

EURObiZ JAPAN

Five-star summit

Tokyo hotels roundtable



FTA update

EU Ambassador on the first year of talks

Worked to death

Japan's culture of overwork

Talking EURObiZ

Arnaud de Saint-Exupéry of Andaz Tokyo

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8 **FTA update**

EU Ambassador on the first year of talks

By Mike de Jong

10 **Five-star summit**

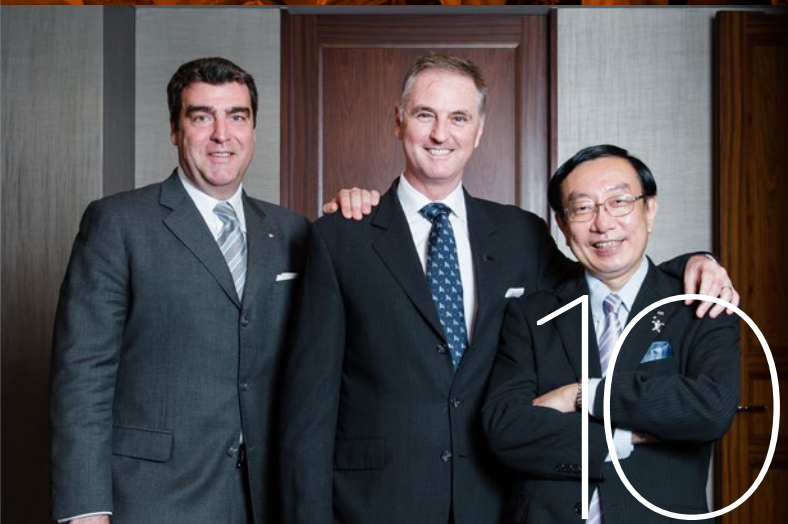
Tokyo hotels roundtable

By Geoff Botting

16 **Worked to death**

Japan's culture of overwork

By David McNeill



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COLUMNS

7 From the Editor

14 EBC Personality

Anthony Millington: a career in foreign service. By Mike de Jong.

20 Talking EURObiz

New heights. Arnaud de Saint-Exupéry of Andaz Tokyo. By EURObiz staff.

25 Executive Notes

Dan Slater on the "new normal".

26 In Committee

Logistics: FTA hope and expectations. By Geoff Botting.

31 Chamber Voice

Gianluca Testa of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan. By Mike de Jong.

32 Travel

Malaga, Spain. Pleasing to the senses. By David Umeda.

33 Green Biz

German technology sweeps the streets of Tohoku. By Christopher S Thomas.

35 Event Report

Scotland's future: Lord Jack McConnell at the BCCJ. By Mike de Jong.

46 Brand Aid

The BQ strategy. By Phillip Rubel.

47 Upcoming Events

Events for the European business community in Japan.

48 Work Place

Marcel Wiggers, Chairman and CEO, Randstad Japan.

The Mission of the European Business Council

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



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EUROBiZ is now available onboard Turkish Airlines business class,
leaving Tokyo twice daily from Narita and once daily from Osaka.



Contributors



David McNeill
examines the
phenomenon of
"overwork" in Japan,
page 16.

David McNeill writes for *The Economist*,
The Chronicle of Higher Education, *The*
Irish Times and other international publica-
tions. He is co-author of the acclaimed

book of survivor stories *Strong in the Rain*
(2012) and also teaches media and politics
at Sophia and Hosei universities. He has
been in Japan since 2000.

"Having worked in many Japanese
companies, I've seen the overwork
problem first hand. Peer pressure and the
need *not* to stand out from the herd are
part of the problem. But employers could
do much more by setting work limits and
telling everyone to clear out of the office
by 6 p.m."

Having majored in classical Chinese, Dan
has spent the last six years in Japan. He
runs the invitation-only Delphi Network,
which is a forum for airing the best
insights on Japan's place in the world.

"I've been cross at the Abe administra-
tion, especially its use of the word 'normal'
as in to 'normalise' Japan's economy and
politics. What I decided to explore in my
column this month was how inappropriate
a vague word like 'normal' is for setting
policy, especially when it seems mainly

to involve copying other countries, i.e.,
if other countries have inflation, Japan
should have it, too."



Geoff Botting
moderates our
Hotels Roundtable,
page 10.

A former newspaper and wire service
reporter and copy editor, Geoff has called
Japan home for a quarter of a century. He
is now a freelance journalist and translator,

writing mainly about business, the
economy and travel.

"Tokyo's big draw is its affordability.
That's what one of the participants of the
hotel roundtable told me when I asked
about the reasons behind the record-high
number of visitors coming to Japan. Did I
hear that right? Indeed, a room at a 5-star
hotel in Tokyo, often branded the world's
most expensive city, can be had for around
¥35,000, considerably cheaper than in
many other world capitals."

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Shining bright in the portfolio of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide is The Westin Tokyo. An added glow in 2014 is the celebration of the hotel's 20th anniversary – a true milestone in luxury hospitality in Japan.

A high level of personalised service, along with a commitment to excellence, continues to be signature features. The Westin Tokyo has played a significant role in developing the Yebisu area as one of Tokyo's major lifestyle hubs.

"We are thrilled to be celebrating our 20th anniversary," beams Dietmar Kielnhofer, general manager. "We've come a long way since October 1994, when our 22-storey hotel with very unique interior design of European neo-classic was unveiled in the green fields of Yebisu."

The Westin Essence is designed to help guests feel their best – and leave feeling better than when they arrived. The six pillars of wellness are Sleep Well, Eat Well, Move Well, Feel Well, Work Well, and Play Well. One of the pillars, "Sleep Well", guests, for example, can sink into the luxurious Westin Heavenly® Bed that cradles and contours to the body – delivering a truly rejuvenating, restorative sleep.

Another pillar "Eat Well" is fulfilled by The Westin Tokyo's SuperFoodsRx™ menu option at certain locations, using nutrient-rich ingredients to enhance a healthy lifestyle.

To satisfy discerning palates, The Westin Tokyo has five restaurants, two bars and a lounge. On the top level of the hotel, teppanyaki-style Yebisu is proud to present its original branded Yebisu Beef with the highest level of sophistication. The dazzling culinary performances combine with panoramic views, which include the World Heritage Site Mt. Fuji on a clear day. Japanese restaurant Mai offers authentic cuisine beautifully presented with the freshest seasonal ingredients and more than 40 kinds of amazing sake fresh from the brewery.

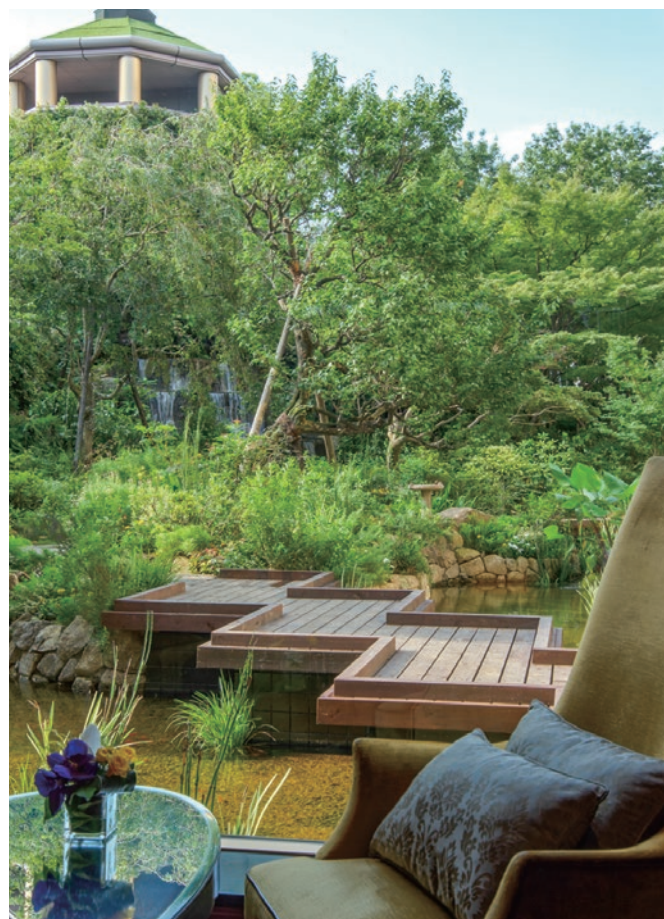
While the urban skyline dramatically developed during the past two decades, The Westin Tokyo has remained one of the

city's most sterling landmarks. "The hotel is a magnificent structure known far and wide for its European-inspired ambience and distinguished restaurants," adds Kielnhofer. Soothing hues, classic continental décor, luxurious amenities – and suites affording magnificent views of the glistening skyline – enhance The Westin experience.

Leading up to the stellar 20th anniversary, The Westin Tokyo unveiled in 2013 The Westin Garden, a green oasis at the heart of Tokyo. Designed by renowned landscape artist and five-time Chelsea Flower Show gold medalist Kazuyuki Ishihara, the exquisite garden serves as a tranquil retreat for reflection and renewal for guests and local residents alike.

"At the heart of our programming and services is genuine Japanese hospitality at its finest," points out Kielnhofer. "Demonstrated by meticulous attention to detail and an uncompromising commitment to excellence, we provide the best Westin experience possible."

In fact, success at The Westin Tokyo has been spearheading a robust expansion strategy of the Westin brand throughout the Asia-Pacific region.



Free trade, overwork and Scotland's future

It was an announcement that caught many by surprise. Japan's prime minister Shinzo Abe concluded a summit meeting with European leaders in Brussels last month by pledging to wrap up a free trade agreement with the EU before the end of next year. Abe's comments shocked experts, many of whom had expected FTA talks to last several years. The pronouncement conveyed optimism about the negotiations, at least from the Japan side. For the EU's perspective on the talks—and Abe's 2015 pledge—EURObiZ checked in with the EU's top representative in Japan, Ambassador Hans Dietmar Schweisgut (page 8).

This fall, the future of Scotland and the UK could change dramatically as Scottish voters cast ballots in a referendum on independence. What appeared to be an easy run for the "No" side now looks like a close race. A "Yes" victory



would see Scotland leave the UK in 18 months and would dramatically change the EU landscape. But Scotland's longest-serving first minister Lord Jack McConnell is not a fan of independence and he explained why, at a BCCJ event last month (page 35).

This month, David McNeill (page 16) takes a look at an issue that frustrates many foreign people in Japan: the culture of overwork. Foreign employees are often perplexed by the overwhelming demands of a Japanese work place, and it's not just Japanese companies. Many foreign firms also exploit their workers

by keeping them on the job late into the night. That's a shame because, as David explains, overwork is not only detrimental to employees and their career advancement; it also affects corporate innovation and societal procreation.

Finally, if you want to hear some great stories, have a chat with longtime EBC member Anthony Millington. He has witnessed many of the landmark events of the 20th century, over his nearly 30-year career in the British foreign service. Mr Millington shares some stories with us this month, in our EBC Personality feature (page 14).

Thanks for reading. [E](#)

Mike de Jong
Editor-in-chief

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FTA update

*EU Ambassador on the
first year of talks*

Text **MIKE DE JONG**
Photo **BENJAMIN PARKS**

At a summit meeting with European Union leaders last month in

Brussels, Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pledged to conclude a free trade agreement (FTA) with the EU by the end of next year. Abe's comments conveyed optimism from the Japanese side, and came just as talks were reaching their first anniversary. European officials were also pleased with the progress made, but are taking a more cautious approach to Abe's 2015 target. EURObiZ Editor-in-chief Mike de Jong discussed the first year of FTA progress with EU Ambassador to Japan Hans Dietmar Schweisgut.

Were you pleased with the prime minister's comments about achieving an agreement by the end of 2015?

During his trip to Europe, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe passed a clear message that Japan wants to move ahead with the FTA negotiations swiftly. We welcome that as a signal of the prime minister's commitment to the negotiation process. For us, substance should prevail over timing. In the context of the one-year review, the European Union is currently assessing the progress made by Japan to address EU requests regarding a series of non-tariff barriers and the opening up of the railways market, as well as other aspects of the FTA including the tariff negotiations. On the basis of this review, the EU will decide on the opportunity to pursue the negotiations. However, at this stage I cannot prejudge the result of the review and therefore it is very difficult for me to comment on the timeline of the negotiations.

The European side has said that Japan has complied with—or is in the process of complying with—many areas of the negotiations. What areas have seen the most progress?

We have made good progress in the area of tariffs and non-tariff barriers. We exchanged offers on tariffs during our latest round in April, and I can say that what we offered mutually is very solid for a first exchange of offers. Also, on the non-tariff side, Japan has taken steps to implement its commitments and has also made progress on a number of issues for which no deadline was foreseen under the roadmaps.

What areas need more work?

If and when we pursue the negotiations, we need to focus seriously on government procurement beyond the railway sector. This would entail an exchange of ambitious procurement offers and commitments to significantly increase competition in the service sector and improve conditions for investments. We will also need to continue to make progress in addressing non-tariff barriers in

key sectors, such as automobiles, medical devices or pharmaceuticals. Finally, we need substantially improved market access for our agricultural products, and will have to negotiate solid provisions on geographical indications (GIs) to make sure that European GIs are sufficiently protected in Japan.

“FOR US, SUBSTANCE SHOULD PREVAIL OVER TIMING”

Hans Dietmar Schweisgut

How important is it to level the playing field in terms of procurement?

This is very important as the procurement market has a major share of GDP in both of our economies (12% for Japan, 16% in the case of the EU) and can provide excellent business opportunities for companies on both sides—provided that healthy competition on an equal footing is allowed.

With low or no import tariffs on most EU goods, it has been said that the goal of the FTA is to remove special regulations. Can you explain what these regulations might be?

These are the non-tariff barriers that I mentioned earlier: for example rules and regulations that can hamper imports of cars, medical devices, or food products from the EU. Where these rules are discriminatory or deviate from internationally agreed standards—without valid justification—we want to remove them in the negotiation process.

As one illustration, Japan and the EU do not apply the same rules to test CO₂ emissions for passenger cars. This forces car manufacturers to go through two separate testing procedures, which, in turn, increases costs. Of course, these

issues are technically more difficult to address than tariffs, because they require the involvement of regulators [on] both sides.

What about harmonisation of safety and environmental standards? Is progress being made in these areas?

Yes, in the negotiations we are tackling these issues when they are relevant to trade. To give you an example, in the context of the FTA, we have agreed to work with Japan on harmonising safety and environmental requirements so that a vehicle which has been accepted in one market will be accepted in the other without additional testing. This should allow car manufacturers to export their cars as soon as they have been approved domestically, without having to go through the process a second time.

There are some reports that the EU wants to link a human rights clause to any economic partnership agreement. Is that the case, and does it relate to capital punishment?

The FTA is being negotiated as a package together with a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), which aims at strengthening the political side of our bilateral relations. The SPA will, of course, underline our shared values, including our joint commitment to human rights and the rule of law. It is true that we urge Japan to join the global trend towards ending the use of the death penalty: it is cruel and ineffective in preventing crime. But that discussion is not linked to the FTA negotiation in any way.

How much benefit would each economy see from a successful FTA?

The agreement could boost the economies of the EU and Japan by 0.6% and 0.8% of GDP [respectively]. Once the agreement is in place, EU exports to Japan could increase by over 30%, while Japanese exports to the EU would increase by over 20%. In Europe, it could generate as much as 420,000 new jobs. 

Five-star summit

Tokyo hotels roundtable

Moderator **GEOFF BOTTING**
Photos **BENJAMIN PARKS**

The situation is looking up for the luxury hotel business in Japan.

The improving economy and a growing number of foreign visitors are helping raise occupancy rates. On the other hand, the industry is experiencing a serious problem finding qualified staff against the backdrop of Japan's demographic squeeze.

Gathered in the plush Presidential Suite of the Shangri-La Hotel, Tokyo to discuss these and other issues were the Shangri-La's general manager, **Jens Moesker**; **Koichi Urashima**, director and general manager of Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo; and **Dietmar Kielnhofer**, general manager of The Westin, Tokyo.

Japan's economy seems to be on the mend, and the number of foreign visitors coming to Japan is at a record high. Are you feeling the effects?

Kielnhofer: Things are really good at the moment. I think we're all doing very well. A key is the competitive room rates. If you look at the average rate at a five-star hotel in Tokyo, it's around ¥35,000. If you compare that to London, Paris, Rome or New York, for example, then that's relatively low.

Why is Tokyo so affordable? It has a reputation for being one of the world's most expensive cities.

Kielnhofer: That's part of a paradox. True, Tokyo is very expensive, and fixed and labour costs for us here are really expensive. But I think the reason is that

over the past 20 years, deflation was prevalent in Japan, and so the hotels tended to resist increasing their rates. The exchange rate is also playing a critical role. The yen was really high back in 2011. But it has since weakened, and our rates have not increased as much as the currency has depreciated.

Urashima: We're a high-end property tucked away in Mejiro, a little away from the major train stations, so we're a kind of "urban resort". Our business generally doesn't experience sudden and drastic changes. Even so, things are improving for us in a gradual way over time.

Moesker: I think another reason for the increase of visitors is the easing of visa restrictions for the Chinese, Thais, Indonesians and the Malaysians, among others. So it's easier for them to come to

Japan. There's a lot of interest in Japan right now. Before, people were hesitant after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. The corporate guests returned quickly, but it's usually the leisure sector that takes more time after a crisis. Some 75% of our guests are corporate, and that segment tends to be quite stable.

A couple of big developments are on the horizon: the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the possible development of large-scale casinos, which would be a first for Japan. Do you expect these to impact your business?

Urashima: The Tokyo Olympics are six years away, so we haven't seen any effects to date. But it seems that transportation facilities, like highways

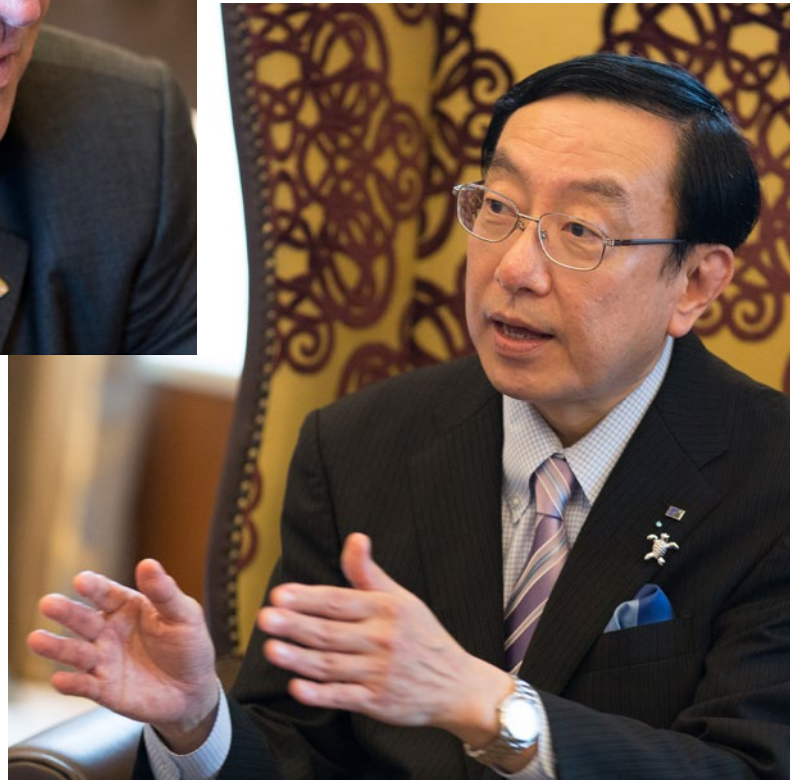


“THERE ARE SO
MANY TREASURES
HERE THAT PEOPLE
DON'T KNOW ABOUT”

Jens Moesker

“WE'RE SEEING
A SHORTAGE OF
STAFF FOR FOOD
PREPARATION”

Koichi Urashima



and subways, will be improved in the near future to respond to the increasing number of foreign visitors, and that would certainly help create a better environment for us in the hotel business.

Kielnhofer: I think the Olympics are definitely a win-win for Tokyo, and the casinos will definitely bring benefits. But my concern is the labour shortage, which we in the hotel industry are facing.

When Singapore opened its first casinos, the country needed to open its borders to bring in foreign workers. I agree that the Olympics and casinos are a good thing, but the labour situation here needs to be dealt with before we can feel the benefits. Six years is a long time, and anything can happen.

Urashima: A few years ago, a lot of young Japanese were keen to become

hotel staff. But this number has declined because young people see the work as being strict and harsh, and always requiring you to apologise to other people. In particular, we're seeing a shortage of staff for food preparation.

What are some of the distinctive features of the luxury hotel business in Japan?

Moesker: Saturday is the busiest day of the week, with the highest occupancy rates. And these are local people who will stay in hotels maybe two or three times a month.

Kielnhofer: It's beautiful, isn't it? In other countries, the weekend is usually the slowest period, but here in Japan it's the other way around. It's actually hard to book a room for a Saturday. If

we get, say, a 96% occupancy rate on a Saturday, we'll wonder what we're doing wrong!

Japanese hotels have long been oriented toward weddings and their restaurants, with accommodation a relatively smaller part of the business. Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo is a quintessentially Japanese-style property, so what is your revenue mix?

Urashima: Our biggest single revenue source is weddings, at about 50%. But I think this will shift in the future, with accommodations becoming more important. Weddings will become a smaller part of the business due to Japan's ageing society, which means fewer people of marriage age, while some people are also looking at



“MY CONCERN IS THE **LABOUR SHORTAGE**, WHICH WE IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY ARE FACING”

Dietmar Kielnhofer

alternatives—weddings outside of hotels.

Moesker: We're in a different segment of the market. In our case, 70% of the revenue is rooms-related one way or another, as we have a relatively small banquet business.

Most people are aware of Tripadvisor, the massively influential website where regular travellers write reviews based on their own experiences. Are you responding directly to this phenomenon?

Moesker: You have to respond to it. People put in their comments, and we learn from them. We respond to every single negative comment. We even invite the person responsible to contact us directly so we can get to the bottom of any problems. I work with my colleague to write the post in my name.

Kielnhofer: I work with an expert in social media. Tripadvisor, Facebook, Twitter, etc.,—we take it all very seriously at The Westin Tokyo. We monitor social media every day. If it's not well managed, it can have a negative effect on your business.

Urashima: We use Tripadvisor, as well as Ikyu for our restaurants, where people give individual opinions. We have assigned staff from each of Chinzanso Tokyo's outlets to respond to them all. We respond as much as possible. Receiving good comments can certainly lead to gaining a good reputation, but we can also use the negative comments to enhance our services, so paradoxically they, too, can lead to something positive.

Luxury hotels are constantly innovating. We're curious to know what tricks you've got up your sleeves.

Moesker: We've just recently introduced paperless check-in. There's no more sign-in card; everything is on a screen, and you can even sign on the screen. We also have PressReader, a digital newspaper and magazine service that guests can use on their devices. That means no more newspapers slid under the door.


Urashima: We have a Japanese garden at Chinzanso Tokyo, and we've been

thinking about ways of using it to address the needs of the guests. For example, we'd like them to be able to enjoy themselves, with the garden surrounding them.

Tokyo can be a challenge for newcomers, especially in terms of language. What kind of things can be done to make the city more visitor-friendly?

Kielnhofer: English proficiency and signage. We live in a global, connected world. If you want to attract more people, train your people. English is the language of trade and commerce.

Urashima: The train system is complicated, with all the different express trains and line changes. A lot of that info is only in Japanese, and it's usually presented from a Japanese perspective.

Moesker: One thing that Japan doesn't do very well is promoting itself. Maybe that's part of being humble and not wanting to show off. But I think a big PR drive would help, because there are so many treasures here that people don't know about. 



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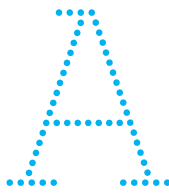
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Anthony Millington

A career in foreign service

Text **MIKE DE JONG**
Photo **BENJAMIN PARKS**





Anthony Millington still gets emotional when he recalls the dramatic events of Tiananmen Square, China, in June 1989.

"I really, really thought there was going to be political change," he says, looking back on the student-led uprising that ended in bloodshed. "There was so much hope. The young people—students' organisations, academics—all of them seemed to think that the time had come where there could be political change. And it didn't happen."

Seated in the Tokyo office of the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA)—his current employer—Millington looks back on the Tiananmen affair as an "eye-opening experience" in a diplomatic career that spanned some 25 years.

In 1989, Millington was head of the Far Eastern Department for the British Foreign Office, a job that saw him spend those dramatic days shuttling between Beijing, Shanghai and London. As the uprising was being quashed in Beijing—and the diplomatic compound was being shot at and evacuated—Millington attended a tense meeting in London between then-foreign secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe and the Chinese chargé d'affaires.

"It was the most dramatic meeting I ever attended," Millington recalls. "On both sides of the table, everybody was moist eyed. Sir Geoffrey read out his statement saying that the British government condemns—in the most outright terms—the brutality. While it was evident where everyone's sympathy lay, the chargé d'affaires said, 'Mr Foreign Secretary, I have instructions from my government.'"

Millington's own eyes moisten when he thinks about what could have been. "I felt very sorry for the guy—that he obviously had to defend the official party line," he says of the Chinese official's unenviable position.

For Millington, the failure of Chinese democracy might rank as a lowlight in a foreign service career that otherwise saw many highs. It was a career that provided him with a front-row seat for

some of the dramatic events of the 20th century.

Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, Millington's first posting in the diplomatic corps was to Japan, travelling here first by boat in 1969. The trip took 70 days, taking him around the Horn of Africa and through South-East Asia before stopping in Japan. Once here, he spent the next two years in what he calls "hard language" training in Japanese.

"There were three Japanese teachers," says Millington. "None of them spoke English. One had been a prisoner-of-war of the Australians and then the British. In complete contrast, we had a very elegant lady who came up from Kamakura. Her father had been a general in the Imperial Army."

“TO SEE SOME OF THESE GREAT MEN IN AN INFORMAL SETTING IS A GREAT PRIVILEGE”

Millington would use his training as an interpreter at various high-level events, including visits by the Queen in 1975 and by Britain's then-prime minister Edward Heath, in 1974—the first-ever trip to Japan by a British leader. Millington also served as an attaché to the British team at the 1972 Sapporo Winter Olympics.

Following six years as an economic officer at the British Embassy Tokyo, Millington moved to London, where he manned the then-Soviet Union and Eastern European desks during the height of the Cold War. Then, following a stint in the Defence Department, he was off to Paris, where he consorted with leading French politicians.

"Through the embassy, we had a little [weekend place] in the Loire Valley, on the estate of [former French President



Do you like natto?

Time outside Japan: 11 years

Career highlight: Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the British School in Tokyo during a period of rapid growth.

Career regret (if any): None.

Favourite saying: "Where there's a will, there's a way."

Favourite book: Nelson's *Kanji Dictionary*.

Cannot live without: My family.

Lesson learned in Japan: Quality Control.

Secret of success in business: Perseverance.

Favourite place to dine out: Maisen Tonkatsu in Omotesando.

Do you like natto? Once a year.


Valéry] Giscard d'Estaing's wife's family. After he lost the election in 1981, he retreated to the village of the estate. We used to see him around the estate and even went to dinner with him.

"To see some of these great men in an informal setting is a great privilege," he says.

Returning to Japan in the early 1990s, Millington served as president of Rolls-Royce before moving into his current position with the ACEA in 1995. His role is to look out for the interests of European automobile manufacturers.

In his 45 years as an on-and-off expat in Japan, Millington has seen many changes, including the end of the post-war expansion period, the oil-shocks, the bubble era and its burst, and now the slow recovery. But throughout it all, he feels the character of the Japanese people remains the same.

"Attitudes change a bit more slowly than the physical apparatus with which they are wrapped up," he says.

"Japan, I think, then and possibly still now, is a bit risk-averse; and that remains one of the challenges in being prepared to open up to greater foreign competition. To have mutually beneficial and deep-rooted free trade agreements with the outside world, Japan needs to be more ambitious and to accept more direct foreign competition—by being less risk-averse." 



Worked to Death

Japan's culture of overwork

Text **DAVID MCNEILL**
Photo **ALFIE GOODRICH**

Before she began working full-time, Mina Mori was a lively, fun-loving 26 year old, according to her parents. But they say a few weeks after she joined the *izakaya* chain Watami in 2008, she became depressed, irritable and unhappy. In June 2008 she jumped from an apartment block to her death. In the previous month, Mori had worked 121 hours overtime, well above the government limit and beyond which *karoshi*—or

death from overwork—becomes more likely.

"My daughter was worked to death," concludes her father.

Mori's suicide is the source of a civil lawsuit between her parents and former employer. In 2012, the Kanagawa Prefectural Labour Standards Inspection Office accepted that her death qualified as *karoshi*. However, Watami disputes that finding, denying she was forced to work such long hours. Since the government broadened the definition of *karoshi*

in the 1990s to include suicide from overwork, dozens of similar disputes have sprung up. Employers with reputations on the line will fight tooth and nail to avoid losing.

The *karoshi* phenomenon suggests that one cultural stereotype about Japan—that it is a nation of exhausted workaholics—is true. But on paper, at least, the country compares favourably to its main industrial competitors. Japanese workers are entitled to an average of about 18 days paid vacation a

“EVEN WHEN COMPANIES
HAVE SEEN THEIR **WORKERS**
DIE, THEY HAVEN'T
ACCEPTED IT OR TAKEN
RESPONSIBILITY”

Chie Matsumoto

at the Faculty of Commerce at Waseda University. Real working hours are much longer, he says.

Of course, comparing Japan with the world's leading vacationers can be misleading. Last year, Americans failed to claim about half a billion paid vacation days, according to a survey by online travel firm Expedia.com. Many analysts, however, view the US as an outlier because it does not guarantee paid vacation or holidays. A closer comparison would be workaholic South Korea, which also often tops international tables for the world's longest working week.

Japan's addiction to work becomes more striking when you look beyond the official statistics. Japanese employees work millions of hours every year without pay—so-called “service” overtime. Largely unrecorded, this overtime is notoriously difficult to quantify. However, Ogura says his research suggests it affects over half of all full-time employees. And, he adds, 85% of these workers feel compelled to work overtime, paid or not.

Suicides are only the most extreme expression of the overwork phenomenon. Analysts say it corrodes family life and is one reason why many people put off having babies in a country that is depopulating. A 2013 Health Ministry survey found that a fifth of young fathers in Japan spend just an hour with their

children every day, because most men in their thirties work more than 60 hours a week. The same survey claims that less than 3% of Japanese men take paternity leave.

The debate on the relationship between shorter working hours and work place performance is hardly new. Britain limited the working day to 10 hours in 1848, partly in the correct belief that happier workers would produce more. Henry Ford helped trigger the American Century in 1913 by splitting the working day at his car factories into three 8-hour shifts, again boosting productivity.

In much of western Europe—which still largely shuts down in August—long holidays have come under renewed attack. But evidence suggests they work for both labour and management. The New York-based consultancy Mercer found in 2011 that most European countries are at least as productive as the US. Mercer said the financial services industry in Luxembourg, which takes 32 days off a year, is far more efficient than its US equivalent.

“Japanese workers, especially in the service industry, are not very productive,” says Eric Perraudin, the French president of Japan Management Consulting, which has been helping foreign companies set up here for about a decade. One reason, he says, is the different corporate culture. “Foreign companies are more

year—close to the global average of 20, according to Harris Interactive, a leading market research firm. They also enjoy 15 national one-day holidays.

In reality, however, employees in Japan are among the least likely in the world to use their paid holidays. Last year they took, on average, just seven days off. And full-time Japanese employees work exceptionally long hours, officially clocking in for 400 hours a year longer than their counterparts in Germany or France, says Kazuya Ogura, a professor



occupation: Real estate investor

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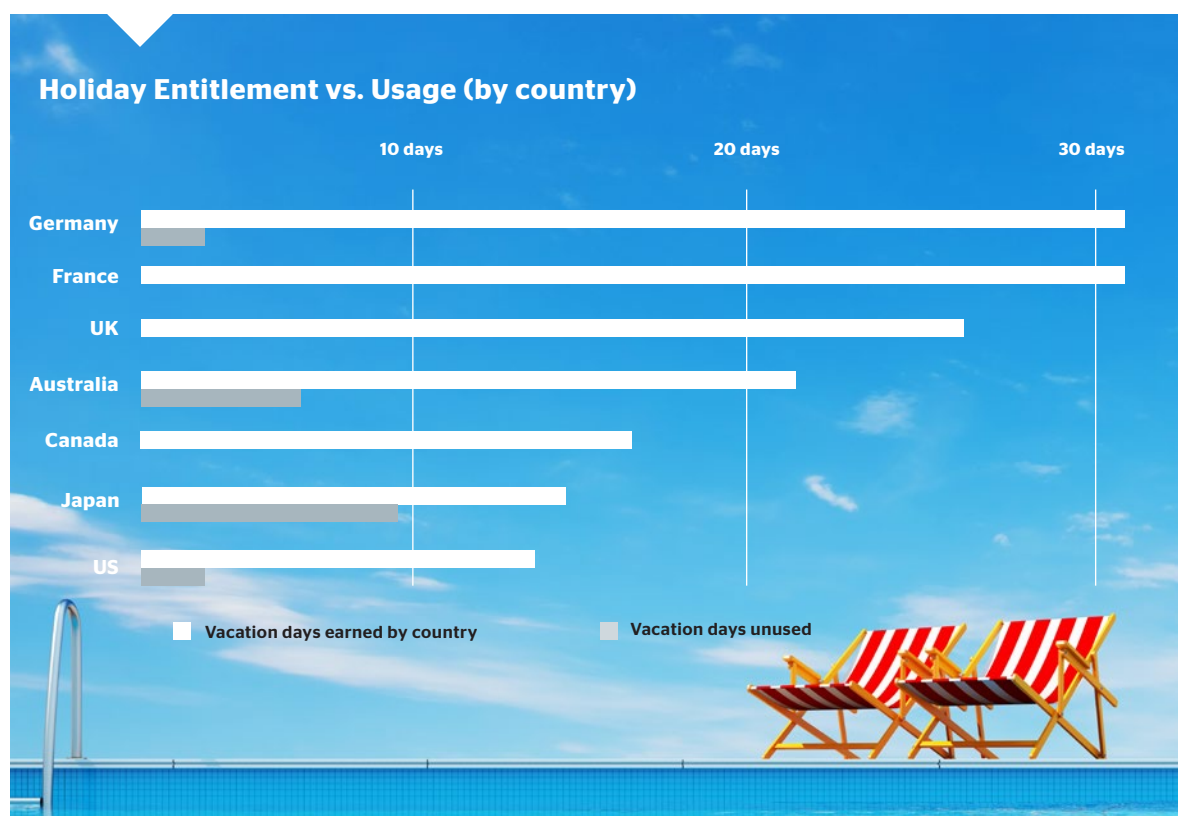
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SOURCE: EXPEDIA® VACATION DEPRIVATION®

results-oriented. Japanese workers are not compensated for results—so why would they bother?”

Given a choice, however, workers will often vote with their feet. According to Robert Walters, a professional recruitment consultancy, a quarter of those who moved from Japanese to foreign companies last year cited the desire for a better work environment. “The general perception is that at Japanese companies people work long hours,” says a spokesperson for the agency. “I’m sure it’s one factor—trying to find a better work-life balance.”

Some Japanese corporations appear to be getting the message. Toyota, which was convicted in 2007 of working an employee to death, has expanded the range of work that qualifies as overtime, and now limits overtime companywide to 45 paid hours a month. The employee, who was 30 years old, had worked 106 hours—mostly unpaid—overtime in the month before he died. His wife sued and won a landmark judgment.

But the overall picture is decidedly mixed. One outcome of the bifurcation in employment practices over the last two decades has been the rise of so-called

“black companies”—modern sweatshops that force young employees to work long hours with no holidays, for stingy pay, in the certain knowledge that many will quit. Campaigners say 80 hours unpaid overtime a month is common among many of Japan’s top companies and double that is not unheard of.

As the manufacturing sector contracts, Japan’s service industry is a prime offender. Zensho Holdings, which runs almost 2,000 Sukiya fast-food restaurants in Japan, has come under fire this year for understaffing and long hours. Many Sukiya outlets have been forced to close because they can’t find people willing to put up with such conditions. Watami, another non-unionised restaurant chain, has twice topped an annual list of black companies compiled by a committee of labour lawyers, activists and journalists.

Committee member Chie Matsumoto says the Mori case illustrates a much deeper problem. “Not every suicide comes to court. Each family has to file a claim with the local labour bureau to have it recognised.” She says that battling companies like Watami takes a lot of time and energy, with uncertain

results for the plaintiffs. “Even when companies have seen their workers die, they haven’t accepted it or taken responsibility.”

But, the tide may be turning. Japan’s Diet is currently deliberating a so-called *karoshi* bill that will make the government responsible for preventing deaths from overwork. Support from the ruling coalition means the bill will almost certainly pass, probably this month. Its impact, however, will take much longer to measure.

“While the government pays lip service to curtailing work hours, particularly unpaid overtime, I don’t think their hearts are in it,” says Rika Morioka, a sociologist and public health specialist. “Workers are still overloaded with more tasks than they can handle in a reasonable time, and with the social norm that expects workers to prioritize work responsibilities over family and community obligations, individual workers are not at liberty to work less even when they are told so formally.”

So changing that culture of peer pressure won’t be easy. Whatever happens, the law will come too late for death-by-overwork victims like Mina Mori.

Andaz

Andaz Tokyo

*Boutique hotel links
future and past*

Text **EUROBIZ STAFF**



© KICHI FUKUDA

A new building opens this month that will tower over the heart of central Tokyo. And at the top is the city's newest hotel.

Located in the historic Toranomon district—between Tokyo Tower and the Imperial Palace—the new Andaz Tokyo takes up the top six floors of the 52-storey Toranomon Hills complex.

Designed to present a more relaxed “guest and host” atmosphere, Andaz is part of a collection of boutique hotels run by Hyatt. With no front desk or concierge, and staff hosts wearing no uniforms or name tags, Andaz is meant to provide weary travellers with a more natural, warm and personal atmosphere.

“People want to have a sense of being welcomed more than processed,” says Arnaud de Saint-Exupéry, general manager of Andaz Tokyo. “Travelling is sometimes challenging. You have all the stress of the airports, so when you arrive at the hotel, you need to feel a more homey environment.”

Andaz Tokyo will offer 164 rooms with panoramic views of the city, along with free wireless Internet, non-alcoholic drinks, snacks and local calls. Guests will be able to enjoy four different restaurants and bars, including a rooftop bar

and its outside terrace on the 52nd floor, the Andaz Tavern on the 51st floor, and a pastry shop on the first floor overlooking Shintore-dori, Tokyo's version of the Champs-Élysées. A fitness centre—with a 20-metre-long pool and spa on the 37th floor—allows guests to work up a sweat with a view of the Imperial Palace grounds. Even the hotel lobby will be different in that it won't exist in the traditional sense—instead, guests will enjoy a convivial lounge which de Saint-Exupéry says will be more like their living rooms back home.

“When you go into many hotels, you don't feel that it's home. [But] the layout of this hotel will give you that feeling of being relaxed. I'm your host. I'm here to welcome you and give you this kind of care,” he says.


Andaz is already present in markets such as London, Amsterdam, New York and Shanghai; but de Saint-Exupéry says each location, including Tokyo, is different. Interiors are designed to reflect local style, which, in Tokyo, means the use of walnut walls produced in Hokkaido, washi paper and Japanese lanterns. Wall partition designs reflect the nostalgic vibe of a Japanese home, and Japanese bath culture will be reflected in deep soaking tubs in every room.

The hotel will also take advantage of its location in the historic Toranomon district, near one of the gates of the old Edo castle. The hotel's staff will be trained in the history of the surrounding area, in order to help guests enjoy the neighbourhood.

“Toranomon has a strong sense of history,” says de Saint-Exupéry. “It's part of the Edo period; surrounded by unique shrines and temples. We want to make sure that our guests can be part of it, by exploring not just outside but also inside.”

The highlight of Andaz Tokyo could be its rooftop bar, studio and open-air terraces. These areas will give guests the chance to enjoy a drink with a spectacular view of Tokyo Bay and the Rainbow Bridge. If romance is in the air, they might exchange vows in the Andaz rooftop wedding chapel.

“We are quite proud of the vision which links the future and the past, a bridge between the two,” says de Saint-Exupéry.

“Tokyo has already a number of nice hotels. I trust we are bringing another approach of a more personal-style and Japanese-inspired venue at a time when Tokyo and Japan are more than ever back on the map and for many years, certainly until the Olympics.” 

UNIQUE AND EXCLUSIVE

S.T. DUPONT'S CREATIONS ARE CULTURAL MASTERPIECES



*Limited Edition - Horse Lighter,
Prestige Collection*

*M*aison S.T. Dupont, founded in 1872 in France, has had a strong presence in Japan for almost 40 years. Their flagship store is located in Ginza, and retail spaces are positioned also in the most renowned department store chains.

From the manufacture of luxury leather goods to high-end lighters and pens, S.T. Dupont has been respected throughout their history for handcrafted products and prestigious brand

ambassadors. Movie icons, royalty and artists, amongst others, have forged the brand's fame and reputation. Originally specialised in leather goods, S.T. Dupont now excels in four major arts that define today the House and know-how. The Art of Fire is represented by the lighters; the Art of Writing by the writing instruments that include fountain pens and ballpoint pens; the Art of Travel by the leather goods, both large and small; and the Art of Seduction by the accessories, such as belts, cufflinks, key holders and more.

HANDCRAFTED

In Japan, most consumers familiar with the S.T. Dupont brand mainly identify with the luxurious lighters — with the signature bell sound as you flip the cap. The history that has defined the prestige of the company globally — as well as the wide range of products offered — has long been overlooked in Japan.

Today, S.T. Dupont stands out as one of the few luxury companies whose products are mostly handcrafted — in France. The manufacturing is located in the most natural environment, near the Alps, at the centre of France, where nearly 300 local craftsmen dedicate themselves to create exceptional products, some for several generations.

S.T. Dupont, in line with their origins as a malletier, has quickly spread wings internationally and established a solid reputation around the globe — thanks to founder Simon Tissot Dupont and their unique creations.

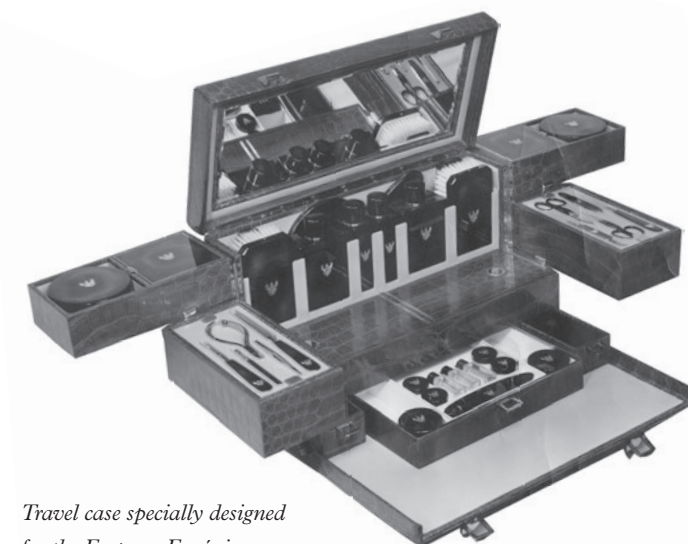
CULTURE CONNECTION

An international and multicultural spirit has been preserved to this very day, and always naturally serves as a bridge to the cultures and countries where S.T. Dupont operates — through specific creations and collaborations with renowned artists and designers. The pen and lighter collections designed by Karl Lagerfeld, and the revival of the Audrey Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart bags are a few examples.

Their desire to be closer to the culture is particularly acute in Japan, and resulted over these past three years in some original varied collections, such as the limited edition “Samurai” in honour of the Japanese warrior, and the “Hope for Japan” created to support the country following the tragedy of 11 March in 2011. The most recent example, “Sleeping Mermaid”, has created a formidable buzz, and is the exclusive collection designed by Eiichiro Oda, creator of “One Piece” — one of the most famous *manga* in the world.



*Humphrey Bogart
Night Collection*



*Travel case specially designed
for the Empress Eugénie*

CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS

S.T. Dupont takes pride in capturing its artisans' exceptional know-how shown in their lines of limited editions and Haute Couture created every year. For the latter, S.T. Dupont collaborates with independent renowned artisans, including French jewellery designer Tournaire or French master engraver Frederic Krill, and others. Every creation is born from a desire to surpass the previous one. It is a search for beauty, uniqueness and dreams — a yearning to share a passion and produce an object of timeless appeal.

The story of S.T. Dupont is equally rooted in two strong desires: to create something truly exceptional, and to share it with the world. Like a one-off Haute Couture garment designed for an individual, or a limited edition artwork, it's the rarity of an S.T. Dupont piece that makes it so special.

S.T. Dupont designs exceptional products to share the intense pleasure of a long-awaited, rare creation among a small number of keen collectors. Every piece reflects expertise and a love of perfection.

These collections are unique and exclusive, fashioned in limited numbers, for discerning eyes the world over.



Line D Leather Collection

Supply and Demand Outlook

by Tetsuya Tanaka, Senior Manager of the Financial Services team, IGS

Lehman Brothers announced its bankruptcy on 15 September 2008 — sending the financial markets and the global economy into a seemingly unmanageable tailspin. The impact was devastating, and the markets have been in recovery ever since. Recruitment firms that had focused on supporting the finance industry were compelled to re-examine their business models. In Tokyo, many recruitment firms abandoned their financial services coverage teams.

The market and its movements over the last year bear scrutiny. Overall financial market recruitment has shown signs of improvement since 2013, and most sectors have a positive outlook for 2014 as well, especially in securities and banking.

Since 2012, Japanese corporate banks have indicated an increasing demand for qualified professionals, though the number of job seekers has remained somewhat flat in response. The number of open positions has increased by 50% over the same period; and going forward, the banks will be looking to strengthen their overseas business, while at the same time maintaining focus on the domestic market.

Hiring in the domestic securities sector resumed in mid-2013 and has shown a similar supply-and-demand issue, but at a more accelerated rate. The number of positions has nearly doubled, with a significant amount of the job movement within equities and IBD (investment banking division). However, overall, the number of people open to changing positions has actually decreased slightly over that same period. In effect, with more work to be done, people are generally busier — and happier — in their current roles, thereby decreasing the supply of professionals who are willingly searching for a new position.

Over the last year, the asset/investment management sector has been somewhat flat on both sides of the job market equation: in newly opened positions and in the number of professionals looking to change jobs. Hiring and growth



“Most sectors have a positive outlook for 2014, especially in securities and banking”

in the sector were flat, as increased regulations for pension funds may have forced the industry to reconsider where to focus their resources. Going forward, there will more likely be a big shift towards the retail end of the business.

Lastly, the consulting sector has seen the most hiring activity in the finance services industry. There has been about a 50% increase in job openings, with a slight increase in job seekers. The sector has been one of the most flexible — aggressive in hiring, and employing a variety of recruitment activities including recruiting events, raising recruitment fees, hosting seminars, and taking on other proactive activities. Such tactics have enabled these firms successfully to locate qualified candidates and fill job positions on all fronts.

In general, foreign financial firms still have limited headcount, and are undertaking mostly replacement hiring — but, even so, such activity is quite competitive.

Overall, the outlook for 2014 is upbeat, and has swung to being a sellers’ (candidate-driven) market.

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The new normal

Abe's policies are anything but "normal"

The Abe administration is claiming to "normalise" Japan's politics and its economics. In fact, the word "normalising" is essentially propaganda, whether it's being used in the political or the economic context.

In practice, the policies that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe are advocating require major structural distortions, since his goals are very much contrary to the flow of Japanese society for the past 70 years. In addition, Abe is pretending that policies to increase Japan's nominal GDP will benefit the average Japanese. This is false. Abe wants to increase Japan's nominal GDP because he has "GDP envy" vis-à-vis the US and China.

Abe's goal of inflation, for example, is highly abnormal when your population is shrinking and your workforce retiring at a rate never seen in human history. S&P economist Paul Sheard said at a recent news conference that Japan's workforce will decrease by 10% over the next 10 years, precisely during the period when Abe is trying to turn the economy to 3% nominal economic growth.

Sheard also pointed out that Japan has averaged 0.8% real economic growth per year over the past 10 years. That growth can be broken down into a 0.5% contribution from spending on machinery and other assets of production, 0.6% from productivity gains and -0.3% from population shrinkage. This shows the massive headwind caused by demographic change, a headwind which will only get stronger. Sheard said the most important focus should be the population, since investment will not go up much faster in a mature economy, and productivity cannot increase without overtaking US levels, which is clearly unrealistic.

As Sheard reminded us, growth has been positive in real terms, even if not in nominal terms. Since prices have been going down, Japan has experienced negative nominal GDP growth of -0.4% per year over the same period.

It may appear alarming that a major economy should be shrinking, but remember it only matters if the national

economy is the only measure to which you attach importance.

In fact, if you are a truly "normal" individual, you probably don't care at all what the national economy is doing, as long as you can put your kids through university, finance your retirement and have a reasonably pleasant lifestyle.

Actually, all these goals can be met through the mild deflation that characterised Japan before Abe (ie, before December 2012).

A full 25% of Japan's population is over 65, and that ratio is set to rise rapidly. The last thing they want is their retirement income—and the cash and Japanese government bond assets they want to pass on to their grandchildren—to be degraded through inflation.

Japan's growing population of freeters (non-career workers) and neets (casual workers) also benefit from prices trending lower. Indeed, many prices are still far too high in Japan. It's inconceivable, for example, that bread should be taxed with 700% import tariffs in Europe, as rice is taxed in Japan. The new consumption tax (8%) also does not have the exceptions on basic goods and foods, as exist in Europe. This adds an unacceptable burden to Japanese consumers.

All the government has to do if it's serious about individual well-being is not to meddle. But preferring to focus on wholly unrealistic plans of 3% nominal GDP growth, the government wants to continue to dismantle the good jobs in corporate Japan, while whacking "liberated" workers with rising consumption taxes and inflation to boot. At another recent news conference, Martin Shulz of the Fujitsu Research Institute estimated the real rate of inflation to be 3-5% so far this year, even as S&P's Sheard stated that base wages have fallen by 0.4%.

On an individual basis, Abe's policies are clearly a disaster for Mr and Mrs Watanabe.

Deflation has other advantages. From a prudential, macro-economic perspective, the great thing about deflation is that it imposes a safety limit on the speed

“ALL THE GOVERNMENT HAS TO DO IF IT'S SERIOUS ABOUT INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING IS NOT TO MEDDLE”

of economic growth. As *The Economist* magazine pointed out a few weeks ago, every single economic crisis in the past 200 years was the result of debt—debt which is greedily used by corporations and governments to flatter growth.

The reassuring thing about mild deflation is that it makes debt more burdensome. This makes investors and entrepreneurs more careful in their choice of projects, and discourages destructive asset bubbles. In a deflationary economy, additionally, the financial sector becomes far less powerful—surely something any person who has lived through the catastrophic consequences of the great 2008 financial crisis would approve of. And it means retirees don't run the risk of being fleeced by Wall Street investment advisors; they can simply stick the money in the bank.

Politically, too, changing the norms of 50 years of democratic government is abnormal. This is what Abe is doing by claiming the right to change the constitution via a simple cabinet vote.

Abe is trying to convince the Japanese that what is good for Japan is good for individual Japanese. This may have worked in the 1930s, but it's not the right message for today. ☹



DAN SLATER
is director of the
Delphi Network



Logistics and Freight//

FTA hope and expectations

Text **GEOFF BOTTING**

Trade negotiators work in the realm of the abstract. They make demands and offer concessions based on principles and regulations.

They labour away in meeting rooms and offices while poring over stacks of reports and papers.

For people in the logistics industry, by contrast, trade is much more a physical endeavour. Around the clock, they load goods onto trucks, ships and airplanes; transport them across national borders; and then unload, store and move them further until they reach their final destination.

In the event that negotiators come up with a free trade pact, the effects on logistics would be anything but abstract. Paperwork and procedures would be simplified or eliminated, allowing the physical movement of goods to speed up and volumes to expand.

So it is no surprise that the EBC Logistics and Freight Committee has been viewing free trade negotiations between the EU and Japan as a great source of hope and expectation.

"We see trade facilitation as the 'tip to the spear' when you talk about the physical flow of goods between the EU and Japan," explains committee chairman

Logistics and Freight Key advocacy points

→ **Customs clearance** - Companies should be free to choose customs declaration locations, regardless of the territory of the responsible customs office.

Procedures and interpretations among the nine customs jurisdictions should be standardised.

→ **Japan Post's EMS** - EMS doesn't have to declare packages valued at ¥200,000 or less, a much higher threshold than applied to private express deliveries. The amounts should be made equal.

→ **Authorised economic operator (AEO)** - The processes involved in the AEO programme should be simplified.

Mark Slade. "This is about smoothing the physical flow of goods through simplified procedures."

Fellow committee member Dominik Wiesler, country manager at Panalpina World Transport (Japan), adds: "Our expectation is that an FTA [free trade

agreement] would strengthen trade relations between Japan and Europe, increase trade activities and, thus, the volume of freight moving along the trade lanes between Europe and Japan."

For years, the committee has pointed to a range of costly and time-consuming procedures required when goods are shipped in to or out of Japan. An FTA offers real hope that many of these barriers will become a thing of the past.

To cite one specific example, Japan has nine different customs areas with no central customs authority. Clear discrepancies in procedures and interpretations exist among them as a result. The committee has been calling for alignment among the jurisdictions, and eventually would like to see the creation of a single nationwide customs area.

"The alignment in the policies among the 28 EU members states is more closely aligned than the nine jurisdictions in Japan," the committee chair explains. "Our hope now is that we can align this through the FTA."

Adds Slade, who is also president of DHL Global Forwarding Japan: "We see the EU-Japan free trade negotiations as a way to achieve liberalisation and, more importantly, the alignment of procedures between the European Union and Japan."



Customs clearance and declaration is one of the committee's main advocacy areas. Apart from addressing the aforementioned jurisdictional issue, the other recommendations in this category include increased flexibility in terms of where quarantine shipments can be checked, the removal of caps on customs clearance charges, and a greater degree of standardisation in procedures.

Another advocacy area for the committee is the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) programme, a global initiative—in which Japan is a participant—aimed at improving supply chain security. Operators here apply to the programme and, if successful, are recognised as AEOs. In theory, certain procedures are then streamlined for the AEOs. However, in the 2013 EBC white paper, the committee questioned the programme's usefulness, given the burdensome paperwork that it imposes on firms to gain approval.

"The experience so far shows that the application process is slightly more challenging and takes more time than expected," says Wiesler, whose company is currently involved in the application process.

However, Slade notes that some progress has been made on the issue

of mutual recognition between the EU and Japan. "The situation has improved somewhat ... more and more of our members have obtained certification."

One distinguishing aspect of the committee's activities is that the area of interest extends beyond its own industry—the business of moving things—and into some businesses of its customers.

Leather footwear is one example. The products are subject to a tariff rate quota (TRQ), a system that places a quota on the number of shoes imported and then imposes tariffs on any imports exceeding the quota. What's more, the Japanese government allocates the quotas to companies in Japan—including ones that are not actively involved in importing footwear. Often, these companies sell the quotas through middlemen.

Why should the logistics and freight companies like DHL care about this arrangement?


"Because our customers are looking around for the quotas, and sometimes they come to us and ask where they can buy them. So this is a market distortion, and it affects our customers," Slade says. "We're the ones who do the clearance and the classifications. We have

“THIS IS ABOUT SMOOTHING THE PHYSICAL FLOW OF GOODS THROUGH SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURES”

Mark Slade

to do the paperwork and provide the support in terms of where they can find [available] quotas."

The committee chairman adds: "We're looking for a simplified, level playing field. Removing tariffs on 90% of the goods coming into Japan would justly improve the overall flow, speed and volume and that is very much in our interest."

Clearly, that would also be in the interest of the majority of other EBC members, who have been looking to the trade negotiators to deliver a real, tangible world of change. 

Expertise

Robert Walters' award-winning IT division

What are the trends in hiring for the IT market?

IT spending is on the rise again globally, with over \$4 trillion spent last year. In Japan, improved business conditions have helped contribute to an increase in IT budgets across most industries — as many new technologies hold the promise of greater cost savings and increased business opportunities in the future. More robust IT budgets have had a direct effect on hiring, as demand for qualified IT professionals surges.

We are also seeing a change in the perception — and role — of IT. The old reactive model of IT took as its starting point an existing problem and sought to find and implement a bespoke or third-party solution. The new proactive model of IT is one that capitalises on such developments in technology as cloud services to offer scalable, real-time, cost-effective services. Subsequently, companies are increasingly keen to recruit IT professionals in tune with this new approach and who can strategically partner with the business.

Can you explain the main areas of your coverage?

The award-winning Information Technology division at Robert Walters recruits IT professionals for permanent positions across the full spectrum of industries in Japan. We can provide staff coverage at all levels of seniority, from pre-sales engineer and project manager to CIO. The Information Technology division specialises in enabling clients to hire highly sought-after bilingual candidates.

What are the skill shortages and in-demand skills for IT positions?

We have seen job vacancies exceed job seekers in Japan, and this overarching shortage of qualified candidates is more severely pronounced within the bilingual professional workforce.

The pool of candidates with relevant professional experience in cloud computing and infrastructure virtualisation has yet to catch up to demand. Moreover, as a growing number of companies try to organise, analyse and utilise data to optimise and expand their business, there is a corresponding rise in demand for candidates with experience and skills in data mining, analysis and consulting.

Given that applications monetise better — and with greater frequency — in Japan than anywhere else in the world, hiring in the mobile gaming industry remains active. The focus, however, has shifted from filling out teams with junior-level engineers to finding the right experienced candidates to provide much-needed hands-on development leadership.

For internal IT positions — whether at financial service firms, manufacturing companies or pharmaceutical multinationals — there is a demand for candidates in business-aligned IT positions. These openings range from application support engineers to business analysts and project managers.

What makes Robert Walters unique in the recruitment for IT positions?

Robert Walters has been recruiting IT professionals in the Japan market for nearly 15 years with teams that are



“To deliver a professional, tailor-made service”

Tomokazu Betzold, Director of Information Technology

industry-aligned, thus enabling our consultants to be experts in their area of coverage. They stay abreast of market trends and new technologies to deliver a professional, tailor-made service to candidates and clients alike.

Furthermore, we maintain a comprehensive — and unparalleled — database of bilingual IT professionals. Such a rich resource is grounded in our scale of operations and longevity in Japan, and is amplified by Robert Walters' international network and proactive headhunting policy.

Robert Walters strives to build a socially responsible working environment and culture that recognises and values diversity. There are presently more than 26 different nationalities represented in our Japan offices alone. Our people — their knowledge, talents, and determination to succeed — are the lifeblood of our business.

Business climate

Moving valuables meets Mother Nature head on

Text **DAVID UMEDA**

The term “polar vortex” entered the vernacular on daily weather reports across the globe this past winter and into spring.

The phenomenon moved farther south than usual, causing persistent snow flurries that crippled communities in its path. But come rain or shine, professionals in the business of moving and storing valuables managed to get the job done.

“As a leading logistics services provider, we are often asked to make the impossible possible,” explains Herbert Wilhelm, president and CEO, Schenker-Seino. “Even with the experience, we have not yet mastered controlling the weather. However, we certainly know how to protect the cargo during adverse conditions to ensure that shipments reach their destination in perfect condition.”

Schenker-Seino has thermal blankets for temperature-sensitive goods and

can arrange for containers to be stowed below deck on a vessel. “We can build air freight pallets with tarpaulins, and have trucks that can maintain a preset temperature,” continues Wilhelm.

Working out of Japan, with its reputation for high-quality control, presents unique challenges when dealing with adverse weather conditions.

“Weiss-Röhlig Japan is aware that informing customers quickly about the freight status is one of the most important aspects in handling sudden weather impacts,” points out Stefan Aebi, managing director. “To avoid drawbacks and losses for our clients, we stay in close contact while our international network shares updates and routing alternatives.”


As a third-party logistics provider, Weiss-Röhlig Japan has the flexibility to handpick reliable partners and locations according to its own risk assessment. “Having several offices in Japan, we are able to act flexibly and shift operations

if necessary,” Aebi adds.

In such a competitive marketplace as Japan, industry leaders strive to be exceptional when dealing with challenges everyone else is facing during a natural or manmade disaster.

“Our pursuit of visibility benefits our clients in time of contingency, as well as our commitment to customer satisfaction leads us to work with our clients in taking action,” explains Takahisa Kashiya, director at OOCL Logistics (Japan).

Quality teams provide best-practice ideas on solutions, and the IT division ensures visibility when transmitting information. “And our global network supports seamless communications,” Kashiya continues. “We provide our clients full visibility and control throughout the supply chain.”

In an ever-globalising economy, expertise in logistics and supply chain management means handling the unexpected effectively and efficiently. 



Italy

Diplomatic relations between Italy and Japan were established in 1913 with the signing of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. In 2012, according to the Embassy of Italy in Japan, trade between the two countries reached €8.8 billion, mainly due to an increase in Italian exports, which grew by a fifth over the previous year, making Italy Japan's third-largest supplier.



Carpigiani Japan Co., Ltd.
www.carpigiani.com/en

Carpigiani is a worldwide leading manufacturer of professional machines for the production of ice cream, soft cream and desserts. The subsidiary was established in 1980, but its first presence in the Japanese market dates from the 1960s. Our customers include premium opinion leaders in the hotel, pastry and restaurant industries. It is estimated that every day worldwide over 100 million people eat an ice cream produced by Carpigiani machines, and over 7,000 international students every year attend the courses of the Carpigiani Gelato University in 10 different locations.



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Marposs is a world leader in precision gauging equipment to industries worldwide. The equipment is for measuring to the thousandth of a millimetre, not in the comfort of the metrology lab, but in the hostile workshop environment—along the production lines, as well as on board of the machine tools.

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Gianluca Testa

President, Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan

<http://www.iccj.or.jp>

Text **MIKE DE JONG**

Italian food, wine and fashion

products have long been popular in Japan. But if you ask Gianluca Testa, president of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan (IC CJ), the trade relationship between the two countries offers so much more.

"The commercial image linked to Italy worldwide is usually fashion, and food and wine," says Testa, also regional manager Asia for Alitalia, Italy's national airline. "In reality, Italy is a leader in chemical and pharmaceutical production. Technology and machinery also represent main exports to Japan."

Testa arrived in 2011, shortly after 3/11, following 14 years in Italy's airline industry. He joined the ICCJ's board in 2012 and this year accepted the role of president with what he calls "big enthusiasm". Testa says he is excited to continue the "excellent job done by the ICCJ in the last four years."

He continues: "We have about 170 members. The main sectors are fashion, automotive and food. Apart from the big names that stand as a symbol of 'Made in Italy' worldwide, we have some smaller-sized members that are nonetheless very active within the commercial transactions between Italy and Japan. Quite a few of them are within the service sectors."

Testa points to several success stories that benefited from the help of the chamber: "A mid-sized brand in Italian outdoor apparel contacted us for support on their entry strategy," he says. "Through us they were able to acquire the interest of one of the biggest trading companies in Japan."

"A successful small brand accessories company was able to cut their costs by 50% on the purchase of Japanese

supplies with the help of the ICCJ in searching [for], contacting and mediating with Japanese factories."

Finally, Testa points to the ICCJ's promotion of high-quality Italian food as a major success story. In particular, he singles out the recent Italian Olive Oil Day initiative, where the winning products were exhibited regularly and sold in Tokyo's top department stores.

EURObiz (April 2014) also covered an ICCJ co-sponsored agri-food event that promoted products from Southern Italy. Testa believes it is vital to "widen the knowledge" of producers from Italy's lesser-known regions.

"The quality and craftsmanship of these companies is extremely high, but they somehow lack a consciousness of international business and marketing strategies," says Testa. "We wish to bridge this [gap] and serve as a practical tool for their international expansion."

Looking forward, Testa is watching with great interest the free trade talks between Europe and Japan. He believes Italian firms are among the many that stand to benefit from a completed agreement.

"The 'Made in Italy' brand has reached an unprecedented level in Japan, especially within the food and beverage sectors," he says. "Yet, if we look closer, we realise that much more can be done."

"Hopefully this [FTA] will be concluded soon, resulting in a significant increase within the bilateral exchange."

The potential of a completed FTA is one reason Testa is optimistic about the decade ahead. He sees Italian-Japanese trade relations heading in the right direction.


"Definitely toward a stronger and more profitable commercial exchange,



© ICCJ

THERE IS STILL SPACE IN THE JAPANESE MARKET FOR THE SUCCESS OF NEW PRODUCTS, BRANDS AND INDUSTRIES

by benefitting from a lowering of the non-tariff barriers," says Testa regarding the economic outlook for the future.

"There is still space in the Japanese market for the success of new products, brands and industries, and I'm sure that the role of the ICCJ—together with other Italian institutions—will become more and more important." 

Malaga, Spain

Pleasing to the senses

Text **DAVID UMEDA**


Malaga is a seaport on the enticing Costa del Sol along the Mediterranean, in the distinctive Andalucía region of southern Spain. Here you will encounter historic architecture, exquisite cuisine, exceptional wines and picturesque sandy beaches. Within city limits, you can also enjoy a variety of outdoor activities, a vibrant nightlife, and annual fun festivities.

The historic landmarks include the Alcazaba Fortress located on the very top of a hill to protect the royal family back in 1040. Castillo de Gibralfaro on the slopes of Malaga hill overlooks the city and the sea. The still unfinished Malaga Cathedral of the 16th-18th centuries and the Roman Theatre of the 1st century BC (next to the fortress) are other sites rooted in Malaga's history.

The Plaza de la Merced is the birthplace of famed painter Pablo Picasso, and includes a modern square offering an array of cafés and contemporary exhibitions that feature not only Picasso, but also the likes of Frank Rebas and Luis Molledo.

The Jardines de Pedro Luis Alonso Gardens reflect both the Spanish and French styles, while Playa de La Malagueta is the nearest beach to the city centre. It consists of sand, imported back in the 17th century, from the Sahara Desert. Here also are many cafés and restaurants to explore.

As varied are the modes of transport to get around. Bike tours allow a leisurely passage through the narrow alleys, beach promenades and winding thoroughfares. An open-top, double-decker bus offers various routes to suit your interests. A wine tour through the province introduces vintages made from Moscatel and Pedro Ximenez varieties of grapes, and stops at some of the oldest taverns, such as the Bodega Antigua Casa de La Guardia, which also offer wine tasting.

Getting to Malaga from Istanbul on board Turkish Airlines means you leave at 9:40 in the morning and arrive at 1:10 in the afternoon; and the return flight is just as convenient, departing at 2:10 in the afternoon and touching down at 5:20 in the evening. Two daily flights serve Tokyo's Narita airport and Istanbul, with one daily flight in and out of Osaka's KIX. 



Clean sweep

Ladog finds a niche in Fukushima

Text and photo **CHRISTOPHER S THOMAS**

In what might seem like an insurmountable task, the clean-up continues in Fukushima, more than three years after the 3/11 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster. Thousands are still working in the area around the stricken reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, and conducting other important tasks.

Decontaminating the streets so people can walk on them again is one major challenge, and authorities have found one foreign company that has helped with the task—Ladog, a German maker of high-performance street sweepers and other equipment. The Japanese company Yanokuchi.Jiko imports Ladog's products.

Yanokuchi.Jiko representative Akira Hirakawa says street-level radiation is very persistent. "This is an important point, because although the air is only about three-times more radioactive than in Tokyo, at street-level the figure is 10-times higher."

“OUR SYSTEM IS MORE EFFICIENT, DURABLE AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, MUCH MORE POWERFUL”

Akira Hirakawa

Conventional sweeper trucks are ordinarily used for street cleaning, but they tend to kick up a lot of dust. In Fukushima, this is a serious drawback, since the dust is contaminated and cleaning would make the situation worse. Normal trucks are also not very effective at scouring radioactive particles from the roads. Ladog's vehicles are best at this task; and, with specially designed high-pressure trucks, Ladog fills a small but important niche.

The Ladog vehicles—designed for cleaning sports tracks, supermarket parking lots and aircraft runways—are perfect for removing radioactive particles from pavement. Custom-made in Harmersbach, Germany, Ladog vehicles come with specially designed chassis and four-wheel steering.

The company pairs the special vehicle with a high-performance brush attachment on the front, made by another German company, Nothhelfer Kehrtechnik. The sweeper unit consists of five discs containing water nozzles; they spin, scouring the ground with high-pressure water.

"The special chassis is necessary because of the nature of cleaning this radioactive material—the pace is very



Ladog's high-performance street sweepers at work in Fukushima.

slow—about 600 metres an hour, and there is constant acceleration and braking," says Hirakawa. Plus, all the components—including the hydraulic pumps, sweeper, vacuum unit and the truck itself—are powered by the engine using Ladog's proprietary power takeoff system. Most similar vehicles, on the other hand, are powered by two separate motors.

"Our system is more efficient, durable and, most importantly, much more powerful," Hirakawa says.

It is also considerably cheaper than the most common system currently applied in Fukushima, which involves crews of labourers, sweeping and scrubbing by hand. Each Ladog vehicle replaces seven to eight workers. If you include another vehicle with a weed trimmer attachment for reaming out gutters (by Nothhelfer Kehrtechnik), you have an efficient, highly effective system.

Ladog's closed intake gathers both road dirt and water used for cleaning, meaning there is less danger of spills. And the fact that it picks up water along with sludge keeps contamination out of the runoff.

When the vehicle's on-board tank is full, the water and radioactive sludge can be transferred to a tanker truck and transported to tanks where the solid matter is able to settle. The water is then drawn off, filtered again and dumped—with the remaining sludge loaded into massive bags for storage.

The company does not divulge prices, but Hirakawa says the Ministry of Environment has been delighted with the results, recommending more of the vehicles for use on Fukushima roads—there are six of them at work now.

The companies' greatest worry is that the market will be overtaken by cheaper versions of the Ladog machines. But, for now, Ladog, Nothhelfer Kehrtechnik and Yanokuchi.Jiko have the market for high-performance street sweepers in Fukushima all to themselves. **e**

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Scotland's future

Lord Jack McConnell at the BCCJ, 19 May 2014

Text and photo **MIKE DE JONG**

The international influence of Scotland and the United Kingdom will be reduced if a Scottish independence vote is successful this autumn. That was the blunt assessment of Lord Jack McConnell, Scotland's longest-serving first minister (2001-07), at a British Chamber of Commerce in Japan event on 19 May.

McConnell, firmly on the "No" side of the debate, says an independent Scotland would raise many questions concerning education, defence, pensions, taxation and other areas. Even the British flag—the Union Jack—would have to be changed to remove its Scottish blue.

"People think this is going to be smooth," says McConnell. "It's not going to be smooth. The major upheaval that this would create—even to the people who think it's justified—you cannot deny the fact that Britain's role in the world would be diminished and Scotland would no longer have the same role that it has today.

"It would be a different kind of role," he adds. "It would be a small country with a seat on the UN General Assembly and a seat at the lower level in Europe. And maybe that's sufficient. Maybe that's what people would like to see—that independent voice."

Opinion polls over the last several weeks have shown that what had been a fairly comfortable 20-point lead for the "No" side has dwindled to a current gap of around 10%. So McConnell says independence has become a very real issue; and, in fact, should the "Yes" side prevail, the Scottish government has already chosen an Independence Day: 24 March 2016. McConnell believes the vote could be closer than anyone anticipates.

"It's a valid point of view [from the "Yes" side] to say that Scotland would be better to have a seat at the back of the General Assembly ... than sit on the Security Council on a permanent basis as

represented by the UK. I don't agree with it, but it's a valid point of view. Let's have that debate.

"I hope that, maybe, as it gets closer, we'll go through all the stories on both sides ... but I'm not overly hopeful."

McConnell says an independent Scotland would also raise questions about its role in the European Union. What would be the terms for joining—or rejoining the EU—as an independent country? What about currency? Would Scotland maintain use of the pound? If it did, what influence would Scotland have on the currency as a non-member of the UK? So far, McConnell says these issues have been absent from the debate which, instead, has been driven by a growing frustration with central governments in the UK and across Europe.

"This is not a choice between Scotland and Westminster," says McConnell. "This is a choice between a Scotland that has a strong devolved parliament inside the United Kingdom and a Scotland that has an independent arm outside the United Kingdom. That's the choice. But that's not the current terms of debate. And, I think that's been partly the cause of the way the campaign has developed over the last few months."

However, one element that could work in the "No" side's favour is the fact that voters as young as 16 will be allowed to cast ballots.

"I think there's a very good possibility that the majority of 16 and 17 year olds will vote 'No', from my experience of the last few months," McConnell says. "I think young people ... are actually studying this. So that might backfire on the Scottish government."

"It would be very interesting if the vote was close and the margin of difference was the 16 and 17 year olds," he adds.

Since the devolution of powers and the re-establishment of the Scottish parliament in 1999, Edinburgh has taken on increased jurisdiction over education,



“IT'S NOT
GOING TO BE
SMOOTH”

Lord Jack McConnell

health, agriculture and justice. However, McConnell believes that Westminster has “failed to adjust” to this “new environment”, a factor that might also be fuelling discontent. Ultimately though, he thinks that independence is not the answer to tackling global challenges such as economic growth, inequality, environmental concerns, conflict and development.

“My contention would be that sharing sovereignty—whether that is sharing sovereignty in the UK between Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England in the best political union in the world, [which it] has been for 300 years and remains so today, or sharing sovereignty in the European Union—is absolutely fundamental to tackling those big global challenges.

“If you ask those questions [about solving global problems],” McConnell says. “I don't see how the answer is to become more insular and isolated. Surely it's better if we come together and try to solve those problems in a cooperative and shared way.”

A Guide for Expats in Tokyo

Making the best choices

Text **DAVID UMEDA**

The modern capital of Japan is clean, convenient, cosmopolitan, dynamic, safe, photogenic, trendsetting, rich in culture, and steeped in tradition. Yet, now that you reside here, there are necessities of daily living that require attention. Consider this your handy mini-guide to bringing out the best of life in Tokyo.

Living

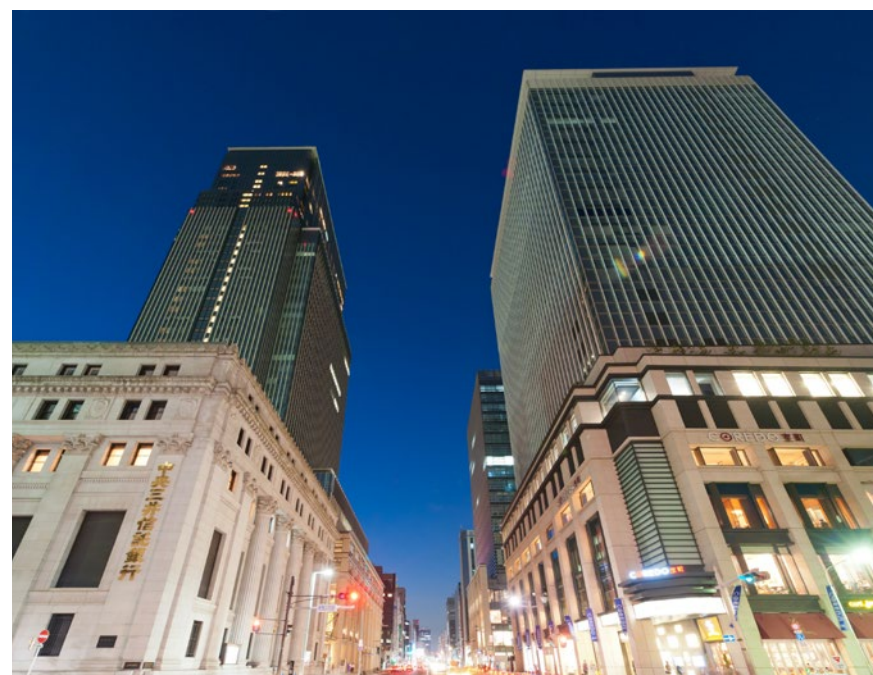
Mitsui Fudosan maintains a presence throughout Japan's urban cities. Representative of how this real estate development company contributes to the cityscape while respecting its heritage, one need go no further than the Nihombashi district and its iconic bridge

near Tokyo Station. Mitsui Fudosan is tied closely to the more than 300-year history of Nihombashi, as well as to its revitalisation. The slogan, "Proceeding to Create While Retaining and Reviving", expresses its passion for Nihombashi (www.mitsuifudosan.co.jp/english/).

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neighbourhood of Minami-azabu, it's just four minutes from Hiroo Station (www.azabucourt.com).

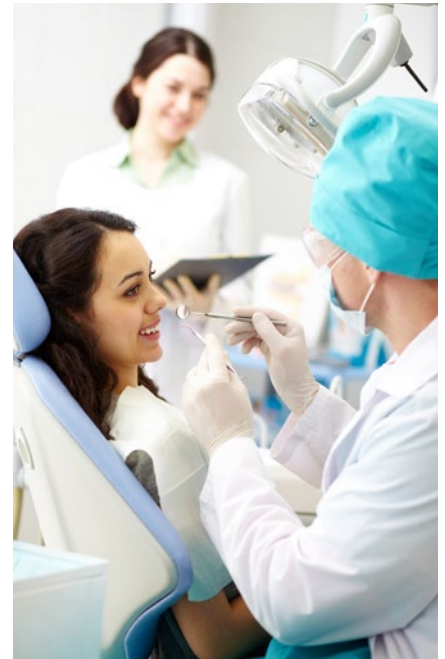
Oakwood's fully furnished serviced apartments offer comfort and convenience to work and to relax, with more space and flexibility than most hotels. Outstanding features include extra living space, quality furniture, full-size kitchens equipped with all the necessary housewares, local phone service, basic cable television, Internet access and special on-site amenities such as Private Residents' Lounge, Kids' Play Area, fitness centre, and business centre. Their customer service helps with coordinating resident activities and provides responsive service second-to-none (www.oakwoodasia.com).



Fitness, health and wellness

HealthyIM is the go-to resource to find a hospital or clinic in Japan. Users can write hospital reviews, find information on medical travel in Japan and other countries in Asia, as well as read unique news and features about healthcare. You can become a part of the HealthyIM community at www.HealthyIM.com

A 3-minute walk from Roppongi Hills, Club 360 offers physiotherapy, personal training, massage and group exercise classes. The modern facility features three private treatment rooms, a five-star resistance-training zone, spacious studio and pristine shower facilities. Their team brings together the best physiotherapists and trainers in Tokyo to provide you with the highest level of support needed to achieve the body and lifestyle you deserve. Their internationally trained and



registered physiotherapists specialise in the treatment of spinal conditions, sports injuries and more (www.club360.jp).

MagaGYM in Roppongi offers classes in Krav Maga suitable to your ability, from beginners with no martial arts experience up to the advanced levels in the official defensive tactics system of the Israeli Defence Force. Staff includes some of the highest-ranked instructors in Japan, and the gym has been teaching for 10 years. The techniques are based on instinctive movements so easy to learn; and the training has a tremendous workout effect to get in shape (www.magagym.com/en/).

Nakashima Dental Office, located in Roppongi, delivers total dental care that meets the highest world standards currently in practice in Europe and North America, which includes being certified for laser dentistry in cavity, root canal and gum treatments. From oral health and safety precautions to skilled restoration and cosmetic treatment, the latest advances in every aspect of dental care are continuously researched to provide a level of care and treatment unmatched in Japan (www.dentist-nakashima.jp/english/).

Nishibori Dental Clinic has been providing general dental services to the community for more than 40 years, and handles patients with or without National Health Insurance coverage. Consultations and treatments are all handled by specialists, and referrals to other medical institutions regarding oral healthcare can be arranged. Digital X-ray machines are employed that require



Mitsui Fudosan helps define the cityscape (bottom left), while Tokyo's conveniences include the best in living and good health.

much less radiation than conventional means. A lifetime of beautiful, healthy teeth is a goal shared by the clinic and patient (www.nishibori-dental.com/english/).

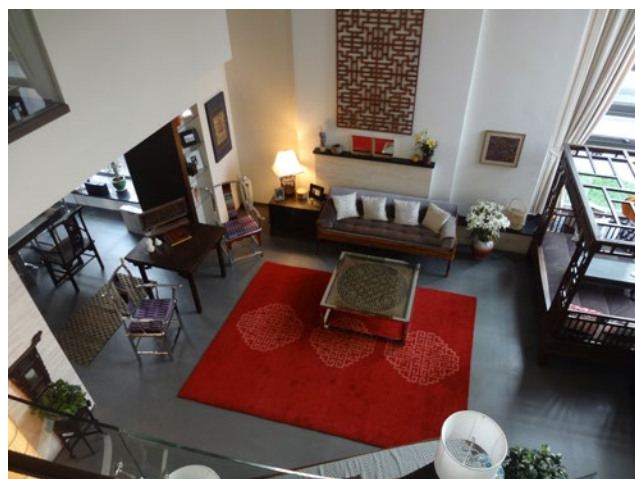
Services

Chez Vous provides one-stop domestic solutions for the most discerning clientele through their expertise in the placement of child-care and housekeeping (maid) staff. This is complemented by their housecleaning-pro and handyman services that are sure to bring a smile to your face and happiness into the household. The Chez Vous babysitting service is ideal for international families seeking safe, secure and dependable child-care in English. Coordinators match housekeeper to your household's requirements, and ensure consistent high-quality service. (www.chezvous.co.jp/english/)

The Carpet Doctor, a family-owned business serving the Tokyo community since the mid-1980s, offers cleaning, stain removal and other optional services for your home and car. Their hot water extraction (steam cleaning) gives carpets a deep cleaning without damaging the fibres. Furniture and household objects are handled with care. Bilingual staff help reduce the worry and concern, and certified technicians provide the best services available in Tokyo (www.carpetdoctor.com).

Learning

Aoba-Japan International School has a long history of providing international education from kindergarten to Grade 12 to families from around the world. Classroom teachers, administrators and parents endeavour to create a learning environment that promotes an understanding and sense of internationalism



(top, clockwise) A-JIS offers a global education from K-12, Wa Space showcases what makes Japan's culture unique, and Interior Collection combines the best of the east and west.

and interculturalism throughout the school and community. A-JIS's goal is to help students develop a strong sense of openness and inclusivity, and through those qualities influence change in the world in positive and meaningful ways (www.japaninternationalschool.com).

Dining


Ruth's Chris Steak House in Toranomon is in the heart of Tokyo, and offers the ideal setting for both family gatherings and business meetings that is like a private home of chic interior. The open-fire grilled steaks are the centrepieces of a mouth-watering menu using the freshest seasonal ingredients. There also are a variety of private dining rooms to fit

the occasion, and the special wine list includes award-winning vintages from around the world (<http://ruthschris.co.jp>).

Shopping

Japan boasts a wealth of artists, craftsmen and designers who reflect the country's unique culture in their extraordinary work—but they aren't always easy to find. Wa Space is the one place in Tokyo that brings together the best in contemporary Japanese design, and under one roof—there is always something exceptional to discover. You are invited to visit and experience the world of Wa, and add a sensational piece of Japan to your life (<http://the-wa-group.com/space/>).

Interior Collection, based in Tokyo, specialises in fine Chinese antiques, combined with Western furniture, fabrics and design elements for your home décor and interior design. They create "oriental chic" spaces with touches of times long past, combining beauty and function. Original design sofas, armchairs and made-to-order curtains and cushions are also available. With a proven track record of quality and service, Interior Collection invites you to see for yourself in their Tokyo Azabudai showroom (<http://interiorcollection.net>).

When it comes to living in Japan's capital city, the right choices can make all the difference in the world. 



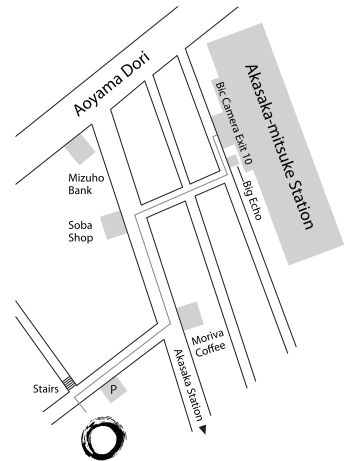
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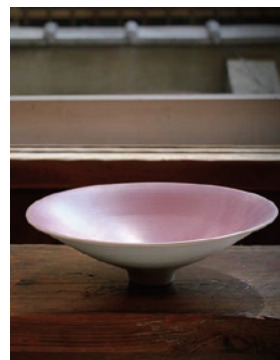
Edo Candle: ¥4,200



Lacquered Zelkova Vase: ¥6,000



Silk Flower Kettle Rest:
¥6,000



Yae Porcelain Bowl: ¥8,000



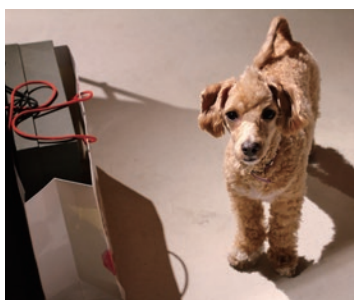
Gold-plated Sauciere: ¥10,300



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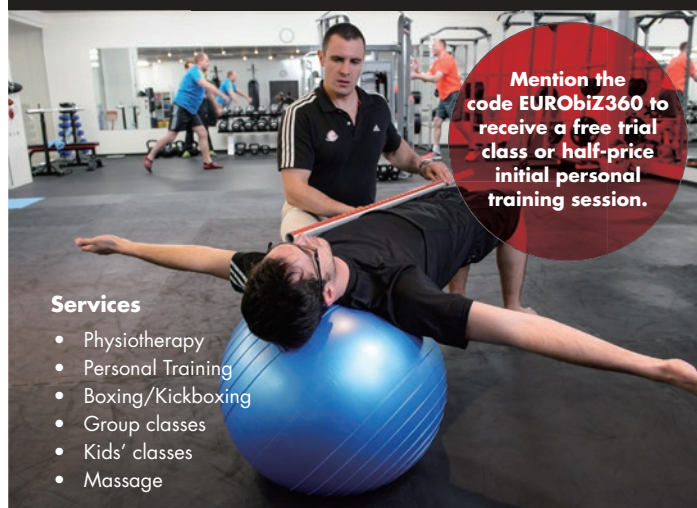
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<http://e-carpetdoctor.com>



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Information

Size Range of Units :

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1 Bedroom Suites (33-52m²) , 2 Bedroom Suite (71m²)

Bedrooms : 60 Units

Parking Facilities : 2 Spaces

Room Rates :

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Inquiries

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Nakashima D.D.S.

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Minato-ku, Tokyo
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Sakakibara Dental Clinic

A Trilingual Dentist and Dental Implant Specialist
in Central Tokyo



Dr. Yasutomo Sakakibara studied laser dental surgery at Paris University with Dr. Jacques Melcer, who pioneered the use of lasers in dentistry. His Minami-Azabu clinic, opened in 1984, handles general and cosmetic dentistry (including whitening), dental surgery—with implants a specialty—and orthodontics.

Dr. Sakakibara went to Einstein Hospital in New York in 1992 to research bone growth techniques and bone grafts, and has been performing about a hundred implant surgeries a year for twenty-five years now. He does both single implants and multiple implants known as "all on four" and "all on six."

To treat periodontal (gum) disease, he gives patients special antibiotics three days before doing major cleaning and scaling work, and also cleans the gum pockets with a laser, eliminating any infection or bacteria. Patients appreciate the laser dental tools because there is no drilling noise and no pain.

The Sakakibara Dental Clinic has an excellent reputation, and its patients include a Japanese film icon, a member of a major J-pop group, and diplomats and residents from several French-speaking nations, since in addition to English Dr. Sakakibara speaks some French—a rarity among dentists in Japan. Dr. Sakakibara also gives patients his mobile number, and they can call him for help day or night, even on holidays.

Open on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2 to 8:30 p.m., Sakakibara Dental Clinic is a seven-minute walk from Minami-Azabu Station. Appointments are recommended.

Sakakibara Dental Clinic

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Minato-ku Tokyo Japan 106-0047

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The European Business Council (EBC) once again is producing the EBC White Paper, its hallmark annual report on the business and investment environment, in English and Japanese, for release in mid-November. This will be the 14th in the series.

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until there's a cure...

The BQ strategy

Or how fast is your marketing plan?



BRAND AID is a forum for experts in public relations and communications.

I suspect that most people reading this article are expecting to see something about big game-changing creative ideas that catapult a brand to rock star status. After all, Saatchi & Saatchi Fallon is a creative-driven advertising agency. Sorry, not this time. Instead, let's talk about the backbone of any truly great and sustainable marketing campaign: the planning structure that underpins the creativity and allows it to succeed.

At a recent global management meeting, our Worldwide CEO Kevin Roberts addressed the group of us by asking: "Everyone knows what IQ, EQ and TQ are, but what is BQ?" We were all momentarily stymied. The answer: bloody quick.

While the world may not necessarily need another buzzword, there's no denying that speed, flexibility and adaptability are key ingredients of any marketing plan, regardless of product category, share or budget. BQ skills are an indelible part of successful marketing leadership allowing you to launch, fail, learn, fix and, ultimately, win.

At our firm, we describe today's marketing environment as the Participation Economy. That's because, whether marketers like it or not, we are no longer in control of the brands we work with. Anybody with an online connection and a social media account can pretty much say whatever they want about your brand and potentially get their message out to a massive amount of people in an incredibly short period of time.

The Participation Economy is not limited to consumers, either. Your

competitors, wholesalers and retailers now know more about you, your product upgrades, new product launches, advertising campaigns, and pricing and trade practices almost as fast as you can develop them. Which means any product attribute and pricing advantages you've implemented all become rather short-lived, due to rapid intelligence gathering, efficient manufacturing, and logistics capabilities.

“THERE'S NO DENYING THAT SPEED, FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY ARE **KEY** INGREDIENTS OF ANY MARKETING PLAN”


So your mission is inevitably how to reach a hard-sales and/or share target while navigating the soft and volatile conditions of the Participation Economy. From a budgeting perspective, part of the solution is straightforward: have a significant portion of your marketing communication budget well thought out and planned for—but uncommitted. That way, you can react swiftly to changes and take advantage of opportunities that arise due to market volatility.

Budgeting aside, two planning tools

I would like to touch on to help you succeed in the Participation Economy are the Organizing Idea and the 100-Day Plan.

If the market conditions demand that you keep a significant portion of your budget uncommitted—or at least as flexible as possible—you therefore need a way to gather and curate a stable of options that still remain true to your brand. An Organizing Idea is a concept that can be the common thread for all tactical executions, regardless of their nature or cost.

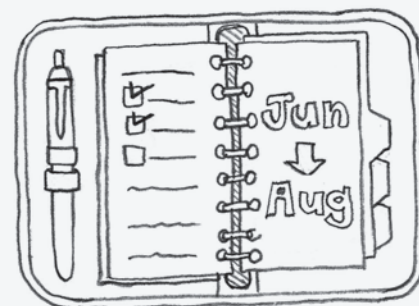
The agency and many of our clients now operate on a planning cycle that is long enough to execute a significant tactic or campaign, but short enough to set goals for a particular cycle that are milestones for the overall yearly KPIs [key performance indicators]. One hundred days seems to be the magic number for us. It affords the flexibility to adapt—or sometimes even completely change directions—should the market conditions so require. The key to a successful 100-Day Plan is to narrow the volume of objectives down to what is truly critical. Experience tells us that at least five—but not more than 10—items allow for the right balance of significance, impact and focus.

The discipline of BQ can be the difference between winning and losing in today's Participation Economy. So how fast is your marketing plan? 

PHILLIP RUBEL is the CEO & Representative Director of Saatchi & Saatchi Fallon in Japan.



Upcoming events



► **Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Japan**

www.blccj.or.jp

Annual Summer Pool & BBQ Party

30 August, Saturday, 15:00-22:00

Venue: Hilton Tokyo Bay, pool area, JR Maihama station

Fee: ¥10,000 (members), ¥12,000 (non-members), half price (children up to 12 years)

Contact: info@blccj.or.jp

Monthly beer gathering

16 June, Monday & July 22, Tuesday, 19:00-23:00

Venue: Belgian beer café in Tokyo

Fee: Pay for what you drink

Contact: info@blccj.or.jp

► **French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**

www.ccifj.or.jp

Fukuoka CCIFJ Gala 2014

9 June, Monday, 18:30-21:30

Venue: Agora Fukuoka Hilltop Hotel & Spa, Fukuoka

Fee: ¥20,000

Contact: nyoshida@ccifj.or.jp

► **Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan**

www.iccj.or.jp

Seminar: Venetian Cuisine Workshop (Lesson #3)*

9 June, Monday, 19:00-21:00

Speaker: Chef Paolo Colonnello

Venue: The Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan

Fee: ¥4,000 (members), ¥5,000 (non-members) for one lesson

Contact: promo@iccj.or.jp

* Series of 9 lessons—Mon: 9, 23 June; 7, 22 (Tue) July; 4 August.

Eat Italian BIO Organic Food Seminar

10 June, Tuesday

Panelist: Luca Fraternali (Luca Deli owner chef)

Venue: The Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan

Contact: promo@iccj.or.jp

Biritalia Italian Beer Garden

31 July, Thursday

Venue: Tokyo Hyatt Regency

Contact: promo@iccj.or.jp

► **Polish Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**

www.pccij.or.jp

Business Seminar: "POLAND—Opportunities" & Reception

12 June, Thursday, seminar: 15:00-17:30; reception:

18:00-20:30

Panelists: Tomasz Miklaszewski, Counsellor—Head of Trade and Investment Promotion Section, Embassy of the Republic of Poland. Other guest speakers to be confirmed.

Venue: Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tokyo

Fee: seminar free-of-charge; reception ¥2,500 (corporate members), ¥3,500 (individual members), ¥5,000 (non-members)

Contact: secretariat@pccij.or.jp

► **Swedish Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**

www.sccij.org

Sweden Day*

7 June, Saturday, 10:00-17:00

Venue: Swedish Embassy

Fee: open to the public

Contact: office@sccij.org

* family midsummer celebrations, National Day of Sweden events, food & drink

► **Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**

www.sccij.jp

Luncheon: "Five practical issues every company should know about international arbitration"

18 June, Wednesday, 12:00-14:00

Speaker: Dr Lars A Markert and Michael Mroczek

Venue: ANA InterContinental Tokyo

Fee: ¥6,500 (members and non-members)

Contact: info@sccij.jp

JUNE

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AUGUST

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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Annual Joint Chamber Summer Cocktail

19 June, Thursday

Venue: Embassy of Canada to Japan

Fee: to be confirmed

Contact: respective chambers

Compiled by **DAVID UMEDA**

A portrait of Marcel Wiggers, Chairman and CEO of Randstad Japan. He is a middle-aged man with short brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a grey blazer over a blue and white striped shirt. He is standing in an office environment with desks and other people in the background. His hands are clasped in front of him, resting on a white surface.

Marcel Wiggers

*Chairman and CEO,
Randstad Japan*

Founded in Amsterdam in 1960, Randstad has grown into the world's second-largest comprehensive human resources services company, having operations in 39 countries. In Japan, Randstad serves clients through a network of 78 offices nationwide.


"We provide services across a wide variety of industries," says Japan chairman and CEO Marcel Wiggers. "We are very passionate about our business which comes down to a simple ambition: finding the perfect job for a job seeker and finding excellent new employees for our client." 


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