

EURO BIZ JAPAN

AUGUST 2018

➔ It's official

The EU–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement is signed

➔ The face of European business interests

Director General of BusinessEurope Markus Beyrer

➔ Better bionics

How European firms are supporting Japan's disabled

JUAN RABANAL,
FOUNDER AND CEO OF
NUMERO ONE

IN THE PILOT'S SEAT

Helping fashion and retail brands take off in Japan






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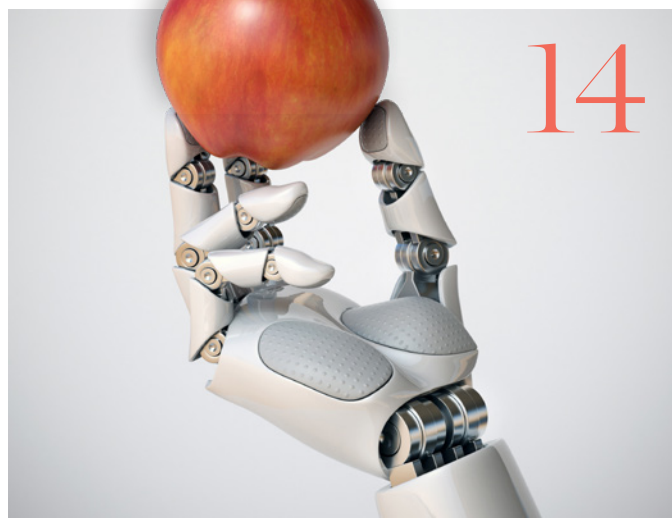
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The Mission of the European Business Council
To promote an impediment-free environment for European business in Japan.

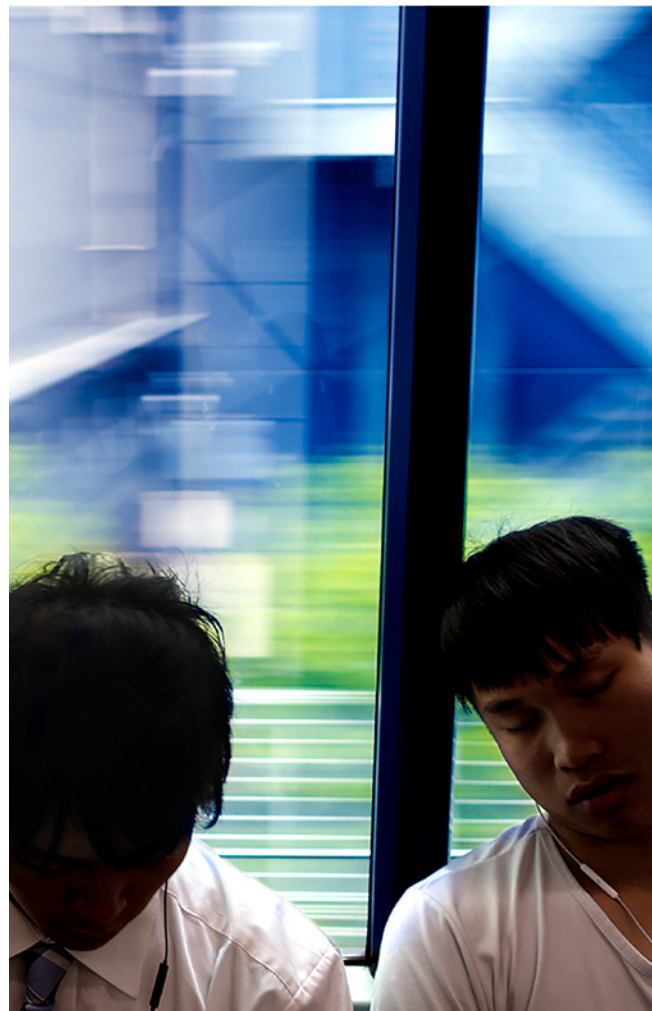
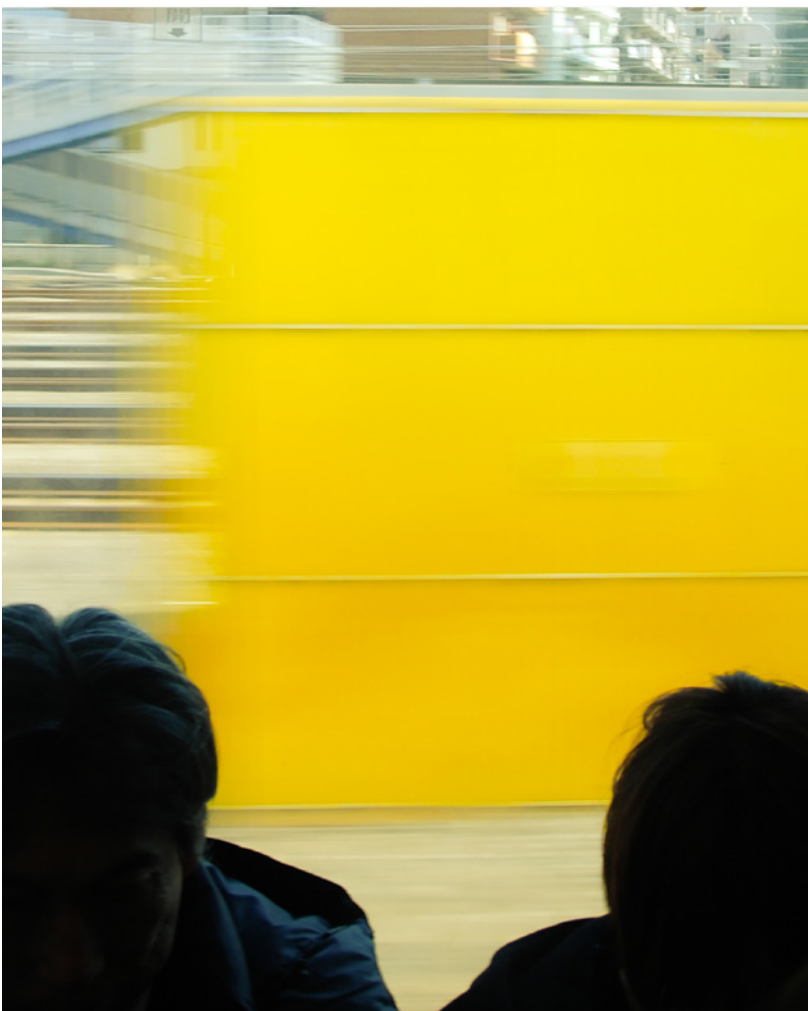
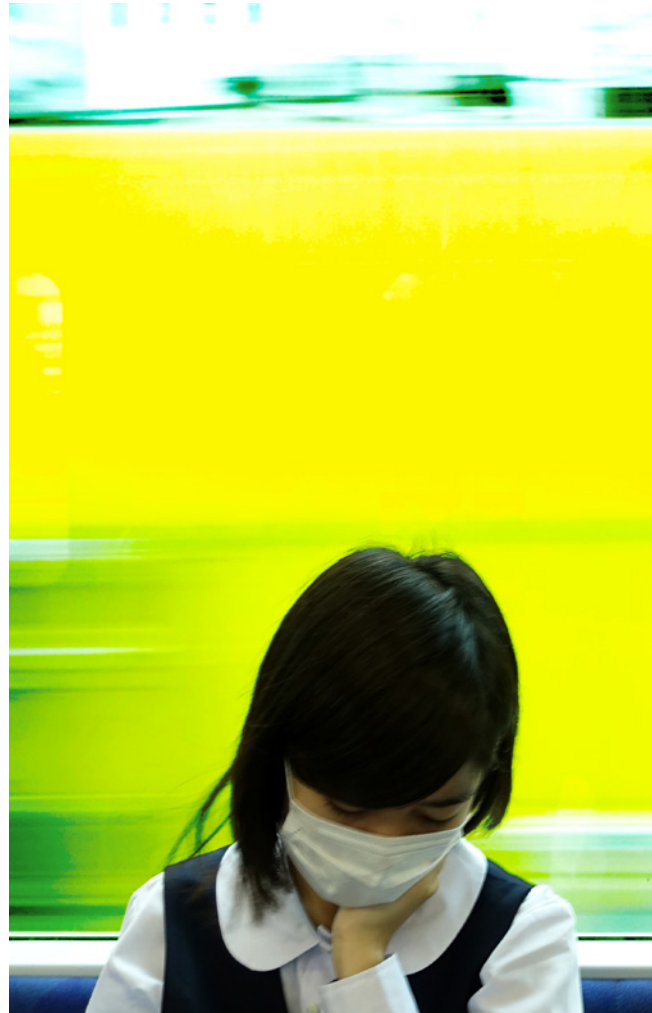


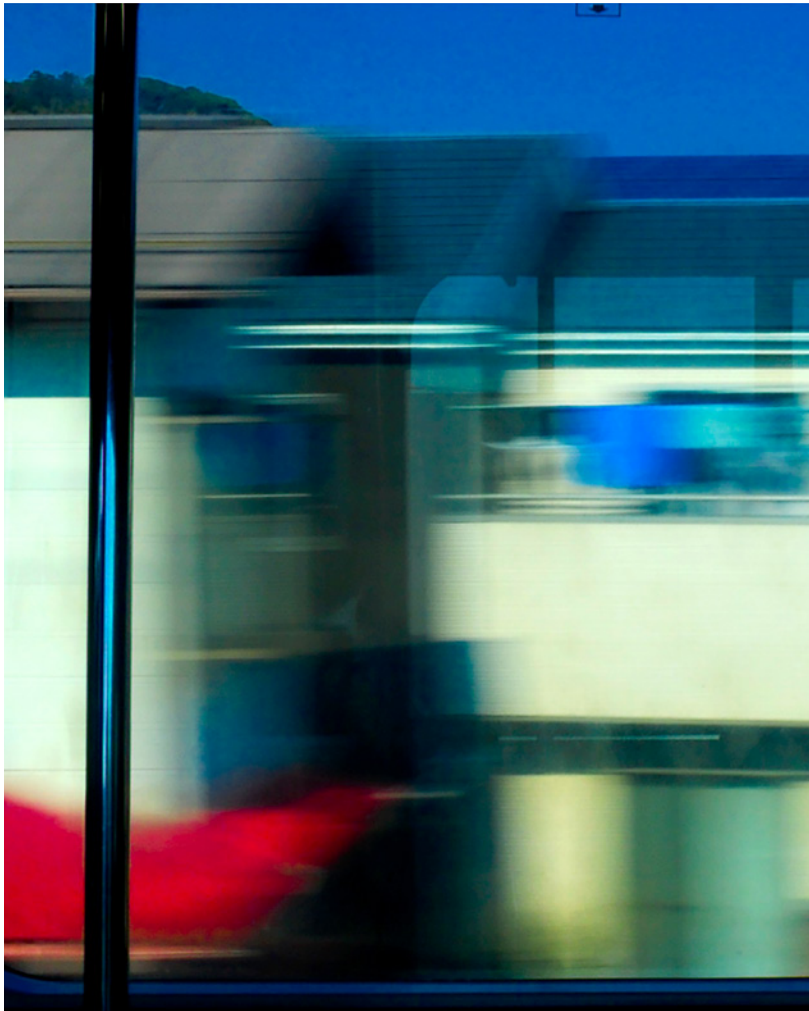
“Japan is a very traditional market. To be able to break into it you need expertise, experience and connections”

10

In the pilot's seat

By Toby Waters





First Focus

"[The Tokyo Trains series] started when one of my children was watching the city through the train window, and I noticed that the adults were just looking at their phones or had fallen asleep — nobody was looking outside ... It's like they're in a museum and there's art everywhere, but nobody's looking, everybody's sleeping."

EBC member Gregory Van Bellinghen has been shooting photographic series for more than 15 years. Read about his photography and his career in EBC Personality (page 28).

Photo by Gregory van Bellinghen
✉ gregoryvanbellinghen.eu



Writing in and about Japan since 2000, **Gavin Blair** contributes articles to magazines, websites and newspapers in Asia, Europe and the US on a wide range of topics, many of them business related.

➔ *“Learning about the advances in the technology of prosthetic limbs and wheelchairs was a mix of positive feelings at how it is improving lives and disappointment at the fact this tech is not available to everyone due to public funding constraints. However, talking to someone whose life had been transformed by way of a high-tech wheelchair was truly inspiring.”*



Dan Sloan has covered Japan and Asia as a journalist, author and corporate content chief for over 20 years, seeing more governments than he can count. He is a former president of the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan, and an unrepentant Yokohama BayStars fan.

➔ *“Japanese firms have set records in M&A transactions this year, but potential deals face more intensive cyber due diligence as the threat of past or future hacking grows. Being aware of all the digital dealings of a company during M&A negotiations can save businesses money — and help protect their reputations.”*



Kazuhiro Terada is president of Equal Marriage Alliance Japan, which advocates for same-sex marriage in Japan. He has worked for the Japanese Parliament and is currently working for the Danish Embassy in Tokyo.

➔ *“If Japan is truly interested in boosting its economy through what Prime Minister Abe calls ‘dynamic engagement of all citizens’, recognising the right of same-sex marriage is one of the most sensible, and least costly, policy options. A decision like this will bring the nation closer to its trading partners, most of whom already recognise same-sex marriage.”*



Toby Waters is an editor at *Eurobiz Japan*. He has over five years' experience editing for a major legal publisher in the UK where he specialised in Japan and the Asia-Pacific region.

➔ *“Coming from a background of writing about legal matters, I was thrilled to attend the Roppongi Bar Association's event to discuss the future of alternative dispute resolution in Japan. It will be great for Japan and its businesses to become a more attractive destination for arbitration and mediation, but questions remain on how long it will take for the nation to develop fully into these areas.”*

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Eurobiz Japan welcomes story ideas from readers and proposals from writers and photographers. Letters to the editor may be edited for length and style.

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Note: All proceeds from Casino Night will go toward Run For The Cure Foundation's mission to eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease in Japan.



Stronger connections

On 17 July, I had the privilege of attending a press conference at *kantei*, the prime minister's official residence, where it was announced that the EU–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement and the Strategic Partnership Agreement had been signed. The statements given by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and EU leaders Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker emphasised the relationship, and increasing level of cooperation, between the EU and Japan (read our extended EBC Update on page 30 to find out more). I was also able to witness the camaraderie – expressed in satisfied smiles and congratulatory handshakes – that has developed among the three politicians. With the agreements expected to come into force early next year, the con-

nections between these powers and their people will, undoubtedly, only grow stronger.

This is echoed in the words of Markus Beyrer, director general of European business advocacy organisation BusinessEurope: “the EPA will be a catalyst” for a closer EU–Japan relationship. Featured in *The face of European business interests* (page 20), Beyrer speaks about how BusinessEurope is working, together with Japanese business organisations, to strengthen links between the two economies.

European prosthesis and wheelchair producers are also working to create stronger connections. The latest technology connects this equipment to users' smartphones and allows data to be sent to therapists and service providers. Read Gavin Blair's *Better bionics* (page 14) to learn how European firms are giving Japan's disabled greater mobility and, in turn, allowing them to better connect to society.

As ties between Japan and the EU grow even stronger, opportunities for businesses – in number and scope – are sure to abound. ●

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“That was the beginning; that put me on the map in the industry, and other brands started to contact me directly, asking me to give them advice or to support them in the establishment of a company here,” he says. “From there I went into the consulting side for foreign clients in Japan, and I worked for a major consulting company in the fashion sector.”

After overseeing a number of impressive brand launches in Japan, including that of major Swedish retailer H&M and American fast fashion brand Forever 21, it wasn't long before he decided to strike out on his own. In 2010 Rabanal founded *Moda + Tecnica*, which quickly became a trusted fashion consultancy in both Tokyo and the global fashion centre of Milan. In 2016, Rabanal sold the business and started another consultancy back home in South America, supporting regional brands, before deciding to return to Tokyo to begin *Numero One* at the beginning of this year.

“We decided to open the company here, with operations in LA and Hong Kong, as well,” says Rabanal. “Our company is quite new, only eight months old, but we already have 10 people here in Tokyo, nine in Hong Kong, and two in LA, where they're focused on marketing.”

While *Numero One* is new to the market, it has already worked with major European brands, including Pomellato, Chopard, and Le Creuset, as well as American fashion house Calvin Klein. The firm is currently offering full-spectrum service for French accessories retailer APM Monaco.

“We're the entire function: we handle everything from company registration to finding the locations to getting the workforce, and we're

now promoting the brand,” Rabanal says, though he stresses that businesses can also pick and choose from among *Numero One*'s communications, recruiting and back office services.

Rabanal is confident that, despite the challenges of establishing a brand in Japan, Tokyo will continue to grow as a prime location for international fashion.

“It is changing — slowly,” says Rabanal. “It's more diverse, compared to five years ago. It's more open to sourcing talent from abroad. The system is getting easier, you might say.”

As Tokyo becomes more tourist friendly, the inbound business is increasingly contributing to the bottom line of fashion and retail firms.

“It represents, to some brands, up to 80% of their revenue,” Rabanal states. “As the Paris of Asia, everyone comes here for quality service and the best products in the industry.”

Looking to the future, Rabanal's priorities are clear: “Communication is in high demand right now, but recruitment is, for our company growth, something we want to focus on more. Trying to find the best talent for clients is very important.”

With a big investment from a private hedge fund, Rabanal is working to have the firm expand across Asia.

“Our next step is to open an office in China,” he says. “I'm looking into when that will be possible.”

Rabanal has recently earned an advanced pilot's licence, which allows him to fly not just single engine planes, but planes with jet engines for medium-haul flights. As *Numero One* — expertly piloted by Rabanal — grows and attracts new clients, there is every indication it will fly fast and far. ●



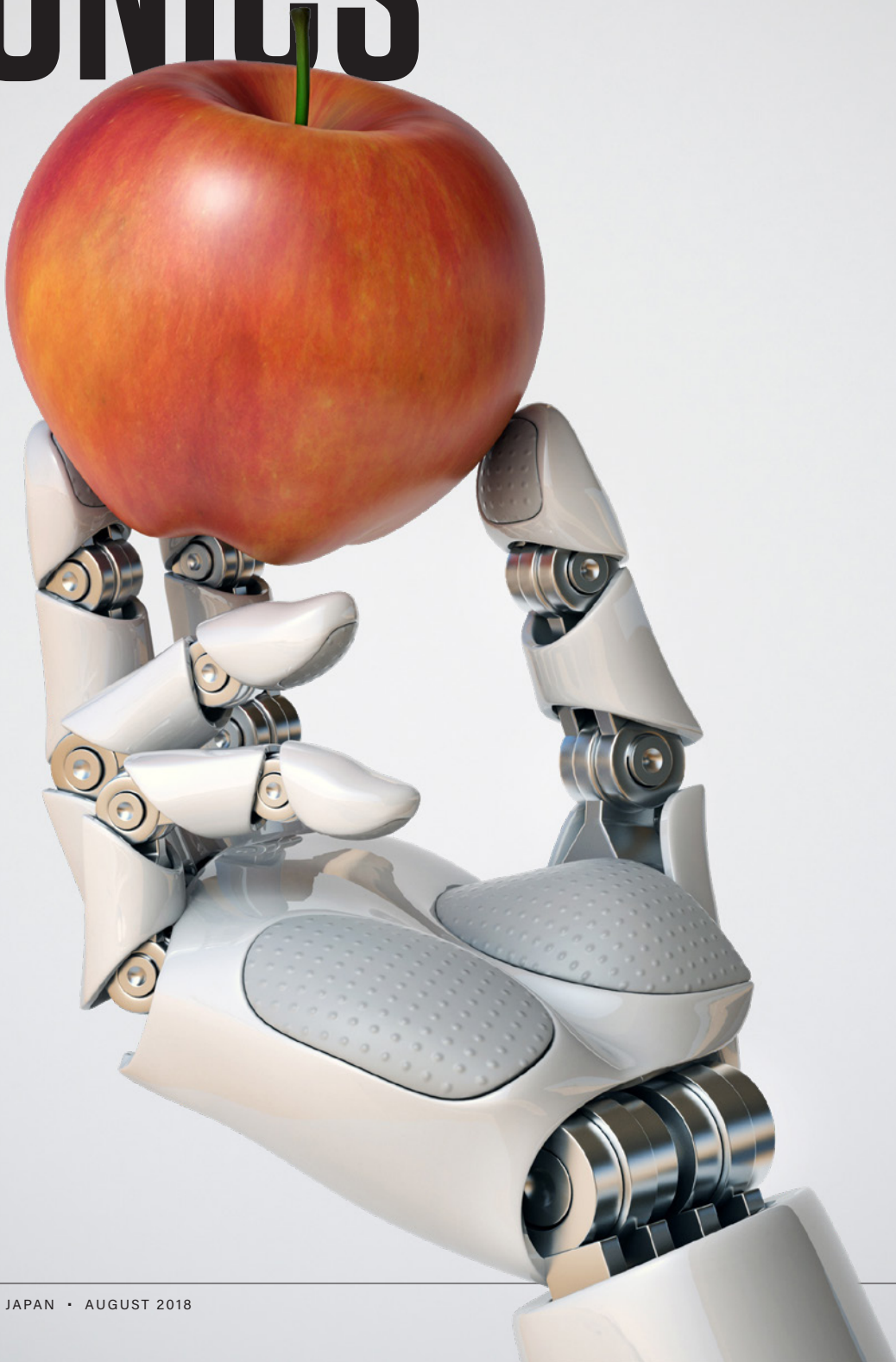
Philipp Berndt has worked for more than ten years in the fashion industry in Berlin, Seoul and Tokyo. Last year, he received a doctorate in science from Freie Universität Berlin, one of Germany's Universities of Excellence. As a business consultant at *Numero One*, he implements recruitment solutions for marketing and communications departments of fashion, beauty and lifestyle brands.

Emi Renata Sakamoto is currently supporting *Numero One*'s PR activities in Los Angeles and Tokyo. She is using her extensive network in the fashion industry, domestically and internationally, to help grow the business.



BETTER BIONICS

How European firms are supporting Japan's disabled



The multiple advantages of such technology are also pointed to by Chuji Kaseda, Japan managing director at Permobil, a Swedish provider of wheelchairs and seating solutions.

The F3 Corpus, one of Permobil's front-wheel drive wheelchairs, costs ¥2.7 million, but like an advanced prosthetic, can transform lives.

"It's the price of a small car," notes Kaseda. "I always explain that people are in their cars perhaps two hours a day maximum, but a wheelchair user will be in [their chair] maybe 14 hours in a day."

Yasutaka Murata, a full-time system technician at Permobil and wheelchair user himself, got funding approval for his F3 Corpus in 2017 after waiting a year. The benefits of this advanced wheelchair include being able to elevate the chair by 30cm, allowing Murata to converse with people who are standing without straining his neck. The controller under his foot that he uses to steer the wheelchair can be switched to work as a mouse for his computer, which he operates via a screen on the chair with a light pen he holds in his mouth.

The F3 also reclines, meaning users can stretch their bodies, helping to prevent chronic joint stiffness and pressure ulcers. A common problem for people who have suffered spinal injuries is a lack of sensation in some areas that lead to such issues arising without them noticing.

Permobil is addressing this with a Virtual Seating Coach that advises users, through a smartphone attached to the chair, when they have been in the same position too long, along with the time and exact angle they need to readjust their posture to. This will be included

in all Permobil wheelchairs equipped with Permobil Connect, a new IoT application scheduled for launch in Japan this autumn. The application will link the wheelchair to therapists who can monitor the user and fine-tune therapeutic programmes, as well as to Permobil service personnel to prevent problems such as mechanical failures or flat batteries.

Icelandic company Össur is another high-end prosthetics specialist, which pioneered the use of carbon fibre with its Vari-Flex foot, as well as silicone liners for artificial limbs.

"There are different kinds of bodies: skinny, fleshy, people who have suffered burns; silicone liners function as both interface and a suspension system," explains Össur APAC's Shoko Nireki, who notes 70% of prosthetics from all manufacturers now use silicone liners.

Nireki, who previously worked fitting prosthetics in the US, says Japanese surgeons often try to save as much of a limb as possible, though counter-intuitively this is not always the best outcome.

"In Japan, there is a lot of variation in where leg amputations are performed, whereas in the US, it is standardised, which is best for prosthetics," says Nireki.

Össur acquired Scottish upper-limb prostheses company Touch Bionics in 2016 for £27.5 million and now offers its i-limb quantum. However, at a cost of ¥3.6 million,

Nireki says the chances of i-limb quantum users getting reimbursement in Japan are very low.

The company also has an advanced Power Knee, with cutting-edge gait-recognition functions; power-aided standing; and connectivity via both the internet and Bluetooth. But an estimated cost of between ¥5 million and ¥6 million means it has not yet been made available in Japan.

Nireki is a passionate advocate of seeing young people get access to the latest tech.

"Grown-ups have options, like being able to drive, but children don't," she says. "And they need to be able to participate in sport at school. I think it's a human right." ●

Permobil's Virtual Seating Coach advises users when they have been in the same position too long





Next year, a group of automakers and tech firms will launch a potentially revolutionary platform for accessing vehicles. The Car Connectivity Consortium — which includes brands such as Audi, Volvo and BMW as well as Apple, Samsung and LG — is set to release a “standardised authentication protocol” called Digital Key 2.0. It will allow users to unlock and monitor their cars via smartphone and smartwatch. The technology would replace key fobs and also let drivers share access to their cars with others using the same app. This will enhance convenience for car owners and boost the car-sharing industry, which will be worth some \$11 billion by 2024, according to market research firm Global Market Insights.



THE NEXT BIG APP: YOUR CAR

How cars are becoming digital platforms

Jaguar Land Rover's Future Type autonomous electric concept car

Digital Key 2.0 is one of the latest developments in smart or connected cars, which are positioning cars as digital platforms that are better integrated into people's tech-powered lives. Better connectivity and functionality will add versatility to what are already impressive hardware and software systems: cars today already have more than 150 different hardware systems, to control everything from braking to seats, and run anywhere from 10 million to nearly 100 million lines of code. The market for connectivity hardware and services is expected to reach €120 billion by 2020, according to Boston Consulting Group, a management consulting firm.

One example of how manufacturers are trying to turn cars into digital platforms is BMW's ConnectedDrive service, which allows users to plan routes on smartphones and then transfer them to their vehicles. It can also share your status and ETA with friends.

“The BMW ConnectedDrive service [will] seamlessly integrate vehicles into

their users' digital lives,” says Peter Kronschnabl, president and CEO of BMW Japan. “It enables customers to access vehicle information and operate relevant functions easily from their home ... With people today spending more and more time online, cars can no longer simply be tools for getting from A to B. Instead, they must become a true part of people's lives — both on and offline.”

If cars today are becoming digital platforms, those of tomorrow will be artificially intelligent assistants. Last year, Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) showed off its Future Type autonomous electric concept car, featuring the Sayer AI-powered steering wheel. It can perform hundreds of tasks, including suggesting traffic

routes or warning of congestion, just like voice-controlled agents such as Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant. It can also be detached from the car and brought into the home.

“It's a totem of ownership that represents an emotional and digital connection with the brand,” Hugo Nightingale, design specialist at JLR, was quoted as saying by *The Globe and Mail* newspaper. “It's for the people who are really passionate about driving.”

Turning cars into sophisticated digital tools might help address declining interest in driving among youth in many countries, including the UK. With smarts and an emphasis on environmental sustainability, there's a lot to love in connected cars. ●



Caveat e-emptor

The importance of cyber due diligence

Acquisition risk has been a staple of free market commerce since Roman times, with transaction assessment — now called due diligence — undertaken to price both present and future value.

In 21st century mega-deals, it's normal to have a phalanx of lawyers and accountants to scrutinise every detail of potential mergers and acquisitions (M&A) but, increasingly, cybersecurity experts are part of the risk assessment.

"There isn't a standard process, but every law firm has a checklist of cyber questions," says Edward Cole, managing partner at law firm Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer in Tokyo. "Requesting cybersecurity-related documentation during a diligence [assessment] is absolutely standard, and we advise clients to think carefully of the risk profile of a particular business and how much diligence is needed."

Cyber due diligence reviews the governance, processes and controls around securing information, as well as the threat landscape, including cyber risk ratings — similar to credit ratings — if available. Companies buying other companies see technology and data as an important part of the deal's value, with low risk enhancing the attractiveness of a target firm or the leverage of an acquirer.

Key cyber areas include customer lists, online sales channels, source codes and intellectual property rights, as well as proprietary systems and formulas. Cyber security firms counsel those in the midst of the M&A process about what they may inherit from a potential transaction, and how to bridge and integrate business gaps after the deal.

"There aren't specific best practices around M&A, but it's simply a case of taking normal best practices, such as NIST [National Institute of Standards and Technology] or ISO 27001, and ensuring continuity in a transformational IT space," says Greg Day, chief security officer for Europe, the Middle East and Asia at network security firm Palo Alto Networks. "It's

really the business processes around the assets listed that need to be evaluated. It's rare that their cyber capabilities are consistent, which, short term, will mean adding in some stop-gap measures against risk variations and, long term, achieving consistency in managing cyber business risks."

Late discovery can be expensive. A recent M&A-related cyber-shock followed Verizon's offer to purchase Yahoo, when it was announced that one billion Yahoo user accounts had been affected by data breaches, at least three years after the attacks had taken place. This resulted in \$350 million being shaved off the initial \$4.8 billion bid.

Discovering past or potential attacks must be part of M&A due diligence, and warranties and indemnities should be part of the deal if risk is determined to be high.

"Warranties cover cyber risks such as IT infrastructure, past attacks, and internal policies; how detailed they are depends on the risk profile of the target," Cole says. "Risks resulting from known incidents should be covered by indemnities. If a particular risk profile or red



Japanese firms alone were involved in some \$300 billion worth of M&A deals between 2014 and 2017

flag is identified during due diligence, a technical advisor can be retained and the target's management should be questioned."

Japanese firms alone were involved in some \$300 billion worth of M&A deals between 2014 and 2017 and have been active this year with Takeda Pharmaceutical's offer for London-listed rare disease specialist Shire, setting a new Japanese takeover record at approximately £46 billion.

Thorough due diligence delves into historic cyber incidents as well as future vulnerabilities; data-management risk at parent firms as well as suppliers; technical issues, such as encryption and firewalls; as well as people-training and company IT policies. When successful, diligence should prescribe next steps and a schedule to address issues. Cyber insurance can also be a worthwhile consideration.

"Given the potentially high damages resulting from a cyber attack on digital business models and the lack of comprehensive regulation allocating liabilities, due diligence — including on whether responsibilities are

appropriately allocated contractually in supplier and customer relationships, and cyber insurance coverage — is particularly important," Cole says.

Tighter EU regulatory standards for personal data protection with stiff penalties will be another catalyst for deeper M&A scrutiny. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), enacted in May to consolidate data protection and personal privacy laws across the EU, requires notification of affected parties within 72 hours on discovery of a data breach.

"GDPR has some very broad-reaching requirements, which typically are owned by differing parts of the business," says Day of Palo Alto Networks. "Where GDPR changes cybersecurity most typically is the need to be able to quantify the decisions made as to what, where and why cybersecurity controls were put in place, as well as how the business can measure the effectiveness in achieving the relevant regard for risk."

If GDPR rules had been in effect during the Yahoo attacks, an estimated \$160 million in penalties might have been levied, based on company turnover at the time. GDPR non-compliance can result in a bill of up to

4% of annual global turnover or €20 million, whichever is higher.

"Europe is ahead of the rest of world in terms of personal data [protection] and regulation," says Cole. "Companies that have to deal with European data laws should be among the best prepared."

A recent Reuters' survey of 215 Japanese firms showed only minimal preparedness for GDPR's tougher rules, as just 7% said they would be able to notify authorities and affected individuals within three days of a data breach. Only a quarter of firms had completed the easier steps for GDPR.

"Japanese acquirers will take GDPR compliance into account when doing due diligence and when integrating acquired targets or data, just as they do other risks — to avoid fines and reputational damage, but also to make sure they are not infecting their own data."

Will cybersecurity due diligence scupper future deals? Cole doesn't think so, instead seeing a better pricing of risk.

"Very few deals aren't done because of diligence," he said. "In most cases, there will be some managing to do the deal on different terms, the same as almost all other risks." ●

"Requesting cybersecurity-related documentation during a diligence [assessment] is absolutely standard"



The face of European business interests

Director General of BusinessEurope
Markus Beyrer



tation of the agreement will provide the certainty and the predictability that businesses need when operating in each other's markets. So, points of contact are being created on both sides, which will provide a framework for cooperation during the implementation process.

Second, we need to ensure that all businesses are fully aware of the new opportunities

Japan and the EU both have carefully considered rules and high standards. But, sometimes, their approach to regulations is different. In new fields, such as robotics and AI, this could lead to unnecessary barriers to trade. Regulatory cooperation will help establish global standards and rules, and set standards in new product areas.

The EPA includes ambitious provisions outlining a formal mechanism of regulatory cooperation, which consists of sharing information and experiences, identifying areas of mutual interest for joint work, and cooperating to develop and promote international standards. Businesses should also be consulted by government on the areas in which they seek common standards. After all, our shared interests mean that we can jointly oppose protectionism — a race to the bottom in global standards — and unfair trade practices.

How do you hope to see the EU–Japan relationship develop over the long-term?

I think the relationship between the EU and Japan can only grow closer and that the EPA will be a catalyst for this. We are like-minded in many areas, including our views on fair and rules-based trade, as well as our commitment to democracy, multilateralism, and citizens' health and safety.

Today, some 600,000 jobs in the EU are tied to exports to Japan, and Japanese companies together employ 550,000 people in the EU. In Japan, jobs linked to the EU also run into the hundreds of thousands. Across the EU, every €1 billion in trade supports 15,000 jobs. So, we hope to see these figures grow with the deepening of our partnership.

How do you think the bilateral relationship will change now that a decision on adequacy, regarding safe data flow, has been reached for Japan?

The decision on data adequacy is a milestone for businesses on both sides. Digital

trade is an increasingly important element of trade as data grows to be an ever more valuable component of the transfer of goods and services. Data is the lifeblood of an innovation-driven economy, and the adequacy decision will enhance data flows between the EU and Japan while protecting personal data. An adequacy agreement was possible because the EU and Japan both have a high level of privacy and security of personal data. Respecting privacy should not prevent the legitimate movement of business-related data, especially since companies mostly transfer non-personal data or anonymised personal data.

Could you share a couple of accomplishments from your career before joining BusinessEurope?

When I was chief economic advisor to the Austrian chancellor, we made a series of structural reforms — including on tax, pensions, budget and the system promoting research and innovation. These reforms were an important basis for Austria's economic success today and are still benefitting the country.

Also, during my time as chief executive of the Federation of Austrian Industries [the Austrian member of BusinessEurope], we ran a large campaign aimed at making the wider population aware of the fact that, contrary to what many thought, Austria's wealth was, and is, coming from the strength and competitiveness of its manufacturing sector. This campaign was very successful in terms of visibility and impact, and it helped to create a more positive attitude toward industry among the general public. ●



provided by the agreement. This is the first time an EU free trade agreement has a chapter for small and medium-sized enterprises — helping them to maximise benefits from the EPA — so making businesses of every size aware of the EPA will be essential to completing its implementation.

Both sides should also commit to regulatory cooperation to ensure that trade barriers are addressed in line with the terms that have been agreed.

How should Japan and the EU cooperate in the regulatory sphere and why is this so important?



#MeTooJapan

Next steps for womenomics

A rising wave of global protest against sexual harassment and assault — seen, in particular, through the #MeToo movement — as well as calls for greater action to promote gender diversity in the work place and corporate boardroom have raised the prominence of the women's movement over the past year.

But despite Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's policy of womenomics, which aims to bring more women into the workforce, Japan is still seen as lagging behind the rest of the developed world, highlighted by its response to recent public allegations against high-profile male journalists, politicians and bureaucrats of sexual harassment and rape.

Those violated, such as journalist Shiori Ito, have faced public opprobrium for speaking up, while also being stonewalled by the police and courts. Not surprisingly, Japan's Ministry of Justice estimates that only 20% of victims go public, while others put the figure as low as 4% in a country where the rape law was updated last year for the first time in 110 years, and attitudes towards sexual violence can reflect Meiji Era sentiments.

In a show of insensitivity, Finance Minister Taro Aso said — after the ministry's top bureaucrat, Junichi Fukuda, was caught on tape making lewd comments about a female reporter — that his deputy may have been entrapped and that harassment was not a crime. Aso's comments sparked public protests around the country.

The prime minister pledged “zero tolerance” of harassment in June, and the government now requires senior officials to undergo training in awareness and prevention. Minister for Internal Affairs and Women's Empowerment Seiko Noda, one of only two women in Abe's cabinet, wants to enhance the law's protection of victims, as the last revision in 1997 only required employers to prevent harassment,

and didn't set out penalties for perpetrators.

A Reuters survey of 232 Japanese firms indicated that 78% had not taken steps to strengthen conditions to prevent sexual harassment in the last year, and nearly the same number aren't planning future action.

Working women in the Abe era have hit a record high — with a total of 43.2% employed in 2017, and 77.6% of women in their prime working years. Yumiko Murakami, head of the

The government has set a female senior public and private leadership target of 30% by 2020, but if Japan's parliament is a proxy for boardroom progress, this target will be hard to meet as barely 10% of today's 465 MPs are women. Teikoku Databank says only 7.8% of Japanese company presidents are women.

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report puts Japan's rank at a record low of 114th among 144 nations. According to the labour ministry, average pay for women in 2017 hit an all-time high, but showed a gender wage gap of 26.6%, compared with about 15% in the United Kingdom.

“Faced with severe labour shortages, companies have started to increase salaries to secure workers — first with



OECD Tokyo Centre, says numbers are growing, but corporate leadership remains overwhelmingly male.

“The female labour market participation rate has been steadily increasing, especially after the Abe administration placed womenomics as one of the pillars of its growth strategy in 2012,” she notes. “Lack of female leadership in both politics and business is the biggest challenge in Japan now. We have tons of women working today, but their voices are not necessarily reflected in the decision-making process.”

regular workers, then irregular workers,” says Murakami. “Women are still under-represented in the regular worker market, especially in senior positions. This explains the large gender wage gap.”

Are things improving in Japan? Murakami believes there is more to do, but she's encouraged.

“I am optimistic that things are changing for the better,” she says. “The fact that #MeTooJapan has been picking up momentum recently in light of the finance ministry scandal is a good sign.” ●



The Netherlands

Giving a high-tech helping hand

The Netherlands is one of Japan's oldest international partners — having traded with Japan since 1609 — and was even granted special trading privileges during the nation's isolationist Sakoku period (1633 – 1853). But it isn't just history that the two nations share. While Japan has long been known as a centre for high-tech developments, inventors and firms from the Netherlands also have been involved in creating a number of significant technologies, including Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and the Blu-ray format, and today the country is one of the most important tech start-up locations in Europe.

“**T**he Netherlands is proudly recognised as one of the world's leading innovators, as described by numerous European and global rankings,” says Netherlands Ambassador to Japan Aart Jacobi. “For example, it ranked second on the Global Innovation Index 2018.”

There are many instances of companies from the Netherlands creating high-tech solutions for different industries in Japan and around the world. One example is Scarabee, which aims to keep global travellers safe while making their journeys easier with its tailor-made technology for airlines and airports to facilitate baggage handling and security checks. Tokyo International Airport Haneda and New Chitose Airport in Sapporo have installed Scarabee's self-service baggage drop-off modules for domestic flights, following successful trials of the system at Nagoya's Centrair International Airport.



Medical technology is also an area of expertise of many Dutch companies. Nowadays, as the incidence of heart disease continues to rise, businesses such as Medis are working to enhance cardiovascular imaging devices. The firm, which has an office in Tokyo, is developing both invasive and non-invasive techniques to more effectively gather information for clinical research and improve routine procedures.

Many of these developments wouldn't be possible without the microchips needed to run both hardware and software. Dutch multinational ASML provides the world's biggest chipmakers with semiconductor lithography technology used in the production of integrated circuits, which are found in everything from industrial machinery to smartphones.

While the private sectors in both the Netherlands and Japan are continuing to create technology that will have long-lasting benefits for one another, the two nations are working closely to further advance scientific development.


"In 1996, the Netherlands and Japan signed a bilateral treaty on Cooperation in Science and Technology, in which they agreed to hold regular bilateral joint committee consultations on science and technology," Jacobi explains. "Topics that were recently covered include quantum technology, cybersecurity, renewable energy, agriculture innovation and funding schemes."

The Netherlands' approach to cooperation between business and academia is also highlighted by the ambassador as a point of pride, and something that Japan has taken note of.

"Open innovation ecosystems surround our research universities," he says. "For example, the High Tech Campus Eindhoven combines business, corporate research and academic projects in a cluster setting. These clusters have seen huge interest from Japan, and it is seeking to emulate our system of open innovation to increase successful industry-academia collaboration."

Jacobi also emphasises that, in the face of current trends in global politics, Japan and the Netherlands will continue to place their relationship first, and that their cooperation is of paramount importance to both nations.

"We have built long-lasting, extensive relations and I expect that they will only grow stronger in time," he states. "Under the current global tensions in trade and resurgent protectionism, Japan and the Netherlands recognise each other as strong, like-minded partners with solutions for a multilateral trade system, founded on an international rules-based approach." ●

 **Trade with Japan**

Imports from Japan: €9 billion
Exports to Japan: €5.9 billion

SOURCE: STATISTICS NETHERLANDS, 2017



"The Netherlands is proudly recognised as one of the world's leading innovators"

— Aart Jacobi, Netherlands Ambassador to Japan

Area

41,543km².
Coastline: 451km.

Climate

Temperate, marine, cool summers and mild winters.

Major cities

Amsterdam (capital), Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, Eindhoven, and Tilburg.

Population

17,016,967 (July 2016, estimate).
Urban population: 90.5% (2015).
39.83% are 25-54 years of age (2016, estimate).

Natural resources

Natural gas, petroleum, peat, limestone, salt, sand and gravel, and arable land.





BUSINESSES FROM ...

THE NETHERLANDS

A LOOK AT SOME COMPANIES FROM THE REGION



BRAND LOYALTY

Brand Loyalty is a global leader in food retail loyalty programmes. We provide bespoke loyalty packages, and aim to change the consumer's behavior in food shopping and increase their spending and visiting frequency — ultimately, improving the retailer's brand.

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Houthoff is an independent firm that provides advice on Dutch law in an international context. In addition to offices in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Brussels, London and New York as well as representatives in Houston and Singapore — and in Tokyo soon — we have dedicated regional teams. We are also the member firm of the exclusive Lex Mundi network and the TechLaw member for the Netherlands.

www.houthoff.com



Liquor

Toasting a year of successes

The EBC Liquor Committee has experienced a number of significant changes over the past year.

Its current chair, Bruno Yvon, took over in September of last year, a couple of months after the EU and Japan announced an agreement in principle on their Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

“The EPA was a good welcome gift for me,” he laughs.

European liquor companies in Japan have a large stake in the agreement. Among other measures, Japan’s tariffs on EU wine imports will be scrapped as soon as the EPA comes into force.

In another big development, the committee managed to more than double its size earlier this year, bringing the number of member companies to nine.

According to committee member Tim Paech, the group decided to reach out to other firms in a bid to bring in fresh ideas, gain a broader perspective and make greater efforts to further explore regulatory issues.

“In recent months, we identified some other important international alcoholic beverage companies that have a direct presence in Japan and

asked them whether they’d be interested in participating,” he says. “It’s a good, cohesive working group. We’ve got a mix of expats, localised foreigners and Japanese senior execs.”

Significant progress is also expected in an ongoing effort to harmonise lists of approved liquor additives in the two economies thanks to the EPA. However, members will probably be spending much of their time on this issue as it is still a work in progress and could take a while before it’s fully resolved.

The EBC wants full alignment on approved additives in the EU and Japan. Some progress has already been made. Officials at Japan’s National Tax Agency (NTA), which regulates the alcohol industry, have already approved several substances, while others are supposed to be given the green light within two years of the EPA taking effect. Nine others are under consideration, although the NTA has yet to indicate a timeframe, according to Yvon.

“There will be quite a bit of follow-up on the additives,” he says.

Another challenging issue is the need for mandatory traceability information on product packaging. This involves the string of digits printed on bottles by the producer, called a production lot code. These codes enable producers and importers to pinpoint where and when a product was manufactured.

Some imported products have these

codes removed or tampered with before they are sold in Japan. The EBC views the practice as dangerous to consumers’ safety. In a situation where items needed to be recalled, for instance, importers and authorities wouldn’t be able to trace the right bottles if the original production lot codes had been removed.

“We believe this is a significant concern for consumer protection,” says Paech, president and CEO of Pernod Ricard Japan.

Yvon, who is also president of MHD Môt Hennessy Diageo K.K., adds that the practice is also trademark infringement: “We also consider [the lot codes] to be part of our trademark, part of the integrity of the brand.”

Japan is one of the few developed economies that doesn’t make lot codes mandatory. The EBC wants that to change. Yvon says the committee’s approach to the issue is to “raise awareness” with Japanese officials, distributors and retailers.

“We are communicating with the NTA,” he says.

Progress has been slow but steady. For example, the NTA released a notice on the lot code issue in 2014, and it was mentioned last year in the Alcohol Management Training Text.

That traceability issue, plus harmonising additives and monitoring the liberalisation outlined in the EPA, promise that the next year or so will be a lively and busy time for the committee.

“We have a pretty clear agenda,” Yvon says. “We are going to keep on working and following up on our three major issues.” ●

Bruno Yvon is chairperson of the EBC Liquor Committee and president of MHD Môt Hennessy Diageo K.K.

Advocacy issues

➤ Tariffs

Japan should remove tariffs on EU wine imports when the EPA comes into force and fix duties at zero permanently for white spirits.

➤ Traceability

The Japanese government should issue legislation that prohibits the sale of liquor bottles without proper lot codes.

➤ Additives

Japan should approve additives in common use in other developed countries.



Gregory Van Bellinghen

Creating the decisive moment

"Photography has a unique characteristic: the decisive moment," says Gregory Van Bellinghen. "The decisive moment can be extremely fast, one thousandth of a second, or extremely slow — you can take a shot for an hour — but it's still that moment."

Having always enjoyed taking photos, Van Bellinghen — from the town of Kortrijk in Belgium — decided more than 15 years ago that he wanted to use his camera for something more meaningful than his vacation pictures. He set himself the challenge of making a photographic series of a minimum of 10 images. His first series, completed in 2003, developed out of a photo of a billboard that he took during a trip to New York City.

"It was the idea of the portrait in the city," Van Bellinghen says, "and how this big face is reacting to everybody passing by."

In 2008, Van Bellinghen and his family moved to Beijing — where he worked at the European Chamber of Commerce and, later, at the

Asian Development Bank. One series he shot while he was in China is titled *Beijing Buses*.

"When I shot buses at a slow shutter speed, they would leave a streak, like a flash — very abstract, very colourful, very joyful," Van Bellinghen explains.

Since then, he has focused on using slower shutter speeds to create a colourful, blurred effect. In 2014, he moved to Japan and shot a similar series, *Tokyo Trains*, which was exhibited at Minna no Gallery in Tokyo.

"It started when one of my children was watching the city through the train window, and I noticed that the adults were just looking at their phones or had fallen asleep — nobody was looking outside," he says.

"It's like they're in a museum and there's art everywhere, but nobody's looking, everybody's sleeping."

Through his photos, Van Bellinghen aims to reawaken this childlike awe and encourage people not to miss unique moments.

At the firm A Capital — which manages a private equity fund that invests in European businesses to help them grow in Asia, and where Van Bellinghen is managing director — the decisive moment is something you have to wait for.

"Investing is believing in the future of a management team," he says. "You can't invest in past success."

Van Bellinghen was hired in 2011 to help

Do you like natto?

Time spent working in Japan?
Four years.

The importance of consistency.

Career regrets?
None at all.

What's your secret to success in business?

Winston Churchill said: "Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it's the courage to continue that counts."

Do you have a favourite saying?

"*Il faut voyager loin en aimant sa maison*" (When you travel far away, retain a love of your home) — Apollinaire.

What's your favourite place to dine?

Uoshin, an *izakaya* in Nogizaka. It's fantastic.

Do you have a favourite book?

Hopscotch by Julio Cortázar.

Do you like natto?

I tried it and I thought it was bland. It won't become my favourite dish. One of the weirdest things I've tried here has to be *shirako* (fish milt). Compared to natto, that's another level.

What's something you can't live without?

Coffee.

What's something you've learned in Japan?

set up the fund, raising some €18 million. Together with an investment from Chinese luxury goods distributor Sparkle Roll Holdings, the fund was first used to invest in Danish audio equipment maker Bang & Olufsen, which was not seeing any growth in China. With this investment, Bang & Olufsen reinvented itself with new products, different manufacturing strategies and more competitive prices.

"Now the company's growing more than 30% a year in China,"



Van Bellinghen says. “It’s a complete turnaround.”

A Capital has also invested in the Belgian firm Epigan, which makes next generation semiconductors, including those for 5G telecommunications technology. It is experiencing healthy growth in Japan.

“We’re also setting up a second fund,” Van Bellinghen says. “The Japanese are investing a lot more overseas to keep the economy growing, so there’s a window of opportunity for European firms wishing to

expand in the Japanese market with a strategic local partner.”

Van Bellinghen is also investing in the future of Japan by supporting its artists.

“I wanted to build a collection of pictures by young Japanese photographers,” he says. “We have to help out the young guys here, today, now.”

For example, he has bought photos by Yoshinori Mizutani, a “very talented photographer”, who has shot series on subjects such as parrots and street crossings. Another artist, whom Van Bellinghen believes “deserves to be known worldwide”, is Kimio Itozaki. He creates “absolutely fascinating” 3D dioramas from

photos he’s taken of ordinary streets.

“The thing with collecting is that you only know if it’s good once you buy it,” Van Bellinghen says. “From the moment you hang it on your wall, you can say if it’s missing something or if it’s just right. I still don’t know how it works, but it’s a magical moment.” ●

Gregory Van Bellinghen is managing director at A Capital and represents the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce on the EBC’s Executive Operating Board.

History was made in Tokyo on 17 July. At the 25th EU–Japan Summit, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, and Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, for the long-awaited signing of the EU–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). It is set to become the world’s largest bilateral agreement, covering 600 million people and nearly a third of global trade.

Formal negotiations began in 2013 and were finally concluded last December. The initial aims of the agreement were to solidify the economic relationship between the EU and Japan by removing tariffs, creating more transna-

tional business opportunities and promoting job creation.

However, in the political context of 2018, the EPA also represents the ongoing commitment of both the EU and Japan to free trade, fair trade and friendship.

“Today, we sign the epoch-making Japan–EU Economic Partnership Agreement and the Strategic Partnership Agreement,” Abe said at a post-summit press conference, attended by *Eurobiz Japan*. “The signing of the EPA clearly demonstrates to the world the unwavering political will of Japan and the EU as flag-bearers of free trade to lead the

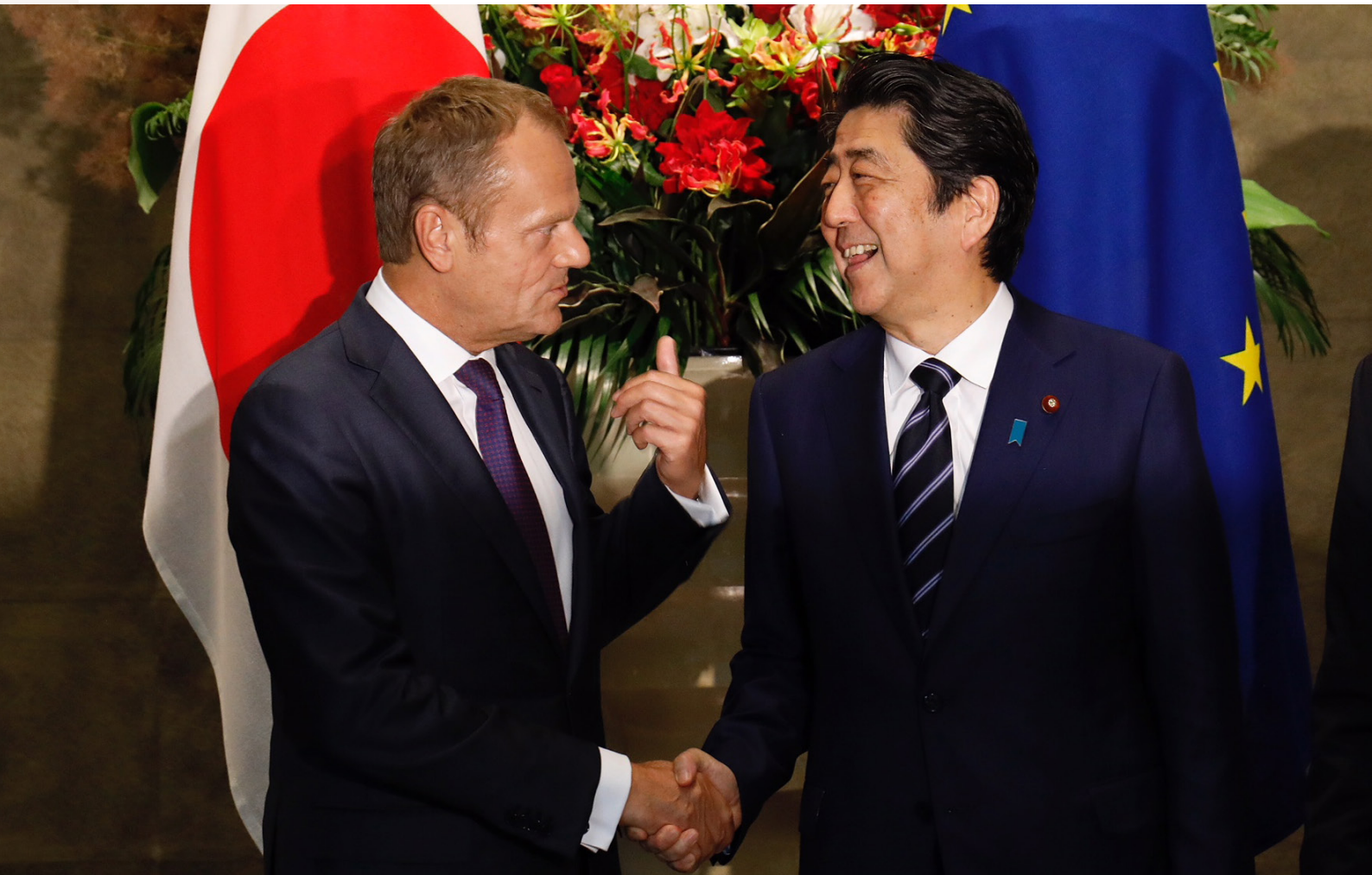
world in the midst of spreading protectionism.”

Tusk focused on the close relationship between the EU and Japan and their shared values, on which the two agreements are founded.

“Today, we cement the Japanese–European friendship forever,” he said. “Geographically, we are far apart, but politically and economically, we could hardly be any closer. We both firmly believe in openness, cooperation, rules-based international order and free trade. We both share values of liberal democracy, human rights and the rule of law.”

It's official

The EU–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement is signed



With the ratification of the EPA by the European Parliament and the Japanese Diet, and its expected entry into force in early 2019, 90% of tariffs on goods — from cars to cheese to chemicals — will be removed between Japan and the EU, saving EU firms nearly €1 billion in annual duties. It is estimated that the agreement will boost Japan's GDP by ¥5 trillion and create 290,000 jobs in the nation.

"[The EPA] will create a free and fair economic framework with high standards befitting the 21st century," Abe continued, adding that it would bring about "huge opportunities, especially to those in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors, as well as the micro-, small and medium enterprises of Japan."

Under the EPA, many Japanese agricultural products, including Kobe beef and Yubari melon, will be protected in the EU through geographical indication (GI), identifying that they originated in a particular region and assuring consumers of their quality. And some 200 European GIs will be protected in Japan.

"This agreement puts fairness and values at its core; it will set the template for others," said Juncker. "It upholds the highest standards in areas such as labour, safety, environmental and consumer protection."

The Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) was negotiated in tandem with the EPA and formally takes the relationship beyond solely business and trade.

"[The] Japan-EU SPA is a confirmation that Japan and the EU share universal values like freedom, democracy, human rights and rule of law," said Abe. "It is the first-ever document

that is legally binding that comprehensively sets forth cooperation in wide-ranging areas ... including security, maritime affairs, development and education."

The SPA also includes sections calling for greater bilateral cooperation in areas such as the environment and climate change; disaster management and humanitarian action; tourism and people-to-people exchange; and the promotion of peace and security regionally and internationally.

Also, a landmark decision was reached during the summit on the mutual recognition of adequacy for the cross-border transfer of personal data between the EU and Japan.

"I am delighted that we have come to an agreement on adequacy in recognising each other's data protection systems," Juncker announced. "This will create the world's largest safe-flow-of-data area and ensure the highest levels of data protection for the people of Japan and Europe alike."

The European Business Council in Japan (EBC), in 2006, was the first European business organisation to call for an EPA. Throughout the negotiation process, the EBC regularly provided the EU Commission with "detailed technical information of both requests and explanations of the issues faced by European industry in Japan", according to an EBC press release.

"The [signing] represents an important milestone in the economic relationship between the EU and Japan," stated EBC Chairman Danny Risberg. "Companies of the respective regions have invested heavily and look forward to [strengthening] their presence in their respective markets."

However, the work of the EBC does not end with the signing, or even the ratification

"Today, we cement the Japanese-European friendship forever"

of the EPA. The EBC will continue to carefully monitor the proper implementation of the agreement to ensure its lasting success.

The summit took place shortly after torrential rainfall and flooding in western Japan killed more than 220 people across 15 prefectures and damaged nearly 40,000 residences. Both EU leaders took a moment to offer their condolences for the lives lost, as well as their continued support for Japan and its people.

"Please be assured that you can count on us and on the European solidarity," said Tusk. "We will always be there for you because this is what friends do." ●



Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission

PHOTO: EUROPEAN PEOPLE'S PARTY



No disputing Japan's potential

Vying to become a hub for alternative dispute resolution

With a highly developed legal system and reliable courts, Japan has long been seen as a safe and stable place to conduct business. However, one area where Japan could be said to be lagging is in alternative dispute resolution (ADR). In resolving international commercial disputes, methods such as mediation and arbitration are seldomly used here and less well known than in other countries.

Many on the panel were bullish about Japan's ability to become a major Asian ADR centre. Hughes Hubbard & Reed's Tony Andriotis, who organised the event, noted that Singapore and Hong Kong, which share a common law system and a colonial history, are currently leading arbitration centres in Asia.

"Japan is a civil law jurisdiction, free from that history, and it could become a major destination for civil law arbitration," he stated. "We can build something new here."

Haig Oghigian of Squire Patton Boggs, who co-moderated the event along with Yuki Sakioka of Anderson Mori &

Tomotsune (AMT), highlighted the benefits to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) of Japan becoming a centre for ADR.

"If you're a big company, and money is no object, then you can afford to arbitrate anywhere, but if you're an SME, then you'll be focused on the cost," Oghigian observed. "If Tokyo can provide the same level of service as elsewhere, but for less money, then so much

the better."

The relative paucity of arbitration in Japan — an average of only 20 cases a year — can largely be attributed to two main causes. The first is that, domestically, Japanese companies prefer litigation to settle disputes.

"Japanese courts are efficient and trustworthy; in a way, they're too good," said panellist Yoshimasa Furuta of AMT. "This means there's little need for domestic companies to enter into arbitration."

The second issue, which concerns cross-border arbitration seated in Japan, is

that there are legal ambiguities over who can be allowed to act as an arbitrator or represent a party. Oghigian, however, doesn't consider this to be an insurmountable problem.

"Any arbitration system will have these issues," he said. "Even Singapore had this problem."

Panellist Michael Mroczek of Okuno & Partners believes that developing into an arbitration hub will be beneficial for Japan, but that it will take time.

"Promoting Japan as a place for arbitration?" he asked. "It'll be an investment."

ADR associations and their members, which include the panellists, have been actively lobbying the government and the Ministry of Justice to update relevant laws and advocating for Japan to become a prime destination for dispute resolution. Their efforts are already bearing fruit.

"The Ministry of Justice is planning to send judges, who have been seconded to the ministry, to be trained as arbitrators," reported Yoshihiro Takatori of Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe.

Investments have also been made to establish facilities for ADR here. The Japan International Dispute Resolution Center is a new permanent facility in Osaka conducting arbitration, and there are plans to launch a similar facility in Tokyo within a few years. And the Japan International Mediation Center in Kyoto is scheduled to open soon.

Despite the head-start of other jurisdictions in Asia, Japan is beginning to realise its potential not only to become established as a location for ADR, but to be a thriving one, benefitting global businesses and lawyers alike. ●

Yoshimasa Furuta (left) and Tony Andriotis



As a way of promoting Japan's potential as a global ADR hub, a panel of lawyers, facilitated by the Roppongi Bar Association, gathered on 18 July at the Thomson Reuters office in Tokyo to discuss obstacles that need to be overcome in order to achieve this goal. The event was co-sponsored by various professional and commercial organisations, including the EBC and the Greek, Swiss and Netherlands chambers of commerce.



The Agenda

AUG.
30IRELAND JAPAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

Third Thursday Networking Event

TIME: 19:00
VENUE: An SOLAS, Yoyogi
FEE: No entrance fee. Buy your own
food and drink
CONTACT: secretariat@ijcc.jp

SEPT.
19

JOINT CHAMBER EVENT

2019 Rugby World Cup – One Year to Go

TIME: 19:00 – 21:00
VENUE: Happa-en
FEE: ¥10,000 (members), ¥13,000
(non-members)
CONTACT: info@bccjapan.com

AUG.
31FINNISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN
JAPAN

FCCJ Yakatabune Cruise

TIME: 18:30 to 21:00
EMBARKATION: Miuraya in Asakusabashi,
Tokyo
FEE: ¥9,000 (members), ¥12,000
(non-members)
CONTACT: fccj@gol.com

SEPT.
20POLISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

Industrial and Production Investments in Poland 2018–2020

TIME: 15:00 – 17:30
VENUE: JETRO Seminar Room (TBC)
FEE: Free of charge
CONTACT: secretariat@pccij.or.jp

SEPT.
7

ABC AND SCCIJ

After Summer Cocktail 2018

TIME: 19:00 – 21:30 (doors open: 18:30)
VENUE: Residence of the Austrian
Commercial Counsellor
FEE: ¥6,500 (members), ¥7,500
(non-members)
CONTACT: info@sccij.jp

SEPT.
26SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

Luncheon – Ulrich W. Herzog, Executive Chairman, Oris SA

TIME: 12:00 to 14:00
VENUE: Shangri-La Tokyo
FEE: ¥6,500 (members), ¥8,000
(non-members)
CONTACT: info@sccij.jp

SEPT.
11BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN
JAPAN

Cyber AI: Under the Hood

TIME: 08:00 – 09:30
VENUE: Grand Hyatt Tokyo
FEE: ¥6,000 (members), ¥8,000
(non-members)
CONTACT: info@bccjapan.com

SEPT.
26BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN
JAPAN

Small is GREAT XIII – Organic Growth

TIME: 18:00 – 20:00
VENUE: BCCJ Office
FEE: ¥3,000 (members), ¥7,000
(non-members)
CONTACT: info@bccjapan.com

SEPT.
13CZECH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

Czech Business & Culture Networking Event

TIME: 18:00 to 20:30
VENUE: Embassy of the Czech Republic
in Tokyo, Hiroo
FEE: ¥5,000 (members), ¥7,000
(non-members)
CONTACT: secretary@cccij.com

OCT.
5

ERC, ACCJ AND CCCJ

The 16th Mercedes-Benz – Cole Haan Cup

TIME: 08:30 to 18:00
VENUE: Atsugi Kokusai C.C., Kanagawa
FEE: ¥24,700
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
www.dccgolf-japan.com

DON'T SWEAT THE SUMMER

Beat the heat at some of Tokyo's best places for drinks

TEXT BY TOBY WATERS

As the mercury continues to rise, people are looking for ways to keep cool, refresh themselves, and enjoy some time with friends — and what better way to accomplish all three than to get out and grab a drink? Tokyo has a number of exceptional offerings for those looking to wet their whistle, and here are a few of our top picks for this summer.

AQ Revolution imports the best beers from around the world, ready for you to drink at Titans Craft Beer Tap Room and Bottle Shop in Otsuka. Right now, they're featuring a favourite summer beer, Summer Love from Victory Brewing Company. They will also have Mikkeller beer cool-shipped direct from their brewery to your glass. Enjoy the end of summer with beers at Titans!

Top off your summer by coming to the **Belgian Beer Weekend Tokyo**. The annual tour of Japan ends its run at Roppongi Hills Arena from Wednesday, September 19 to Monday September 24. They offer 98 refreshing Belgian beers together with delicious food — including world-famous fries

— as well as live music, featuring Goose, Bent Van Looy, ShunGu and Hiro-a-key. Find out more at www.belgianbeerweekend.jp.

For those looking to enjoy a drink at home in a classic yet stylish fashion, the **Spiegelau Craft Beer Glasses** collection comprises five custom-shaped glasses, one each for IPA, stout, American wheat, barrel-aged and pilsner beers. Expertly crafted and carefully tested, the unique shape of each glass in the Spiegelau Craft Beer Glasses collection has been developed through a series of design and tasting workshops in collaboration with master brewers from leading American craft beer breweries.

Raise a glass to the end of one exceptionally hot summer.



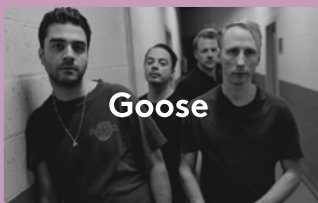
Belgian Beer Weekend



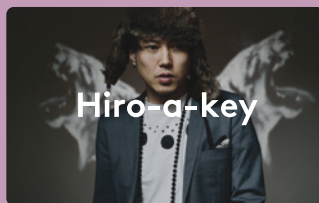
Tokyo
9.19 WED - 9.24 MON

Roppongi Hills Arena

Join us for six vibrant days in a superb setting with 100 different Belgian beers, matching food (our fries are world-famous!) and excellent live music.



Goose



Hiro-a-key



Shungu



Bent Van Looy

www.belgianbeerweekend.jp

OPENING HOURS WEEKDAYS 16:00 - 22:00, WEEKEND/HOLIDAYS 11:00 - 22:00 (LAST DAY TILL 21:00)

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The same rights for everyone

The NPO advocating for the recognition of same-sex marriage in Japan

When I was a teenager, people in the LGBT community in Japan were either invisible or considered deviant — and that was when I became aware that I was gay. Nobody knew my secret. I didn't feel I could come out because I was worried about being discriminated against by my friends or, even worse, by my family. I felt so alone.

In 1999, when I was 26, I had the opportunity to live in Denmark and work at the Japanese Embassy in Copenhagen. Ten years earlier, in 1989, Denmark had become the first country in the world to legalise same-sex partnerships, which was a status almost equivalent to marriage. It was a delight to see many “married” gay couples openly enjoying their lives in Copenhagen. And I realised, for the first time, that I did not have to be alone.

After returning to Japan a few years later, I came out to my parents. It took them months to grapple with the news, but it was a great relief to me that they didn't turn their backs on me. However, my mother — who had always been so loving and supportive — told me she didn't feel she had done her duty as a mother. I decided I didn't want to see families blame themselves anymore for something that shouldn't be considered a failing.

In 2014, I started the NPO Equal Marriage Alliance Japan (EMA), an organisation that advocates for the legal recognition of same-sex marriage in Japan. Partnered with organisations, law firms and individuals working towards the same goal, EMA educates on same-sex marriage and promotes the need for a change in legislation through events and lectures.

Today, we can do a lot to make this country a better place for people in the LGBT community. Private businesses, many municipal governments, and even Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's administration, already acknowledge that diversity is vital for the economy. And an increasing number of local governments now give some form of recognition to same-sex partnerships.

From a legal standpoint, Japan is discriminating against gay and lesbian people by denying them the right of same-sex marriage, or free and equal marriage regardless of gender.

Since Japan is a free society that stands for equality for all, the denial of same-sex marriage can in no way be justified.

I'm not saying that marriage is a necessity for a relationship; that is each couple's decision. But when couples do want to marry, the legal system should be applied equally — every person in society deserves the same rights.

Foreign employees with a same-sex spouse can't get legal protection or benefits in Japan. And there are many who come to Japan who have to face this

situation. Countries that have legalised same-sex marriage and national partnership systems together represent more than 60% of the world's GDP. All OECD nations with per capita GDP greater than Japan's have recognised same-sex marriage.

Now that free trade agreements have been reached with both the EU and the trans-Pacific nations, Japan's economy is connected with the rest of the world's much more closely than ever before. Japan's refusal to grant same-sex marriage is sure to become a liability for the nation's businesses. If Prime Minister Abe's government is truly interested in boosting the stagnant economy through the “dynamic engagement of all citizens”, recognising same-sex

“Today, we can do a lot to make this country a better place for people in the LGBT community”

marriage is one of the most sensible and least costly policy options.

As Maurice Williamson, a New Zealand MP argued, same-sex marriage is “fantastic for the people it affects, but for the rest of us, life will go on.”

Simply put, the government needs to stop clinging to a discriminatory policy and take this step forward. ●

Kazuhiro Terada is president of Equal Marriage Alliance Japan, which advocates for same-sex marriage in Japan.



GETTING THE BALANCE RIGHT

Developing excellence in and out of the classroom

TEXT BY TOBY WATERS



Many schools strive to maintain a good balance between studies and student activities to ensure that pupils are able to reach their full potential both inside and outside the classroom.

INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Nicole Yamada, vice president of **Gymboree Play & Music** believes that her nursery promotes a child's early development.

"Our activities help develop the cognitive, physical and social skills of children as they play," she says. "Since we are mainly a 'mommy and me' programme, we encourage parent participation in their child's development."

Chateau des Bambini Montessori School has its focus on creating the best classroom possible for its students.

"Our priorities are to prepare a physical environment that is child-centred and provides materials and activities that are age-appropriate and beneficial for learning," explains Head Teacher Maria Valdez.

Developing children's personalities is an area of major importance at **St. Alban's Nursery**.

According to Director Gilma Yamamoto-Copeland, "our chief objective is to bring out each child's individuality, helping them discover their own interests and abilities, and develop confidence and a passion for learning that will carry them through life."

Poppins Active Learning International School (PALIS) gives students the chance to interact with experts.

"We strive to provide authentic experiences for our students by having specialist teachers lead lessons using real tools and methods they would use on the job, explains Director Betty Shimozaki. "Our hope is that students will develop interests in a variety of topics."

Shinagawa International School (SIS) seeks to foster a love for learning.

Principal Mehmet Deniz reports that "SIS's philosophy promotes a balance of acquiring knowledge, developing skills and promoting positive attitudes and attributes that will inspire every student to be a lifelong learner."

A priority for **MEES International School** is to get its students to interact with the modern world.

"Academic studies are done using tablets twice a day for short periods of time," says Principal Euft van den Berg. "Children work individually, learning at their own pace, while teachers give one-to-one support when needed."

Damian Rentoule, principal of **Hiroshima International School (HIS)**, describes his school's approach.

"Content is important, but the process of inquiry is the priority if we want students to become confident, independent learners," he states.

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The role and range of extra-curricular activities offered to students is also hugely important to both parents and teachers.

At **Aoba School**, "our after-school programme gives students the opportunity to take part in activities such as sports, music, drama, dance and French," says Kathleen de Silva, homeroom teacher. "Each child is formally and informally assessed so we can best understand their individual needs."

Annette Levy, deputy school head of **St. Maur International School**, is proud of the range of activities her school offers.

"It's part of our school culture for students to get involved in sport, fine arts and academic-focused activities, such as robotics," she states. "Involvement in extracurricular activities allows students to develop courage, perseverance and teamwork."

Shinagawa International School works to promote cooperation while catering to individual needs.

"Social development is a high priority here, and our after-school programmes encourage interaction among children of different ages," Deniz says. "All our activities and school events take our students' culture, beliefs, and background into account."

St. Alban's unifies its in-class and out-of-class activities.

"For our preschoolers, study equals activities," states Yamamoto-Copeland. "We provide a whole range of hands-on, do-it-yourself, indoor and outdoor learning opportunities, from reading picture books to play-acting."

Michael Hosking, of **Nishimachi International School**, believes that activities in and out of class complement one another.

"We value both academic study and non-academic activities, because they both contribute to learning," he says. "These allow students to pursue their individual passions and interests."

EF Academy International Boarding School believes extra-curriculars will help with higher education.

"Pursuing your passions and cultivating new interests is important regardless of whether it happens inside or outside the classroom," President Jennifer Hepworth reports. "A rich co-curricular life shows universities that you are an active community member, and that your dedication is genuine."

BALANCED STUDENTS, BALANCED GRADUATES

These schools share the goal of using a balanced education to produce capable students after they leave school.

Levy of St. Maur says: "One of the essential outcomes is for our students to become balanced learners. When students know that they have the opportunity to be involved in a wide range of activities it helps them to become well-balanced individuals."

Gymboree manager Hanako Ito hopes that her school will foster creativity and imagination.

"When children leave our classes they will be socially, cognitively and physically prepared for their future schooling," she says. "Our play-based classes encourage children to be creative and challenge themselves."

Aoba strives to create leaders who can enact positive change.

"We want our students to become effective problem-solvers who are able to draw on their experience and knowledge to find a solution," de Silva says. "Activities at our school are designed to enhance thinking and creativity, as well as collaboration and leadership."

Shimozaki wants PALIS graduates to leave with a strong sense of curiosity.

"A PALIS graduate will leave us as someone who is curious about the world. Students learn not to hesitate to try something new."

Hiroshima International School is keen to produce students for whom the schoolday never ends.

"Following years of investigating the world around them, our students develop a strong sense of curiosity and confidence in their ability to gain deep conceptual understanding, something that carries over to their daily lives," says Rentoule.

Nishimachi wants its alumni to use their experience in the world around them.

"Our mission is to cultivate reflective graduates who will possess the attitudes and approaches of lifelong learners," says Hosking. "They will be active and responsible global citizens who are knowledgeable, caring, and can take action."

Valdez of Chateau des Bambini is confident her students will leave highly socialised.

"When students leave our school, they will have developed a strong foundation in academics as well as in interacting with and understanding people," she explains.

Van den Berg believes that MEES will prepare students for the real world.

"It is our aim to create an environment in which today's technology is readily available, giving our students a head start for future learning," he notes.

The philosophy of EF Academy is that diversity is a benefit for students' futures.

"We believe that studying with classmates from 75 nations opens your eyes to new cultures and enables you to become independent and confident," says Hepworth.

As the world changes each day, a balanced education can help your child to thrive academically and socially.

"We value both academic study and non-academic activities, because they both contribute to learning"

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Appellation unknown

Obscure wine regions worth your attention

The classic European regions — such as Burgundy, Barolo and Rioja — have always been at the centre of the wine lover's universe. We know them, we're attuned to their character and histories. But a little nudge out of that familiarity should lead us to discover the vast array of exotic wine lands that produce nectar of a different ilk. Here are two.

CANARY ISLANDS

With dramatic landscapes of volcanic black ash, island mountains rising from the ocean at over 3,700 metres, and centuries-old vines, the Canary Islands might be the most obscure wine region on the planet. Situated about 100km off the southwest coast of Morocco and less than 130km west of the Sahara Desert, this chain of seven main islands remains under Spanish authority.

The Canary Islands have been producing quality wines for half a millennium. Luminaries such as Shakespeare and George Washington have written about their excellence. Luckily for us, winemakers are still using grapes similar to those that the Bard would have tried. The Canary Islands were never hit by the late 19th century phylloxera epidemic that wiped out an alarming amount of native European vines, so these



ancient varieties are still planted and used in modern wine production.

Of the seven main islands, Lanzarote, known for its black soil and semicircular stone walls — which guard vines from fierce winds — and Tenerife, whose viticulturalists traditionally braid vines in horizontal rows, are the most notable wine regions. Critics have concluded that the red wines of the archipelago are most remarkable, offering notes of wildflowers, spicy fruit and funk.

MOLDOVA

Located between Romania and the Ukraine, Moldova has historically exported its wine almost exclusively to Russia

and neighbouring countries with incredible success. But in 2006, when Moldova refused to end a long-term territorial feud with Russia, President Vladimir Putin slapped a trade embargo on Moldovan wine, resulting in \$180 million in losses.

Now, after Moldova finalised a trade agreement with the EU in 2014, the Moldovan wine industry is in a golden era. The quality of wine has been further refined, and though its key importers are still Eastern European nations, exports were up 20% in 2017 compared with 2015.

The four wine regions of Moldova are Codru in the centre of the country, its most heavily planted region; Stefan-Voda in the southeast, with a climate influenced by the Black Sea; Valul lui Traian in the southwest, known for its red wines; and Balti in the north, with grapes grown for distilling and spirits. Also, look out for Moldovan wineries such as Purcari, Chateau Vartely, Et Cetera, Cricova and Castel Mimi, whose wines have consistently been rated 87 points or above by *Wine Enthusiast*. ●





The end of golf's irritations in Japan?

Three peculiar customs beginning to change on the nation's courses

THE LONE GOLFER

Imagine this (real) situation. You fly into the beautiful tropical resort island of Okinawa. Maybe you're coming from Tokyo or the US or Europe. You've seen pictures of its spectacular courses and you want to experience the reality. You have your clubs with you and, as you head to the clubhouse, you see the course looks pretty empty. You ask when you can play, and you're told: you can't.

Why not?

Because you're on your own. Golf in Japan is a bit like karaoke; it's a social pastime and not the sort of thing most people do on their own. Some clubs will allow members, and occasionally guests, to play solo, but many won't even let two people play together. In the past, a twosome had the right of way on a golf course. That doesn't apply any more. Although in Europe and North America, the rules state: "Priority on the course is determined by a group's pace of play. The term 'group' includes a single player." However, clubs in Japan can still make their own rules

to ensure that all tee times are taken up by as many players as possible.

Solo players in Japan are more likely to get a game on more remote courses and with less favourable conditions. Value Golf recognised that some people can't find a partner and have set up a system on its website (www.valuegolf.co.jp) for lone golfers to join up with other singles, pairs or threesomes. Another option is to enter a club's open competition.

IT'S TIME FOR LUNCH

Lunch is the bugbear of foreign golfers in Japan. Only here is it compulsory nearly everywhere to stop for lunch after completing the front nine holes. For the golfer who is not used to this, it's a major irritation. But for

the Japanese, golf is a social (or sometimes business) occasion and lunch is an essential part of it. Also, unlike in the West, golf club restaurants aren't open to the general public and aren't open into the evenings. Playing 18 holes straight through has always been opposed by most Japanese golf clubs; they make a lot of money from their lunches.

Fortunately, this is beginning to change. Certain clubs have introduced "play through" options (which you can book online through sites such as Golf Digest Online) and you can have your lunch after your round — or just go home early.

THE EMPTY GOLF COURSE

Another peculiarity of golf in Japan is the empty golf course. Even though the sun rises as early as 4:30 in the morning in the summer, there are still some courses that don't open their doors before 8:00 a.m. Also, the sun sets at around 7:00 p.m. on "long" summer evenings, but most golfers are showered and on their way home by 5:00, which means that many golf courses are lying unused for hours every day.

But this, too, is starting to change. A few clubs have installed floodlights to allow for longer playing times or for playing in the evening after work. Other clubs now recognise that some golfers don't want to start in the morning, have lunch, play the back nine and then go home. Quite a few courses now allow you to start at 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning, and play through, while others are allowing players to start at 11:00, 12:00 or later and play 18 holes straight.

It's like real golf, only in Japan. Who would have thought? ●





Nobi Kaneko

Company: Kaneko & Associates

Official title: President

Originally from: Hokkaido, Japan

Length of time abroad: I've spent 20 of the last 40 years in the US

Hungry? Where do you like to go for a bite?

QUAND L'APPÉTIT VA TOUT VA! in Azabu-juban. I like the casual French atmosphere and their impressive wine selection.

What do you do to stay in shape?

I hike. And I aim for a low-carb diet.

Name a favourite movie:

The Green Mile.

Favourite musician/band: It's a tie between U2 and Bruno Mars.

Favourite album:

U2's *The Joshua Tree.*

Favourite TV show:

Saturday Night Live.

Favourite book: *The Bible.*

What's something a lot of people don't know about you?

Prior to starting my current professional position in executive recruit-

ment, I was an ordained member of the clergy.

Cats or dogs?

Dogs.

Summer or winter?

Summer.

What's your ideal weekend?

Going to see a movie, then relaxing at home.

Where do you go for a drink after a busy week?

My favorite bar is Bar Jada in Aoyama. I've been going there for the past 15 years.



"I was an ordained member of the clergy"



Oliver Ryf

Company: ARYZTA Japan

Official title: Managing Director

Originally from: Zurich, Switzerland

Length of time in Japan: Seven years

Hungry? Where do you like to go for a bite?

Tanbo for the best *onigiri* lunch and Kaneishi for their original Hiroshima style *okonomiyaki*.

What do you do to stay in shape?

Play tennis and run. To keep my mind in shape, I study Japanese.

Name a favourite movie: *Carnage*

by Roman Polanski. I also love Hirokazu Kore-eda's *Soshite Chichi ni Naru.*

Favourite bands: Patent Ochsner (from Switzerland) and Ulfu!s (from Osaka).

Favourite albums: Patent Ochsner's *The Rimini Flashdown Part III* and Ulfu!s' *One Mind.*

Favourite TV show: *Black Mirror.*

Favourite books: *On the Edge* by Markus Werner and Haruki Murakami's *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running.*

What's something a lot of people don't know about you?

I have been a Fuji Rocker since 2011.

Cats or dogs?

I am a fan of big dogs.

Summer or winter?

Since you're asking during this summer, there's only one answer.

What's your ideal weekend?

Every weekend is ideal.

Where do you go for a drink after a busy week?

Somewhere in Ebisu. I especially like Bar Tram.



"I have been a Fuji Rocker since 2011."



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Christian Wolf,
Managing Director

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