

# EURO BIZ JAPAN

NOVEMBER 2017

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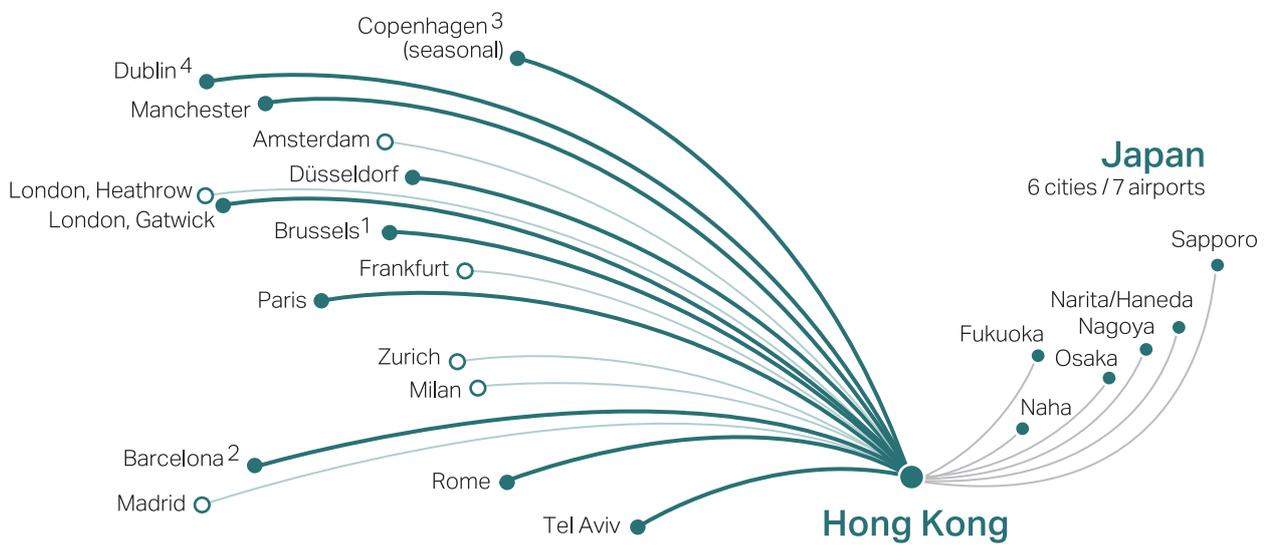
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**The Mission of the European Business Council**

To promote an impediment-free environment for European business in Japan.



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## The gateway to Europe



Finnair's special  
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Japan

By Andrew Howitt





# First Focus

At the 45th Tokyo Motor Show last month, Tokyo Connected Lab put on a VR experience for the public called The Maze. Thirty PlayStation VR systems allowed users to experience a futuristic, maze-like Tokyo — complete with neon road barriers and shimmering buildings — from a self-driving car connected to other vehicles and the city's infrastructure.

On this side of the VR headset, we appear to be one step closer to our docile surrender to robotkind.

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Photo by Jan van Dijke



**Justin McCurry** is the Japan and Korea correspondent for *The Guardian* and *The Observer* newspapers. He graduated from the London School of Economics and later gained a master's degree in Japanese studies from London University.

➔ *"This must rank as one of the most complex subjects I've covered for Eurobiz Japan. As I quickly discovered, Geographical Indication is about far more than lending cachet to certain products in the food and beverage sector. GIs have far-reaching economic repercussions. And, as the US stance demonstrates, they have their detractors."*



**Tom Elliott** is deVere Group's international investment strategist. He produces regular videos, blogs on a wide range of topical investment issues, and regularly speaks at seminars for clients at deVere offices around the world.

➔ *"Despite the marked increase in political tension on the Korean peninsula this year, the South Korean stock market has made impressive gains. But it may not be wise for investors to assume that war can be avoided. The Cold War logic of mutually assured destruction, which helped keep the peace between the Soviet Union and the West, may not apply to the Korean nuclear missile crisis."*



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.

➔ *"It seems monopolies and cartels are another area of business that will be drastically disrupted by AI. The immediate concerns include price-setting algorithms, which can push prices up or down, but also aid collusion among unscrupulous operators. However, the inevitable advance of AI may make antitrust laws irrelevant in the future."*



**Danica Purg** is president of IEDC-Bled School of Management and president of CEEMAN, an international association for management development in dynamic societies. Her special field of interest is in inspiring managers through art.

➔ *"Gender equality is progressing as more women are getting a higher education and joining the labour force. However, this is not yet reflected in the corporate and political leadership in Europe. Unfortunately, mindsets and infrastructures are not ready to make a dramatic change. Women have to become better networkers and support each other more in order to advance to leading positions."*

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# And all that jazz

**This year is** the 100th anniversary of jazz music — the first official jazz recording, “Livery stable blues” by the Original Dixieland Jass Band, was released in 1917. Jazz began in a specific region of the southern United States as something distinctly American, but it has spread around the world and evolved significantly from its original form.

This is ideal for a musical style, but perhaps less than desirable for goods. In order to prevent a similar kind of transformation, the EU gives Geographical Indication (GI) status to protect foodstuffs and beverages that are unique to specific regions in each of its 28 member states. GI helps to maintain the integrity and ensure the quality of a product, as well as keeping rural areas alive.

But there are some voices of opposition to the GI system. Read Justin McCurry’s *The genuine article* on page 14 to find out more.

On our cover this month are Pekka Vauramo, Jonne Lehtioksa and Hiroaki Nagahara of Finnair. In *The gateway to Europe* (page 10), they talk about Finland’s distinct geographical advantage of being the closest European country by plane to Asia, making Helsinki Airport the most convenient international airport for Japanese travellers to connect to the rest of Europe.

At the same time that jazz was being cemented as a musical style, Finland was cementing its geographical borders by declaring independence. Finnish Ambassador to Japan Jukka Siukosaari spoke to *Eurobiz Japan* about celebrating his nation’s centenary, as well as its unique strengths and the novel ways he is promoting Finland in Japan (page 20).

Every country has something special about it. And usually pretty good jazz. ●

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As part of its community outreach, Lakeland University, Japan Campus also offers non-degree bearing courses in evening and Saturday Open College classes. Among the courses being offered are: Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Russian, Translation, Film Appreciation, Ageing, and PowerPoint.



# THE GATEWAY TO EUROPE

## Finnair's special connection with Japan

At the turn of the millennium, then-president of Finnair Keijo Suila made a bold — and risky — decision to invest seriously in routes to Asia. It was a time when traffic from the continent only accounted for 6% of the airline's revenue. But he believed there was great potential in the region and, in 2005, placed an order for 11 of the yet-to-be-built Airbus A350 aircraft — wide-body planes designed for long hauls. Suila's sagacity has paid off. Today, with that initial Airbus order filled, Asia has become Finnair's largest growth area, and Japan is the company's biggest market outside Finland.

**“We are the** national carrier of Finland, but we have grown beyond Finland with the business model we have,” explains Pekka Vauramo, president and CEO of Finnair. “We have a lot of connections with Japan: 28 per week, growing to 31 next summer. And those 28 have already made us the biggest European carrier to Japan by number of weekly flights.”

The decision to add more flights was made because of demand. Visit Finland, run by the Finnish Tourist Board,

reported that overnight stays from Japan have increased by 14% in the past year alone. One reason for this boost in tourism, specifically, could be that both Lonely Planet and National Geographic Traveller ranked Finland in the top three best places to visit in 2017. It has also been a great year for Aurora Borealis.

Perhaps the greatest advantage that Finnair can give the Asian traveller is Finland's

location. Helsinki is the first city in Europe that planes reach on a typical flight path from Asia. By choosing to fly Finnair, customers in Japan who want to connect to other European destinations could shave several hours off their travel time.

“The question we are often asked is, ‘How do you differentiate yourselves as an airline?’” says Jonne Lehtioksa, area vice president of Asia and Oceania for Finnair. “You can have food, service, all kinds of things that can be copied by your competition, but the geographical

advantage — you can't copy that.”

Vauramo adds: “If there's no direct flight to your

destination in Europe, Finland is the natural place to transfer.”

Helsinki Airport is a hub that connects Japan's airports in Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya and Fukuoka, as well as other cities around Asia, with the more than 100 European destinations Finnair serves. There are numerous benefits for Japanese travellers transferring at Helsinki Airport. All the signage

**“we will grow  
as the market  
grows”**



# ROBERT WALTERS JAPAN

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## “all kinds of things ... can be copied by your competition, but the geographical advantage — you can't copy that”

is in Japanese, for example; and, as a medium-sized airport, distances to other gates are relatively short, allowing for smooth connections. There is also Japanese-friendly passport control.

“Coming into Europe, only Japanese and South Korean passport-holders can be expedited through the gate — the same as European citizens,” says Hiroaki Nagahara, general manager of Finnair Japan. “All they have to do is pick up their bags. It's stress-free, and very convenient.”

And, unlike some major European airports with only two runways, Helsinki Airport has three.

“So, we don't circle around,” says Lehtioksa. “We just land.”

Demand for additional routes is not solely one-way. Finnair flights to Japan are also selling well in Finland and throughout Europe.

“They used to be heavily weighted on the Japan traffic, but now, interest in Japan is growing, and lots of Europeans are visiting Japan more,” states Nagahara. “The route balance is much healthier.”

The success that Finnair is seeing today came after a carefully considered restructuring that ended in 2014. In its revised strategy, Finnair has chosen to focus on four main areas. The first is to grow the business, something it is currently doing at an accelerated rate. The second is high-quality personal service, which will allow the company to differentiate itself from the many airlines that have gone in the opposite, bare-bones direction. The third area of focus is cooperation with its staff, since they are the

ones delivering the service. The fourth point is transforming the business to prepare it for the future, including digitalisation.

“We believe that we will grow as the market grows,” says Vauramo. “I would like to see us continue to grow at this rate, so we become a bigger airline than we are today.”

Thanks to the implementation of this new strategy, 2017 is shaping up to be the most successful year in Finnair's 94-year history. Sales in 2016 were approximately €2.4 billion and, this year, the company is on track to see that increase by close to 10%, with profits expected to be between €135 million and €155 million.

**T**his year is also a noteworthy one for Finland as it celebrates 100 years of independence. One way Finnair has been commemorating the event is with special meals onboard. In business class, Finnair is offering a menu created by Finnish chefs — and supported by the ELO Foundation for the Promotion of Finnish Food Culture — that has been inspired by the centennial. Passengers in economy class are also being treated to

a unique culinary experience. Since 1948, every school in Finland has provided nutritious meals free to all students, grades one through twelve. To give Finns and the rest of the world an appreciation of this valuable social programme, Finnair is offering school meals, such as a macaroni and minced meat casserole or Finnish meatballs, as chosen by elementary school students from the city of Turku.

The celebrations will continue as 2018 marks Finnair's 35th anniversary in Japan. It will also be five years since it entered into a joint venture with Japan Airlines (JAL), British Airways and Spain's Iberia.

“We're very happy with the cooperation,” says Vauramo. “It has brought very good results.”

According to Nagahara, JAL's influence in Japan is significant and, once it started operating the Helsinki route in 2013, the Japanese market quickly became better informed about travel to Finland.

“The joint venture is our biggest tool to expand ourselves in this market,” adds Nagahara.

Finnair has a clear idea of where it is headed.

“We will move away from just being an airline and logistics company,” explains Vauramo. “We want to move towards providing experiences for passengers — during the flight, and even before and after the flight — to make travelling easier and more exciting for people. That's how we feel that we will be more attractive as a company.” ●

70

Finnair flies to more than 70 European destinations

€2.4 bn

Sales in 2016 were approximately €2.4 billion

94 years

Finnair has been in business for 94 years



# The genuine article

## The business and controversy of Geographical Indication

Would you offer your dinner guests some pungent cheese, a couple slices of dry-cured meat and a postprandial glass of blended brandy? Or, more likely, would you rather forego those prosaic descriptions and tantalise their tastebuds with the more appealing Roquefort, Parma ham and Armagnac?

**A**s far as Europe's most valued foodstuffs and beverages are concerned, location is everything.

The European Union has protected as many as 4,000 items with Geographical Indication (GI) status. Now, with the trading bloc on the cusp of finalising an economic partnership agreement (EPA) with Japan, the protection of signature products has become a key issue in trade negotiations.

GI status is granted to products that have a specific geographical origin, and whose characteristics and reputation among





consumers is inextricably linked to that locale. Think Champagne, Camembert de Normandie, the aforementioned Parma ham (or, more accurately, Prosciutto di Parma) and Roquefort cheese. Location is the thread running through a GI product – from the origin of its ingredients to processing and packaging.

This special status lets consumers know that what they are buying is authentic and, as the European Commission puts it, “allows European producers to earn a premium for the quality of their produce.”

That consumer base will expand to include Japan once the EPA, as many expect, is agreed later this year before going into effect in 2019.

As part of the agreement, the EU has asked Japan to recognise around 200 European GIs to ensure that only products with this status can be sold in Japan under the same name. Doing so will ensure that Japan’s famously discerning consumers can be sure they are buying the genuine article.

While GI fails to make headlines in the same way as trade barriers, there is no doubting its role in driving the rural economies of countries such as France and Italy.

Simply put, GI is a huge business in the EU, allowing producers to command big premiums on cherished produce. Consumption of GI products totalled €48 billion in 2014, according to the EU Intellectual Property Office. In a 2010 report, the office found that GI production accounted for almost 6% of the total food and drink industry in the trading bloc. Every one of the EU’s 28 member states has GI-protected produce.

**“[Geographical Indication] allows European producers to earn a premium for the quality of their produce”**



In terms of consumption, France accounts for the largest share of GI-designated food and drink, followed by Germany and Italy with 16.2% each. By category, wine accounts for just over half of all GI designations, followed by spirits, cheeses, meat products and beer.

While the technicalities surrounding GI designation are many and complex, they have become central to the long-awaited EPA, with the potential to triple exports of European processed food exports to Japan.

The trade section at the EU Delegation of the European Union in Tokyo said Japan was waking up to the benefits that can come from GI status. In 2015, Japan introduced its own GI system, and now protects several dozen products — from Yubari melons to Tajima-gyu beef.

“GIs have the potential to add value to agricultural products and beverages,” the EU trade office told *Eurobiz Japan*. “They

can help keep rural areas alive because you can't move a GI from its place of origin.”

The trade office cited EU studies showing that GIs are good for generating local jobs, and that listed products — particularly cheese — can fetch prices up to four times higher than those of their conventional counterparts.

“Once there is a high price for GI cheese, it trickles down the chain all the way to the dairy producers, because they own the cows that are producing milk for that cheese,” the trade office added. “I think that's one of the positive sides of the system.”

The EBC Liquor Committee also welcomed the inclusion of GIs in the EU–Japan EPA. In e-mails

to *Eurobiz Japan*, the committee expressed its support for tighter regulations on GIs, saying that would be a “very positive move for Japanese consumers as well.”

**W**hile the EU is an established GI enthusiast, opposition remains strong in countries such as the US, Australia and New Zealand.

The agreement to include GIs in the EU–Japan EPA prompted a recent outburst from US groups representing farmers and food manufacturers.

In early October, the US Dairy Export Council and the Consortium for Common Food Names wrote to President Donald Trump urging his administration to impress on Japan that any GIs it is considering for approval with the EU should not include “common” names such as parmesan and bologna.

The groups, which have made similar demands of Mexico, accused the EU of attempting to monopolise those and other terms.

Under the EPA, the EU will be able to insist that Japan does not market items from third countries that are included in the list of GI products. The reciprocal arrangement means Japan can make similar demands of EU countries.

Faced with export restrictions on, for example, Kraft Parmesan cheese — a familiar product among Japanese consumers — and other such products, food producers in the US have called, rather belatedly, for the GI designations to be dropped from the EPA. If that does not happen Kraft, whose popular grated parmesan is sold in Japan by Morinaga Milk Industry, could be forced to change the cheese's name, according to media reports.

“The way the Americans see it is that the EU, through the GI protection in third countries, is attempting to limit market access for others,” the EU trade office said. “But this is not the case. The US can produce whatever they want and export to wherever they want, but once our EPA is in force they shouldn't continue using the European GI names, protected by Japan under the agreement.”

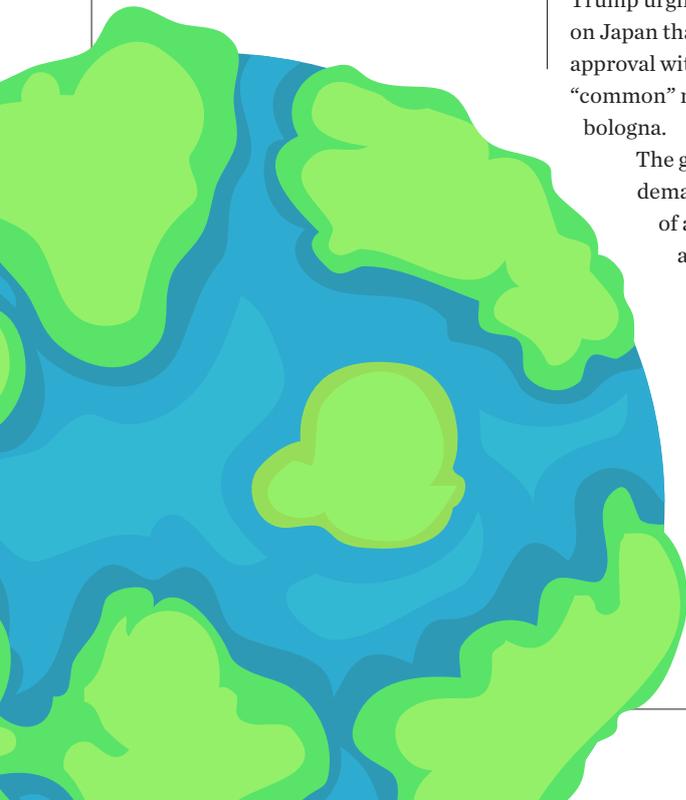
While the EU trade office praised Japan for making swift progress on GI during trade negotiations, it believes Tokyo should tighten up its regulations to protect the misappropriation of Japanese GI names in countries such as China.

One reported point of contention is that Japan's legislation leaves open the possibility that certain GI names could one day be accepted as generic — a loophole apparently designed to accommodate US exporters.

“Our EU GI names will be protected in Japan [under the EPA],” the EU trade office said. “What Japan does with its legislation is up to Japan. But at the same time, we would want to encourage Japan to fully promote and support the GIs, without getting too entangled with US ideas.” ●

4,000

The European Union has protected as many as 4,000 items with Geographical Indication (GI) status.





# Don't bet on MAD

## How investors should respond to North Korea

The strong performance of the South Korean stock market this year is not as surprising as it may at first seem, given the remarkable rally in the shares of tech stocks globally.

**The MSCI Korea Index** has a 47% weighting to the IT sector, which has helped deliver a 39% gain in US dollar terms since January, and 30.6% in local terms. It is the best-performing country in the MSCI Emerging Asia category, with the exception of China.

The primary factor driving the South Korean market has been investor interest in Samsung, whose share price has made an impressive 50% gain since January. Since this represents a massive 29% on the MSCI Korea Index, the company has made a considerable contribution to the overall gain.

But the ongoing strength of the tech sector should not blind investors to the continuing risk of war on the Korean Peninsula. Despite many investors wishing it to be the case, the old Cold War rules of Mutually Assured Destruction – or MAD, as the strategy became known – may not apply in this instance. Investors should treat exposure to South Korea with caution.

Although most professional global investors cite the risk of war breaking out on the peninsula as one of their key current worries, fund flow data from research company EPFR Global suggests a declining level of concern. After six months of continuous net foreign selling, net flows into the South Korean stock market turned positive in July. Since then, we have seen ever-larger net inflows each month.

Global investors appear to be betting on a stalemate between North Korea and the US, in which South Korea carries on as

normal. At first glance, this is a reasonable assumption. After all, the Cold War showed us that an uncomfortable but stable peace can result from a mutual fear of instant and devastating retaliation.

But at the heart of MAD was the idea that both parties in a potential conflict want to preserve their countries, and if possible, those of their allies. Both Washington and Moscow were rational players in the Cold War days, employing game theorists to help keep the strategy working.

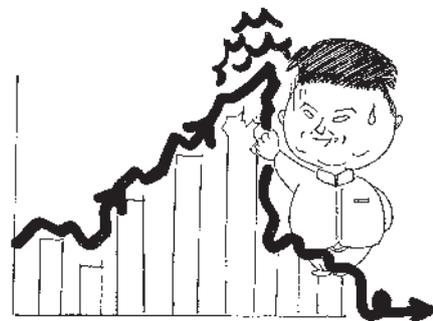
Investors in South Korean stocks may be over-confident that the strategy of MAD can be applied to the current situation. They assume that both Kim Jong-un of North Korea and American president Donald Trump will both make rational decisions.

But what forces are working on Kim Jong-un? We know he constantly fears an internal coup, and he may be prepared to see his country – and himself – destroyed, rather than back-track on a missile programme he is so personally identified with.

We assume we know why Kim Jong-un wants to possess nuclear missiles capable of reaching the US mainland. Yet, the explanations vary from analyst to analyst. No game theorist would want to predict the outcome when a player's objectives are unclear.

Equally, Donald Trump may not see the protection of South Korea, and other regional allies, as a priority. Indeed, one of the most disturbing aspects of the crisis has been Trump's unwillingness to readily communicate with South Korea, while also demanding the end to a "horrible" 2007 US–South Korea bilateral trade deal.

The likelihood is that war – whether conventional or nuclear – will be avoided. Perhaps the thinking behind MAD will



prevail. Or, perhaps, we will even see China mount a coup against the Kim dynasty.

But the uncertainties are such that investors should assume nothing. The only defence against such uncertainty is portfolio diversification. It should not be to push South Korean IT stocks ever higher. ●

Tom Elliott is an international investment strategist with the deVere Group in London.





# Algorithm pricing cartels and other concerns

## Why new antitrust legislation is needed in Japan

This year marks 70 years since the introduction of Japan's competition laws in the shape of the Antimonopoly Act. Enacted at the behest of General MacArthur in 1947, it was part of the efforts to break-up the *zaibatsu* business conglomerates that had dominated the Japanese economy and were instrumental in the war effort. Many believe Japan's antitrust and competition regime now needs a significant overhaul to help build an open, dynamic economy and cope with a business environment being rapidly disrupted by technology.

**D**ue in large part to their origin, Japanese competition laws were initially similar to their US anti-trust counterparts. But in recent years, Japan has been moving closer to the EU system, though some crucial differences remain in legislation, interpretation and implementation.

The Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC) interprets and enforces Japanese competition law. In 2006, it introduced a leniency programme, broadly modelled on

EU practices. The initiative allows companies — for example, those involved in a price cartel — to come clean to the JFTC of their own volition in return for a reduction, or elimination, of penalties. However, when the programme was introduced, the JFTC apparently hadn't considered the possibility that companies might withdraw their cooperation during an investigation, having already secured leniency. Such a strategy is commonly employed by non-Japanese companies, according to Kaori Yamada, a competition law specialist at the Tokyo offices of Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, a global law firm headquartered in London. In the EU, there is "massive discretion to reduce penalties" even during an investigation, though that is dependent on cooperation to the end, explains Yamada.

EU competition law also allows companies to accept guilt without a penalty if they commit to changing the business practice under investigation.

"In Japan, at the moment, companies either get penalised or the investigation is abandoned," says Yamada. "The 'commitment system' is very



efficient both time-wise and money-wise for the regulators and companies, taking about half the time of a full investigation.”

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement contained a commitment clause; but with the TPP now on ice, the regulator is working towards unilaterally introducing such a system.

Another major difference with the European system is that there is no client-lawyer privilege in Japan — and not just in antitrust cases, but across the legal system. This allows the JFTC to seize documents related to client-lawyer communications when they raid a company's offices, something regarded as “lack of due process” by European companies, according to Yamada.

## “In a world of advanced AI, the room for competition will be really narrowed”

“And many Japanese agencies don't expect lawyers to come and represent companies in their place,” she adds.

JFTC investigations are conducted in a manner still influenced by the criminal law system, from which public prosecutors are often seconded. Much of the evidence is gathered through interviews with company employees, summarised by the JFTC to create a narrative that justifies its complaint, and which interviewees are then asked to sign. Not only is this similar to the confessions that form the basis of many criminal cases in Japan, but like public prosecutors, the JFTC is reluctant to move ahead with a case unless success is almost guaranteed.

“Some European manufacturers complain that they often can't get shelf space in retail outlets because there are a lot of close relationships between manufacturers and distributors in Japan, and the JFTC is lenient on cartels” says Yamada, who points out that, recently, JFTC appears more interested in these kinds of distribution issues.

Yamada believes that the JFTC will become more active once the commitment system is introduced, and because the regulator is conscious it is falling behind its global counterparts in not being as aggressive. However, some are less optimistic, and are even caustic in their criticism of the current regime.

“There must be a total revamp of the law to recover from the current bad situation, where all you can see is a terrible quagmire of vagueness — in the absence of bright-line rules — and manipulative enforcements,” says a legal officer at a European firm in Japan, who asked not to be identified.

The lack of clarity in the laws allows the JFTC to take action almost arbitrarily, which is unconstitutional, claims the legal officer. While the officer believes the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement offers hope for reform, the current pattern of investigations stifles innovation by following anonymous complaints from established businesses trying to protect their interests.

As in so many fields, technological innovation is creating challenges for competition

law. One of the trickiest issues is pricing algorithms, which monitor vast amounts of data and automatically adjust prices accordingly. The first cases of collusion between companies utilising such software to create price cartels have already been investigated in the US and Europe. While none have yet been identified in Japan, “the JFTC is very interested and aware of the implications of AI,” particularly as it relates to e-commerce, according to Yamada.

Amazon is being investigated globally for some of its pricing practices, while Google was fined a record €2.42 billion in June by EU antitrust regulators for favouring its own shopping service in web searches. This was the first of three investigations into the company.

“The crucial points are ‘object’, the purpose of using an algorithm; and ‘effect’, showing that it actually distorts the market,” explains Yamada. “These can be very hard to establish as, in some cases, algorithms can push prices down, and information exchange is happening automatically all the time.”

However, if the use of such algorithms is overly restricted, then market efficiency — and, therefore, consumers — could suffer, suggests Yamada.

“Price convergence often happens naturally in the absence of collusion,” she says.

The rapid advances in robotics and AI, if collusion is avoided, may eventually make cartels redundant.

“In a world of advanced AI, the room for competition will be really narrowed,” says Yamada. “In 20 or 30 years' time, when AI in a device is a given, competition law may not even be relevant.” ●



# Doing diplomacy differently

Finnish Ambassador to Japan  
Jukka Siukosaari

On 6 December, Finns around the world will celebrate Finland's 100th anniversary as an independent nation. Ambassador of Finland to Japan Jukka Siukosaari has been celebrating this historic occasion all year long. He spoke to *Eurobiz Japan* about some of the centenary events held in Japan, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Finland, and the embassy's animated mascot, Fintan.

## How has the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence been celebrated in Japan?

For me personally, the Koumi midsummer festival in June was very memorable. A Finnish friendship society in Japan invited sauna enthusiasts to celebrate in a very traditional way. We had a bonfire, which I had the honour of lighting; and then — next to a lake and a green field — we enjoyed the sauna and cooling off in the open air afterwards.

In Tokyo, the Tampere Philharmonic and their Sibelius performance at the Bunka Kaikan in May was a great suc-

cess. The conductor, Santtu-Matias Rouvali, is the first person I've ever seen conducting a symphony orchestra who looked like he was dancing.

And then we had a big exhibition of Finnish design, from the 19th century and all the way to the present day, featuring Marimekko and some other names. That has been to six different locations in Japan.

Events like these have strengthened the positive image that Finland already has here. Much of the audience already knows about Finnish music or Finnish design, but I'm confident that we have also attracted some new friends and created interest in Finland.

## Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Finland in July. What did he discuss with President Sauli Niinistö?

The timing was very good because Prime Minister Abe's visit was right after the G20 meeting in Hamburg and also the summit in Brussels where Japan and the EU announced a political agreement on the EPA [Economic Partnership Agreement]. Much of their talk centred on the willingness of both Finland and Japan to defend the international rules-based system and, as part of that, free trade agreements. The fact that we are

**"We have to be where our audience is, and I think the digital world lets us do just that"**





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now so close to finalising the agreement between the EU and Japan was a central part of the discussions.

President Niinistö and Prime Minister Abe spoke about regional issues, as well. The Japanese side is very interested in what will happen in Europe after Brexit. And then they talked at length about the security situation in this region and, particularly, the situation with the DPRK [Democratic People's Republic of Korea].

### How would you describe the current level of investments by Finnish companies in Japan?

The productive investments of Finland in Japan are far too few, and we would be happy to see more. Two major Finnish companies have production facilities here. One is Nokia who purchased the network business of Panasonic nearly three years ago. And then we have a company called Wärtsilä that produces marine technology. We would very much like to see Finnish companies working more with the Japanese partners in R&D.

But when we talk about Japanese investments in Finland, they are on the increase, which is very positive for us. Japanese investments tend to be very long-term and based on the companies' interests in building an R&D presence in Finland. So we have seen a number of investments in Finland from different fields over the 15 months I have been here – in materials production, semiconductors, software and energy solutions.

In monetary terms, the biggest one is the investment by Itochu in a next-generation pulp mill that was just opened last month in Äänekoski. It is the first pulp mill inaugurated



in Finland since the 1980s, so it was quite a historic moment. We are very happy that a Japanese company was part of that.

### Who is Fintan?

He is a seven-year-old boy with a lion costume and a Finnish flag. He was created in 2012 by the famous *anime* artist Kenji Itoso and, to our knowledge, he was the first mascot of this kind at any embassy in the world. This project has proved to be a great success. Fintan has more than 133,000 followers on Twitter at the moment.

Diplomacy doesn't have to be too serious and official – we can also have a more human face. We want to reach the ordinary citizen, including children and young people. It's good to have this friendly, approachable face for the embassy,

and we use him quite extensively. We even have a Finland 100 logo for Fintan [above] that we have used for the centenary of our independence.

We are the first embassy ever, anywhere in the world that has produced *anime*. Three episodes featuring Fintan were made this year as one of the embassy's centennial projects. The Fintan *animés* are online and they will be shown on Finnair flights, as well. We also have a project that will bring Fintan to [Japanese social communication app] Line as stamps.

I think this shows that Finland is a country that dares to do things in a different way.

### How important is digital diplomacy to the embassy?

It's extremely important because it is the future of diplomacy. We have to be where our audience is, and I think the digital world lets us do just that. Organising events and inviting people to them will never give you the coverage that digital media can give you. I think it's also about creating a positive image and attracting people's attention to Finland through different means in the digital world, such as Fintan.

We have to adapt our message, the content and the length to the media that we



have. But we can't simplify too much. It would be very difficult to squeeze Finland's human rights policy into 140 characters, for example.

The Ministry in Helsinki is also working hard on this. I think Finland was the first country in the world to have its own national emojis.

You have to be innovative and think about what the audience wants, not do it the way you have been doing it for the past hundred years. ●



# Finland

## From green to greener

Finland topped the 2016 Environmental Performance Index, a measurement of how a country protects human health and ecosystems, taking into account factors such as air quality, sanitation, species protection and water resources. In spite of having better environmental practices than the 179 other countries on the list, Finland is striving to become even greener. The Finnish government has made bioeconomy and clean solutions one of its five strategic priorities and is investing €300 million to further develop innovations in this growing industry. Many Finnish businesses are also making the environment a priority.



UPM-Kymmene is one such company that is taking Finland's traditional forest industry in a new, and surprising, direction. In addition to typical products such as pulp, paper, plywood, labels and packaging, UPM has turned its focus to the cellular components of trees for use in biochemicals and biofuels. One biofuel is UPM BioVerno, an advanced renewable diesel fuel made from a byproduct of pulp production called tall oil. With CO<sub>2</sub>

emissions that are 80% lower than those of fossil diesel fuel, UPM is moving Finland closer to its goal of having 20% of all transport fuel come from renewable sources by 2020, and 40% by 2030 — more ambitious than the goals set by the EU.

Another Finnish firm that is going beyond the boundaries of traditional pulp and paper is Stora Enso. Like UPM, its customers include printers and office suppliers,



but it is also innovating in the area of biomaterials. Stora Enso is producing lignin, a complex macromolecule — retrieved from the leftovers of the pulp-making process — which has the potential to become a raw material for products that normally have nothing to do with wood, such as automotive parts and building façades. The company’s lignin is currently being used as a renewable alternative to fossil-based phenols for glue and other adhesives.

In the machinery industry, Wärtsilä has the environment at the core of its business model. The manufacturer, which makes power sources and equipment for the marine and energy sectors — including large combustion engines for cruise and navy ships, propulsion systems, compressors and gas cargo handling systems — ensures that its products are efficient over their entire lifecycle. Wärtsilä also offers its clients ways to meet today’s — and tomorrow’s — environmental standards with equipment such as systems for exhaust gas cleaning and oily wastewater treatment. It has received numerous awards for its sustainable products.

Using Internet of Things technology, Enevo is helping to transform waste management and reduce the industry’s environmental impact. Its wireless dumpster sensors, which measure and transmit the amount of waste in a container, and its waste analytics software optimise waste collection routes — reducing fuel consumption as well as operating costs. The firm has lent its expertise to cities, such as Rotterdam in the Netherlands, to streamline their waste management systems. Following a US\$12 million investment in September, Enevo is now moving into total waste management for restaurants, retail customers, and commercial property groups.

For more than 80 years, Vaisala, a maker of observation products for weather-related businesses, has been helping the world keep an eye on the environment. Its customers include meteorological institutes, airports, and the energy industry. Vaisala produces climatological observation systems that can provide high-quality, long-term data on climate change.

With so many of its firms making the environment a priority, Finland is sure to keep getting greener. ●



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Coastline: 1,250km. More than 60,000 lakes.

**Climate**  
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**Major cities**  
Helsinki (capital), Tampere, Vantaa, Turku, Oulu, and Lahti

84.2%

Urban population

**Population**  
5,498,211 (2016, estimate).  
Urban population:  
84.2% of total population (2015).  
37.9% aged 25-54 years.

**Natural resources**  
Timber, iron ore, copper, lead, zinc, chromite, nickel, gold, silver and limestone.



### Trade with Japan

Imports from Japan: €670 million  
Exports to Japan: €1 billion

SOURCE:  
FINNISH CUSTOMS (2016)



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# Pawel Komender

You can't put a price on knowledge

“In a way, business is all about pricing,” says Pawel Komender, founder of PJK Strategy and Marketing Specialists. “Companies need to manage their prices wisely to stay profitable.”

**The profit-maximising** price for a product can be calculated mathematically. But price management is more than crunching numbers.

“You combine the theory with the practice; it’s not just about what looks nice on paper,” he explains. “You also need to

consider qualitative factors, such as the specific environment the company operates in, business strategy and potential regulations.

An acknowledged expert on price management, Komender taught an MBA class on the subject – in Japanese – for four years as a visiting lecturer in Waseda University’s faculty of commerce.

“The seminar covered some basics: why is price important and why is profit important,” he states. “Then, we looked at techniques for how to determine the optimal price; and also

that pricing involves payment conditions, managing discounts and price negotiations.”

The services that PJK Strategy and Marketing Specialists offer are not limited to price management. Komender offers support related to other aspects of strategy and marketing, including competitive strategy, positioning, product value strategy and sales organisation.

“Our selling point is methodology,” he says. “We gather data, analyse it, and then derive implications. Recently, I’ve been getting questions about market analysis for potential market entry, including segments, size, growth potential, competition and profitability. For this type of analysis, I can create financial models with all the relevant factors, which render different possible scenarios.”

To stay on top of the latest methods, he continues to study econometrics and statistics. But, to Komender, it’s never a chore – he describes his work as his hobby.

“When someone says they’re finished for the day, they might grab a novel or watch television,” he states. “What I do is I grab a textbook to check something or review something.

I keep learning, keep looking out for new methods and applications.”

To date, one of Komender’s most significant accomplishments is having played a central role in an M&A project where one company purchased the business unit of another – a job dependent on a strong understanding of a variety of fields. He conducted financial due diligence, took part in negotiations on the purchase price, negotiated with the Japanese trade union, and, following the merger, was in charge of the accounting and management reporting functions.

“All my knowledge of business administration, plus the experience I have gathered – particularly in Japan – plus leadership and people-management skills, that all came together in this one job,” he says.

Komender learned the value of learning early in his life, in part through his language studies. Born in Warsaw, Polish is his native language, but he has become fluent in English, German and Japanese, and has also studied French.

He started his English studies when he lived in Minnesota in the US for a year during junior high school. But it was Komender’s English teacher at the boarding school he attended in Germany that ensured he mastered the language.

“Our teacher was quite tough,” he says. “But she got

“I keep learning, keep looking out for new methods”

us to understand that English was a precondition to doing anything.”

Proficiency in both German and English made it possible for Komender to be accepted to a European business studies programme put on jointly by the University of Paderborn and Trent Polytechnic Nottingham. He took classes in both Germany and England.

More important than being able to do data collection today in different languages is the fact that Komender’s multilingualism has taken him around the world, and he has developed lifelong friendships with people from diverse backgrounds.

“Many of my friendships from the time I was a student continue to this day,” he says. “I’ve been to nearly every one of my high school reunions.”

You can’t put a price on that. ●

## Do you like natto?

**Time spent working in Japan:**  
Over 20 years.

**Career regret (if any):**  
None.

**Favourite saying:**  
Life is what you make it.

**Favourite book:**  
Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. I love Shakespeare.

**Cannot live without:**  
Faith.

**Lesson learned in Japan:**  
To understand the spirit of the samurai.

**Secret of success in business:**  
Exceed expectations.

**Favourite place to dine:**  
Bernd’s Bar.

**Do you like natto?:**  
I’m not passionate about it. I prefer *nattomaki*.



# Your word is my command

## How digital helpers are changing the office environment

Voice-activated digital assistants for the home have been getting a lot of press lately as Apple, Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Samsung have all continued to roll out updated versions of their AI-powered helpers. Amazon's Alexa, for instance, can help users get online information, play music, and control thermostats and other connected home appliances; thousands of apps are available for its Echo wireless speakers, launched in 2014.

**But not making** the headlines is the growing interest in digital assistants for the work place. Proponents say that the less time workers spend doing routine tasks, such as typing out e-mails, to-do lists and entries in their schedules, the more creative they will be. Digital assistants allow users to speak their thoughts out so that writing a document is less a mechanical exercise of typing and more a mental one. Thanks to improvements in machine learning, Google and Apple now claim a speech-recognition error rate of less than 5% for American English, so you'll spend less time fixing transcription mistakes. For routine business communication, you can tell a smartphone assistant like Siri to call someone, and if you

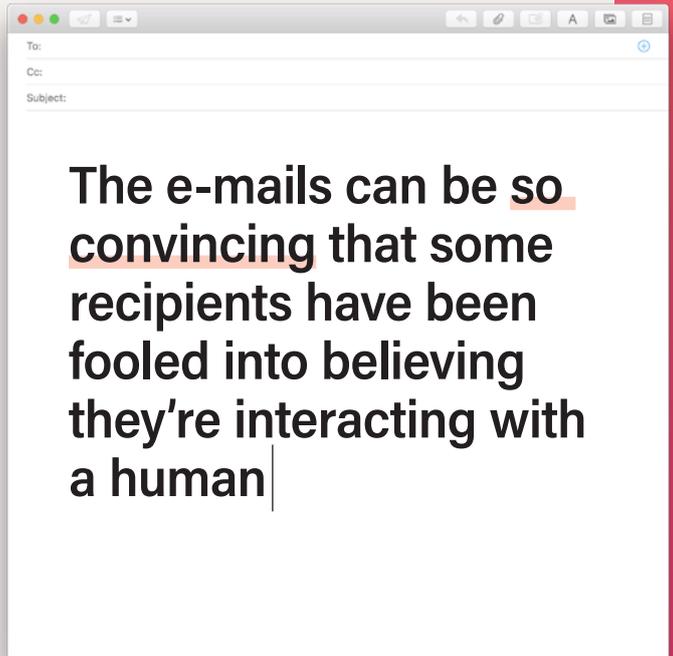
want to forward something that you received via e-mail, Google Now can do that for you by obeying your voice commands.

Automating and sending reminders about tasks is another function of digital assistants. If you need to pick up office

supplies, Google Now can send you a reminder via Google Maps whenever you're near an office supply store.

With the rise of Internet of Things devices, you can sync your digital assistant with online devices such as air conditioners, coffee makers and security cameras. That way you can programme them to switch on or shut off at certain times during the workday.

Digital assistants have been used for rudimentary customer assistance, such as directing phone calls and answering simple questions on company websites, but as the machine learning technology behind them grows increasingly sophisticated, they will be performing more complex tasks.



Earlier this year, X.ai launched an enterprise edition of its Amy Ingram personal assistant. This AI programme, available since 2015, can automatically schedule meetings through e-mail, which users can control by voice; Amy is already setting up hundreds of thousands of meetings per year. For a more human touch, Amy (or its male version Andrew) can also be assigned its own e-mail address with the company's domain name at the end. The e-mails can be so convincing that some recipients have been fooled into believing they're interacting with a human, not a digital, personal assistant. That's the way high-tech should be integrated — effective, invisible and boosting productivity. ●



# Creatures of the vineyard

## A menagerie of caretakers

With organic and biodynamic practices becoming more prevalent in vineyards worldwide, viticulturalists are acknowledging the merit of benevolent four-legged and two-winged creatures in maintaining healthy vines.

**In Napa Valley**, birdhouses sit atop 2.5m poles that tower over the squat vines. These are home to barn owls, Napa's best rodent control system. Wildlife biologist Carrie Wendt, who has spent years visiting these boxes to study owl behaviour, says "without owls, the rodent population would explode. And they would cause a lot more damage to vineyards."

One such rodent is the pocket gopher, a particular menace to vineyards in the Northwestern United States, whose rooting habits damage soil structure and irrigation systems. Barn owls are these gophers' natural predators, and their box homes allow for the ultimate hunting perch. Dwellings for owls are so popular in Napa that the Barn Owl Box Company specialises exclusively in making them. The scattering of rodent skulls at the bottom of any of the company's owl boxes is

proof that barn owls are highly effective in keeping rodent populations in check.

A recent article on [decanter.com](http://decanter.com) showed that there is a menagerie of animals playing vital roles in vineyards all over the world. Sheep appear to be the most widely used, as they offer superior weed management and fertiliser for the soil. Most vineyards only use sheep in the off-season, before any spring shoot growth would tempt them to start munching on the vines. At Yealands winery in Marlborough, New Zealand, babydoll sheep are allowed



to roam the vineyards year-round — they are too small to reach the grapes.

Winged creatures play a variety of helpful roles for viticulturalists. Chickens are particularly skilled at dealing with pests; they scour the vines for worms and other insects that can harm the rootstock. Hawks and falcons — widely used by famed producers such as Gallo and Cakebread — ward off starlings and other small birds that are particularly fond of wine grapes.

These are typical farm creatures that have been aiding agriculturalists for decades, if not centuries. However, there are also instances of the rare and the novel. In Patagonia, vineyards are using native armadillos to aid in insect management, with wild armadillos successfully returning year after year. In Sonoma, the Navarro Vineyards employs bobcats to catch pesky mammals, including rabbits and gophers, in a similar role to that of the barn owl or hawk. Between a bobcat and a barn owl, though, the latter might be a bit easier to train. ●



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# Aeronautics, Space, Defence and Security

## Openness, action, breakthroughs

The Aeronautics, Space, Defence and Security Committee has plenty of recommendations for the Japanese government, covering three chapters in the 2016 EBC white paper. And Japan seems to be listening. The leading topic these days concerns a Bilateral Air Safety Agreement (BASA), according to committee co-chairman Frank Bignone. The BASA mainly covers mutual certification and inspections of such things as aircraft and maintenance facilities. A major goal is to eliminate the duplication of procedures, which is also a Japanese objective.

**“So, if something** is certified in Europe, we don’t have to run the same certification here in Japan, and vice-versa,” Bignone explains. Discussions on a BASA between government officials of the EU and Japan have been underway since early this year. The committee has been playing an important and highly appreciated role, according to the co-chairman, by producing a set of recommendations that reflect the views of European industry here. The EBC believes an agreement would enhance global air safety by making procedures more efficient and forging closer cooperation between the two sides. The committee’s recommendations also suggest a

way of tackling Japan’s labour shortage.

“Japan has a lack of certified people in the aviation industry,” Bignone explains. “It would benefit Japan if some foreigners, who already have certification for aeronautics, were allowed to do repairs on airliners, for example,” he says, “It’s the same for pilots.”

Work on the BASA was separated from the EU–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement so that, says the co-chairman, the negotiation process could be simplified and the BASA talks pushed forward more quickly.

As its name indicates, the committee covers three distinct industry areas — aeronautics; space; defence and security. A decision was made to keep these areas in the same group because the activities of many of the members span two or all of the industries. In addition, there is a great deal of overlap on advocacy issues.

The committee has long pointed to Japan’s heavy reliance on US suppliers to meet its defence and aviation needs — a legacy of postwar history — and stressed

that business and partnerships should involve economic and technical considerations, rather than history or politics. Even so, Bignone says Japanese government and industry officials have been showing a new attitude towards Europe.

“We’re seeing more openness, that’s for sure,” he says. “I’d say that there has been a shift in competition with the US. This has forced European companies to demonstrate their quality — beyond what was necessary.”

He cites the fact that the company he works for, Airbus, has been selling more aircraft to Japanese customers than Boeing over the past few years. That’s in stark contrast to previous years when its US rival enjoyed nearly total dominance of the market.

European defence contractors have also seen a lot of progress with the signing of bilateral defence cooperation agreements between Japan and the UK, France and Germany.

As for space, European firm Arianespace has long been a major launch operator for Japanese satellites. An initiative the EBC has in the works is a space symposium that would bring together officials from both sides. The committee hopes to hold the event in early 2018 under the theme of “research, training and innovative partnerships.” Bignone, who was appointed as co-chairman by the current chair, Stephane Ginoux, acknowledges that many of its issues have lain on the table for quite a few years. But now, he is expecting to see further action and more breakthroughs.

“We are at the point where we’re taking issues step by step and issue by issue to push forward and better engage the other side,” he says, “and not stay too long in waiting mode.” ●

### Advocacy issues

#### ✦ Bilateral Air Safety Agreement

The EU and Japan should finalise a BASA to make administrative procedures more efficient and create more bilateral business opportunities.

#### ✦ Satellite launchers

There should be more cooperation between the EU and Japan on the next generation of launchers.

#### ✦ Defence procurement

Japan should improve transparency towards foreign suppliers as it prepares to become an exporter of defence equipment.

# Lighting candles

## The importance of networking for women

Since 1957, one of the fundamental values of the European Union has been equality between men and women. If we consider women's employment and their participation — and success — in higher education, equality is certainly progressing. However, this progress is not yet reflected in much of the corporate and political leadership of Europe.

**The number of** women in the European Parliament has grown from 16.3% in 1979 to 36.9% today, according to official data. Why, then, is the percentage so low in many of the national governments of member states? The only explanation can be that men are still the centres of real power in these countries' parliaments; the example being set in Brussels is largely ignored. It is true that some progress has been made: the average proportion of women in the parliaments of member countries has grown from 16% in 1990 to 28% in 2016. But note that it took 26 years to win just 12%. If there is no acceleration of this development, it will take another 50 years before we achieve the equality we are striving for.

In the business world, as well, women have still more steps to take. The EU-27 average of representation for women on the boards of large companies is only about 7%, even though the EU's current objective is 40%. Only Iceland and Norway, whose quotas are set by legislation, have balanced the boards. I believe that treaties, strategy papers, and legislation are necessary tools for change, but the success of our endeavours depends on whether we are able to

change the mindsets of people — both men and women.

It is encouraging to read that, for example, young, qualified women in the Netherlands are even more in demand in the labour market and are, on average, better paid than men are. But their happiness is short-lived as this holds true only until women have children. This means that our thinking and our systems are still inadequate. Sadly, it is still considered the norm that women, and not men, take a break from their careers to look after their children.

What are we as women doing to help improve this situation in a significant way? At IEDC-Bled School of Management, which I established in 1986 and have been leading ever since, 80% of our employees and 50% of the faculty are women. We are an example of female leadership and service. We have recruited only the best people — and I don't mean this to be a diversity statement. The same holds true also for a number of "younger" business schools in Central and Eastern Europe.

I believe that women could be much better positioned if

they were better networkers, communicating more — and more effectively — particularly amongst each other. You can be excellent, the best for the job, but if nobody knows it, you will remain a candle that has never been lit.

Networking is a skill that you can learn. Networking is creating a fabric of personal contacts that provides support, feedback, insights and information. Networking means getting out to important events, attending seminars and conferences, and then meeting people and discussing relevant topics. To get plugged into a network, you need to develop your communication skills as well as a give-and-take attitude — and get ready to expend a lot of energy.

It is very important to know that networking is a learning process. It is essential not only

## Networking is a skill that you can learn

to build relationships, but to maintain them — regularly calling and sending letters, cards and e-mails to the people in your network. Not only when you need them, but primarily when you have something to offer. And we should remember that despite all the electronic technology, making those personal contacts is what's most important. ●

Prof Dr Danica Purg is president and dean of the IEDC-Bled School of Management, Slovenia





Apple's iPhone X, released at the beginning of this month, is getting attention for its many new features, but also as being the most expensive iPhone ever sold. Providers in Japan such as SoftBank have introduced a four-year contract to help spread the cost of the handset and contract over a longer period. However, this has prompted some debate on the cost of mobile services and whether what the consumer pays is actually worth it.

## Whatever device you use, do you think that what you pay every month for your phone bill is fair?



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# THE PLEASURES OF BUSINESS TRAVEL

Greater than the sum of the parts

TEXT BY DAVID UMEDA

The high quality of business travel commences with making your reservations, and continues throughout your itinerary. The marvel of the experience is in how each component — be it your travel agent, ground transportation, luggage and amenities, airline, or accommodations — provides exceptional seamless service and products.

## GETTING AROUND

**Bugaboo International** ([www.bugaboo.com](http://www.bugaboo.com)) is a Dutch design company that produces mobility products. Best known for revolutionising the stroller market with the launch of their iconic stroller in 1999, Bugaboo designs products that make life on the road easier. Bugaboo introduced their Bugaboo Boxer luggage in 2016. All available online.

## UP, UP AND AWAY

Business Class on **Vietnam Airlines'** ([www.vietnamairlines.com](http://www.vietnamairlines.com)) Boeing 787s out of Narita and Kansai offer guests exceptional comfort,

modern amenities, superior service, and the best inflight entertainment available. Cabin layout and features are complemented by superior service for an exceptional flying experience. Dishes with fresh, healthy ingredients are accompanied by an extensive beverage selection.

**Cathay Pacific** ([www.cathaypacific.com](http://www.cathaypacific.com)) is rapidly introducing state-of-the-art Airbus A350 aircraft to its long-haul routes to and from Hong Kong, providing premium comfort in all the cabin classes. Dublin, Brussels and Copenhagen will be added to the airline's global network, deploying A350s, from April 2018, delivering smooth flight connections in Hong Kong from six major Japanese cities.

## WHERE TO STAY

Boasting 11 properties in central Tokyo, **Oakwood Japan** ([www.oakwoodasia.com](http://www.oakwoodasia.com)) offers warm and welcoming apartments, with vibrant, and contemporary interiors. The apartments are fully furnished with amenities, in-

cluding a completely equipped kitchen, resident activities and exclusive perks. All properties are a stone's throw away from train stations, dining, and shops.

**Cerulean Tower Tokyu Hotel** ([www.ceruleantower-hotel.com](http://www.ceruleantower-hotel.com)) is conveniently located along Route 246 and just a 5-minute walk from Shibuya Station. The hotel provides banquet rooms to accommodate various types of meetings and weddings, luxurious guestrooms that

## Serving the discerning business traveller adds up to a complete package exceeding expectations.

include spacious suites with splendid panoramic views, as well as an abundance of dining restaurants and a bar for special occasions.

Serving the discerning business traveller adds up to a complete package exceeding expectations.





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Focusing on high quality and functionality, new exercise machines have been selected and installed. In addition to the introduction of new training programmes with personal trainers, yoga programmes, to be held in the inner courtyard, have also been lined up for the near future.

While providing a relaxing and comfortable environment to exercise, the facility is also popular with corporate executives and local members as an urbane social oasis.

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\* Please note, there is a screening process for membership registration.

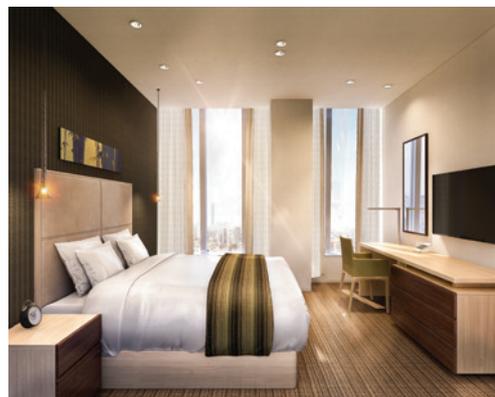
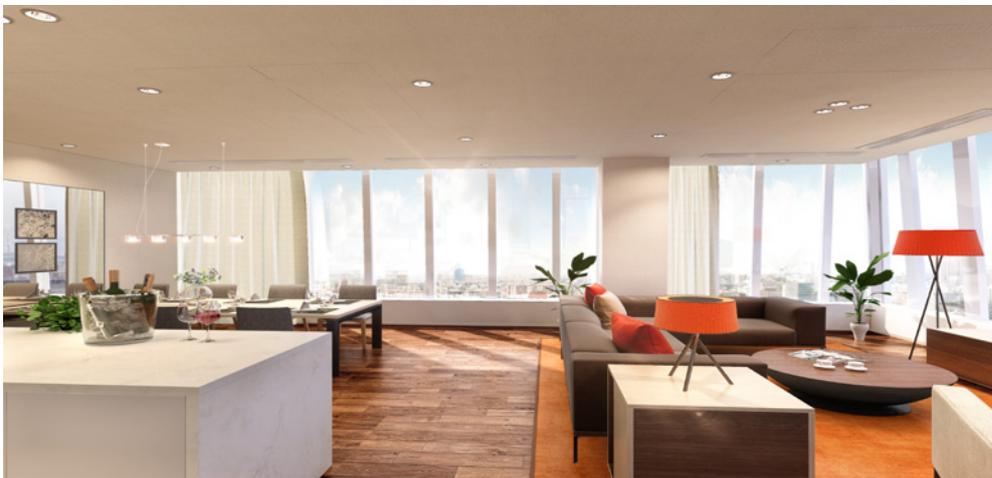
\*\* Applications will be accepted until the club reaches its membership capacity.

\*\*\* ¥64,800 will be discounted from the standard annual fee of ¥259,200 (tax included)



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# Wowing consumers

The fifth CLIC event: Nespresso Japan

Which country is the number one per capita consumer of coffee in the world? It's not one you might expect.

**Last month,** the Embassy of Sweden in Tokyo hosted the fifth event of the Creative Linking of International Chambers group — a loose organisation of nine of the smaller European chambers of commerce in Japan. The speaker was Alexander Schoenegger, president and representative director at Nestlé Nespresso Japan, who began his talk, “Nespresso — Conquering Japan with the Ultimate Coffee Experience”, by asking his audience this question.

Almost immediately, one confident voice shouted out the correct answer: Finland. After confirming this, Schoenegger added that the Scandinavian countries are all among the top coffee consumers.

Coffee is the second most-traded commodity globally after oil, he noted, and 125 million people's livelihoods depend on it. The main exporters include Brazil and Vietnam, while the major importing countries are the US and Germany.

Before looking at the reasons for Nespresso's success, Schoenegger shared some basics about coffee and its history in Japan.

“There are two types of beans — arabica coffee and robusta coffee,” he explained. “And for the best in-cup result, you need both. Imagine that the arabica coffee gives you the melody — these nice, different flavour types — while the robusta coffee gives you the body, like the rhythm.”

Coffee first arrived in Japan through the Dutch, and the first coffee shop — called *Kissaten* — was opened in 1888.

In the 1960s, two factors helped develop coffee culture in Japan: instant coffee, which took coffee into the home, and the introduction of vending machines. Today, with two and a half million machines in the market, they are a significant distribution outlet here.

Nespresso first brought its capsule coffee machines to Japan 30 years ago, starting as an internet-based company. It opened its first boutique in 2004, and today has 21 across the country. Its flagship store opened in Omotesando in 2013. Schoenegger high-

lighted three factors for Nespresso's success in Japan, and around the world.

“The quality of the coffee is, clearly, the first key element for us,” he said. “We are only interested in

1%–2% of the global production, which you could call gourmet coffee ... and everything has to be standardised.”

Since 2003, Nespresso has been working directly with farmers. This has helped to raise the quality of the crop and also increase the return for the farmers, since there are no intermediaries.

The second reason Schoenegger cited for Nespresso's success is that it owns the entire value chain — from sourcing and farming through to the sale of its products at its boutiques.

“Everything that you experience from Nespresso is managed by Nespresso,” Schoenegger stated. “We have around 200 control processes until the product is released. This is how we can ensure quality.”

The firm has worked hard to deliver a consistent message at every point of sale, including on its homepage and at each of its stores.

“How do you see to it that at all those touchpoints, the consumer gets wowed?” Schoenegger asked. “We are actually spending heavily on people training.”

The third element is inducing passion in your staff.

“This is very important,” Schoenegger said, “because they have to be fully engaged and want to push Nespresso to the fullest.”

The ultimate goal, however, is to pass this passion on to the customer.

“Our measure of success is not how many machines we sell,” Schoenegger stated. “It's how much our new member base is still consuming after 12 months because they're going to be loyal. We want a long customer lifecycle, and that they promote Nespresso to others.” ●



Alexander Schoenegger, president and representative director at Nestlé Nespresso Japan



# The Toyota Prius of golf clubs

## Some benefits of hybrids

Do you have a 1- or 2-iron in your golf bag? Probably not, and Lee Trevino knows why.

**“If you are** ever caught on a golf course during a storm and are afraid of lightning,” he said. “Hold up a 1-iron; not even God can hit a 1-iron.” This coming from a man who could hit almost anything from anywhere; 1-irons and 2-irons are virtually unheard of now.

Twenty years ago, hybrid clubs — also called rescue clubs or utility clubs — were virtually unheard of, but now they are an essential club in many golfers’ bags. However, some golfers are still unsure of what they are and whether to make the change.

Hybrids were designed to replace the longer irons in your bag. Okay, not the 1- or 2-irons — which were never in your bag anyway — but the 3-, 4- and 5-irons, which are usually tougher for the amateur golfer to use. They are harder to hit because they require greater head speed and the shafts are slightly longer, so they’re more difficult to control. For less talented golfers and older golfers, this is a problem. The alternative would be your fairway woods, but these have longer shafts and a less forgiving clubface than irons.

So, the hybrid was born — a club with the face of an iron and half the body of a wood. Golf specialists will tell you that the bigger club head pushes the centre of gravity back, allowing you to launch the ball more easily. So even if you don’t hit the ball perfectly, you have a greater chance of pulling off your shot. Also, with the power-boost from the bigger clubhead, the head speed can be reduced. This means the golfer can concentrate on making a good connection with the ball rather than tensing up their muscles to slam the ball. In fact, the hybrid swing is a hybrid itself, requiring the action of an iron shot and the restraint of a wood shot.

So, where do woods fit into the picture? Nowadays, most bags will have a 3-wood and a 5-wood. Fairway woods are designed for distance, particularly on par-5 holes when a good drive and a fairway wood can get

you on the green in two shots. They are also more accurate than drivers, so are sometimes used off the tee when you are faced with a tight shot.

But this is where things get murky. In the old days, woods went up to 5; now they can go up to 25. And while the hybrid was seen as a replacement for the long irons, some now are designed to replace fairway woods. To make matters more complicated, the numbering system doesn’t always designate

## now [hybrids] are an essential club in many golfers’ bags

what you expect it to. Why does a 3h shot go 220 yards but a 9h only travel 190 yards? Lack of standardisation is an issue, so you need to check the degree of loft on your club and, if possible, try a few out at the driving range.

For those new to the hybrid game, you should find a hybrid easier to strike from a lie on the fairway, and particularly in the rough, using less power to get a more elevated shot. But remember that they are a one-trick pony; irons are far more flexible in terms of the type of shots you can play. Like the Toyota Prius, hybrids are functional rather than flash. ●



## Lorenzo Scrimizzi

**Company:** Carpigiani Japan

**Official title:** Representative Director

**Originally from:** Bologna, Italy

**Length of time in Japan:** 22 years

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

It depends on the mood I'm in: it could range from a casual ramen store to a sophisticated Italian or Japanese restaurant.

### **What do you do to stay in shape?**

Jogging.

### **Name a favourite movie:**

*Once upon a time in America.*

### **Favourite musician/band:**

The Beatles.

**Favourite album:** *Revolver* by The Beatles.

**Favourite TV show:** I don't watch TV these days, but I really liked *The Persuaders* with Roger Moore and Tony Curtis.

**Favourite book:** I don't have one particular favourite, but I love history books.

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

That I truly love ice cream. It's not only business for me ...

### **Cats or dogs?**

Dogs, definitely. But I admire cats' independence.

### **Summer or winter?**

Summer, but I love skiing.

### **What's your ideal weekend?**

Relaxing and enjoying some good food at a Japanese *onsen*. And also playing sports.

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

Tableaux Lounge in Daikanyama, a cigar bar that serves great single malt whisky.



## Greg Story

**Company:** Dale Carnegie Training Japan

**Official title:** President

**Originally from:** Australia

**Length of time in Japan:** 31 years

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

The Hong Kong-style Yum Cha at Tsim Sha Tsui in Roppongi on Sundays.

### **What do you do to stay in shape?**

I train in Goju-Kai karate and do gym work at the Tokyo American Club dojo.

### **Name a favourite movie:**

*Chariots of Fire.*

### **Favourite musician/band:**

Alessandro Safina.

**Favourite album:** Alessandro Safina's self-titled album.

**Favourite TV show:** *Game of Thrones.*

**Favourite book:** *See You At The Top* by Zig Ziglar.

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

I have trained continuously for 46 years in traditional Shitoryu karate and hold a ranking of 6th Dan.

### **Cats or dogs?**

Dogs.

### **Summer or winter?**

Summer.

### **What's your ideal weekend?**

Relaxing on the sofa reading *FT Weekend*, having a nice dinner at home with my family and enjoying an awesome Aussie Shiraz wine.

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

Legends Sports Bar in Roppongi when the Australian rugby is on.

**"I have trained continuously for 46 years in traditional Shitoryu karate"**



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# The Agenda

NOV  
22IRELAND JAPAN CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE

## Ireland Japan Business Awards 2017

**TIME:** Conrad Tokyo  
**FEE:** ¥190,000 (table), ¥22,000  
(members), ¥25,000 (non-members)  
**CONTACT:** secretariat@ijcc.jp

DEC  
7

SCANDINAVIAN JOINT EVENT

## The 25th Scandinavian Christmas Ball

**TIME:** 18:30-24:00  
**VENUE:** Westin Hotel Tokyo  
**FEE:** ¥21,000  
**CONTACT:** www.fcc.or.jp/xmas/

NOV  
24SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND  
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

## SCCIJ & Swiss Club Tokyo - Year-End Party 2017

**TIME:** 18:00-23:00  
**VENUE:** Hilton Tokyo, Kiku Ballroom  
**FEE:** ¥13,000 (members or guests),  
¥8,000 (students, 18 years or older)  
**CONTACT:** info@sccij.jp

DEC  
14BELGIAN-LUXEMBOURG CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE IN JAPAN

## Bonenkai Luxembourg wine gathering

**TIME:** 19:00-22:00  
**VENUE:** Luxembourg pop-up café,  
Hamacho, Chuo-ku  
**FEE:** You pay for what you drink.  
**CONTACT:** info@blccj.or.jp

DEC  
1ITALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN  
JAPAN

## ICCJ Gala Dinner & Concert

**TIME:** 18:30-23:00  
**VENUE:** Tokyo Marriott Hotel,  
Shinagawa  
**CONTACT:** events@iccj.or.jp

JAN  
19SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND  
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

## Luncheon: Daiju Aoki, UBS Wealth Management

**TIME:** 12:00-14:00  
**VENUE:** Grand Hyatt Tokyo  
**FEE:** ¥6,500 (members), ¥7,000  
(non-members)  
**CONTACT:** info@sccij.jp

DEC  
4BELGIAN-LUXEMBOURG CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE IN JAPAN

## Belgian Beer and Food Academy in Osaka III

**TIME:** 18:30-21:30  
**VENUE:** Hilton Osaka, Umeda  
**FEE:** ¥14,800 (members),  
¥16,500 (non-members)  
**CONTACT:** info@blccj.or.jp

JAN  
27

AUSTRIAN BUSINESS COUNCIL

## 3rd Inter-Chamber Ski Race\*

**TIME:** From 09:30 (08:30 register)  
**VENUE:** Happo-One, Nagano  
**FEE:** ¥2,500 (adults), ¥1,250 (minors  
under 20)  
**CONTACT:** <https://goo.gl/Wm81qV>

\* Organized by Austrian Business Council. Fee does  
not include accommodations, transport, or evening/  
awards party.

DEC  
6SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND  
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

## Luncheon: Shinichi Koizumi, Advisor to the Chairman of Nippon Keidanren

**TIME:** 12:00-14:00  
**VENUE:** ANA InterContinental Tokyo  
**FEE:** ¥6,500 (members), ¥7,000  
(non-members)  
**CONTACT:** info@sccij.jp

FEB  
19SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND  
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

## Luncheon: Kengo Kuma, architect

**TIME:** 12:00-14:00  
**VENUE:** Shangri-La Tokyo  
**FEE:** ¥6,500 (members), ¥7,000  
(non-members)  
**CONTACT:** info@sccij.jp



## Richard A. Moe

President, RAM Corporation

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