recommend, and do business with a country brand. And twice as many people say they would buy products from a country brand than they would from a country.”



\$9 TRILLION INDUSTRY

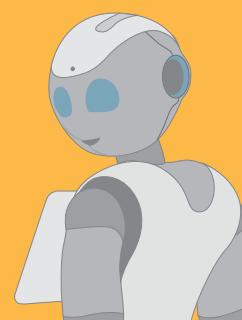
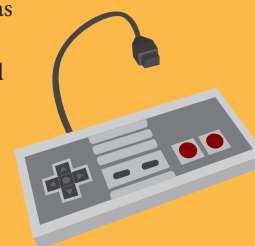
The value of a strong national brand is shown by forecasts that the global cultural industry, including fashion, film, and food, will reach \$9 trillion by 2020.

While Cool Japan originated in 2002, it was officially adopted by Tokyo in 2011 in response to the March 2011 triple disaster.

Run by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), the administration of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has pledged \$1 billion to the Cool Japan campaign over the next two decades, with the aim of earning an extra \$100 million or more a year.

The Cool Japan Fund Inc.—a public-private partnership set up in 2013 with the aim of supporting and developing a market for Japanese goods and services overseas—has backed Japanese TV translations abroad, launched a Japanese food court in Singapore, and established new shopping centers in China and Malaysia, among other activities.

This follows similar moves by neighboring South Korea, which has invested \$1 billion in its own global cultural war chest, and China with its Confucius Institute, a non-profit intended to promote the country’s language and culture around the world.



DEFINING COOL

However, like parents telling their kids what to wear, not everyone thinks that the government can decide what is cool.

“Cool is in the eye of the beholder: it’s not something that you can claim to be,” says Singapore-based Martin Roll, author of *Asian Brand Strategy: Building and Sustaining Strong Global Brands in Asia*. “Brands and countries should be very careful about referring to themselves as being cool.”

According to Roll, Cool Japan has received mixed reviews for failing to distinguish, brand, and engage with overseas audiences. Famous Japanese artists such as Takashi Murakami have reportedly distanced themselves from the program.

Eric Wedemeyer, CEO of Tokyo-based Tactus Associates Inc., helped Canada build its brand in Japan with a local branding initiative. According to Wedemeyer, Cool Japan may struggle because its proponents just do not “get” cool.

“The people running the initiative have no understanding of how cool Japan actually is. They’re just putting things into a bucket and trying to flog it, without any understanding of how brands work strategically,” he says.

While Wedemeyer says building a national brand is far more difficult than a company brand, there are common elements that could be tied together into a consistent theme for Japan. It could cover from traditional culture to high-tech *monozukuri* (craftsmanship), along with *omotenashi* (Japanese hospitality), and other elements such as anime and manga. The only problem, though, is finding someone with the authority and knowledge to drive it.

JAPAN 3.0

Competition from Asian rivals has put pressure on Japan to create “version 3.0” to regain competitiveness, argues Roll, who says Japanese companies have lost the stature they previously enjoyed.

“Japan needs to innovate further. They probably got some leeway during the recession of the ’90s and into this millennium, and Japan is still one of the biggest economies. But now, with [South] Korea showing that markets other than Japan and the US can create strong brands and globalize their industries, and with China in the making, this is putting a lot of pressure on Japan,” he says.

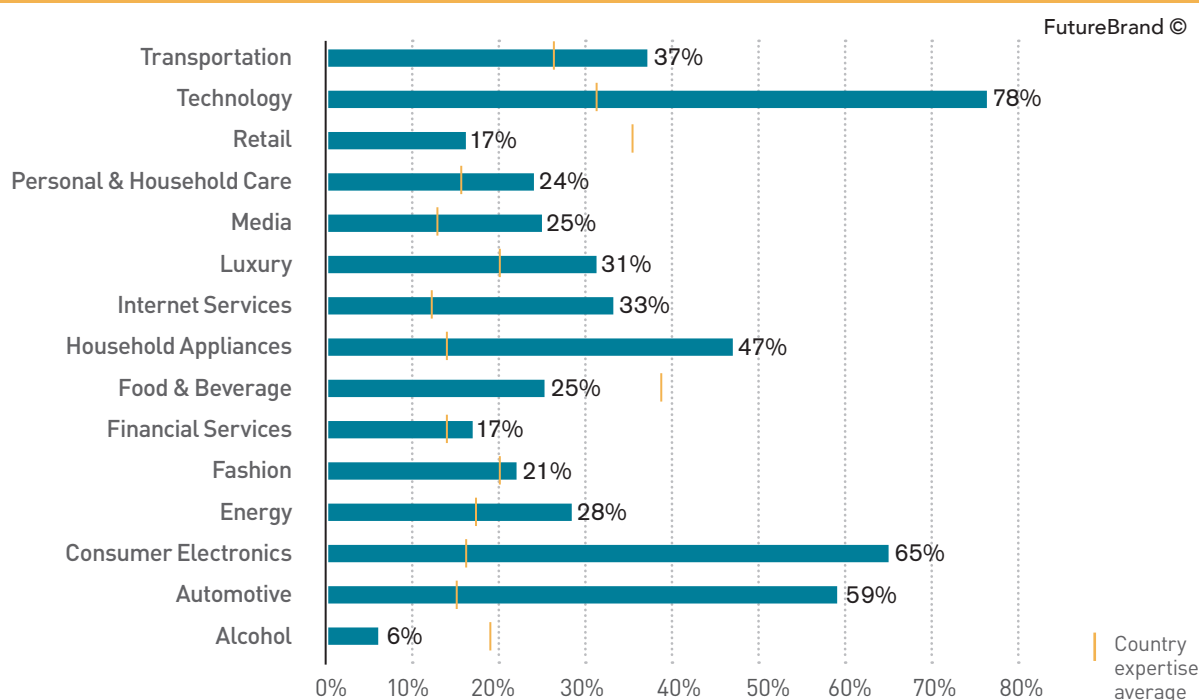
Others point to the increased speed of innovation—sometimes called the speed of social—required in the modern, social media world.

“The [product] cycle used to be five to 10 years, but is now months or weeks. Look at the Chinese—[Xiaomi Technology Co., Ltd.] puts out a new phone every week. We call it the speed of social—you see it in China, you see it in [South] Korea, you see it in the States. But that’s just part of the culture that’s difficult to overcome,” says Jeremy Epstein, vice president, marketing, at US enterprise software company Sprinklr, which recently expanded into Japan.

No Japanese company made the top 10 of BrandZ’s 2015 survey of the 100 most valuable global brands, which was led by US tech giants Apple Inc., Google Inc., and Microsoft Corporation. Japan’s best placing was Toyota, ranked 30th with an estimated brand value of \$28 billion, with Honda in 78th place and SoftBank ranked 98th, in a group dominated by North American companies.

Similarly, Forbes’ 2015 positioning of the world’s most valuable brands ranked Apple, Microsoft, and Google its top three. Its top Japan brand was Toyota in 8th place, with an estimated brand value of \$37.8 billion, behind Samsung at \$37.9 billion. Other Japanese companies to crack the top 100 comprised Honda (23rd), Lexus (66th), Canon (73rd), Nissan (75th), Sony (79th) and Panasonic (93rd).

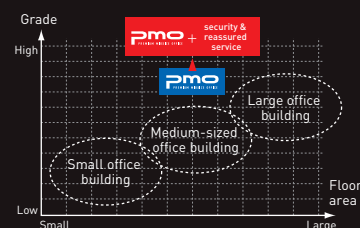
WHAT IS JAPAN MOST EXPERT AT?



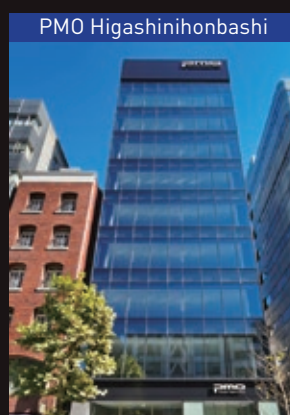
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BUILDING GLOBAL BRANDS

Asked for examples of Japan's current top brands, Roll nominated Toyota along with Uniqlo Co., Ltd. for "taking the world by storm" in basic casual fashion, as well as technology company Canon Inc. and All Nippon Airways Co. Ltd. Wedemeyer agreed, citing carmaker Lexus and retailers Uniqlo and Muji as Japanese companies that have consciously considered branding.

"Uniqlo is a brand-oriented company in a way that very, very few Japanese companies are—they understood that from the beginning," says Wedemeyer.

"They brought in Wieden+Kennedy, an American agency, to build a brand, something that had actual values and position, a purpose in the world, and were very disciplined about rolling that out. They succeeded 90 percent on good branding and execution, and there's huge potential for other Japanese companies to succeed in the same way."

Epstein cited technology firm Line Corporation, Ltd. as a "perfect example" of a successful Japanese brand, which had helped Japanese communicate in the wake of the 2011 disasters.

"Here's a company that is a Japanese arm of a Korean company, but has a uniquely Japanese angle, and they [said to themselves]: we've got this earthquake that is literally a disruption; how do you respond? The phones are down, so we react at the speed of social to create this social messaging system that uses the Internet so people can communicate. Most businesses didn't see the disruption; Line physically felt it and did something about it," he says.

THE AGE OF SOCIAL

Amid greater demand for innovation at the so-called speed of social, how can Japanese people and companies based in the nation respond? The branding experts cited Japan's design, technology, quality, and service culture as aspects that both local and overseas organizations operating in Japan could adapt as part of their global brand experience.

"What Japan brings is that deep appreciation for the experience, which you can really feel at Kyoto's Zen gardens or the traditional Japanese tea ceremony. These are the cultural aspects companies can borrow from, because you can't win alone on pure product functionality or 'BS' marketing," Epstein says.

With a strong focus on localization, Epstein said his company took time in choosing the right Japanese partner and had provided its local operation with the freedom to make necessary changes. "Otherwise, you're just the arrogant American or European who thinks you can just show up in Japan and do what you want, and you'll get blown out of the water."

Wedemeyer suggests the Japan brand is readily available as a tool for local companies, should they wish to use it.

"It's an advantage for companies operating out of countries with strong brands that they have that available. You see American companies using their Americanness sometimes, and staying well away from it at other times—depending on what they want their brand to be," he says.

Roll points to a "sea change" in Japanese boardrooms with the retirement of the older generation, suggesting this is an opportunity for innovation at some famous but tired brands.

"Imagine if Sony came up with a digital platform where they merged the best of Apple, the best of BMW, the 'Internet of Things,' and showed us things that go way beyond, including TV, your alarm, your insurance, school, [and] just put it all together? That could be one way that brand Japan could get back on the block, and Sony would have the muscle to move in there," he says.

"Overall, it's time for Japan to step up—they have the opportunity but need to shed the arrogance and complacency, and be willing to step outside the comfort zone. It's about shedding a little of this sense of face, seniority, and tradition. South Koreans have shown they were willing to sacrifice for the benefit of a global growth story, and Japan should dare to do that to get back on the global block. I can't see why they couldn't do that." ■

"Cool is in the eye of the beholder: it's not something that you can claim to be."



COUNTRY BRAND INDEX: TOP 20 COUNTRIES

2014-15 RANKINGS

FutureBrand ©

1		JAPAN	11		NEW ZEALAND
2		SWITZERLAND	12		UNITED KINGDOM
3		GERMANY	13		FINLAND
4		SWEDEN	14		SINGAPORE
5		CANADA	15		ICELAND
6		NORWAY	16		NETHERLANDS
7		UNITED STATES	17		FRANCE
8		AUSTRALIA	18		ITALY
9		DENMARK	19		UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
10		AUSTRIA	20		SOUTH KOREA



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Companies rushing TO RAISE FUNDS NOW

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Traders on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange

Businesses are expected to go to the world's securities markets and do a record amount of fundraising this year. Although long-term interest rates in the West and other economies are still on the wane, there is talk of the US Federal Reserve raising rates by the end of the year. That is motivating a lot of companies to get cash now while interest rates are low and share prices high.

During the seven months through July, businesses went to stock and bond markets to raise about \$1.96 trillion, 2 percent more than they raised in the year-earlier period. It was the highest January–July figure since data began being collected in 1995.

Public offerings and other share placements accounted for a record \$560 billion, while corporations issued \$1.4 trillion worth of bonds. The biggest jump came in North America, where companies raised \$840 billion.

In July, Charter Communications, a US cable television provider, issued bonds worth \$15.5 billion to cover the

acquisition of Time Warner Cable. Helped by the strong stock market, leading generic-drug maker Actavis, now known as Allergan, this year raised \$4.1 billion through a share offering.

Gerald Keefe, head of corporate banking of Citibank Japan, said a lot of the fundraising activity has been to pay for acquisitions and to improve companies' financial health.

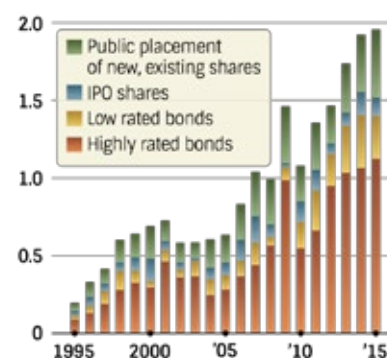
In Japan, where the Nikkei Stock Average has been hovering around 15-year highs, companies raised \$15.9 billion during the first seven months of the year, up 4 percent from the year-earlier period. Sony had a ¥420 billion (\$3.33 billion) share offering in July. Rakuten, which operates Japan's leading online retail platform, placed ¥180 billion worth of shares in June.

There were plenty of share offerings in emerging countries as well, though corporations in Europe are not going to the bond market so much these days, mostly due to the Greek debt crisis.

If the current pace of marketplace fundraising continues, this kind of financing is expected to reach last year's global record of \$3 trillion. The securities boom largely stems from corporate sentiment that today's low financing costs are unlikely to remain much longer.

Janet Yellen, chair of the Federal Reserve Board, in testimony to Congress in July, mentioned that it would be appropriate to raise the short-term interest rate "at some point this year," as long as the US economic recovery remains on track. Some estimates peg "at some point this year" as being [September]. If the

Global fund raising by stock, bond issuance in trillions of dollars



As of January–July each year
Source: Dealogic

Fed does raise US rates, those in Europe and Japan would be affected, and stock market confusion could ensue.

According to British bank Barclays, yields on dollar-denominated corporate bonds carrying AA ratings are trending upward and are currently around 2.5 percent. This is far below the 6 percent level of July 2008 and shows why companies want to secure financing now.

On the other hand, the investors buying all the bonds and shares—those who are actually doing the lending—are becoming more selective. "Investors are shifting their money to relatively safer assets, preparing for interest rate hikes," said Mana Nakazora, chief credit analyst of BNP Paribas Securities (Japan).

In the corporate bond market, issuances of highly rated bonds are at a record high, while issuances of bonds with BB ratings or below—junk bonds—have dropped 18 percent. Few investors want to buy bonds from companies that already carry heavy debt burdens and will have even more financial difficulty when interest rates start hiking north. ■

Fund Raising in 2015

Company name	Funds raised; in billions of dollars	Period
Corporate bonds		
AT&T (U.S.)	17.5	April
Microsoft (U.S.)	10.7	February
H.J. Heinz (U.S.)	10.0	June
Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (U.S. & Europe)	3.0	April
IPO shares		
Guotai Junan Securities (China)	4.9	June
Aena (Spain)	4.8	February
Sunrise Communications (Switzerland)	2.4	February
Public placement of new, existing shares		
Banco Santander (Spain)	8.8	January
Telefonica Brasil (Brazil)	5.4	April
Actavis (U.S.)	4.1	February

Source: Dealogic

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Portuguese Folk Tale “Stone Soup” Useful for Japanese Workplaces

Innovation requires a team
founded on relationships of trust

Translation of article in *Diamond* online
by William H. Saito @whsaito



I have said, any number of times, that I believe it will not be so difficult for Japanese corporations to display creativity and regain a leading position in the world. When asked what needs to be done to this end, I suggest the three following points:

1. Build teams based on deep communication
2. Empower subordinates with authority and responsibility
3. Provide sufficient incentives for staff, based on fairness and transparency

Of the above, I have previously touched on items 2 and 3. Here, I'd like to discuss building teams based on deep communication. I define “team” as an organization composed of diverse people, who enthusiastically support one another with the aim of achieving an objective. It forms the basis of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The essential point of the team is the relationship for engaging in mutual support, but do you understand what is needed to make this happen?

You might find it surprising, but it's knowing each other's weaknesses that enables relationships of trust. By being able to have frank mutual discussions over weak points and failures, feelings of trust will be created naturally within the team.

In this context, the key person at the workplace is the supervisor. It's necessary for him to take the initiative by revealing his own weaknesses, thereby creating an environment in which members of the team feel at ease discussing their own weak points. And, since a person claiming to have no weaknesses is not considered trustworthy, no one wants him or her as a member on the team.

Recently [July 18], at TEDx Haneda 2015—a conference in which Japan Airlines Co., Ltd. (JAL) took part as a core

partner—a sense of team power was evoked. TEDx programs, which help communities, organizations, and individuals produce events at the local level, are a spin-off from the better-known Technology, Entertainment and Design conferences for innovators.

What was interesting about the recent conference is the process by which a party held after the event was planned. One organizer suggested that an aircraft hanger be used for the party. Initially, most of the others involved felt doing so would be impractical. But the person responsible at JAL persisted, persuading his colleagues to go along. The party turned out to be a lot of fun.

This case evoked memories of the Portuguese folk fable, “Stone Soup.” For those unfamiliar with the story, it concerns a traveler who, short of food, came to a village. There he told the residents he possessed an amazing stone that, when boiled in water, would produce a tasty soup. He requested the loan of a kettle and some water.

Moved by curiosity, the villagers complied, and he placed the stone in the water once it had been boiled. Taking a sip, he remarked to them that, “adding a bit of salt would make it even better.” A villager went home and

brought some salt. This process was repeated with rice, meat, vegetables, and so on being added to the pot.

In the end, the traveler invited the villagers to share his delicious meal of stone soup. What had enabled the traveler, with no provisions, to make a tasty stone soup was his ability to generate ideas and harness the efforts of others.

Back in the 1980s, “nomunication”—a word formed by combining *nomu* (Japanese for the verb to drink) with “communication”—was taken up in the *Harvard Business Review* as an important element of Japan's creativity. Of course, this does not suggest that it is good for people to go drinking together just for its own sake, but, rather, that when in their cups, people often can exchange views with more frankness than under normal circumstances.

Nevertheless, believing the practice was meaningless, many companies put an end to the custom of nomunication during the so-called two lost decades following the collapse of the bubble economy . . . [That change in custom] can be considered a major loss.

So this summer, how about trying to work at building the ties of trust

that come from being open about oneself? If conducted with sincerity, when plans and ideas are advanced, cooperative people will flock around you to collaborate in preparing a tasty “stone soup”—thereby building links for the creation of a strong team. ■

. . . it's knowing each
other's weaknesses that
enables relationships
of trust.

Full-length original article:
<http://diamond.jp/articles/-/74055>



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: ABE'S HEART IN THE RIGHT PLACE, BUT METHOD LACKING

By Martin Foster

The reform-minded spirit of Abenomics can be seen in the structure of a recently introduced Corporate Governance Code, but questions remain about how the code has been implemented, clouding future relationships between smaller Japanese companies and their shareholders.

A series of scandals involving the misuse of company funds serves to illustrate the difficult relationship between Japanese companies and their shareholders. The latest disgrace involves Toshiba Corporation, which admitted overstating profits to make it appear that it was hitting targets. As a result, share prices were artificially propped up, with incorrect signals sent to shareholders.

The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) and KPMG, Singapore, ranked 25 countries on corporate governance performance in a November 2014 report entitled *Balancing Rules and Flexibility: a study of corporate governance requirements across 25 markets*. Japan was positioned 21st, ahead of Vietnam, but behind Cambodia, China, Canada, and the Philippines, highlighting the difficult relationship between companies and capital providers.

BOARDROOM BEHAVIOR

Japan faces a battle to bring its boardroom behavior up to international standards, if it is to entice international investors to buy shares, especially those in smaller companies. A Corporate Governance Code was introduced on June 1, requiring companies to rethink shareholder relations, in much the same way that a Stewardship Code of February 2014 shook up operations for asset managers.

Abenomics is seen as a prime driver of this initiative. "Without Abenomics, corporate governance would not have started," says Kenji Shiomura, senior strategist in the Investment Strategy Department at Daiwa Securities Co., Ltd. "It is unlikely that the code would have been introduced under a different government."

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has created the necessary environment for the corporate governance code to flourish by motivating the private sector, and recognizing the limits of what the fiscally strapped public sector can do, Shiomura added.

BANKER'S PARADISE

Japan is a bank-based financial system, with systemic similarities to countries such as Germany, rather than the market-based financial systems of the United States and the United Kingdom, and has been characterized by stable cross-shareholdings between banks and companies.

At their peak in the late 1980s, over half of Japanese shares were held in such cross holding arrangements. Shiomura estimates that figure is now closer to 15 percent, and likely to fall further as banks sell to satisfy capital adequacy requirements under the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (Basel III) measures that list cross-shareholdings as risky assets.

THE NEW NORMAL

Under the new Corporate Governance Code, companies are required to file reports following annual shareholder meetings, which are concentrated in the final week of June. It was a positive surprise for Shiomura, then, that the Mizuho Financial Group not only filed their report on June 1, the day that the code was implemented, but also publicly stated that neither the bank-holding company, nor its subsidiaries—including Mizuho Bank—would engage in cross-shareholdings with other companies.

"This was a surprise," he said. "If a small business corporation or mid-ranking bank had made the announcement, then it would've had a different effect. The fact that a megabank has made this announcement makes it completely different."

2014 Corporate Governance Ranking

1	UK	14	UAE
2	US	15	New Zealand
3	Singapore	16	Philippines
4	Australia	17	Indonesia
5	India	18	Canada
6	Malaysia	19	China
7	Hong Kong	20	Cambodia
8	Russia	21	Japan
9	Brazil	22	Vietnam
10	Taiwan	23	Myanmar
11	South Africa	24	Brunei
12	Thailand	25	Laos
13	Korea		

■ Developed Markets
■ Developing Markets

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PERSUASION

Asset managers have been putting efforts into raising governance-based awareness among smaller companies to make themselves more attractive to shareholders. Hiromitsu Kamata is head of the Target Japan Department in the Fundamental Investment Group at Amundi Japan, the local arm of Paris-based Amundi Asset Management, a top-10 global asset manager.

His group maintains smallholdings of up to 5 percent in a number of Japanese companies, including a family-owned, housing-related manufacturer located in the Chubu region. Over the past three years, Kamata has persuaded the company to operate more efficiently and transparently. Under a second-generation company president, the firm has revamped its board, which now includes three outsiders, among a total of eight directors.

The growth stance that Kamata has promoted has also seen the company decide to construct a new manufacturing plant. It intends to inject more vitality in the workplace by hiring new staff in an attempt to bring down the average age of employees, which as of 2014 was about 45, eight years higher than in 2003. These policies have produced benefits for the company, resulting in a 30 percent year-on-year boost to dividends in 2014.

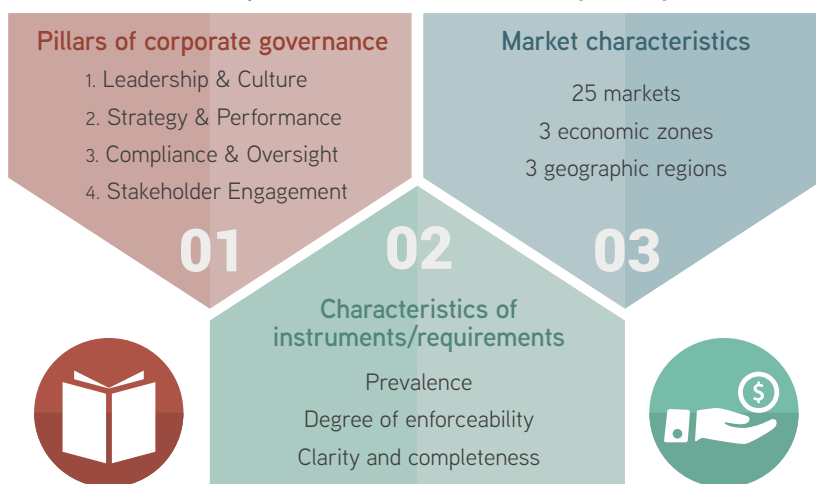
TOO MANY QUESTIONS

According to the Financial Services Agency, the purpose of the Corporate Governance Code is “to stimulate healthy corporate entrepreneurship, support sustainable corporate growth, and increase corporate value over the mid- to long-term.”

And, while Takeyuki Ishida, executive director, Institutional Shareholder Services K.K., believes the code is a positive development, he finds fault with it on a number of levels.

“First of all, the Corporate Governance Code contains too many questions—some 70 in all. Companies will be tied up in paperwork if they are to properly answer them all,” he says. For Ishida, the most important elements of the code concern the nomination and remuneration of directors.

ACCA-KPMG Corporate Governance Study Analysis Method



In the United States, the Board of Directors is the ultimate decision-making body, and works closely with a nomination and a compensation committee. These concepts are unfamiliar to many small companies in Japan, where few have such committees.

In the majority of companies based on statutory auditors, the company president holds power, and often executes it without a recognizable process, documentation, or transparency.

“If asked ‘how do you decide compensation,’ the answer is, ‘the company president sets compensation,’” Ishida says. “It is companies like this that are having a hard time responding to the new code.”

The Japanese Corporate Governance Code has been modeled on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Principles of Corporate Governance and the UK Corporate Governance Code, and is principles- rather than rule-driven.

The Japanese code borrows from the UK Corporate Governance Code in the sense that companies need to comply with reporting requirements, and explain their reasons if they do not do so. Failure to comply, and respond to demands for an explanation, may violate securities listing regulations on the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE), but the TSE has yet to release definitions of what constitutes adequate written explanation.

In addition, it was originally intended that companies would publicize relevant governance reports to shareholders ahead of annual general meetings; the

reports would form part of the discussion process between companies and investors. But, vested interests appear to have postponed this until after the annual general meeting, effectively diluting its power to influence events, Ishida says.

A LONG WAY FROM HOME

Japan has gone a long way to appoint outside directors to its boards, and statistics by Institutional Shareholder Services Inc., a leading provider of corporate governance advice and solutions, show that 55 percent of Japanese companies fulfill requirements to have two outside directors compared with 2014, and more than 94 percent have at least one outside director on the board. The problem is that, in Japan, a position on the board is viewed as a trophy appointment, rather than a post with a task.

“In Japan, the basic mentality is that people graduate from universities, join companies, and aim for a seat on the board, as a career goal,” Ishida says.

“Awarding directorships to outsiders means that the number of directorships for insiders will be reduced. Anything that changes that basic structure is a major shift in the socio-economic paradigm.”

Ultimately, it seems, Abe’s heart may be in the right place, but he needs to get his head together with that of chief executives at smaller Japanese companies, to properly implement the new code, and usher in an era of more friendly relations between boardrooms and shareholders. ■

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THINKING differently

Japan works to escape the Galapagos effect

By Richard Smart

The young are lucky. Twitter Inc., the micro-blogging platform, launched in 2006, enjoys high growth and has created the kind of environment that attracts the staff it wants. Without the constraints of long-term employees who are difficult to dismiss, the company has been able to choose staff attracted to its brand. Those that come on board are generally comfortable with the company's ideas.

"Most of us come to Twitter because of an interest in the product itself, which is an open communication platform," Yu Sasamoto, the company's manager for Japan, told *The Journal*.

That has allowed Twitter to foster an environment that shuns the top-down approach to management in favor of participation by all involved in the company's creative decision-making process.

"I don't think many [employees are] very surprised when they understand that the company and culture are aligned with its product," Sasamoto says.

It should not be difficult to come by staff who want to participate in the day-to-day running of companies and managers who embrace that approach. But the government feels that is not happening. Abenomics, as the centrally planned economic revival policies of Japan are known, is focusing on internationalization as essential to reviving the economy.

"Steadfast policies are required to overcome the yoke of supply constraints due to the decreasing population," the government states in a revision of the nation's growth policies, released July 10. Translation: Fewer Japanese due to a declining population means more need for foreign cash, and Japan is not doing enough to attract it.

Yu Sasamoto
of Twitter
speaks about
the company's
HR approach.



ISLAND MENTALITY

Japan has an obsession with internationalization, or *kokusaika* in the vernacular. But population worries aside, the sting of a declining electronics sector as Silicon Valley goes from strength to strength, the rise of companies such as South Korea's Samsung that can compete on hardware, as well as being overtaken by China as the second-largest economy in the world, have all taken their toll.

Back during his first tenure as prime minister in 2007, Shinzo Abe said, "It has become obvious that many of the basic frameworks—from the constitution down to the administrative system, education, the economy, employment, state-local relationships, foreign policy, and national security—have become incapable of adapting to the great changes taking place in the 21st century." All these ills, so the logic goes, can to an extent be remedied by internationalizing.

Defining what characterizes internationalization is difficult, but the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry attempted it in 2010. It sees the following as some of the key requirements for internationalization:

- Human resources departments that can take measures to expand the company overseas, treat all company branches equally, and pay attention to all staff
- The ability to recognize skills and deploy them appropriately
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There are plenty of headlines that suggest more can be done to achieve these goals. Julie Hamp, Toyota Corp. chief communications officer until recently, resigned after a package sent to her was found to contain a substance the United States considers a medicine and Japan a drug.

Takata Corporation, a Japanese company, has been slammed in the United States for its faulty airbags, which have caused deaths. It recently rejected the idea of setting up a compensation fund for victims in the United States. Toshiba Corporation, meanwhile, has made headlines after owning up to cooking its books.

Multiple problems require multiple answers. Rakuten Inc.'s CEO Hiroshi Mikitani is placing his bet on "Englishnization." His idea is to make staff conduct all business in English, and incentivize those who master the language. "Englishnization is, in my opinion, not just a Rakuten strategy, but a global strategy for Japan," he wrote on LinkedIn. "Other Japanese companies are taking note."

Honda Motor Co., Ltd. is among those. "It is vital to develop an environment that achieves close communication between associates in [Honda's] six regions worldwide," the company wrote in a June 29 news release. "Therefore, Honda is working to set English as the official language when we engage in inter-regional communication by 2020."

A strategy such as Rakuten's, however, perhaps misses a point that Twitter seems to realize. Speaking English alone is not enough. "In theory, Englishnization is fantastic," one former Rakuten employee, who did not want to be identified, told *The Journal*.

"In practice, [there are] lots of challenges. Let me put it this way, the foreigners nicknamed this place *gaijin* (foreigner) graveyard."

The employee felt Rakuten failed to listen to foreigners, instead focusing on maintaining *wa*, or the Japanese tradition of harmony, in the office. Strong and risky opinions were sacrificed in favor of more conservative ones, whether expressed in English or not.

Rochelle Koppe, managing principal at Japan Intercultural Consulting, a human resources consultancy, believes it is essential to make sure staff go beyond learning the language and get on board with Western customs.

"English is, of course, something very important," she says. "It's kind of the entry ticket to global business. But I think also necessary is cross-cultural understanding, a comfort level with interacting with people who are not Japanese."

WAKE-UP CALL

The government is trying to make sure that, alongside reforms that affect all staff, executives are also made to change their ways. Codes for stewardship and corporate governance (page 18), introduced over the past 18 months, aim to encourage investors to question the way companies are run and discourage docility in shareholders, as is often found in the West.

By giving shareholders more of a voice in the way a company is run, for example, the codes can make a difference to work culture—at least in theory. The reforms "are a good start, but it takes years to produce enduring behavioral change in organizations and among investors," says Nicholas Benes, representative director of the Board Director Training Institute of Japan.

"It takes a lot of learning of new concepts, structures and procedures." Benes sees adding foreigners to boards as one way to make sure the corporate culture in Japan improves. "Who you have on your boards sets the tone for a company. And the number of foreigners on Japanese boards is low."

For Benes, a major issue is that the stewardship code is not being used effectively. "The most important thing to happen next is for the [Government Pension

You will see . . . a divergence between those companies that get it and those that are doing the old stuff.

Investment Fund (GPIF), Japan, an administrative agency] to be a steward," he says.

"Today, it just shuffles paper. If you look at similar public pension funds overseas—all are smaller—most of them have publicized detailed corporate governance practices that they encourage portfolio firms to adopt, or at least point to the country's corporate governance code. The GPIF has nothing like that. When the GPIF hires fund managers, it has no governance filter for making sure they are active as stewards. They do not have a filter for making sure fund managers are following the code—and in fact, the GPIF has not ever publicly supported the code."

Still, with or without leadership by the GPIF, Benes believes that the codes mean change is coming. The only questions are how much and how soon. "What you will see in the next few years is a divergence between those companies that get it and those that are doing the old stuff," Benes says. "The ones that get it will serve as examples for those that don't." ■





Kaori Sasaki

Online and Offline Global Connector

By Dr. Nancy Snow

At first blush, it's easy to be intimidated by the resume of Kaori Sasaki. She is the queen bee of women's conferences and entrepreneurship, not only in Japan, but also around the globe—if one measures an international women's conference by passion, personal connection, and level of individual satisfaction.

Little does she know that she had me at concerts by the Doobie Brothers and Pet Shop Boys, famous bands from the US and the UK, respectively, but that's a twist in this story less familiar to her many admirers.

With two kids of her own, Sasaki is also responsible for the mother of all women's conferences: the International Conference for Women in Business (ICWB). Now in its 20th year, the ICWB was made even more famous by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's selfie with speakers at the 2014 gathering.

Perhaps I took it for granted then when I shook hands at the conference and gabbed with a variety of world class

women leaders—including contemporary artist Sputniko!, Yokohama Mayor Fumiko Hayashi, and Marina, daughter of the former Prime Minister of Malaysia Mahathir Mohamad.

But that's what ICWB attendees have come to expect, which is why the gathering is the place for what I like to call Brain Gain and Passion Fashion: You can learn and

enjoy yourself with speakers who don't just "speak and run," but also stay at the event, many for the entire day.

This year's ICWB had more than 1,100 participants and 61 speakers, and what I noticed is that you see a lot of people laughing and smiling. Personal empowerment is joyful, and that joy extends well beyond the gospel choir finale at this year's conference—according to the ICWB, the gathering has enjoyed 98 percent endorsement by attendees over two decades.

Just like what the choir sang, amazing grace is an apt descriptor of Sasaki's integration into Japan's power centers. Besides her longtime chairing of the ICWB, she is president

and CEO of translation/interpretation company UNICUL International, Inc., as well as eWoman, Inc., a one-stop shopping portal for smart women consumers that also offers public relations strategy and consultation services, including web research, branding, and product development. Whew! Somehow this super busy woman pulls it off with a smile.

If that weren't enough, she is the recipient of an honorary doctorate from her study abroad alma mater, Elmira College (2008),

Sasaki speaks at the 20th International Conference for Women in Business, held July 26.





20th ICWB event: over 1,100 participants and 61 speakers attended.

a four year, private, coeducational, liberal arts college located in upstate New York.

Born and raised in Yokohama, Sasaki describes her father as an entrepreneurial type, who changed jobs frequently but whose constant movement is probably what spurred on this woman-in-motion.

Sasaki's success began early. She attended Catholic kindergarten and tested into the junior and high schools affiliated with the prestigious Yokohama National University.

"I was very lucky to get into the elementary school," she says, a modest reference to the hard work and preparation she put into her studies to get accepted into one of Japan's best university preparatory schools. It's not unusual for the number of applicants who apply for such schools to hit six or seven times the capacity.

"At the very beginning (when she was six or seven years old), I was taking trains to go to elementary school." Sasaki later moved closer to the school and was able to walk, whereas almost everyone else in her class was still taking commuter trains.

The much-touted story of Abe Lincoln's miles-long walk to school has a Japanese correlation here: the importance of education and shared experience with others who value it can last a lifetime. A long commute allows children to share precious social time that extends into adulthood. I see it everyday riding the Tokyo Metro.

Of the students she met in her formative grade school years, she says, "We are very close and meet fairly often." The friendship networks she formed in elementary and junior high school are part of her professional and personal network today.

Sasaki realizes, however, that her uniqueness is not just in professional networking, a practice promoted these days but one that is tinged with impersonal benefit and career advancement. A lot of people "net-work," but her preferred style of connecting to others revolves around friendship, a skill she honed from childhood.

She loves meeting a variety of people with whom she can connect and introduce to others. This leads to the cohesive whole one sees on display at the ICWB. It's not just a business-, academic- or private-sector gathering; it's virtually everything—with business, academic, entertainment, and sports figures gathered under one roof.

A lot of speakers at business conferences may arrive thirty minutes before a talk and then leave 10 minutes after the conclusion of their speech commitment. "Most of the 60 speakers stayed for 10 and a half hours," she says of this year's conference. "They enjoy themselves. They are excited about it." They meet people, and they trust her in putting them in a workshop or panel where they become very good friends with speakers who initially were strangers.

People who are first-timers at her women's conference may not understand how different the ambiance is. Sasaki plans everything: from the timeline (how people might feel toward a panel in the morning versus the afternoon), lighting, lunch menu, to the music, all of which are designed to dazzle the senses and make people more in the mood to connect, converse, and inspire. The setting is jam packed with panels and workshops, but the atmosphere is more homey than business-like.

"It's a very emotional experience I intend to create. If I were just to ask someone to come and speak and go, I wouldn't have to do it because you can meet that person everywhere. Thirty years ago, maybe, it was difficult to hear real voices, but now with YouTube and seminars, you have greater access to most speakers."



Sasaki in South Africa on assignment, shortly before being shot in the leg.

... [Sasaki's] preferred style of connecting to others revolves around friendship ...

How many international women's conferences begin with a prime minister and end with the conference chair singing with a gospel choir! Which brings us back to the Doobie Brothers and Pet Shop Boys. Sasaki has nearly 20,000 Twitter followers (@kaorisasaki), and I recently became one.

I quickly tweeted the latter group's 1986 smash hit video "West End Girls" to her after our interview, an inside joke in reference to her interpreting days when she rubbed shoulders with international superstars.

Sasaki graduated in 1983 from the Department of Comparative Culture, Faculty of Foreign Languages, of Sophia University. Then, in short order, she was an interpreter to the many musicians visiting one of the world's top entertainment consumer markets.

Within four years of graduating from university, she had founded UNICUL, with a network of interpreters and translators who operate in 70 languages.

Sasaki is well known in Japan as having been a reporter for many years at TV Asahi, and an anchor for TBS TV's "60 Minutes" in Japan. She's even got a work-related injury; while on assignment in South Africa, she was shot in the leg during a political demonstration. I'd say an honorary doctorate—for services rendered to humanity—is long overdue. ■

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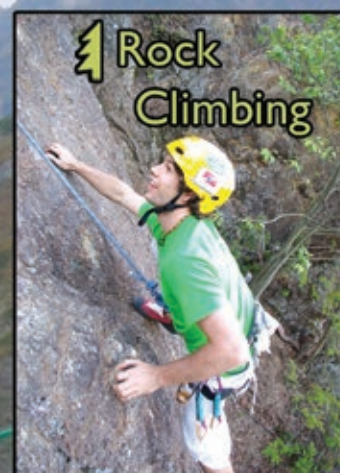
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Alison Espley: Coming to Japan, Steering the Craft

By John Amari



Alison Espley is spearheading United's positioning in the Japanese market.

From the UK to Australia and now Japan, Alison Espley is no stranger to travel and to taking on new challenges and seizing new opportunities.

As managing director for Japan and Pacific Sales at United Airlines, Espley is spearheading the award-winning airline's—United was named “Best Place to Work” by Human Rights Campaign—market positioning in Japan, while also establishing herself as the face of United in the country.

Speaking to *The Journal*, Espley sounded an up-beat note, expressing enthusiasm about United's products and services offerings, as well as the carrier's plans for future growth in the Asia-Pacific region.

Can you introduce yourself and tell us how you come to be in Japan?

I joined United Airlines back in 1987. I had several jobs within the airline, mostly within sales, until I moved to Australia in 2007. Earlier this year, when my present position came up, I simply couldn't resist the chance to live and work in Japan—a place that is so important to United. Japan is also such a cultural change for me, and that was a great attraction.

What are your main goals for the airline in Japan?

From my perspective as the leader of the team here, I have three key sales strategies that are important to me: one is to be extremely visible in the market, to be the face of United. And, since I've been here, I've spent time with our travel agency partners, corporate customers, and frequent flyers.

The second thing is to aggressively seek new business—whether that is leisure travelers or corporate business, or whether that is SMEs or individual travellers—and give them a reason to be loyal to United. The third thing is to create an environment where people consider United a company they can do business with easily.

What can you say about United's positioning in this market?

United remains committed to the Asia-Pacific region, and

Japan is a hugely important part of that. We currently offer 140 weekly flights from Japan to 11 cities, seven of which are key hubs within the US mainland, as well as Honolulu, Guam, Incheon, South Korea, and Singapore. In addition, we serve the Guam hub from six cities in Japan.

What's more, we recently celebrated 25 years of service from Sendai and Sapporo to Guam. We have a joint venture arrangement with our partners at All Nippon Airways (ANA) on trans-Pacific flights, which is very important business strategy to us, and which we will continue to develop to provide our customers in Japan with more convenient options of flight schedule between Japan and the US.

How are customers benefiting from the joint venture with ANA on the trans-Pacific market?

The joint venture began in 2011, and has gone from strength to strength; our customers tell us that they like it. The key thing—in terms of benefits—is that you can choose to fly with United or ANA as if it was one carrier between Japan and the US. We are able to coordinate our schedules and offerings to give you the most choice.

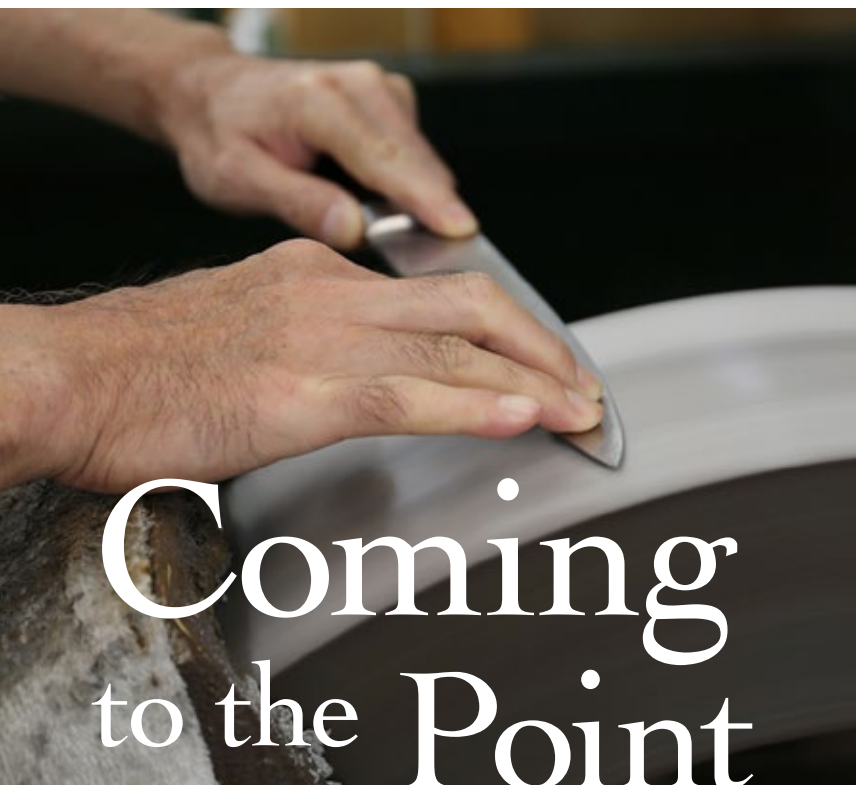
For example, ANA recently added a service to Houston and they chose to operate in the morning to complement our departure in the afternoon. The joint venture covers 66 countries and 11,000 daily flights, and it continues to grow.

Are you optimistic about this market and, if so, why?

I'm generally optimistic, and I continue to believe that Japan will play an extremely important part in United. It is a mature market, and it does have some challenges, in terms of the devaluation of the yen and in the fact that fewer people are traveling from Japan, whilst in-bound travel is very strong.

And as a company that is well-established here, including having a strong relationship with local carrier ANA, I feel we are well-positioned to take full advantage of our being here. And I, personally, am very excited by the opportunity to live and work in Japan. So I'm very excited for the future. ■





Coming to the Point

at Kamata Hakensha

Text and photos by Kit Pancoast Nagamura

ARTI-SENSE MONTHLY HAIKU

heat and waves
in shimmering layers
the Japanese knife



If there is one person in Japan who can claim that his skills have been and will always be cutting edge, it's Kamata Hakensha's owner, Seiichi Kamata. And, since his profession is the art of knife-sharpening, who's going to argue that point?

I find Kamata himself, 62 years old and soft-spoken, in a baby-blue apron at his Kappabashi store in Taito Ward, Tokyo, handling customers who resemble a gathering of the United Nations. As French, Indonesian, and German conversations fill the air, I ask him how he attracts his clientele.

"We've been here since 1923, for 92 years," Kamata says, "so, Japanese customers know of us—word gets around if you're any good—but we try to reach out to foreign customers by placing ads in local magazines." Furthermore, Kamata employs bilingual staff and offers explanatory pamphlets on knife care in English and Japanese. "Our location is also key," Kamata says of his shop on Kappabashi's main shopping street.

The third generation in his family's knife-sharpening profession, Kamata expanded the scope of his business when he realized that Kappabashi street was becoming renown for culinary goods. "I wanted chefs to have the very best knives available, so I went looking for them," he says.

Kamata's glimmering inventory today is a battalion of some of the world's most perfectly honed blades. To source them, Kamata travels to major knife-producing forges across Japan. "For Japanese cleavers, it's Sakai in Osaka," he says, "and for foreign knife styles, Niigata and Gifu."

Working with individual blacksmiths, Kamata produces, orders, and selects specific knives to sell. Next, he engages in strict quality control.

"Knife-makers make knives," he says, with a wry grin, "but their finishing skills are not very good, so one by one, I check each knife, calibrate it by hand, and make sure it is perfect before I acquire it."

Kamata's offerings range in price from ¥6,000 to ¥160,000. "We do have cheaper knives," Kamata admits, "but they do not carry our brand name."

Aside from specialized knives, some in gorgeous layered Damascus steel, Kamata has also personally designed a series of blades featuring etched Japanese patterns of cherry blossoms, maple leaves, and dragons. "That doesn't add to their usefulness or anything," he says, "but they make a useful souvenir of Japan."

Furthermore, Kamata will engrave the owner's name (in Japanese or Chinese characters) on any purchased knife's bolster or blade, a service popular with his foreign customers.

While I know it's a provocative question, I ask Kamata how he can compete with the local "blade-runners" who drive around the neighborhood, offering knife-sharpening services. "Skill separates us!" he says.

“Those guys, in their little trucks? They’ll take your kitchen knife to the level where it will cut for a month or so. That’s okay for housewives, and the cost is less. But if I sharpen the same knife, it will stay that way for three months. Master chefs send their students to me before their certification tests, to get their knives in perfect condition. It makes a difference.”

Among Kamata’s skills is the ability to observe needs and react accordingly. “I began to realize that, over the course of years, many pro chefs who naturally sharpen their own knives daily, can eventually destroy the shape of the knife,” he says. “But I am able to bring it back to its original utility.”

The workshop area of his store—a glassed-in room designed to allow people to watch—is scattered with “patients” awaiting rejuvenation.

I am allowed into the workshop area, where I ask Kamata about the sharpening process. He outlines the knife’s journey from *arado* (giant rough circular grinder), to belt sander, and finally to a series of whetstones. “But the process is actually kind of secret,” he says, rubbing his hands and laughing.

Master chefs send their students to me to get their knives in perfect condition.

So, were I to study the art, how long would it take, I inquire. “For a household knife, if you’ve got the knack, about three years,” he answers, “but for pro knives, at least ten years.” I must appear glum at that, because he pipes up with good news.

“I really want people to know how to choose, use, and maintain superb tools, so I teach classes,” he says. “But I can’t consider that a business success story exactly, because the class costs ¥5,000, and the whetstone that we present as a take-home gift costs ¥5,400. All we gain in that deal is a trustworthy reputation.” Priceless, I think.

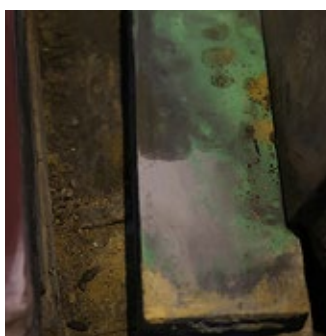
Classes are held the first Tuesday of each month, in Japanese. “I accepted a group of French women once, who chatted up a storm. They had a good time, but I doubt they got much out of it,” he says.

Kamata’s most serious and successful student, his son Yosuke (31), dodges between us as we roam the store. “He wanted to join the business early on,” Kamata says, watching him affectionately.

“While in college, he had some free time it seems,” he says, laughing, “and I taught him all I knew.” But subsequently, Kamata required his son to know the ways of the working world, by signing him up to work in a supermarket.

“He wanted to quit after two years, but I insisted on three,” Kamata says, “and then I brought him on board.” But Yosuke’s study had barely begun. He was sent to work at a forge in Osaka for a year, then returned to Tokyo to study as the last *deshi* (apprentice) of another sharpening artisan.

“Now he knows techniques that even I don’t know,” Kamata says, rightfully proud of the sharp new blade he has honed. ■



The traditional artisans featured in this series have negotiated novel ways to survive, pushing their skills in new directions and devising methods to make their age-old products indispensable in a world of largely machine-made goods.

Long-established Japanese movie company Toei has partnered with YouTube to create videos—based on *jidaigeki* (period dramas)—made by Japan's video creators.

Japan's sometimes-conservative corporate, it turns out, is embracing the idea that the cutting edge of the Internet may be a place to make money, promote products, and increase brand loyalty.

NEW MEDIA PIONEERS

Starring in the new videos are a relatively new breed of Internet entrepreneur, known as YouTubers, including comedians, musicians and make up artists—they are the pioneers of YouTube Spaces: top-of-the-range studios, of which there are seven in the world so far, where sound, camera, and action is turned into content for the Internet generation.

“When we pooled the creator base, and we asked them what type of content they'd like to create, what sorts of sets they'd like to create on, a lot of people asked for Japanese-style sets: a geisha set; a soba shop etcetera,” says Head of YouTube Spaces, Asia Pacific, David Macdonald.

Therefore, “We decided that Toei were the partner for us. They have a theme park in Kyoto around the genre of *jidaigeki*, which, actually, connects very well with the youth.”

As a result, YouTube set up its studio in Tokyo to a Toei period drama film set; Toei, meanwhile, opened its doors to its full-to-scale *jidaigeki* theme park in Kyoto, called Toei Kyoto Studio Park, to YouTube creators. The result surprised Ken Takahashi, who handles Toei's collaboration with YouTube on the project.

“What I found most surprising was the unconventional methods of productions, for instance, in the way makeup was used,” he says. “We don't associate that with the *jidaigeki* genre. We didn't expect the genre to be used in such a way.”

YouTubers involved in the program included Sayulee, a musician; Sasaki Asahi, who uses her channel to give advice on applying makeup; and Kobasolo, a musician who has a music channel.

DEMOCRATIZING CONTENT

Watching the videos the YouTubers produced, it is clear they have breathed new life into *jidaigeki*—the YouTubers were playful, and dancing to the sound of house music, eating *dango* (rice-cake), and entering a duel with a fox mask.

The result was that some creators felt like the productions were some of the best work they had ever produced. Speaking of her fans' reaction to her *jidaigeki* video production, Sayulee says, “I think a lot of them were blown away by the quality. It was a step up from anything I'd produced before.”

What's more, the YouTube and Toei partnership seems to have discovered a new formula for millennials and their forerunners to be creative in the “brave new world” of media in the Internet Age.

“I think what the Internet has done, and YouTube among other different platforms has done, is really democratize the ability to entertain people,” Macdonald says.

“And so what we are seeing with YouTube and YouTube creators is that they are a breed of individuals who like to entertain, who have a talent they want to show off, or they have a hobby they want to share with the world.”

Two hundred videos have been published from the YouTube and Toei collaboration, as of this writing, reaching 10 million views and 20 million social media impressions, Macdonald adds.

When YouTube Met Toei

Can period dramas and millennials mix?

Custom Media







Rehearsals during a *jidaigeki* production at YouTube Spaces, Tokyo (left) and filming at the Toei period drama set and theme park in Kyoto
Photos: Miho Tomita, Marco Scotto, Anthony Knight, and Sayulee. Posters: Shigetoshi Furutani

ASAHI SASAKI | Style: Makeup artist
YouTube channel subscribers: 394,748

How did you become a YouTube vlogger?

I have a makeup channel and one that does YouTube beauty tutorials and the like. I've been doing the channel for years, but had a hard time attracting viewers. That made me wonder what audiences want to see, and so I decided to create a channel dedicated to makeup and that really took off.

What has been the reaction to your vlogging from friends, family and the public?

My family has supported me a lot. I often film in the house, and if I do, my family is happy to turn down the TV to let me film quietly. My mother has also made me a lot of clothes for the different concept videos I have on my channel, such as one where I dress as Cinderella. My friends have been kind enough to watch my videos and appear to enjoy them, which I'm grateful for.

What did you do for the *jidaigeki* production; how did you come up with idea?

At the beginning, when I heard that there will be a *jidaigeki* set, I was thinking of doing my usual makeup video by myself. However, there were a number of questions, such as "Who will create the storyline, and who will create the song?" I then thought, "Why not collaborate with a musician and others who have a diverse set of skills?"

It was rare for me to see a production that involved collaboration between women, and so, by carrying out this production, we managed to create something that was never made before. We complemented each other, and created something powerful.

What do you think about collaboration between YouTube and Toei?

An authentic *jidaigeki* set from Kyoto was transported to YouTube, which I found really inspiring. The props were made for *jidaigeki* films, and they were often not props but real antiques, which was great, but it was also difficult to know how to use them properly.

We wore beautiful costumes and our hair contained a lot of objects. At the YouTube Space, the ceiling is of a certain height, and so it was a little difficult to get wide shots. In Kyoto, we managed to get all the wide shots showing us from head to toe. We filmed on a beautiful sunny day, and we were very lucky with the location space. [The Toei Kyoto Studio Park] is an open set, and there were others filming, but the staff was so kind . . . and provided a great environment for us to shoot.

KOBASOLO | Style: Musician, entertainment
YouTube channel subscribers: 109,893

How did you become a YouTube vlogger?

I've been building my career . . . and two and a half years ago, I thought why not upload videos to YouTube. Also, I play pretty much everything: guitar, piano. I also sing. Previously, during live concerts, I often played and sang. Recently, I've played concerts with a band.

What has been the reaction to your vlogging from friends, family and the public?

At first, the reaction was quite bad. I was mainly doing live concerts. Shifting my attention to YouTube, there were some fans . . . who were happy with my decision, but it also meant that I would not do as many live concerts, and there was some criticism [because of that]. I then uploaded more videos. As time passed, people started to appreciate and support my work.



What the Internet has done
is really democratize the ability
to entertain people

SAYULEE

Style: Musician

YouTube channel subscribers: 31,263

How did you become a YouTube vlogger?

I'm a singer-songwriter based in Tokyo. I was born in Japan and raised in New Zealand. I came back to Japan about seven years ago, and that is when I started working toward being a singer-songwriter and having a career in music.

And just when I was thinking of ways to build my fan-base, I started doing gigs in Japan, and I really saw YouTube as an opportunity to reach not only a Japanese audience, but a wider audience too.

In 2008, I had the idea but it took me a while to get anything started. I think it was 2011 that I decided to do a 365-day challenge of uploading a cover song everyday, for a year. I would get requests from fans and it would be, "Oh, what song should I cover today?"

I would find the song, listen to it, get the lyrics, work out the chords, and pretty much do it on the spot. It was a lot of work, but that is sort of where it all started.

What has been the reaction to your vlogging from friends, family and the public?

I think that a lot of them are very proud of me and are happy that I have stuck to it. But in the beginning, my parents said: "You should get a real job. You need financial stability."

They thought that going into music was going to be unstable and risky. But I just went ahead anyway. I guess it took them a while to see that it can work. By no means am I anywhere where I want to be yet, but I guess I've been able to carry on doing music as my thing, and people around me now say: "Good on you; it's good that you've stepped it up." They are proud of me, I think.

KUMAMIKI

Style: Harajuku culture/Craft/How-to/DIY

YouTube channel subscribers: 162,208

How did you become a YouTube vlogger?

I started by doing videos of DIY stuff and it wasn't working out. So then I started studying how to make videos and talking about things around the Harajuku area [of Tokyo], the cute stuff I see, and other things I am interested in. That's when everything started going well.

What has been reaction to your vlogging from friends, family and the public?

Everyone seems to enjoy my videos. And my father seems to be my biggest fan; he is always talking to me about the videos. After I release a video, people are quick to respond with photos of what they have made, which makes me really happy.



Productions released by the *jidaigeki* collaboration have had more than 20 million social media impressions.



KEN TAKAHASHI,

Production supervisor, Toei Studios Kyoto

Briefly, what can you tell us about Toei?

We produce lots of films. At the Toei Kyoto Studio Park, we have an open set where people produce films. The set also functions as a theme park that is open to the public.

How did the partnership between YouTube and Toei work?

The characters in *jidaigeki* dramas are quite clearly defined. What's more, viewers have an immediate understanding of them on platforms such as YouTube, which has content that is generally short. And although we hesitated a little at the beginning when YouTube pitched the project, I eventually thought, *jidaigeki* on YouTube could actually work. I think YouTube achieved their goal in this regard.

What can you tell us about the process of re-creating the sets at YouTube?

We applied the same structure of *jidaigeki* architecture that exists in our film set in Kyoto by building pillars and floors and adding elements that could be changed into four different spaces. Creators could, for example, change walls into sliding doors. There were some challenges, as the YouTube studio space was limited, but we managed to create multiple *jidaigeki* backdrops, which worked really well. ■

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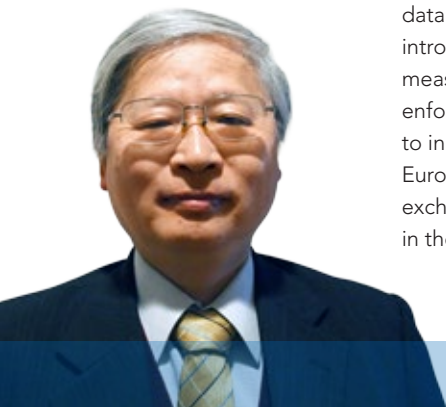
MDP Business Advisory Co., Ltd.,



Japan introduced legal initiatives that will have a direct impact on business. They include changes related to labor, patent, copyright, Unfair Competition Prevention Law (regarding Trade Secrets), and tax laws.

Changes were also made to personal data protection regimes and the Act against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations, to name a few regulations affected. The business community needs to take note.

By amending personal data protection legislation and introducing more protective measures, while enhancing their enforceability, the government plans to initiate an arrangement with the European Union (EU) involving the exchange of personal data held in the EU.



Yoshiki Uchida,
President, New York State Lawyer

Moreover, the Act against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations, under the supervision of the Consumer Affairs Agency (CAA)—which may request a government agency, such as the Fair Trade Commission, to assist its investigations—now has clauses prohibiting misleading representation.

This has a wide application, including representation of yields of financial products, and will play an important role, since the CAA may be able to impose a penalty of 3 percent of the sales price, for a maximum 3 years, if a product is sold with misleading information.

Furthermore, the amended Code of Criminal Procedure has introduced a plea-bargaining system, which permits one to bargain one's crime for that of another's (or an organization's) crime. One even may be able to avoid prosecution or have a sentence reduced, etc, by reporting another's criminal act.

To comply with these amendments and laws, businesses should be mindful of the legal and regulatory risks involved, and establish fair compliance systems. ■

FINDING THE TALENT, ENSURING A COMPETITIVE EDGE

By Miyuki Seguchi

Senior PR & Communications Executive

In an increasingly technology-driven world, financial institutions need to remain competitive by constantly upgrading applications and switching over from out-dated systems.

Many insurers in Tokyo, for example, are in the process of dealing with a large volume of system integration projects in response to a number of mergers and acquisitions in recent years. These factors are creating a large number of jobs in IT, with hiring activity for project managers, business analysts, and solution architects in particular booming.

"Japan is a key market for many global firms, and within the insurance industry, there are currently hundreds of open IT roles, but skills shortages are making it difficult to fill these positions," says Cameron McAllister, manager of the IT Finance Team at Robert Walters.

"A few years ago, there were comparatively fewer jobs available in the market. However, despite the current boom in available positions, the challenges of filling job requirements remain significant due to a limited pool of technically proficient bilingual talent."

Constantly adapting to the ongoing changes in the market, the Robert Walters IT Finance Team pride themselves on the customized and consultative approach with which they assist clients in finding the best solutions for their hiring needs.

McAllister says companies need to be prepared to compete aggressively for the best talent, should they want to succeed in a challenging market.

"We have seen that those clients who remove rigid salary bands, are flexible with interview processes and language requirements, and are able to offer sign-on bonuses and other benefits, are the most successful in acquiring the talent necessary to compete effectively in a unique market, such as Tokyo." ■



Cameron McAllister, manager,
Robert Walters IT Finance Team

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Market Yourself In One Minute

By Dr. Greg Story

President, Dale Carnegie Training Japan



Meeting new business contacts, expanding personal networks, promoting a reliable, trustworthy Brand You are the basics of business. What's more, even if our job title doesn't explicitly mention sales and marketing, we are all in sales and marketing.

In modern commerce, even professionals in non-traditional sales roles—such as accountants, lawyers, dentists, engineers, architects, analysts, and consultants—all need to pitch their expertise to get new clients.

When we try to influence a decision—buy my widget, fund this project, open a new market or, even, where shall we go for lunch—we are engaging in sales and marketing efforts intended to persuade others.

First impressions are so critical. When I ask my participants during sales training how long it takes to form an impression of someone, the range of answers is usually between two and five seconds. Think about that. We are so quick to form a judgment; we are shockers!

An opinion is formed immediately, and if it is a negative one, it takes quite a bit of effort to unwind it.

Given that our first interactions with strangers are so important, are we getting the best result for our organization and ourselves? Can we succinctly explain what we do, in a clear, informative, impressive, and memorable manner?

Based on my experience and observations, there is room for improvement. An excellent formula is called the wow and how. When we meet someone for the first time, after examining their business card, we should get the ball rolling and ask them about their business.

Why don't we rush in and start impressing them with our information? We know that people love to talk about themselves, so don't deny the potential client that chance. We also learn more by listening than speaking and so having them lead off is a win-win situation.

Hearing what they do also assists us in considering how we explain what we do. We can emphasize certain aspects that we believe would appeal to them, based on what they

have just told us about what they are doing. Listening to them speak, we can gauge their personality type. We can then adjust our communication style to best suit their preference for interaction.

If we notice, for example, that they are a very detail-oriented person, we might add in more concrete detail than usual to explain what it is we do. If you are speaking with an accountant, three decimal places when quoting numbers is always appreciated!

The opposite tack is best applied to big-picture people—don't kill them with minutia. If they are fast-paced, speak faster and with more energy than normal. If they are very calm and considered, drop your voice and energy to mirror theirs. We like people who are like us.

When it is our turn to explain what we do, we use a three-step approach. We start with a proposition that they can easily agree with. For example, "You know how companies often really struggle with training their staff. They get really frustrated that the training doesn't produce the results they require."

The listener by this time is nodding and voicing their agreement, because they can mentally picture the problem. We then add, "Well, we fix that completely." Their immediate thought is "Wow; sounds amazing." Then the skepticism kicks in and they ask us, "Alright, how do you do that?"

This allows us to lead with our differentiable advantage in the market. This answer is more what than how. We do this because we want to explain the precise how—in their office rather than in a noisy, crowded networking event. The explanation is under a minute, so each word is vital. The delivery must be practiced and perfected beforehand.

At the next business soirée, roll out the wow and how formula, delivered in the potential client's preferred communication style, and see the results. Remember, first impressions count; so let's not leave that creation process to chance. ■

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Lanis Yarzab,
Managing Director,
Spring professional

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Finding Talent in Asia

An insider's viewpoint

Spring Professional is an international recruitment firm specializing in IT, engineering, property and construction, and supply chain and logistics industries in Asia.

For Managing Director Lanis Yarzab, having a clear-eyed understanding of your company's needs—and knowing how to find the best-qualified candidates in a market with scarce talent—is the key to successful recruitment.

"Japan has a scarce market—it is short of candidates," Yarzab says. "If you can identify the people that you want to

hire, then the main challenges are usually processes within organizations."

One of the first tasks a company needs to undertake, she says, is to define where the potential candidate will fit into the organization's structure. A key question to ask is, "What problem will they solve as an employee?"

What's more, the specific role of the new recruit will depend on the type of firm he or she is joining.

"If you're bringing someone into a well-established company versus a startup, you need a different type of person. If you need someone to do a change management role, that's very different compared to someone who is coaching a young and fresh team," Yarzab adds.

In addition to finding the right person for the right company to fulfill the right role, organizations—especially those with an international corporate footprint—have to identify one or two key decision makers.

Especially in Japan, Yarzab says, decisions as to whom to hire are usually bogged down because of in-house recruitment processes that are not streamlined, or due to competing priorities across a company's domestic and international concerns.

TRAILBLAZER

Yarzab is one of only a handful of women in executive positions in Japan, and a leader in business sectors that have historically seldom been represented by women. Having lived in the country for over 14 years, however, she is a vocal champion for diversity and for raising diversity awareness.

"Everyone who knows me knows that I'm all about diversity and inclusion—I'm kind of an evangelist within my industry and especially within my group on this," she says.

"As you know, Spring Professional is a technical recruitment firm in areas that definitely lack women and minorities."

To effect change and increase the participation of under-represented talent in these industries, Yarzab says company's not only have to

increase awareness of their in-house ratio for recruits, but also implement organizational structures—including diversity training programs—that are conducive to a diverse work environment.

"I would start with having full disclosure of gender labor rates within companies," Yarzab says. "That would at least give us a starting point so that we know how companies are doing, and how balanced their workforces are."

In addition, "I would like to see investment into diversity and inclusion programs, so that people and organizations can have the training and understanding of what they need to do before they start making changes—I think that would be a great starting point."

FUTURE CHANGE

Furthermore, a shift in mindsets needs to occur so that women, especially young ones who will become role models for future candidates, are not only administrators, as happens too often, but also have roles as technicians.

"By doing that," she adds, "you are building a company where you've got female leaders. That might not solve the problem right now, but you'll have role models for the future."

Yarzab also strongly recommends that company compensation packages become gender-neutral, pointing out that in Japan and elsewhere, a significant pay gap between male and female employees still exists.

Looking to the future, Yarzab remains optimistic about the Japanese market. With the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games just around the corner—and leading to an increased demand for talented candidates—Yarzab believes Japan, more so than any other country, is capable of rising to the challenge.

"If any country could do it, it would definitely be Japan. Just look at the post World War II boom and how quickly the country recovered—no one expected that. Japan clearly has the spirit to get things done. So, yes, I'm very positive." ■

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—Dennis Muldowney, general manager



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- 1 ACCJ leaders attended a send-off event at Tokyo Tower on July 21 for Japanese participants of the Special Olympics World Summer Games Los Angeles 2015.
- 2 The ACCJ's Globalization Committee held two dinner receptions for participants of the Furusato Project, including ACCJ Colleagues.
- 3 Solar Impulse on a record-breaking attempt to fly around the world.

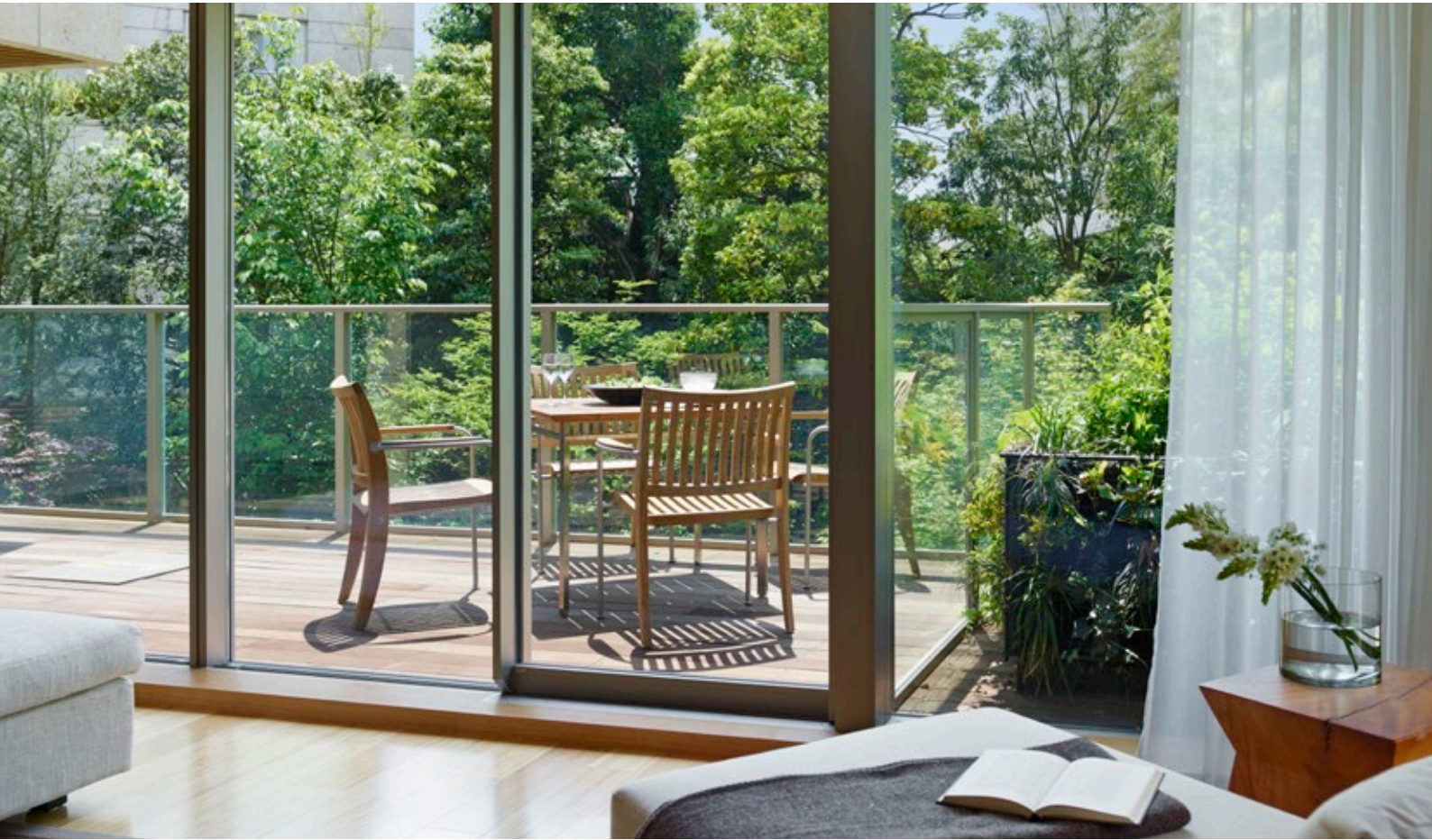


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Make a Difference in Your Community



PRESIDENT

Jay Ponazecki jponazecki@accj.or.jp

It has been an outstanding year for sponsorships and donations that impact the local communities in which we live and do business. The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) is deeply grateful to all of the sponsors who helped make the 2015 ACCJ Women in Business Summit in Tokyo a success.

This month's Kansai Women in Business Summit is also being generously supported by ACCJ member companies, and I have no doubt that it will also be a very successful event.

As we enter the final months of this year, let's continue the important momentum of support with an event that, for many of us, is close to the heart: the ACCJ Charity Ball. This occasion is one of the most direct ways in which ACCJ members and member companies can contribute to the local community.

Proceeds from the ball will directly support local Japanese beneficiaries such as the ACCJ Mike Makino Fund, which provides food for the homeless, and the Taylor Anderson Memorial Fund, which enriches the lives of children in Tohoku.

I encourage you to visit www.accjcharityball.org to learn more about the charities that will be supported by the social event, and to discover the variety of ways in which you and your organization can sponsor one of the ACCJ's annual marquee occasions.

Please mark your calendar so that you can join me, together with many other ACCJ members and friends, at this year's Charity Ball on Saturday, November 28.

DRIVING BUSINESS THROUGH DIVERSITY

I hope many of you will be able to attend the ACCJ's Kansai Women in Business Summit on Monday, September 7, at the InterContinental Osaka.

For having enabled the ACCJ's Kansai Chapter to hold its first Women in Business Summit—through the donation of ¥4.5 million in total as of mid-August—I ask you to please join me in thanking our very generous sponsors: Robert Walters Japan K.K., Eli Lilly Japan K.K., Aflac, Bayer Yakuhin Ltd, MetLife Inc., P&G Japan, Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc., Caterpillar Inc., and EY Japan.

With panel discussions on women in leadership, male champions of change, and best practices in human resources, we hope this summit will help answer questions on how to convert strategies into measurable results.

The conference is expected to identify what challenges still need to be addressed in Kansai, as well as provide practical, solutions-based recommendations, and share tested best practices regarding how to advance the role and engagement of women in the workplace.

This focus on driving business through diversity is key to stimulating further economic growth in Kansai and throughout Japan. ■

For more information on this Summit, please visit www.accj.or.jp/en/events



TOO BUSY TO ATTEND AN EVENT?

Jeremy Epstein, VP/Marketing at Sprinklr, the industry-leading social experience management system, shares insights, best practices, and anecdotes from among their 1000+ enterprise brand clients.

LIVE THIS MONTH:

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Surfing on Sunlight

Solar Impulse 2 flies to new heights in innovation

By Rob Jacobs

Solar Impulse is pushing the boundaries of human exploration and raising key questions about our energy future.

On June 1, just before midnight, the Chubu region was unexpectedly included in a revolutionary journey around the world. The result of the most ambitious experiment in modern aviation history, the *Solar Impulse 2* made an unscheduled landing at Komaki Airport, Aichi Prefecture, due to unfavorable weather—the aircraft was en route to Hawaii on its seventh of a 13-leg flight. Although a disappointment for the crew of the Solar Impulse, citizens of Chubu reveled in seeing firsthand the aircraft which, on a world-circumnavigating journey, is operated using solar power only.

THE RISE OF SOLAR

In an ever-changing world, we tend to take new technologies for granted. Without realizing it, society has come to expect the “next big thing” to hit the shelves on a weekly basis. Most of these expectations fall in the category of communications and connectivity—the Internet, smartphones, and so on—in the so-called information age.

During the same period of gadget improvement, a plethora of advancement in other fields has also taken place, although these advances largely have gone unnoticed. Perhaps the sci-fi movies are to blame; flying cars, hover boards, and personal space flight are all already supposed to have hit the market.

Among the unseen revolutions of the technological world is advanced solar power. We have been using solar-powered calculators for decades. We see solar panels on rooftops and don't blink an eye. What we are not seeing, perhaps, is the drastic drop in the cost of producing solar-powered products.

From 2012 to 2013 alone, the cost of producing a solar panel dropped 30 percent, a direct result of huge technological advances in photovoltaic cells, which convert light energy into electricity. But why aren't these advancements generally known? The answer is that, since its inception, solar power has been used to tackle two problems: powering small devices and providing electricity to the grid. Until now.

From left: Noriko Kato, ACCJ Chubu operations manager; Daniel Cohen, Solar Impulse PR; Ryan Locascio, Aero Solutions Business Development manager, Rob Jacobs, and Johnny Gamalo, Pratt & Whitney PW1200G Program general manager.

POWERING FLIGHT, EFFECTING CHANGE

An aircraft designed to fly around the world on nothing but solar power and really big wings, the *Solar Impulse* has introduced solar technology to aviation. Bertrand Piccard and André Borschberg initiated the effort in 2003, after performing a feasibility study with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne.

Both of them pilots and engineers, Piccard and Borschberg have invested over a decade on this project and turned a small idea into a global phenomenon. Which begs the question: why?

Much more than a sun-powered airplane, the *Solar Impulse* sends a message to the world. Through its web-based petition, at Futureisclean.org, *Solar Impulse* endeavors to gather as many web-signatures as possible for a communal “I want concrete action for a clean energy future.”

The team's intention is to take its message to the United Nation Climate Change Conference to be held in Paris in December. Flying around the globe on nothing more than solar energy, the vehicle proves that modern technology is capable of reducing world dependence on fossil fuels.

FLYING SOLO

The record solo flight from Nagoya to Hawaii took five days. How does one sleep? On board is a rudimentary autopilot that enables the pilot to have short periods of shuteye: 20 minutes at a time, 10 times a day. One can only imagine how minimal sleep, constant temperature changes, and the fact that you are manning a fuel-less aircraft might affect focus. With years of meticulous planning, the *Solar Impulse* team has considered everything. Within the 3.8 cubic meter cockpit, no detail has been overlooked. There is even a solution when nature calls.

EARNING ITS WINGS

Notwithstanding the technical, logistical, and human challenges they face, the *Solar Impulse* team prevails. As they are flying directly in the face of their primary target of climate change, it shows other industries how old science can be applied to new problems.

For the field of aerospace, transforming the trend of incremental innovation into a firestorm of discontinuous innovation can bring the advances of air travel up to speed with those of the information age. The industry has been implementing incremental innovations to the same root technology for more than 50 years. Maybe the “next big thing” is waiting in the *Solar Impulse* wings. ■

Rob Jacobs is Lockheed Martin Quality Assurance Liaison and Vice-chairman of the ACCJ Chubu Chapter Aerospace Subcommittee.

2015 Chubu Diversity Summit

Identifying Problems, Finding Solutions, Increasing Diversity and Productivity

By Chris Zarodkiewicz and Erin Sakakibara



ACCJ members at the inaugural 2014 Chubu Diversity Summit

A woman's ability to be successful in the workplace is often determined by aspects of family life, such as rearing children. Often, circumstances beyond her control—including the need to take care of elderly parents—may also affect her prospects at work. This is becoming especially evident as the Japanese population ages, with the expectation that 40 percent of the workforce will be lost by 2050. As this happens, both opportunities and challenges are created for working women trying to move forward in their careers, as shown by the following example.

A company owner—and member of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ)—came to the office one morning. He was approached by one of his staff, who said she needed to talk to him. She was having some personal issues after her elderly mother had passed away. Given her grieving and request for a meeting, the owner was certain she would resign.

The employee said she was going to take care of her elderly father, who would need her support at home. Now in his late 70s, he had health problems and was not accustomed to being alone. That being

said, she would no longer be able to stay at work late when required and might need to miss work on occasion. Her feeling was that, since she was a full-time employee, the company would prefer someone without such pressures at home.

The owner reaffirmed how valuable she was and the importance of her continuing to be a part of the team. With some adjustments to her schedule, and some understanding by her coworkers, she is still employed at the company—three years later—and continues to be an important part of its success.

Unfortunately, this type of situation is the exception and not the norm. Today, many women in Japan's workforce are forced to leave the workplace because of the need to care for elderly parents or the requirements of childrearing. Japanese society has yet to create an effective system to assist with the aging population and with women wanting to work after they have started a family.

Although Japan is the third-largest economy in the world, 70 percent of Japanese women will leave their jobs permanently after having their first child. It is still widely believed that a woman has an obligation to stay home indefinitely after starting a family. This is in addition to the fact that childcare may be frowned upon and is not readily available in many parts of the country, with waiting lists for daycare facilities in major urban areas.

It is not just for the sake of Japan's economic vitality that the country is bringing more women back into the workforce. It is absolutely necessary that Japan do so if it wants to survive as an economic superpower.

Following the success of its inaugural conference, the 2014 Chubu Diversity Summit, the Aichi Prefectural government joined forces with the Chubu Chapter of the ACCJ to continue the dialogue in creating strategies for change, with a focus on Central Japan. As with the massively successful 2015 ACCJ Women in Business Summit held in Tokyo, the Chubu summit's goal is to highlight concrete solutions to diversify the workplace and create more opportunities for women. ■

Chris Zarodkiewicz is vice president-Chubu, and **Erin Sakakibara** is the chair of the ACCJ-Chubu Women in Business Committee.

The **2015 Chubu Diversity Summit** will be held at the **Westin Nagoya Castle Hotel** on Monday, **October 26**. For more information, including assistance for involvement as an event sponsor, contact the **ACCJ Chubu office** at **chubu@accj.or.jp** or call **052-229-1525**.

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The Furusato Project: Big Steps Forward

By Alyssa Smith

Patrick Whalen (left) and Dr. Junzo Takeda sign a memorandum of understanding between the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and Tokyo Medical Center.

The inaugural trip of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan's (ACCJ's) Globalization Committee's Furusato Project, an initiative to encourage bilateral investment in both Japan and the United States, took place in April 2015.

In the space of a single week, the Japan-US relationship was strengthened through a deep appreciation for the pursuit of scientific discovery and the formation of new friendships among colleagues. The success of the trip confirmed the value of the initiative, garnering further support from the US Embassy and members of the ACCJ.

Reciprocal trips to the US will be taking place over the next few months, and members involved in these projects have already started looking ahead, targeting new cities with growing industries, and recruiting more ACCJ peers and US contacts, encouraging them to become active liaisons.

ACCJ Globalization Committee Chair Bryan Norton selected his hometown of Buffalo, New York, as a prime case study for the new project. In recent years, Buffalo has developed a strong healthcare industry, and is investing heavily in regenerative medicine.

A major contributing factor is the development of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC), a collection of the region's premier medical institutions, including the Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute, and Ross Eye Institute.

The trip in April brought three BNMC representatives—Dr. James Reynolds, Dr. Steven J. Fliesler, and BNMC Chief Operating Officer Patrick Whalen—to Tokyo for a productive tour of Japanese companies.

Building on the momentum of an information-gathering mission to Tokyo and Kyoto in January 2015, the Buffalo delegates met with numerous organizations to discuss future research exchanges, collaborations, and business opportunities. ACCJ members Bryan Norton and Greg Norton, as well as the chamber's Bioscience Subcommittee Chair Paul Cizdziel, acted as local liaisons.

The delegates took part in tours of labs and research centers around Tokyo and Yokohama, which led to fruitful discussions with fellow scientists who are seeking to further research and establish better patient care for citizens of both countries.

A major highlight of the trip was the visit to one of the largest research institutes in the country, Riken in Kanagawa Prefecture. The Buffalo delegates were amazed by Riken's multitude of noteworthy scientific accomplishments.

The BNMC members also visited Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.'s developing life sciences hub in Nihonbashi, Tokyo, a center of innovation and entrepreneurship with goals similar to those of the BNMC.

On the final day of the trip, Patrick Whalen and Dr. Junzo Takeda, chief executive director of the Tokyo Medical Center (TMC), met to sign the memorandum of understanding between the TMC and BNMC.

The Globalization Committee held two dinner receptions which drew members from TMC, Nippi Inc., Mitsui Fudosan, Yokogawa Electric Corporation, the US Embassy, and various ACCJ committees. William Bishop, ACCJ Healthcare Committee chair, praised the benefits of grassroots activities and Dr. Reynolds gave a heartfelt speech on collaboration in the spirit of advancing science and on the intertwined interests of the United States and Japan.

As a result of the trip in April, Japanese counterparts are arranging trips to the United States to take place within the next few months. In September, Dr. Hayashizaki, director of the Preventive Medicine & Diagnosis Innovation Program at Riken, is scheduled to present a seminar on the institute's groundbreaking technology at the BNMC, with the support of the State University of New York at Buffalo and the Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

Collaboration between Riken and the BNMC could revolutionize healthcare diagnostics, especially in oncology. In addition, representatives from Mitsui Fudosan are coordinating a business trip to the BNMC campus.

It has taken time and effort for the ACCJ's Globalization Committee to build trust and maintain steady communication in this endeavor. It is clear, however, that the developing cross-border activities are accomplishing the Furusato Project's primary objective: to create beneficial, collaborative relationships. ■

In the space of
a single week,
the Japan-US
relationship was
strengthened

Alyssa Smith is a writer and project coordinator at T-Mark Inc.

Carnegie Hall

Behind-the-scenes with Sir Clive Gillinson

By Timothy Connor

“Like so many things in life, Carnegie Hall happened almost by chance. Andrew Carnegie’s wife asked him to build her a concert hall for her chorus group and, being Andrew Carnegie, he said yes. He did everything wrong. Instead of going to a world famous architect, he asked the treasurer of his wife’s chorus, who happened to be an architect, to go to Europe and learn about all the famous concert halls.

“The architect/treasurer came back, and what he built had nothing to do with any of them, yet he built the greatest concert hall in the world. You cannot do this by chance; he must have had an extraordinary instinct.

“This echoes one of my own beliefs,” said famed British cellist and arts administrator Sir Clive Gillinson. “You not only want brilliant people; you also want people with great instinct.”

Sir Clive originally planned to become a mathematician, but luckily discovered—while a college student—that math was not for him, so he moved to music. His parents “encouraged” him to play the piano, which he did for three years, but “I had no talent.” When his mother allowed him, at 10 years of age, to change to the cello, he suddenly found that he had talent. And soon he was on his way to a career as a top musician with the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO).

A number of years later, when the LSO was in difficult financial straits and could not hire a Managing Director, he was asked to take on the role temporarily. That period lasted 21 years, and included a Knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for his outstanding contributions to music.

Since 2005, as executive and artistic director of Carnegie Hall, one of the world’s most popular venues for classical and pop music, Sir Clive has presided over many innovative and stimulating musical programs.

In 2011, for instance, Carnegie Hall mounted an ambitious Japan Festival, a New York City-wide musical extravaganza that included signature performances by renowned Japanese conductor Seiji Ozawa, as well as a plethora of other musicians and entertainers. The event was widely praised for its innovation and artistic contribution to music.

Subsequently, Sir Clive has been regularly asked when Carnegie Hall might do another Japan festival. “But we can’t. As the world’s leading musical institution, Carnegie Hall can never repeat any of its programs,” he said.



ACCJ member Justin Turkat (left), founder of the Notables Japan group (Carnegie Hall group for young people) speaks with Sir Clive.

COMMUNITY OF ALL

Carnegie Hall is an institution whose core beliefs also include the dictum “great music should be available to all people.” The institution is committed to music sharing, education, and giving back to the community. While most people associate the institution with concerts and concert halls, it is much, much more.

As a short video shown to ACCJ members at the event demonstrated, Carnegie Hall started a program for children called “Link Up”—a curriculum for them to experience music through participatory learning, with several large orchestras around the United States. The curriculum is now distributed free to 70 orchestras around the US—who could never have afforded it otherwise—and reaches more than 500,000 young people.

“But not only kids, we also work with adults and even in prisons—Carnegie believes that every single person has the right to have music in their lives. In one prison, an inmate told me: ‘This is not a project; this is the most important thing that has ever happened in my life.’”

In closing, Sir Clive said, “All great artists share a trait of humility and an overwhelming desire to continually improve themselves.” It was clear to me, as to others in attendance, I’m sure, that we were seeing in Sir Clive the very personification of that belief. Sir Clive almost never talked about himself during the entire time, always other great artists and how Carnegie Hall is always striving to bring the transformational power of music to all people—the sign of a truly great artist. ■

Timothy Connor is director of the corporate development and marketing services group, Newport Co., Ltd. He is also co-chair of the ACCJ Special Events Committee and member of the ACCJ Communications Advisory Council.

Timothy Connor speaks on the occasion of Sir Clive’s address to ACCJ members.



Carnegie believes that every single person has the right to have music in their lives.



EVENTS



1 Dr. Sophie Vandebroek, Xerox Chief Technology Officer and President of the Xerox Innovation Group, speaks on "Innovating at Xerox What's Next?" at Tokyo American Club on July 24.



2 Detroit Mayor Michael Duggan speaks on Detroit's strong ties with Japan at Tokyo American Club, July 28.



3 Participants gather for the Special Olympics World Summer Games Los Angeles 2015

4 Kathy Matsui, vice chair chief Japan Equity Strategist, and co-head of Macro Research in Asia, Goldman Sachs Japan, speaks on "Abenomics - overlooked Reform" at Tokyo American Club on July 30.

5 Garr Reynolds (left) receiving a certificate from Kansai Business Programs Chair Stephen A. Zurcher on the occasion of his "Communication and the Power of Design" presentation on July, 2015

6 Japan Market Expansion Competition Program Director Trond Varlid (left), and Independent Business Committee-Chubu Chair Sean Gallagher at the Chubu event "Creating an Effective Business Plan" on July 15 at International Design Center Nagoya. (Photo by Andy Boone)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit www.accj.or.jp for a complete list of upcoming ACCJ events or check our weekly e-newsletter, *The ACCJ Insider*.

• OCTOBER 1

ACCJ Charity Ball—"A Night on Bourbon Street" Wine Taste-off

This will be an opportunity to sample a variety of wines from some of your favorite local wine purveyors and to select the wine to be served at the 2015 ACCJ Charity Ball. Delectable wines, delicious hors d'oeuvres, and a light-hearted wine competition will be on offer.

Event details: 7:00-10:00 pm, at Roti Roppongi. Entrance: ¥5,000. All proceeds will benefit the ACCJ 2015 Charity Ball.

For more details of supported charities, visit: <https://www.accjcharityball.org/accj-community-service.html>



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ACCJ SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

Mercedes-Benz—Cole Haan Cup

An interview with Gregory C. Dinges

By John Amari

Gregory C. Dinges, president and representative director, Cole Haan Japan

Starting this year, Cole Haan will team up with Mercedes-Benz as co-title sponsors of the Mercedes-Benz—Cole Haan Cup. This will be the first time the illustrious global lifestyle brand has collaborated with the iconic German marque to cosponsor the event.

In an exclusive interview with *The Journal*, President and representative director of Cole Haan in Japan Gregory C. Dinges speaks openly about the company's past, present, and future brand strategy in Japan. Dinges also speaks about his enthusiasm for golf and his high expectations for the upcoming tournament.

Why did you decide to be co-title sponsor of this tournament?

Cole Haan is a great brand, started in 1928—so we are approaching 100 years. This is our 21st year in Japan. We have a great heritage that we are very proud of but, equally, when we became an independent company, we had a vision to build on that heritage.

So I think that, as we go through that process here in Japan, being a co-title sponsor of this illustrious tournament is a great opportunity to share that vision with people and, most importantly, the people in the chambers of commerce—whether they are Americans, Canadians, Europeans, or Japanese—many of whom are already consumers of our brand.

How does the tie-up with Mercedes-Benz complement your brand?

From a brand positioning point of view, we are taking Cole Haan—a heritage brand—to new places. Part of our new vision for the company is that we are a brand for extraordinary people. That's not meant to be snobbish, because everybody can, and should, be extraordinary.

So we really seek to deliver a product to extraordinary individuals, and we want to be passionate advocates for the extraordinary. We think that customers of Mercedes-Benz, obviously, fit that bill.

Furthermore, the real core of our brand positioning is this elegant collision, if you will, of fashion with performance and innovation, and that is just a great fit for Mercedes-Benz—who produce very beautiful and elegant performance-driving machines—as well.

Can you say something about the community aspect of this tournament?

Golf is a great game that you can do individually and also in teams. Obviously, the great Ryder Cup-esque nature of this competition between North Americans and Europeans—but in an Asian setting—goes to the heart of our DNA and to the core of much of the business community here. What's really great, though, is that we can bring together so many people from both sides of the Atlantic and Pacific with this event.

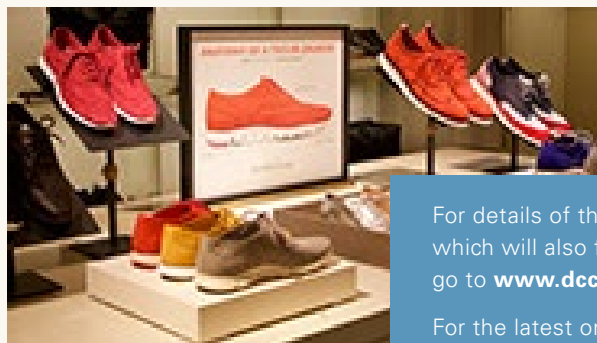
What can you tell us about your golfing experience and expectations for the tournament?

I aspire to be an amazing golfer. My father developed golf courses as a property developer when I was a child—so I've been around the game my whole life. Although I'm a pretty good hacker, I have no excuse to have a lack of practice or experience. Still, I'm looking forward to the tournament, but I don't think I'm going to be challenging anybody for the trophy. I'll be there having a good time and, along with our partners from Mercedes-Benz, I'll be there to celebrate the winners.

Briefly, what can you tell us about Cole Haan's expansion plans both here and abroad?

We've got plans in Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America that are exciting, but our biggest growth opportunities are in Asia. And Japan is the heart of our Asian business—as I said, we've been here for nearly 21 years.

We opened the first new concept or flagship store, anywhere in the world, here in Ginza, Tokyo. So Japan—where we have 70 stores—is a crucial market for Cole Haan. China, South Korea, Southeast Asia, are all going to be very crucial markets for us, too. ■



PHOTOS: A. KREMER/GENKI ART PHOTOGRAPHY

For details of the Mercedes-Benz—Cole Haan Cup, which will also feature an all-new women's competition, go to www.dccgolf-japan.com

For the latest on Cole Haan's new e-commerce website for Japan, visit www.colehaan.co.jp



Board Approves New Initiative to Support SMEs and Younger ACCJ Members

By Tom Whitson

The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) has been a long-time supporter of the Japan Market Expansion Competition (JMEC), a business skills development program. Many ACCJ member companies and ACCJ staff have participated in this program. In August, the ACCJ board approved a two-year program to provide a ¥500,000 subsidy to one ACCJ member SME and a scholarship to pay for two participants to attend the JMEC 22 program which starts this fall.

What is JMEC?

JMEC is a unique English-language business skills development program to provide actionable business plans. It was started in 1993 by the Australian and New Zealand Chamber of Commerce in Japan, and is currently supported by 18 foreign chambers of commerce here. Since 1993, more than 1,000 JMEC participants have produced more than 200 business plans for the program's Project Clients.

How does it work?

JMEC lecturers train motivated participants in business planning skills. In January, the participants—formed into four- to six-person teams—begin work on a business plan for a product or service that actually exists in Japan, with a mentor and a consultant guiding each team. From January to May, there are several workshops on various aspects of financial forecasting, market research and analysis, project management, distribution channel analysis, presentation skills, as well as other topics. Plans are submitted after the Golden Week holiday period in spring, and the teams present them to JMEC judges and to their clients. The best plans win prizes for members of the teams responsible.

Why do Project Clients use JMEC?

Clients find that using a JMEC team is a low cost way to explore the acceptability of a new product or an alternate approach to the Japanese market. Past plans have resulted in creative marketing approaches and significant new businesses for the Project Client. Some past clients have used their JMEC plan to start a completely new business in Japan. The cost of participation is ¥1.2 million (¥990,000 for early bird applicants). The ACCJ has agreed to pay ¥500,000 of



Team Galileo, winners of JMEC 21 in 2015.

this cost for one project over the next two years. See what some past Project Clients have said about their business plans on our website.

How do Participants benefit?

The Participants are a very diverse group of mid-level managers. They invariably want to develop practical skills, learn from local business experts, expand their network of

contacts, and receive a high-quality, low-cost cross-cultural training experience. Recent JMEC classes have comprised Japanese and non-Japanese Participants in a 50:50 split, with a 50:50 male-to-female ratio. Fifty-four nationalities have participated in JMEC over the last 21 years. The cost is ¥125,000 for a seven-month English-language practical business program. The ACCJ will sponsor two people from ACCJ member companies to participate in the JMEC 22 program. What past Participants have said about the program can be found on our website.

How do I qualify for ACCJ support?

To qualify, the Project Client has to be a US-owned, ACCJ SME member with less than 30 employees and a commitment to the Japanese market. They need to meet JMEC's participation criteria. Eligible Participants need to be English-speaking and employees of an ACCJ member organization living and working in Japan with two to five years of work experience. ACCJ presidents emeriti Debbie Howard and Mike Alfant will conduct the final selection.

How do I get started?

Visit JMEC online at www.jmec.gr.jp to learn more about the program and attend an information session. JMEC brochures can be found in the lobby of the ACCJ office in Tokyo. Potential Project Clients should contact Program Director Trond Varlid or Assistant Program Director Betsy Rogers at info@jmec.gr.jp to discuss project ideas and learn more about how JMEC can be of help. Potential Participants should attend an information session to learn more about the program from past Participants and others. Info sessions begin August 27. Sign up for a session that fits your schedule. ■

Tom Whitson is a president emeritus of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan and JMEC Executive Committee chairman.

The ACCJ thanks its Corporate Sustaining Member companies

Their extensive participation provides a cornerstone in the chamber's efforts to promote a better business climate in Japan.

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Challenging Minds, Changing Attitudes through Sports

By Jonathan Kushner

Between July 25 and August 2, some 6,500 athletes and 2,000 coaches gathered in the Los Angeles Coliseum before 500,000 spectators and a nationally televised audience for the largest sporting event in the world this year. You could be forgiven if you missed it.

The event was the Special Olympics World Summer Games Los Angeles 2015. The Special Olympics—not to be confused with its better-known cousin, the Paralympics, which focuses on athletes with physical disabilities—are an international sporting competition held every two years, alternating between Summer and Winter Games in non-Olympic years.

Special Olympics events celebrate athletes with intellectual disabilities. Due in part to the stigma of such disabilities, the event has not been as widely known or covered as the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

However, some progress is being made under the leadership of the United States, where this year sports broadcaster ESPN dedicated substantial coverage to the Special Olympics, and understanding appears to be on the upswing.

Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, sister of the late President John F. Kennedy, the Special Olympics movement has grown to comprise more than 4.5 million athletes in 170 countries.

With upward of 1.4 million coaches and volunteers worldwide in support, the Special Olympics delivers 32 Olympic-type sports and more than 94,000 games and competitions throughout the year. At this year's world games in Los Angeles, the niece of the founder and US ambassador to Japan, Caroline Kennedy, was one of the guest VIPs.

Japan was one of 165 countries to take part in this year's competition, the 14th World Summer Games. The nation's official delegation of 118 included 77 athletes who competed in 11 events, including badminton, basketball, bowling, golf, soccer, table tennis, track and field, and volleyball. The Japan team competed with determination and earned gold medals



The Special Olympics World Summer Games Los Angeles 2015: 165 countries were represented this year.

for divisions in events including aquatics, tennis, basketball, and track.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) contributed ¥1 million from the Community Service Fund and was recognized as a supporter for the Special Olympics Nippon (SON) this year.

"With this year's World Summer Games in Los Angeles, and Tokyo hosting the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, we are very pleased to support the Special Olympics Nippon as part of our long-standing commitment to the greater community, diversity in its many forms, and the bilateral ties between the US and Japan," said ACCJ President Jay Ponazecki.

"We are inspired by the courage and dedication of the athletes and their families and coaches, and by the commitment and enthusiasm of the volunteers. It is wonderful that sport and the spirit of competition have once again proven to be an avenue for greater international understanding and people-to-people ties between our two great countries."

To cheer on the Japanese participants, several ACCJ leaders attended a send-off event on July 21 at Tokyo Tower. In addition to President Ponazecki, the ACCJ was represented by Executive Director Laura Younger and Vice President Jonathan Kushner, co-chair of the Olympics and Sports Business Committee, as well as President Emeritus Tom Whitson, who

is also chairman of the Community Service Committee which supported the donation to SON. ACCJ Governor Tim Brett from CocaCola Japan Co. Ltd. also joined the event as a corporate sponsor.

Immediately following the send-off, the delegation boarded buses for the airport and set off across the Pacific to Los Angeles. Ryuhei Doi, who competed in the Unified Basketball competition, where intellectually disabled players compete on a team together with athletes who do not have a disability, afterwards said he was able to experience important growth by having participated in the LA Games.

"I was really pleased to be able to play in the unified competition together with regular people," he said.

Yuko Arimori, CEO of SON, said, "I want to applaud everyone for providing an opportunity to communicate through sports."

The ACCJ is planning an event in the future with SON to share the experiences of those who participated in the World Games with those who want to learn more about the Special Olympics movement. Stay tuned for further information. ■

Jonathan Kushner is an ACCJ Vice President and co-chair of the ACCJ Olympics and Sports Business Committee



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