

EURObizZ JAPAN

The strategy of expansion

Martin Fluck
Oakwood Asia Pacific



Rise of the euro-bots

Challenging automation
powerhouse Japan

Safe from harm?

National immunisation
programme still trails Europe



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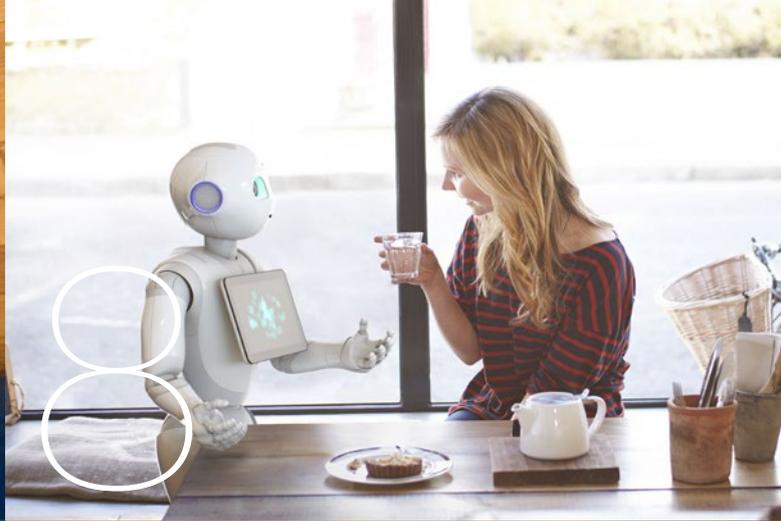
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SIX Financial Information, Ltd.

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Publisher **Vickie Paradise Green**
paradise@paradigm.co.jp

Editor-in-chief **Andrew Howitt**
andrew@paradigm.co.jp
Senior Editor **David Umeda**

Creative Director **Paddy O'Connor**
Art Director **Cliff Cardona**
Illustrator **DJ**

Account Executives **Delilah Romasanta,**
Tamas Doczi
advertising@paradigm.co.jp

Production and distribution
Daisuke Inoue
eurobiz@paradigm.co.jp

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in Japan

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EURObiZ Japan welcomes story ideas from
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Contributors

Gavin Blair learns
about a newly
opened residence
in Marunouchi and
others that are in the
pipeline, page 14.



Writing in and about Japan since 2000,
Gavin Blair contributes articles to maga-
zines, websites and newspapers in Asia,

Europe and the US on a wide range of
topics, many of them business related.

"It's always encouraging to hear about
businesses that are optimistic enough
about the future of Japan to be investing
in new ventures, facilities, or services in
the country. And the furnished apartment
sector is one I knew little about: the types
of people and organisations that make use
of them, or the differences between their
operations and those of hotels."

David McNeill writes for *The Economist*,
The Irish Times and other publications. He
is co-author of the acclaimed book of sur-
vivor stories *Strong in the Rain* (Palgrave
Macmillan, 2012).

"Japan has, by any standard, made enor-
mous strides in public health, vaccinating
millions of children every year against
once-fatal diseases. But there is still a gap
between Japan and Europe in access
to common vaccines. Critics say Health
Ministry bureaucrats are too slow to revise



David McNeill
examines the lag
in getting approval
for vaccines and
its consequences,
page 18.

vaccine regulations and close this gap. As
the father of a second, as yet unborn child,
I find this worrying."

Tim Hornyak
takes a look at
the robotics
landscape today,
page 8.



Tokyo journalist Tim Hornyak has covered
technology in Japan for IDG News, CNET,
Scientific American and other media
outlets, and is the author of *Loving the
Machine: The Art and Science of Japanese*

Robots. He has also co-authored Lonely
Planet's guidebooks to Japan and Tokyo.

"Japan is known as the 'robot kingdom'
for its automation prowess. Foreign players
are often overlooked in the robotics scene
here due to the dominance of domestic
manufacturers. But ironically, some of
these, like Parrot and iRobot, can become
game-changing innovators. Researching
European robot-related firms in Japan
reminded me that Japanese companies
have to guard against resting on their
laurels."



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ROBERT WALTERS

Looking to the future

I clearly remember watching Astro Boy cartoons as a child and being amazed by the highly technological, futuristic society presented, but also being slightly ill-at-ease that a robot could have emotions and a distinct personality.

Reality is not there yet, but some of the advances being made at firms involved in robotics are encouraging us to think that it may not be too far off. From fully automated cars to robot vacuum cleaners, consumer drones to personal robots capable of emoting, robotics continues to transform every aspect of our lives. In this issue, Tim Hornyak reveals how European robotics companies are challenging Japan's dominance in the industry (page 8).

Advances are also being made in the area of bioenergy. In our Green Biz column (page 24), Ian Munroe tells of how the manga Dragon Ball was an inspiration for a Japanese researcher



to begin farming the algae euglena for use as a dietary supplement and in other health products. Euglena also has potential for future application in areas such as water-treatment and biofuel.

Unfortunately, progress is not being made in every field. David McNeill's comparison of European and Japanese immunisation programmes (page

18) shows how Japan is dragging its heels on approving new vaccines and that this may be endangering lives unnecessarily.

Our cover story this month features Oakwood's North Asia Director of Operations Martin Fluck. Gavin Blair interviews Fluck to find out more about Oakwood's lavish new Premier residence in Tokyo and their plans to build more residences across Japan (page 14).

Finally, Happy New Year from *EURObiZ Japan!*

As we look ahead to all of the possibilities the future holds, you can be sure of great things in these pages in 2016. 

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Rise of the euro-bots

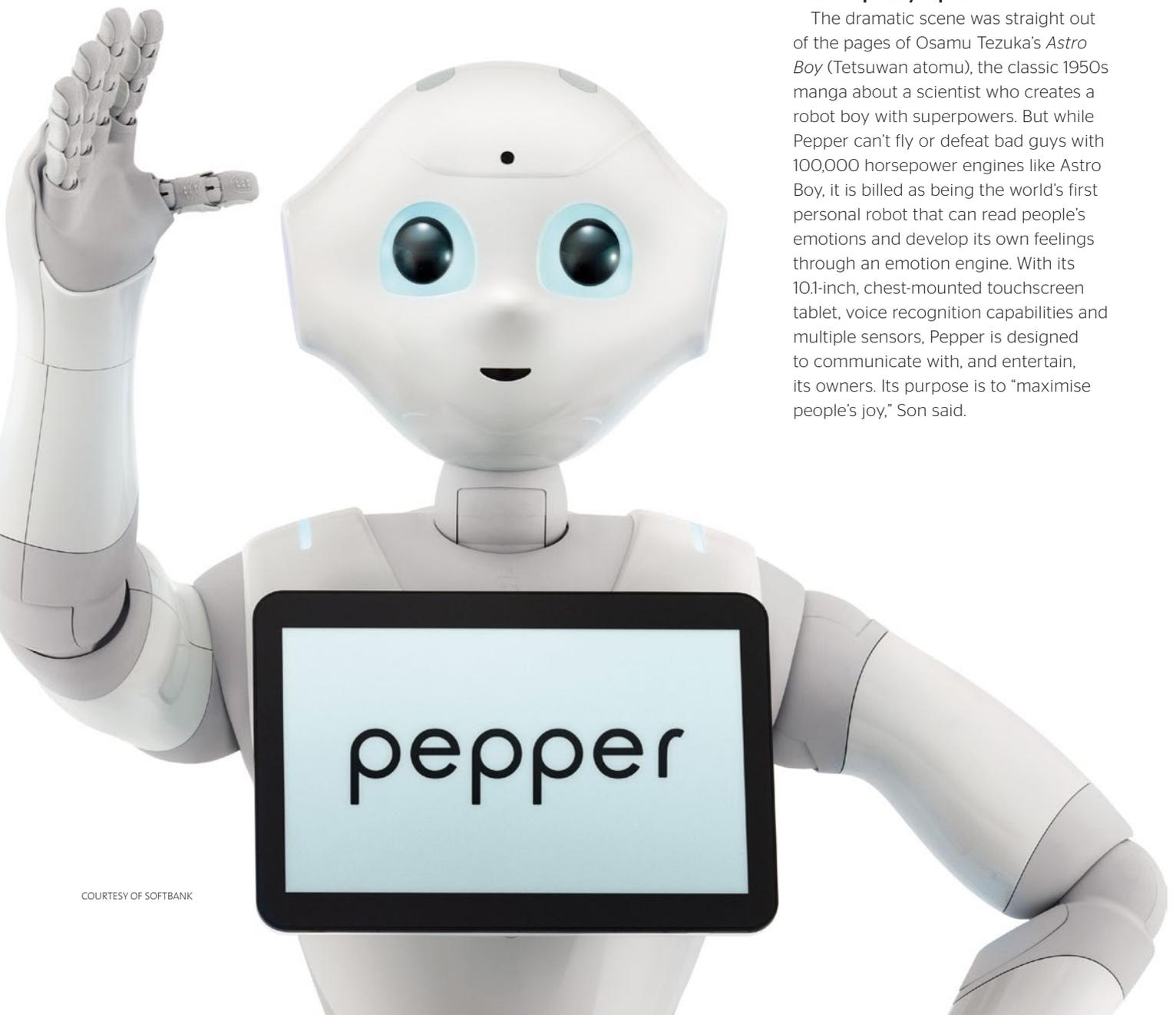
Challenging automation powerhouse Japan

Text **TIM HORNYAK**

The stage at the press conference was dark when suddenly a spotlight shone on Masayoshi Son, CEO of Japanese mobile

carrier SoftBank, and a 120-cm-tall humanoid robot standing next to him. Son presented a glowing heart to the machine, which immediately came to life and spoke: "My name is Pepper," it said in squeaky Japanese.

The dramatic scene was straight out of the pages of Osamu Tezuka's *Astro Boy* (Tetsuwan atomu), the classic 1950s manga about a scientist who creates a robot boy with superpowers. But while Pepper can't fly or defeat bad guys with 100,000 horsepower engines like Astro Boy, it is billed as being the world's first personal robot that can read people's emotions and develop its own feelings through an emotion engine. With its 10.1-inch, chest-mounted touchscreen tablet, voice recognition capabilities and multiple sensors, Pepper is designed to communicate with, and entertain, its owners. Its purpose is to "maximise people's joy," Son said.



“PEPPER WAS CREATED BY A FRENCH, **NOT** JAPANESE, COMPANY”

Japan has long been a robot powerhouse, especially for industrial automation. Pepper follows in the footsteps of Honda's Asimo and other humanoid robots, but stands out for several reasons. Instead of being another corporate showpiece, Pepper has been actually commercialised; it can download and run applications developed by anyone. But, it was created by a French, not Japanese, company: Aldebaran Robotics.

“[These are] cute robots, so cute that people want them at home, very easy to interact with and which are connected to the Internet; look at this potential we are [creating],” Aldebaran CEO Bruno Maisonnier said in introducing Pepper. “Many things can be done to improve education, healthcare, entertainment, flow management, you name it.”

Pepper can't tidy your house or do the laundry yet, but demand for the machine is surprisingly strong. Batches of 1,000 units have sold out in minutes every month since its launch in June 2015; roughly half of the buyers are households and the rest are enterprises, with the latter leading slightly. Pepper owner Tomomi Ota has chronicled her life with the robot on YouTube, taking it out shopping and having family meals with it. Meanwhile, Pepper is being used as a corporate pitchman by high-profile companies like Nestlé Japan, while smaller businesses are using the robot to draw visitors to trade show booths.

Factory automation specialists ABB of Switzerland and Germany's KUKA have been challenging Japan's dominance in industrial robotics on its home turf, showing off their products and services at events like the 2015 iRex International Robot Exhibition in Tokyo. Auto-parts maker Bosch, also from Germany, has 1,300 engineers working at 11 R&D sites

in Japan. The company wants to help reduce fatalities from traffic accidents by robotising cars – adding sensors that can track the position of other vehicles and warn drivers about hazards. It recently began testing its automated driving technologies in Japan, part of an industry-wide move to relieve drivers of tasks ranging from parking, to paying attention during monotonous stretches of road.

“By 2020, we expect that vehicles using Bosch technology will be able to drive autonomously on freeways,” Bosch executive Markus Heyn said in a presentation at the 44th Tokyo Motor Show, in October of last year.

Other European companies are also finding niche markets for robotics applications in robot-savvy Japan. When Britain's Dyson finally entered the robot vacuum cleaner market in October, it chose Japan as its launch pad. It introduced the 360 Eye as a competitor to not only the long-dominant Roomba from iRobot of Massachusetts, but other vac-bots from Japanese makers like Panasonic, Sharp and Toshiba.

The main feature of the 360 Eye, priced around ¥140,000, is an omnidirectional camera that can help the vacuum recognise its surroundings and location. In contrast to standard navigation techniques like infrared and object sensing, computer vision can reduce the time it takes to clean a room, according to Dyson. At the company's new Tokyo showroom, near the intersection of fashionable Omotesando and Aoyama boulevards, a salesman showed off the 360 Eye by controlling it via a smartphone app. He pointed out the caterpillar treads it uses to overcome obstacles, and said the robot has the most powerful suction motor in Japan.

While Dyson is a latecomer to the robot vacuum market, France's Parrot

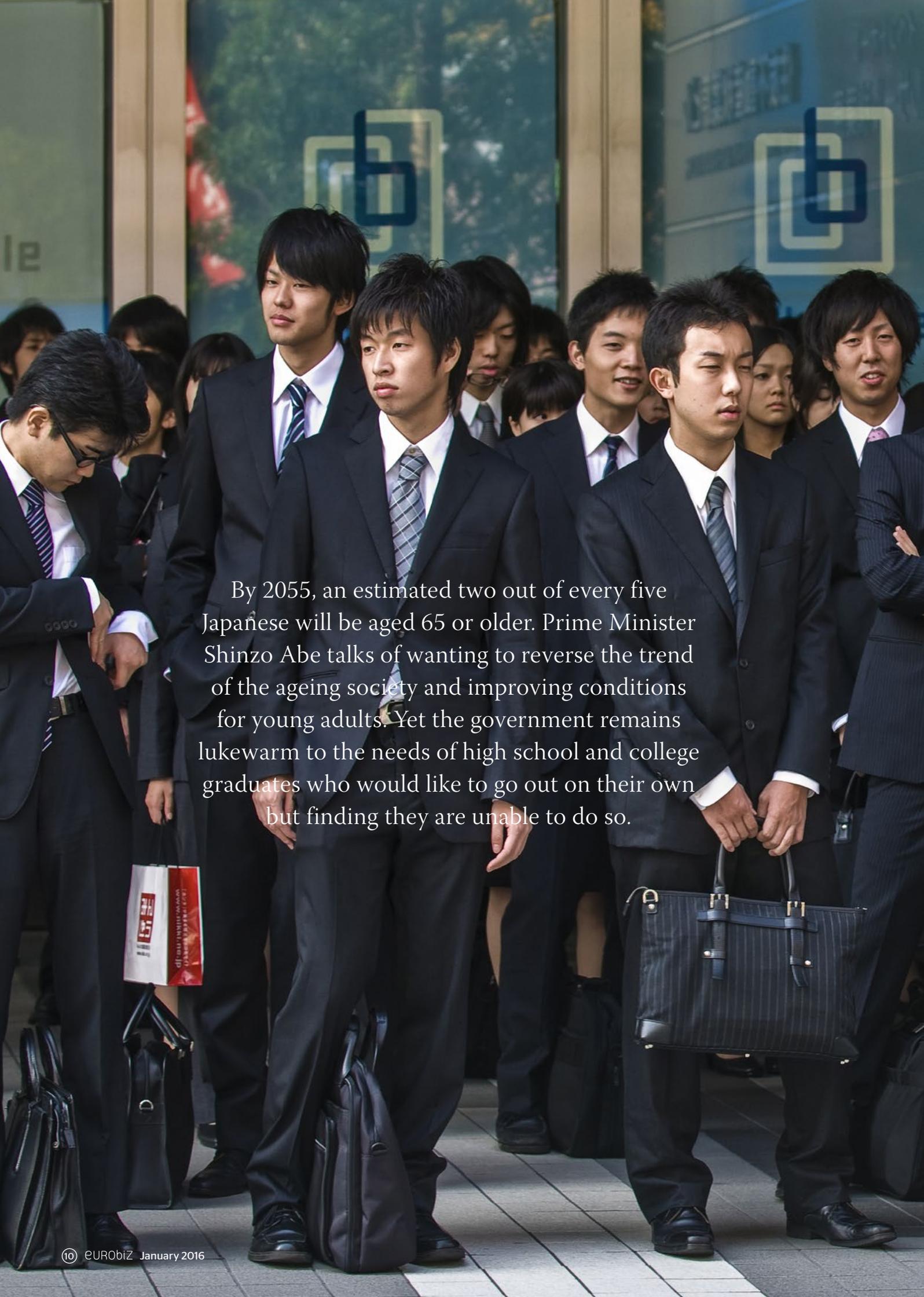
is helping innovate a market that's still in its infancy here: consumer drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). One of its latest products is the Bebop Drone, a lightweight, 14-megapixel camera propelled by four rotors. Controlled by tablet or smartphone through a Wi-Fi connection, the Bebop can shoot aerial videos indoors and outside, and instantly uploads footage to YouTube. Parrot claims about 750,000 users worldwide, and began selling the Bebop in Japan in April of last year.

With its popular UAVs, Parrot has helped push Japan to introduce drone regulations – the country effectively had none despite its existing market for drones used in crop spraying, and volcano research and monitoring. The government was blindsided by the technology in April 2015 when a protester landed a DJI Phantom drone containing a radioactive substance on the roof of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's official residence. On 10 December, new Japan Civil Aviation Bureau regulations governing small UAVs flown without permission were put into effect, but at least one observer believes these rules actually will help foster the market.

Shinji Suzuki, an engineering professor in the University of Tokyo's Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, who specialises in drones, hailed the regulations. He noted that Sony recently entered the drone game through a joint venture with robotics specialist ZMP, called Aerosense, which has developed UAVs for remote surveying.

“The industry welcomes this regulation since hobby-users have caused accidents without sufficient knowledge [of the technology],” says Suzuki.

All Japan needs now is its own home-grown hobby drone to go up against its French and Chinese rivals. [e](#)

A group of young Japanese men in dark suits and ties walking in a crowd, likely graduates, with a text overlay. The men are walking in a line, some looking forward, some looking to the side. They are carrying briefcases and bags. The background shows a building with large windows and a logo.

By 2055, an estimated two out of every five Japanese will be aged 65 or older. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe talks of wanting to reverse the trend of the ageing society and improving conditions for young adults. Yet the government remains lukewarm to the needs of high school and college graduates who would like to go out on their own but finding they are unable to do so.

The other end of the spectrum

The outlook for the younger generation

Text **ELLIOT SILVERBERG**
and **YUSUKE OMURA**

“Japan is not investing in its younger generations, and there is no political party advocating their needs,” says Shun Otokita, 31, who was elected to the Tokyo city council in 2013. Otokita belongs to the Assembly to Energise Japan, an offshoot of the failed Your Party, whose stated objective is to re-engage young people in politics.

Last year, Japan lowered its minimum voting age from 20 to 18. Government officials described the change, the first of its kind since 1945, as directed at inspiring young people to vote. Chief cabinet secretary Yoshihide Suga said

the change has “great significance ... [and] will allow for more young people’s voices to be reflected in politics.”

However, many observers believe the change will have little impact on the fortunes of young people who still represent a small fraction of the electorate.

Consider the government’s apathy to the recent growth of politically activist youth movements – particularly on the left. According to Koichi Nakano, a professor of politics at Sophia University in Tokyo, the largely symbolic voting-age reduction speaks volumes about the limits of what groups like

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Multi-lingual Economics graduate Yoshi Yamada worked at Restaurant Gordon Ramsay in Chelsea for 18 months before becoming head chef at Tempo, an Italian restaurant in the Mayfair section of London. He later spent five years cooking in top restaurants in Naples (2 Michelin star Don Alfonso), Sardinia and Florence.



www.runfortheure.org

Students Emergency Action for Liberal Democracy (SEALD) and other left-wing groups are able to accomplish. Their time in the political limelight may be short-lived due to the offsetting strength of right-wing Internet activists (net *uyoku*). In Nakano's mind, the popular appeal of net *uyoku* has emboldened political conservatives and a fair share of establishment lawmakers to become more relaxed about disclosing their own extreme beliefs.

"Some members of the right wing have even come to think that – by utilising the fact that the newly enfranchised youths will be of school age – they can apply further pressure on school teachers and university professors to be 'neutral' in the classroom: meaning, they shouldn't be openly critical of the government," Nakano says.

Classroom political bias is not all that should worry students, however. According to anthropologist David Slater, at Tokyo's Sophia University, the Japanese education system contributes to a wealth-based segregation, from middle school through adult life. Though students are almost universally stellar in basic language and numeracy skills, Slater argues this equality is insignificant in the long run because of the critical role played by *juku* (cram schools) in ensuring success on the life-determining entrance exams for high school and university. It costs a fortune to send children to *juku* over the many years needed for it to have the desired impact, and they are more prevalent in the cities where real estate is higher-priced. These factors combine to ensure that students from privileged backgrounds tend to have better access to the institutions most instrumental in deciding which university and what job opportunities are presented.

While Japan's economic future is not looking bright – with faltering educational standards, and diminishing liquidity and individual earning potential – there are some grounds for reassurance.

"Generally speaking, Japan is not abandoning or tearing down any of the social welfare benefits that safeguard hardworking people," says Jakob Edberg, managing director of GR Japan, a leading government-relations firm.

Although Japanese workers tend to lack boldness, they remain highly efficient and productive, according to Edberg. He feels that even a problem like increased labour mobility can benefit companies and employees. Companies, especially international ones that guarantee job training and competitive employment benefits, can tap into Japan's abundance of blue-collar workers. He believes that this helps them meet the needs of the country's highly demanding consumers.

A 2010 McKinsey study suggests that, unlike in past decades when Japanese buyers tended to value quality and convenience, the "new" Japanese consumer is an Internet-savvy bargain-hunter who – when persuaded to shop in the

“THIS HELPS THEM MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY'S HIGHLY DEMANDING CONSUMERS”

real world – would rather frequent malls and standalone specialty shops than the more high-end department store outlets.

"Another promising change is the government's focus on promoting women in the work place," adds Edberg. Half of GR Japan's professional staff are female, he says. If others followed its lead, the effect on Japan's economy would be significant. In 2014, Goldman Sachs estimated that if Abe's Womenomics campaign were to raise Japan's female employment rate in 2013 (62.5%) to the male employment rate that same year (80.6%), Japan's GDP could grow by nearly 13%.

Whether Japanese women can overcome gender pay gaps and unequal career opportunities to "lean in" to the workplace, as Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg says they must, remains uncertain. But as Goldman Sachs' analysis indicates, even a little improvement can go a long way to growing Japan's economy and

transforming consumer-spending patterns beyond the significant alterations they have already undergone.

Besides the more Internet-focused companies taking advantage of e-commerce's surging popularity, "some successful industries in Japan are old or mature industries that are renewing themselves and still generating new growth," says Trond Varlid, programme director of the Japan Market Expansion Competition (JMEC). For the past 22 years, JMEC has provided practical business training to experienced mid-career professionals in Japan, as well as business plans for market entry or business expansion to companies here.

Accordingly, Varlid is encouraged by Abe's support for structural reforms intended to generate business growth in the country's vast economy.

"Over the last 10 years, many more Japanese start-ups have been going to the Tokyo Stock Exchange MOTHERS Index for high-growth and emerging stocks," says Varlid. "In time, high-flying entrepreneurs like Rakuten's Hiroshi Mikitani, Softbank's Masayoshi Son, and Joi Ito at MIT Media Lab are sure to be a great inspiration to the new generation of young people."

Steve Burson, president of H&R Consultants, offers some caution about how long it will take start-ups to succeed here. "Japan still has many challenges in the face of globalisation. The time it can take to build the necessary trust for business to bloom is unlikely to be one or two years in Japan, but more like three or five, or even 10.

"Japan's culture of slower and more methodical decision-making creates challenges when the world is moving so fast," Burson adds.

And what about the outlook for the rank-and-file staff in Japan?

"For Japanese workers who cannot keep pace with the global community by studying abroad and working for a multinational company, the future is not all bleak," says Seiichiro Iwasawa, a Harvard-educated behavioural economist and professor at Nagoya University of Commerce and Business. "If young people can become productive members of society, Japan will provide a market for them." 



The strategy of expansion

*Martin Fluck, Director of Operations,
North Asia, Oakwood Asia Pacific*

Text **GAVIN BLAIR**
Photo **BENJAMIN PARKS**

January will see the opening of Oakwood Premier Tokyo, a new mixed-use development in Marunouchi with a total of 123 luxury serviced apartments, minutes from Tokyo Station.

This will be the ninth Tokyo property in the Oakwood-branded portfolio of properties, and they have plans for further expansion across Japan and the rest of Asia.

Founded more than 50 years ago by Howard Ruby, who remains chairman and CEO of the company, Oakwood Worldwide was the pioneer of corporate housing and now has 25,000 apartments around the globe. The company provides temporary housing

solutions, mainly to corporate clients, but also to various types of government workers and, to a lesser extent, leisure travellers.

Oakwood entered the Asian market via Singapore in 1997 and has 29 properties, including the Marunouchi property, across the region. The current head of North Asia operations, Martin Fluck, joined the company in 2001, the year after it had expanded into Japan with a property in Akasaka. A Swiss national who was born in Kobe and spent his first 10 years in the port city, Fluck graduated from hotel school in Lausanne and quickly returned to Asia where he has spent his working life, the majority of it in Japan. >

“THE CLIENTELE FOR THE OAKWOOD PREMIER TOKYO IS EXPECTED TO BE **PREDOMINATELY** BUSINESS PEOPLE”

“What we offer is very close to a hotel, with services including front desk and housekeeping, but without the banquets and dining. In other countries in Asia, it’s more like a hotel because of the short stay customers; so Japan is unique in that sense because of the licence issue,” explains Fluck.

Due to relatively strict regulations in Japan around what is designated a hotel, seven of the current eight properties have a minimum stay requirement of 30 days.

“We’d love to be able to take stays of less than 30 days, but the building would need a hotel licence. At the moment, the only one with a license is in Ariake, near Big Sight,” says Fluck,

“If you work with the authorities from the start, it’s not that difficult to get the license. But it requires wider corridors and more emergency exits, provision of a restaurant, so the number of rooms from the same floor space is lower. However, it allows us to fill in the gaps between longer-term bookings, so it increases revenue overall,” explains Fluck

“There are also zoning issues, you can’t have a hotel in a residential area like Aoyama. All of our new properties will have [a licence], including the Marunouchi apartments,” he adds. “The new Tokyo property will be more like a hotel, but managed like a serviced apartment.”

The clientele for the Oakwood Premier Tokyo is expected to be predominately business people, given the large concentration of major corporations in the Marunouchi district.

“In Japan, 60% of our corporate clients are U.S.-based companies, though that doesn’t mean of course that the person coming to stay is an American national.”

Government contracts, which account for 5 to 7% of guests in Japan,

include providing temporary housing for a few months to embassy staff at the beginning or end of their postings to the country.

These corporate and government clients bring a good deal of stability to the business, according to Fluck.

“We don’t have waves in our business to the extent that the hotel business at times may have; it’s quite constant, though times like Christmas-New Year’s and O-bon [a Japanese holiday in mid-August] are a little quieter. Our long-term guests provide us with a great base; after the [2011 Great Tohoku] Earthquake our occupancy rate didn’t drop the way hotels’ did,” says Fluck.

The serviced apartment industry isn’t that well known in Japan, but awareness is growing, according to Fluck, who says the new property at Marunouchi will help raise its profile and that of the Oakwood brand name.

Still, 25 to 30% of guests at its current properties are Japanese, though that increases to around 50% at the Oakwood Premier Tokyo Midtown, the only other facility that bears the Oakwood Premier brand.

“It’s convenient, it’s chic, it’s stylish. There’s a 24-hour supermarket nearby, Roppongi, shops, offices; it’s all here. We get a number of guests who have a home outside Tokyo and stay here during the week. We also get quite a few prominent figures in various industries who like the exclusivity,” explains Fluck.

There are plans for another 28 properties across Asia in the next three to five years, including a number in Japan.

“We are looking at Yokohama, where we are working on potential projects, and then planning properties in Osaka, Kyoto and Fukuoka.

“The world is travelling more, and we will try and grab more of that market.”



Safe from harm?

National immunisation programme still trails behind Europe

Text **DAVID MCNEILL**



In 1993, Japan stopped using the combination vaccine for mumps, measles and rubella (MMR) in routine immunisations. The Health Ministry said the triple vaccine was linked to side effects, notably non-viral meningitis.



f the 1.8 million children who were administered it, some had adverse reactions and three children reportedly died.

Japan, as a result, remains the only developed country to have banned the MMR combination vaccine, and use separate jabs for measles and rubella.

The ban is controversial. In 2002, then-British Prime Minister Tony Blair cited Japan as an example of the dangers in scrapping the combination

vaccine. He said the result was outbreaks of occasionally fatal measles. The vaccine has been the subject of scare stories linked to autism, but studies have failed to uncover any such connection. Indeed, the Japan ban has helped to disprove it – a 2005 study of 30,000 children found cases of autism rose despite the ban.

The MMR ban is not the only problem cited in regards to routine immunisation programmes in Japan against potentially fatal diseases. While noting that the country is “catching up with” the

European Union and the United States in the number of vaccines available to children, the 2014 European Business Council white paper warns: “Protection by vaccines remains insufficient.”

The report’s lead author is Dr. Shunjiro Sugimoto, who chaired the Vaccine Subcommittee of the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) Japan. He said the combination vaccine for diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (inactivated polio vaccine) had only just been approved

in Japan, “15 years behind Europe”. Dr. Sugimoto said that the 5-in-1 or 6-in-1 combination vaccines, produced by adding hepatitis B and/or polio vaccines, though widely used elsewhere, are still unavailable here.

In addition, some vaccines, such as for mumps and hepatitis B, are not part of the national immunisation programmes. Regular vaccinations cover diphtheria, acute poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, Japanese encephalitis, tetanus and influenza.

“Some experts say the mumps vaccine in Japan may not be as safe as that from abroad,” explains Jun Honda, current chairman of the Vaccine Subcommittee at the EFPIA. “The lack of combinations is an inconvenience, but the ones that are not available are a public health issue.”

The result is that Japanese mothers have to make multiple trips to the doctor for shots. They must ask for vaccines that are not available on the public programme and pay out of their own pockets. Perhaps most worrying of all is that stocks may run out during an emergency.

“There have been a number of occasions where there were shortages due to sporadic outbreaks,” points out Simon Collier of the EFPIA.

The most prominent, says Collier, was the swine flu (H1N1) epidemic in 2009, which forced the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare to import “a huge amount of flu vaccines from outside Japan.”

About 15 million Japanese had been vaccinated against the disease by the end of 2009. A string of side effects, and over 100 reported deaths, prompted the Health Ministry to launch a probe into the vaccines. In 2013, a rubella outbreak caused another temporary vaccine shortage.

All this underscores the enormous difficulties of keeping millions of people healthy using public programmes. But Honda is among many experts who say Japan’s sluggish bureaucracy is needlessly putting lives at risk.

“The Health Ministry takes a lot of time to make decisions and to put these vaccines into national vaccine programmes,” he laments. One reason, Honda says, is that Japan lacks vaccine expertise. The difference in the number of Health Ministry experts compared to the National Institute of Infectious Diseases in the United States is in the order of 1 to 10, he estimates.

Japan’s Health Ministry says it “cannot deny” that its decisions take time, but counters that public safety comes first.

“In the case of MMR, we decided that we needed a newer, safer vaccine, and have asked the Japanese Association of Vaccine Industries to develop one,” says Yoshihisa Ota, an industry spokesman.

(HPV) vaccines for cervical cancer in girls. Over 8 million Japanese had received the drug by the time it was pulled in 2013. The Health Ministry reported about 106 cases of serious adverse effects, including convulsions. According to Medscape.com, the decision was “in stark contrast” to an announcement in the United States in the same week that vaccination rates in teenage girls “should be increased” because the effectiveness of the vaccine is “high.”

Honda accepts the outlook that the problems in Japan’s public immunisation programmes have eased.

“There are more vaccines than ever before,” Honda says. But there is still

“PERHAPS MOST WORRYING OF ALL IS THAT STOCKS MAY RUN OUT DURING AN EMERGENCY”

“Measles and rubella vaccines are currently given individually. Mumps is still voluntary.”

While developing new drugs can take years, the Japanese government, in the meantime, sometimes shuns imports from Europe or elsewhere. Collier cites the case of the combination vaccines of diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTP), which required the addition of the inactivated polio vaccine.

“It took time for the Japanese manufacturers to develop the polio vaccine,” Collier continues, “and the ministry chose to wait for the local development, rather than rely on imported combination vaccines.”

Furthermore, experts are worried by government decisions to withdraw approval for certain drugs, most recently the papillomavirus

some way to go, he adds. “We have to make some noise that we need to have these vaccines approved. The HPV vaccine has been suspended for nearly three years. That implies that more girls in Japan are susceptible to cervical cancer.”

In his report, Dr. Sugimoto says that the bottom line is that many paediatric combination vaccines necessary to protect Japanese infants from infections remain unapproved and are not in use, “even though infants represent the future of Japan.” Congested immunisation schedules in other parts of the world have been eased thanks to the approval of a variety of combination vaccines that have now been in use for more than 10 years.

“Japan is undisputedly lagging behind in this area,” the 2014 EBC report says. 

A portrait of a middle-aged man with short brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a blue and white striped dress shirt and a dark tie. He is sitting on a dark blue couch with his hands clasped in his lap. The background features a wooden ceiling and white vertical slats.

Rune Nordgaard

After all these years

Text **DAVID UMEDA**
Photo **GENEVIEVE SAWTELLE**

😊 Do you like natto?

Time spent working in Japan:

Twenty years.

Career regret (if any): I don't have too much work experience outside of Japan, but this is because I have enjoyed working here so much.

Favourite saying: "What can be done better next time?"

Favourite book: "Japan at War" by Haruko Taya & Theodore Cook.

Cannot live without: My family, sushi, and my wife's electrical bicycle.

Lesson learned in Japan: To avoid mistakes through simple repetition like servers do at Japanese restaurants.

Secret of success in business: To accept that in Japan 1mm is 1mm, and doing business in Japan is a long-term commitment.

Favourite place to dine: TY Harbor Brewery at Tennozu Isle.

Do you like natto?: I have tried natto now more than 50 times, and I still don't seem to like it.

You would think that, for someone used to moving around a lot, settling down in one place for 20 years would be unthinkable. But for Rune Nordgaard, it has been exactly the opposite.

able. But for Rune Nordgaard, it has been exactly the opposite.

"When I was quite young, I got used to living in different countries, and I liked it," the Norwegian consultant reflects. "So when I decided to go to Japan to study, it didn't feel like it was a bigger move than going to a different city in Norway.

"It has turned out to be an interesting journey," Nordgaard adds, "and much longer than I ever imagined."

The experience he has gained over the past two decades in Japan, especially in the early years of his career, has made a lasting impression.

"From the beginning of my career here, all this time I have been involved in sales," he says. His first years were spent as a technical manager who supported sales staff in providing services for customers.

"It was by watching them that I learned to go the extra mile for customers, which makes a big difference," Nordgaard continues. "It builds trust and cooperation, which I believe is the basis for a successful business in Japan."

Norwegians are known for their love of nature. While living all these years in the world's largest metropolis, he has still managed to nurture this passion in many ways.

"One of my colleagues gave me his old golf set, and since then I have been playing golf," Nordgaard explains. "What I like about golf is that I get out to see the countryside, and I have to admit, Japan's countryside is very nice ... I also go skiing in Japan, both alpine and cross-country."

He adds, "We live quite close to many shops, so it seems like we use the bike more than the car in terms of total kilometres per year."

He wants his daughter to learn and appreciate the "Norwegian way" even while living in Japan.

"I began a Pappa Club when she was two years old. We, mostly Norwegian fathers, take the kids skiing, camping, or hiking in the mountains or hiking on long weekends," says Nordgaard. "Or just before Christmas last year, we made Christmas decorations for the Christmas tree at the embassy. The kids love these get-togethers. The Pappas have time to discuss 'important' issues, and the Mammams have some time to relax while the kids are at the Pappa Club. So it's a win-win-win situation for the family."

The past 20 years in Japan have brought out in Nordgaard a strong sense of optimism, rather than cynicism, especially when it comes to doing business. He has learned that everyone has unique qualities to offer.

"Japan is a tough market to penetrate – mostly because the existing competitors are highly skilled and have great products – so you need to find your own strength, and focus a lot on that. At the same time, you have to provide excellent support to your customers."

Although many people claim that it is difficult to get business in Japan, with quality, support and logistics all being at such a high standard, Nordgaard believes that "you just have to be better, or to offer something different." To him, it's about people connecting with people.

Nordgaard cautions that even if you have a good product to sell, you first need to set up the correct strategy, to think about "how you sell it, how good your quality and durability is, how you do service, how well it can be adapted on the customer's side, how the logistics work, how you can assure trouble-free delivery on time, and more."

"Japan has a dynamic industry which is changing all the time, so there are plenty of opportunities for innovative products," he says.

Nordgaard still believes, after all these years, that Europeans – like no one else – can offer Japan the best. 



Norway

In addition to the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Tokyo, Norway has consulates in Kobe, Nagano, Sapporo and Fukuoka. Japan and Norway signed an agreement on cooperation in science and technology in 2003. Norway is a world leader and global knowledge hub in the industries of oil and gas, maritime, and seafood. The country's emerging industries are renewable energy, cleantech, and medical/biotechnology. For centuries, cultural influences have travelled the 12,000 km between Norway and Japan, from ornaments and tapestries along the Silk Road to manga comics and Japanese cuisine.



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Major cities: Oslo (capital), Bergen, Stavanger, Trondheim, and Fredrikstad.

Population: 5,147,689 (July 2015 est.). Urban population: 80.5% (2015). 40.91% 25-54 years (2015 est.).

Area: 323,802 sq. km. Coastline: 2,650km (mainland), plus 22,498km (fjords, small islands)

Climate: Temperate along the coast, modified by the North Atlantic Current. The colder interior has increased precipitation and colder summers, and it is rainy year-round on the west coast.

Natural resources: Petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, copper, lead, zinc, titanium, pyrites, nickel, fish, timber, and hydropower.

Michal Berg

*Executive Director,
Norwegian Chamber of Commerce in Japan*

www.nccj.or.jp

Text **DAVID UMEDA**

Chambers of commerce differ in terms of how they are organised, according to Michal Berg, executive director of the NCCJ. “However, in our case, we are 100% membership-based. The Chamber is by the companies – for the companies.”

Berg defines the task of executive director as being twofold. First, respecting and challenging expectations. “We aim to balance the expectations from our long-time corporate members regarding the focus of the chamber activities, against how much change they can tolerate as a result of organisational adaptation to a changing reality,” he says.

Second, creating value. “We try to make sure our members receive, in return, such services as events and support that they perceive as worth the membership fee they pay,” he concludes.

Berg sees the chamber’s main purpose as making it easier for Norwegian companies to conduct business in Japan. “Put simply, this can be divided into two types of efforts.”

First, efforts for the companies. “We provide support for companies in regards to improving their own competitiveness,” he says.

Second, efforts for the market. “The NCCJ aims to make the playing field an easier one for Norwegian companies to conduct business. The chamber events play a key role,” he points out.

The NCCJ offers social events, as well as business and professional gatherings. “My task is to ensure that we have a balance between the two efforts, and that the themes we give to our events are also on the agenda of our corporate members,” Berg says. “This means my role is a communications partner – and a host for our members.”

What then brings him the most satisfaction on the job?

“Knowing there is potential for the Chamber,” he replies. “In order to develop a relatively small-sized chamber as the Norwegian Chamber of Commerce in Japan, our benchmark is always ‘last year + 1.’”

Berg goes on to explain the catchphrase.

“We are not satisfied with what we have done. The feeling of being in a situation where you have potential to expand further, grow and improve, this feeling makes this a satisfying job,” he says. “Corporate Membership is now up to 44.”

Since 2014 the Chamber has been coordinating efforts among corporate members to jointly promote themselves through promoting Norway and the Norwegian lifestyle through a quarterly free-paper called *StyleNORWAY Magazine*.

“I love being able to be part of this,” Berg beams. “We have companies working together promoting the brand ‘Norway’ in Japan. And their efforts benefit all of us. We are helping to create visibility for Norwegian brands. And by cooperating, they are accomplishing things on a totally new scale.”

Yet, Berg also faces some unique challenges on the job.

“We are in a shift. The numbers of Norwegian expats are going down. I think it is not only a trend; it is the new reality”, Berg explains. “In the offices of our Norwegian corporate members, for example, we see fewer Norwegians in top management positions. This leads to a shift in themes and style of events. Our audience is changing, so we need to change how we communicate in order to engage.”

The executive director believes



JOINTLY
PROMOTE
THEMSELVES
THROUGH
**PROMOTING
NORWAY**

a good approach is what the NCCJ undertook in preparation for 2015. “We had a Management Forum, attended by around 20 company representatives. They discussed what their challenges were; important topics for them; and ideas that would challenge their coworkers.”

This resulted in the first NCCJ Academy. “I believe this is our first go at the new reality,” Berg says.

“In regard to all our events, when our corporate members bring their important business connections, this is a good indication of value in my point of view.” 

Euglena

Tiny algae, great promise

Text and photo IAN MUNROE

It sounds like science fiction. A business inspired by a manga comic that aims to help save the planet by turning a micro-organism into everything from superfood to jet fuel. And yet, as I sit across from the unwaveringly professional investor and public relations manager at Euglena's futuristic Tokyo headquarters, this prospect doesn't seem quite so far-fetched.

Euglena was founded in 2005, and the company's name comes from the algae it has been farming commercially ever since. *Euglena gracilis* is a tiny single-celled organism with plant and animal qualities. It feeds on carbon dioxide, but contains an astounding 59 nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and amino acids.

The firm's history can be traced back to 1998 when one of its co-founders, Mitsuru Izumo, travelled to Bangladesh on an internship with a microfinance bank. After learning about the struggle against malnutrition there, Izumo recalled a favourite childhood manga series called *Dragon Ball*. It featured a magical bean that could nourish a person for days and heal wounds. He wondered if something similar existed in the real world, and set about researching nutrient-rich foods.

Izumo's search was fruitless until a colleague who was studying at Tokyo University's Faculty of Agriculture suggested he take a look at euglena. It was a revelation, but it took several years to figure out how to cultivate the micro-algae on an industrial scale. Today, that colleague, Kengo Suzuki, is head of research and development at Euglena, and Izumo is president of the operation, which employs about 100 workers. Euglena has also won a lot of attention, including from Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who is eager to show that Japan can produce successful start-ups.

The company's main product is a powdered algae. It produces up to 60 tons a year at a facility on the Okinawan island of Ishigaki. The powder is used in a range of consumer goods – mainly as a dietary supplement and an ingredient in health foods – that are sold both online and in brick-and-mortar shops.

Euglena went public in 2012, and has seen business jump since then. Sales of its food and health products hit ¥59 billion in September, nearly doubling sales from the previous year. And the company is hoping to enter a new foreign market in January.

"We're preparing to sell our products in China, possibly in stores like pharmacies first," says Mio Yasuma, the aforementioned public relations manager. "There's

a growing health trend in China, and we believe we can sell our products there for similar prices as in Japan."

But Izumo hasn't forgotten the firm's origins. Ten yen from every Euglena product sold goes toward funding a nutrition programme that helps about 5,000 children in Bangladesh. Yasuma says Euglena hopes to grow that programme,

and may bring it to other developing countries. They also have ideas for a host of other socially minded ventures. The micro-algae could be used in water-treatment projects, and to cut emissions from thermal power plants.

Euglena is also hoping to produce biofuel without having to rely on arable land, using a process it says would yield much more than with alternatives such as palm oil. ANA Holdings has signed on to support the research, raising the prospect that this biofuel could one day help power All Nippon Airways' jets.

"Fuels normally end up increasing the amount of CO₂ on the planet," Yasuma says. "But euglena can produce fuel by actually absorbing CO₂." 

“CONTAINS AN
ASTOUNDING 59
NUTRIENTS”



Recruitment

*International companies
are screaming*



The single biggest issue by far in Japan for non-Japanese companies is recruitment. But let me refine that. What is lacking is not the people, but the talent. In what one Delphi Network member described as the “Japan Rushing Phenomenon”, everyone is suddenly looking for the same smart, bilingual, self-starting staff.

Non-Japanese companies have always been forced to seek these people by their very nature – but now new foreign entrants are coming to Japan, and Japanese multinationals are waking up to the need to upgrade their HR. Dentsu, one of Japan’s most reactionary companies, is suddenly realising it gets most of its revenue from abroad, after its recent splurge on overseas M&A. But if Dentsu actually wants to retain control of the “new” Dentsu, it has to find global managers who can stand toe-to-toe with the metrosexual brats of Madison Avenue and London.

Ironically, nobody is worried about getting business – it is executing the business they have already got which is the concern. Mind you, new venues for making money are opening up – one non-Japanese Delphi Network member told us that a new practice has emerged of seconding his staff to Japanese companies. The secondee company pays him three to four times what he pays his staff. Those are pretty impressive profit margins.

The obvious solution is to raise salaries. But I suspect that is the last thing that companies are willing to do, and I would not be surprised if there were an informal agreement to suppress market rates. The official answer is that one may not pay more than an accepted ratio of revenue on staff salaries – say 55%. If you pay more than that, you hire less staff, and everyone has to work harder.

The real resentment among CEOs is the lack of ‘cannon fodder’ – i.e., cheap, fresh graduates who do most of the work at rock-bottom prices. Paying a recruiter top dollar for a C-suite executive is one thing. After all, he will hopefully increase business exponentially. But paying the equivalent of three-months’ salary for a spotty 22-year-old to a recruiter is just offensive to most CEOs.

“IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, EVERY EMPLOYEE COUNTS”

In addition, the Internet is making everything more complex, which reduces the number of people available. Digitisation is almost an ontological phenomenon – the world is being “data-ified”, and it is an unstoppable trend. Formerly fundamentally simple industries like advertising and retail are becoming immensely more complex. Senior managers are unable to give real guidance; consultants become more important, but take advantage of this and raise costs. Unqualified young people are thrown on the front lines. Digitisation means everything converges into a massively heavy, but tiny, centre. Rather like a black hole and equally hard to comprehend.

In this environment, every employee counts. Nobody can afford to drag around an under-performing employee. Japanese employee protection is quite strong. For example, the employee trial period is limited to two weeks. If the person passes, they become a full-time employee and thus hard to fire. Companies are getting creative – e.g., by offering a substantially higher salary after a six-month trial period. Such contracts are technically illegal, but do indicate to the employment tribunal that the employees were aware what they were getting into.

An interesting fact came to light during these conversations with the Delphi Network member. Potential employees are keen on job security. So if a company does not offer a full-time role, it will lose out. One member told us about a non-Japanese company that is bleeding its staff because 100% of them are on temporary contracts – these are much cheaper for the company, as it does not have to pay social security. Retention of good staff under these conditions is impossible.

Prime Minister Abe needs to think carefully about his labour market reforms. Reducing the market to the US hire-and-fire model will not work by government fiat. If firms want to attract talent, they are stuck with the old paradigm of open-ended contracts and benefits. With profits rising, they have the means to pay for a European-style system. That is surely a good thing. ☺



DAN SLATER
is director of the
Delphi Network

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www.bayer.jp



Hans-Dieter Hausner
Senior Bayer Representative for Japan

Building a stronger brand

Netherlands Chamber of Commerce in Japan Luncheon – 8 December, 2015

Text and photo **ANDREW HOWITT**

Before 2011, Nissan's global organisation was decentralised, and building a stronger brand image was not a high priority for the company, recalls Roel de Vries, the global head of marketing and brand strategy at Nissan Motor Company. His talk on building brand value at the NCCJ Luncheon gave "a look inside the kitchen" regarding some of the lessons Nissan has learned about the importance of developing a strong brand.

"We had developed into an organisation where the US was more powerful than Japan, and Europe was very powerful in itself," de Vries observed about that time. "There was no global centre of excellence anywhere in the world ... and no one was listening to head office."

Nissan's foundation is in engineering and manufacturing, and the thinking had been that if they kept doing that well, it should be enough to secure the company's future. However, when analysing the aftermath of the Lehman Shock, de Vries realised how critical a strong brand was to a company's financial security.

"If you take the Lehman Shock, we saw that the companies that recovered first were the branded companies."

De Vries and his team looked at other strong brands and found that focusing more on brand value allowed those companies to drive demand, increase prices, and build customer loyalty. "The next step for Nissan is not going to be more cars or more markets. The next step has to be growing our share and pricing power in markets where we have always been."

The key to convincing the company to invest more in strengthening its brand image was helping them see that brand value had a significant impact on the bottom line.

"At our company, as it is at every company, it's all about returns," de Vries



said. "Marketing and brands are not about beautiful TV commercials, they're tools. It's not about events, not about whatever it is, they're all tools. If you can get the company to realise that it's about money, then they wake up."

The next step for de Vries was identifying the three key areas where the company needed to focus its energy: producing high-quality products, creating good experiences for customers, and concentrating on visibility.

One crucial ingredient of a good customer experience is creating a consistent global image. "How do you make sure there's consistency in a hundred and something countries with a few thousand pieces of content generated all the time – that the message is consistent, that the look and feel are consistent, the tone and manner are consistent?" asked de Vries. "You need a process."

Throughout his talk, de Vries repeatedly stressed that this was a journey and not something that happens overnight. Today, Nissan is right at the start, only now able to move into the differentiation stage. "If you ask the customers out there, is Nissan truly differentiated from other brands you will not get a positive result ... because it takes time, it takes a long time."

With regard to visibility, de Vries referred to the importance of sponsorships and advertising at live events. So they use 5 to 10% of their entire marketing budget on high-profile sponsorships, such as for basketball, cricket, and NCAA football.

De Vries concluded by looking at the automotive industry's future.

"The biggest challenge in our industry is providing an integrated customer journey," he stated, stressing the need to get up to date with how they deal with customers by becoming better connected digitally. Right now, "nothing talks to each other."

He remains optimistic, but realistic: "I think it's exciting. Cars are becoming interesting again. But it's going to be quite a race."

To end his presentation, de Vries offered up some advice on branding: "Focus on what's common, not what's different." He has learned that there is a lot of wasted energy trying to find out what is different, but insists that you can't make lots of cars for different markets, or have lots of different strategies for different parts of the world.

"You cannot differentiate all the time. It's impossible," he said. "The power sits in what's common, in my view." 

Food and Agriculture//

Technically complex

Text **GEOFF BOTTING**

In October, Japan and 11 other Pacific Rim countries signed a broad agreement to create the world's largest trade zone. The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) was forged after seven years of negotiations. Among many other things, Japan agreed to cut tariffs and increase imports of certain food and agricultural items from other member countries.

European officials, meanwhile, were paying close attention. They have been working on their own free trade agreement (FTA) with Japan, and, as with the TPP, one of the toughest areas in the negotiations is food and agriculture.

Members of the EBC Food and Agriculture Committee generally welcomed the Pacific Rim agreement, according to committee chairman Olivier Convert. They hope it can help shed some light on the secretive deals being worked out by the European and Japanese negotiators.

"Some members have said their Japanese customers have looked at the content of TPP and told them, 'This is

Key advocacy points

→ **Tariffs** - The EU and Japan should abolish tariffs on food products under the free trade agreement.

→ **Approval of additives and enzymes** - Japanese officials should align their standards with international ones.

→ **Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs)** - The EU and Japan should try to harmonise their MRL standards.

how it's going to be. We have to take the TPP's content into account, even though ratification is still many months away," he says. "That view might be a bit extreme, but still it gives us an idea of how the market players are looking at these agreements."

Convert is quick to add that the two deals are distinctly different from each other, given the size, number and nature of the markets involved. But "the

Japanese side says it wants to maintain a kind of equivalency between what they grant to their various partners," he noted.

The committee chairman expects the pace of the EU-Japan negotiations to pick up, now that "the Japanese side is less busy than before."

As a trade issue, food and agriculture is politically sensitive and technically complex. A range of onerous issues, from human health to rural conservation, comes into play.

The committee listed seven advocacy areas in the EBC's 2015 white paper, taking up two full pages. "These are just a few issues that have been brought to our attention by our members," Convert says, adding that the full list would continue on for several more pages. The group's 20 member companies have "few common issues."

Europe exports significant amounts of processed and packaged foods to Japan, some of which must go through complicated approval processes. "When it comes to processed products, the list [of ingredients] is endless so the relevant regulations are all the more

“THE MEMBERS HAVE BUSINESSES TO RUN, AND THEY **DON'T TEND TO BE** SPECIALISTS ON REGULATIONS OR THE FREE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS”

Olivier Convert

numerous and complicated,” the chairman says.

In this area, the committee wants to see harmonisation between Japan and the EU on approved ingredients, including additives and enzymes. Importers are forced to wait long periods of time for Japanese regulators to issue their approval and are often in the dark about what kind of documentation they need to submit.

Japan has recently aligned its list of approved additives, a move the committee welcomed. It now wants to see similar progress with enzymes, so that items commonly used in Europe and other major markets don't require extra testing for the Japan market.

The current hassle of duplicate procedures creates higher costs that are inevitably passed on to the Japanese consumer.

The same kind of price pressure happens with tariffs, which top the committee's list of issues in the white paper. Double-digit duty rates are common in the food industry – butter at 35%; cheese, 26 to 40%; and chocolate for

industry use at 29.8%. Certain raw materials such as starch are slapped with tariffs of over 100%.

Depending on the product and its supply situation, duties often don't restrict market access for food products because importers are willing to buy them, says Convert. The result, however, is a rise in prices for consumers. This may help local producers, but at the expense of hurting profitability for importers.

Other EBC committees point to similar problems in their respective industries. But they hit the food industry particularly hard. Consumers buy food as a daily necessity, making them highly sensitive to prices. Even small increases can drastically affect sales.

Tariffs, says Convert, have proven more difficult to reform than approval methods. The tariffs are in place to protect certain industry stakeholders, including powerful ones. The approval methods largely reflect Japan's history, with testing methods and other procedures put in place decades ago when its economy was a lot less globalised.

For now, the committee is waiting for the outcome of the EU-Japan FTA, after which they can expect to see the barriers start to come down.

The committee meets regularly, with sessions usually attended by trade specialists from the EU delegation or the embassies of EU member countries, who play a valued role, according to Convert.

“The members have businesses to run, and they don't tend to be specialists on regulations or the free trade negotiations,” he says. “So there is a lot of exchange.”

That was especially the case during the scoping exercise that led up to the launch of the EU-Japan FTA negotiations. “We had a lot of questions from EU representatives, but it was also a two-way [discussion], with us asking them questions as well.”

Given the complexity – and controversy – involved in the international trade of food, stakeholders need all the information they can get, especially at the current stage of negotiations aimed at creating a much more liberalised market. 



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Osaka YMCA International School
 6-7-34 Nakatsu, Kita-ku, Osaka 531-0071
 Tel: +81(O)6 6345 1661
 Fax: +81(O)6 6345 1601
www.oysis.org | general-inquiry@oysis.org

Staying real

Japan's real estate sector meets demand

Text **DAVID UMEDA**

In Japan's key cities, so many industries are impacted by the real estate sector. So when it comes to measuring the Japan market and its future, a multitude of factors come into consideration.

Santa Fe is committed to delivering exceptional moving and relocation solutions to their valued customers.

"We work with families, individuals and organisations across the world," explains Aurélien John Nacrou, Business Development Executive at Santa Fe Relocation Services. "We are a world-class leader in relocation, moving, visa and immigration, as well as records management services."

Santa Fe offers convenience through its 126 offices in 56 countries, spanning six continents.

"We have your world covered! For our customers, we live and breathe our motto: 'We make it easy'," Nacrou adds.

"Thanks to our dedicated staff, global presence and consistent excellence in customer service in all locations, our business has been growing rapidly in Japan."

Major players in real estate also anticipate critical trends in the New Year.

"Well into 2016, we expect to see continued significant demand for new office and logistics developments," says Craig Hudleston, COO of CBRE, a global real estate services firm. "With regard to the office market, in spite of a series of new Grade-A office properties coming online, we expect to see rents continuing to increase for the next two to three years."

When it comes to real estate, the winners in this most competitive market remain committed to consumer needs and, in a significant way, help define success across all industries operating in Japan. 

“Helping people
achieve healthy skin
is our mission.”

—Stefan Sakurai,
President and
Representative Director

WHO'S WHO

Pharmaceutical

LEO Pharma

LEO Pharma helps people achieve healthy skin. By offering care solutions to patients in more than 100 countries, LEO Pharma supports people in managing their skin conditions.

Founded in 1908 and owned by the LEO Foundation, the healthcare company has devoted decades of research and development to delivering products and solutions to people with skin conditions. LEO Pharma is headquartered in Denmark and employs around 4,800 people worldwide.

Areas of Expertise

- Psoriasis
- Skin Infections
- Acne
- Eczema
- Actinic Keratosis
- Research and Development
- Partnership and Alliances
- Business Development

Key People



Kenichi Hara,
Head of Commercial
KHRJP@leo-pharma.com



Kelly Lausen,
Head of Strategic Planning & Projects
KLYJP@leo-pharma.com



Kazuhiko Takeshige,
Director, Global Business Development
KATJP@leo-pharma.com



Yasunori Adachi,
Director, HR & General Admin
YAAJP@leo-pharma.com



leo.japan@leo-pharma.com
03-5809-2468
www.leo-pharma.jp

“We have a shared ambition to transform the lives of people living with severe diseases.”

*—Masanobu Kambara,
Representative Director
& President, UCB Japan*



WHO'S WHO

Pharmaceutical

UCB Japan

UCB, based in Brussels, Belgium, is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery and development of innovative medicines and solutions. They employ more than 8500 people in nearly 40 countries. UCB Japan was established in 1988. The anti-epileptic drug E Keppra®, which was launched in September 2010, and the Anti-TNF-alpha Antibody Cimzia® are two of its leading drugs. As a specialty biopharma, UCB Japan is dedicated to making a continuing contribution to the treatment and health of patients with severe diseases such as central nervous system disorders and immunological/inflammatory diseases.

UCB Japan was recently awarded the Nippon Export Award for 2015-2016. It is a biennial award recognizing Belgian-Luxembourg companies that demonstrate vision, innovation, and originality, and have been successful in export to or distribution within Japan.



Therapeutic Areas

- *Immunological diseases*
- *Neurological diseases*

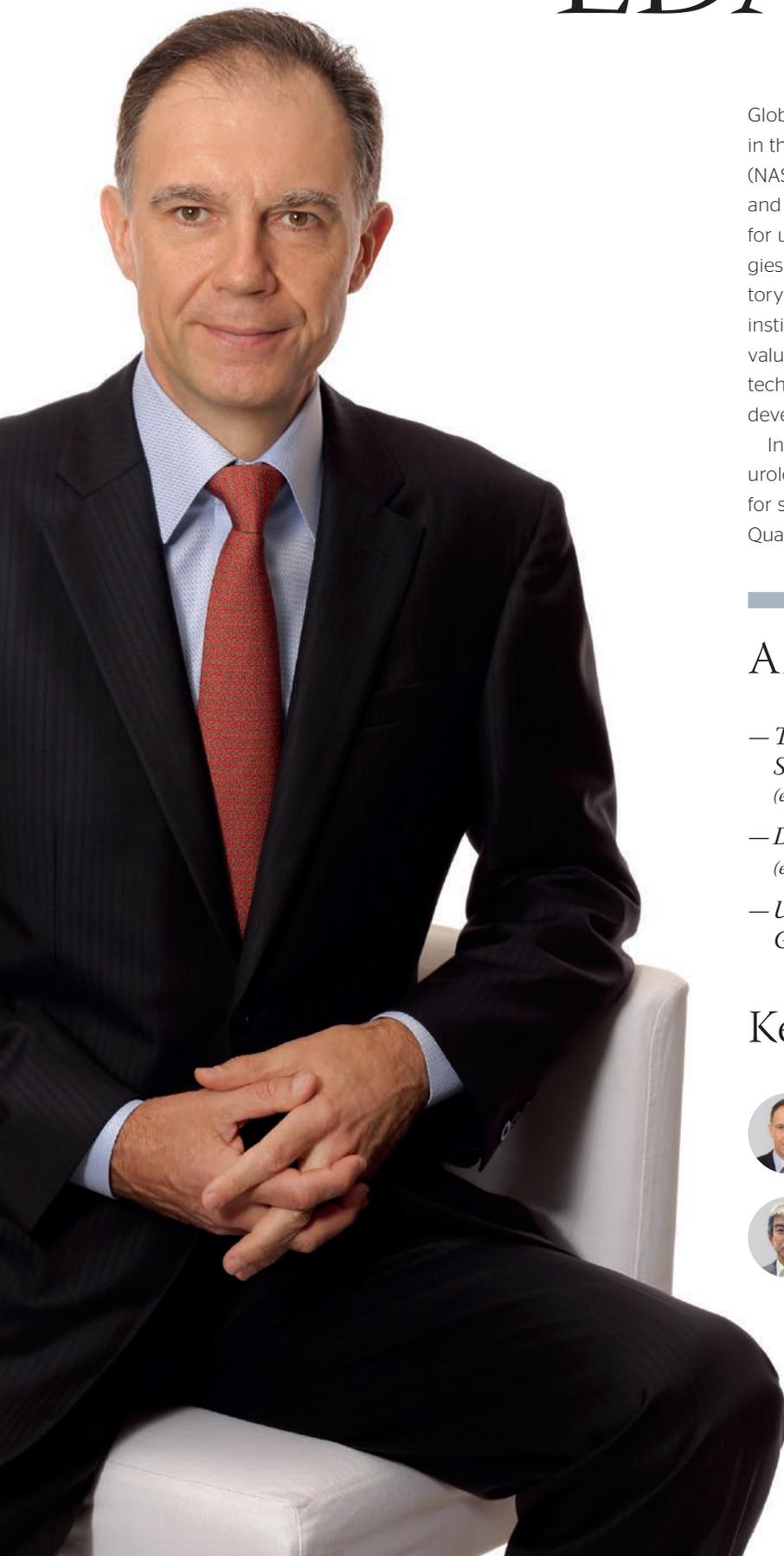


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Driven by **science.**

www.ucb.com

*“Bringing New Horizons
to Therapy.”*

*—Jean-François Bachelard,
President & C.E.O.*



WHO'S WHO

Medical Equipment

EDAP TMS

Global leader in therapeutic ultrasound, and present in the market for more than 35 years, EDAP TMS (NASDAQ: EDAP) develops, manufactures, promotes and distributes minimally-invasive medical devices for urology using ultrasound and laser technologies. Partnered with France's INSERM public laboratory and internationally renowned medical research institutions, EDAP TMS has developed a strong, valuable patent portfolio based on its innovative technologies by constantly investing in research and development.

In Japan for 20 years, EDAP TMS is a leader in the urology market and is now the exclusive distributor for several leading European manufacturers such as Quanta System, MMS, and Rocamed.

Areas of Expertise

- *Therapeutic / Surgical*
(equipment & disposables)
- *Diagnostic*
(equipment & disposables)
- *Urology / Gastroenterology*
- *Ultrasound / Laser*
- *Consulting*
(healthcare, regulatory)
- *Distribution*
(sales and marketing, service, DMAH)

Key People



Jean-François Bachelard

President & C.E.O.
jfbachelard@edap-tms.com



Shinichi Hayashi

C.F.O.
shayashi@edaptechnomed.co.jp

marketing@edaptechnomed.co.jp
Tel: 03-5540-6767

www.edap-tms.com
www.edaptechnomed.co.jp



*“Philips is health –
before an incident,
in the hospital, and
during recovery”*

*—Danny Risberg,
Chief Executive Officer*



WHO'S WHO

Medical Equipment

Philips

Philips is a diversified health and well-being company focused on improving people's lives through meaningful innovation in the areas of Healthcare, Consumer Lifestyle and Lighting. Headquartered in the Netherlands, Philips posted 2014 sales of EUR 21.4 billion and employs approximately 108,000 people with sales and services in more than 100 countries. The company is a leader in cardiac care, acute care and home healthcare, energy efficient lighting solutions and new lighting applications, as well as shaving and grooming products for men, and oral healthcare.

Areas of Expertise

- *Diagnostic Imaging*
- *Patient Monitoring Solutions*
- *Emergency Care and Resuscitation*
- *Respiratory Care*
- *Sleep-Disorder Breathing Care*
- *Healthcare Informatics*
- *Oral Healthcare*

Key People



Kazuo Watanabe
Head of Philips Respironics Japan
kazuo.watanabe@philips.com



Izumi Hamada
Head of Government & Public Affairs
izumi.hamada@philips.com



Shinichi Nakamura
Head of Marketing (Health Systems)
shinichi.nakamura@philips.com



Tetsuji Kasahara
Head of Patient Care and Monitoring Solution (Health Systems)
tetsuji.kasahara@philips.com

Philips Electronics Japan, Ltd.
03-3740-3213
www.philips.co.jp

PHILIPS

Get involved

Some 300 of the over 2,500 affiliated local European companies and individuals participate directly in one or more of the EBC's 29 industry committees covering a wide variety of economic sectors.

COMMITTEES

- ▶ Aeronautics & Space, Defence & Security
- ▶ Airlines
- ▶ Animal Health
- ▶ Asset Management
- ▶ Automobiles
- ▶ Automotive Components
- ▶ Banking
- ▶ Business Continuity Management
- ▶ Construction
- ▶ Cosmetics & Quasi-drugs
- ▶ Defence & Security
- ▶ Energy
- ▶ Financial Reporting
- ▶ Food & Agriculture
- ▶ Human Resources
- ▶ Insurance
- ▶ Intellectual Property Rights
- ▶ Legal Services
- ▶ Liquor
- ▶ Logistics & Freight
- ▶ Materials
- ▶ Medical Diagnostics
- ▶ Medical Equipment
- ▶ Railways
- ▶ Retail & Wholesale
- ▶ Sustainable Development
- ▶ Tax
- ▶ Telecommunications Carriers
- ▶ Telecommunications Equipment

To join the EBC visit

www.ebc-jp.com

For more information please contact the EBC Secretariat.
Alison Murray, EBC Executive Director.
Tel: 03-3263-6222. E-mail: ebc@gol.com



Philipp Gumpl

Deputy General Manager,
Anton Paar Japan

reads

eURObiZ JAPAN

A toast to health



Why you shouldn't feel guilty about a glass of wine

In the 1980s, the French Paradox was beginning to stump modern science – despite a diet high in saturated fats and cholesterol, the French had lower incidences of heart disease and obesity than their neighbours to the west.

Common sense pointed to an unidentified third factor, and in the mid-1980s a study came out that had wine-lovers rejoicing. It pinpointed the red wine habit of the French as the mitigating element, claiming that red wine in particular contains antioxidants that play a part in preventing heart disease and cancer.

Overnight, red wine sales skyrocketed and, still to this day, continue to trump white wine sales worldwide. But even after a few decades of debate, it's still unclear whether or not red wine is as magical as people had hoped. Here's what we do know: drinking beer, wine, or spirits in moderation raises levels of good cholesterol, which helps protect against heart disease.

What separates red wine from other alcohols on the health metre is the existence of polyphenols, which are extracted from the skins of the grapes

during fermentation. Polyphenols have antioxidant properties that have been linked to heart disease and cancer prevention. Wines coming from thick-skinned grapes (and that were fermented over a long period of time with the skins) have more polyphenol – Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel and Syrah/Shiraz top the charts.

According to a *Food & Wine Magazine* article, drinking one or two 14-gram glasses of wine a day carries a score of benefits for the human body. This includes promoting longevity; slowing brain decline; and reducing the risk of heart attack, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, cataracts and colon cancer.

The health benefits of wine are well documented, but rely on one key factor – drinking in moderation. As a study from the Harvard School of Public Health says, alcohol is “both a tonic and a poison. The difference lies mostly in the dose.” Standards around the world vary quite dramatically, and are most easily explained by cultural differences. The American Heart Association, for example, recommends men to drink up to 28gm a day, and for women

to drink up to 14gm; in Italy, it's up to 40gm for men, and 30gm for women. It should be noted that there is evidence that women who drink more than two glasses of wine a day have an increased risk of developing breast cancer.

As with any new study about diet and health, there is still plenty of controversy surrounding the health effects of red wine. In a BBC article titled “Red wine health benefits ‘overhyped,’” a study conducted in small-town Tuscany found that red wine (in this case Chianti) had little discernible impact on elderly villagers' health. The study targeted resveratrol, a type of phenol naturally found in red wine, dark chocolate and berries – all of which have been linked to inflammation reduction. For nine years, volunteers reported their diets and gave urinary samples to measure their resveratrol intake. The conclusion was disappointing; there was no clear correlation between resveratrol levels in the urine and incidences of heart disease, cancer or death.

Some even argue that red wine alone cannot explain the French Paradox. *The Telegraph* published an article earlier this year linking the French's love of cheese with their vigour, stating that moulded cheeses in particular are anti-inflammatory, reduce obesity and increase metabolism. Food and wine lovers, take note: a cheese plate with a glass of wine is now healthy – at least until the next study is published. 🍷



Every month, **ALLISON BETTIN** takes *EURObiZ Japan* readers on a trip through the world of wine.



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- Daycare (from 18mths)



- Backcountry Tours
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- Snowshoe Tours



- Avalanche Safety
- Instructor Programs
- CASI & APSI Courses

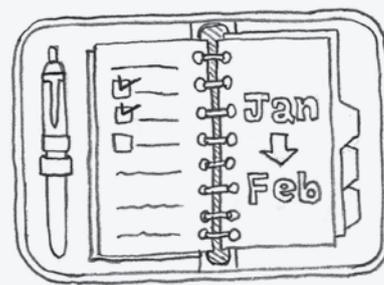
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or **www.skischool-hakuba-japan.com**

Upcoming events



» **Austrian Business Council**
www.abc-jpn.org

1st Inter-Chamber Ski Race (family-friendly!)

30-31 January, Saturday-Sunday

Venue: Happo-one, Hakuba (Nagano)
Fee: ¥2,500 (adults), ¥1,250 (minors under 20). Award Party - ¥4,000 (adults), ¥2,000 (children under 12)
Contact: tokio@advantageaustria.org

» **Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Japan**
www.blccj.or.jp

Monthly beer gathering

18 January, 15 February,
Monday; 22 March, Tuesday; 19:00-22:00

Venue: Belgian beer café in Tokyo
Fee: Pay for what you drink
Contact: info@blccj.or.jp

» **British Chamber of Commerce in Japan**
www.bccjapan.com

BCCJ New Year Party 2016

27 January, Wednesday, 16:00-18:00

Venue: Hilton Tokyo, 2F, Bar & Lounge ZATTA
Fee: ¥5,500 (members), ¥8,000 (non-members)
Contact: info@bccjapan.com

Small is Great VIII - off the beaten track

28 January, Thursday 18:00-20:00

Speakers: Paul Christie, CEO and founder, Walk Japan KK
Venue: Regus Japan, Shiodome Bldg., 3F, Hamamatsu-cho/Daimon
Fee: ¥4,000 (members), ¥6,000 (non-members)
Contact: info@bccjapan.com

» **Finnish Chamber of Commerce in Japan**
www.fcc.or.jp

FCCJ Shinnenkai Club Evening

20 January, Wednesday, 19:00-21:00

Venue: Scandinavian Center, Akasaka
Fee: ¥4,000 (members), ¥6,000 (non-members)
Contact: fccj@gol.com

» **French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**
www.ccifj.or.jp

Tax and Regulations Committee

16 February, Tuesday, time: TBC

Speaker: Thierry de Gennes, Audit Associate, Deloitte (France)
Venue: CCIFJ, Yotsuya/Kojimachi stations
Fee: to be confirmed
Contact: c.queval@ccifj.or.jp

» **Ireland Japan Chamber of Commerce**
www.ijcc.jp

3rd Thursday Networking

21 January, Thursday, from 19:00

Venue: Slainte, Ebisu
Fee: Pay for what you drink and eat
Contact: secretariat@ijcc.jp

Joint Networking with the ACCJ

4 February, Thursday, from 19:00

Venue: Irish Ambassador's Residence
Fee: ¥5,500 (ICCJ members), ¥8,000 (ICCJ non-members)
Contact: secretariat@ijcc.jp

» **Netherlands Chamber of Commerce in Japan**
www.nccj.jp

NCCJ Shinnenkai with Holland Alumni Network Japan

28 January, Thursday, 19:00-21:00

Venue: Va-tout, Roppongi
Fee: to be confirmed
Contact: nccj@nccj.jp

JANUARY

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» **Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**
www.sccij.jp

SCCIJ February Luncheon

9 February, Tuesday, 12:00-14:00

Speaker: Professor Dominique Turpin, president, IMD
Venue: Shangri-La Tokyo, Ballroom
Fee: ¥6,500 (members & non-members)
Contact: info@sccij.jp

SCCIJ Luncheon

3 March, Thursday, 12:00-14:00

Speaker: Ms Annette Bossler, managing director, Main(e) International Consulting LLC
Venue: ANA InterContinental Hotel Tokyo
Fee: ¥6,500 (members & non-members)
Contact: info@sccij.jp

Alain Delfosse

*Managing Director,
SIX Financial Information, Ltd.*

SIX Financial Information, Ltd. is one of the largest information vendors in the world. Established in Switzerland in 1930, it delivers high-quality market and reference data services to the financial community around the globe. In Japan today, the company serves more than 100 banks and financial institutions.

Alain Delfosse, managing director since 2003, explains how the company has grown so much in Japan: "Clients value our precision, speed, and the fact that we help keep their total costs down. Local product adjustment has been a key strategy in our success. I am convinced that when your product makes it in Japan you can sell it anywhere."



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