Japan

Annual Report 2009-2010

SUMMER

Microsoft Innovation Center

Microsoft®

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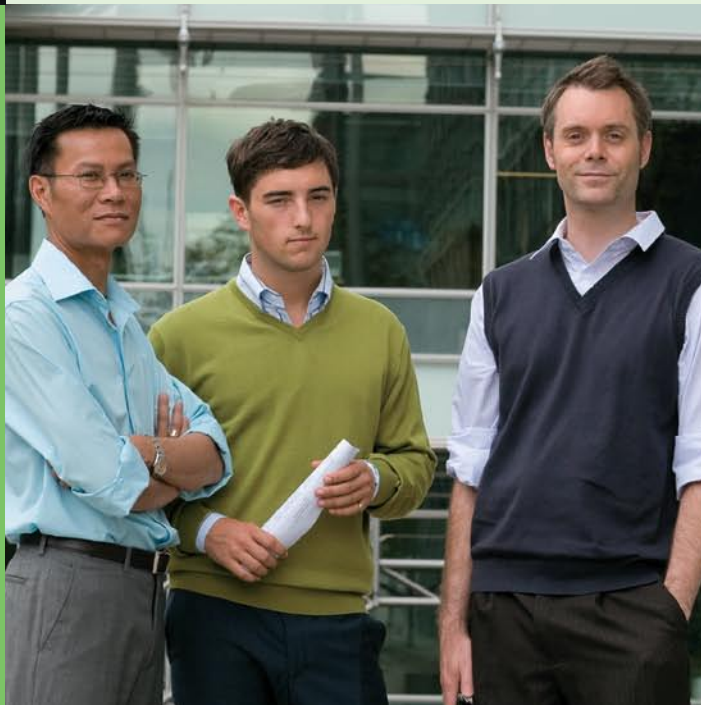
The titles of the representatives of Microsoft and partners herein
are those at the time of their activities.

Greeting from President & CEO, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan

Thank you for using Microsoft products and services in your daily life.

Under Microsoft's mission, "to help people and businesses throughout the world realize their full potential," we are working hard to enhance and improve technologies to make IT easy-to-use and accessible for our customers. To deliver top-of-the-line products and services to our customers in Japan, we are making efforts to improve quality in cooperation with Microsoft headquarters in the U.S., as well as expanding our cooperative relationship with our solution partners, other partner companies in various regions, local governments, educational institutions, and NPOs.

Microsoft Innovation Center was established in 2006 to advance technological research in the Japanese IT industry, to support product development and verification, and to create and develop new businesses in Japan and other countries. In October 2009, we consolidate Microsoft Executive Briefing Center and Microsoft Technology Center in Otemachi, Tokyo, and provide many kinds of unified services, from the creation of innovation to business enterprises.

This report illustrates various activities that Microsoft Innovation Center is engaged in. I would be pleased if this report serves as a reference to the Microsoft Innovation Center for you.

We promise to meet the needs of our customers in Japan with exceptional products and services, and the strength of all our employees who share the vision of becoming the top leader of the technology industry.

Yasuyuki Higuchi
President & CEO,
Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan

Microsoft Supports the Growth of IT and the Generation of Innovation

Microsoft Innovation Center aims at contributing to the IT software industry in Japan by supporting software/hardware development companies, system integrators, universities, entrepreneurs with innovative ideas, and individuals and organizations that plan to operate global businesses. In addition, Microsoft Innovation Center will introduce innovative products and services by working together with Japanese companies with cutting-edge technologies and products to operate global business.

Through Microsoft Innovation Center, Microsoft will provide its resources to its partners in order to contribute to the software industry in Japan

The goal of Microsoft Innovation Center (MIC) is to contribute to the IT industry in Japan by supporting not only software and hardware development companies, system integrators, educational institutions, and entrepreneurs with innovative ideas, but also individuals and organizations looking for global business opportunities.

Programs Offered by Microsoft Innovation Center

By providing Microsoft's resources, Microsoft Innovation Center will support Microsoft partners.

IT Companies in Japan
(Software Development Companies, Hardware Development Companies, System Integrators, etc.)

Support

Microsoft Corporation

Microsoft Development Co., Ltd.

Microsoft Research

Microsoft | Innovation Center

- Technology Innovation Program
- Interoperability Program
- Quality Assurance Program
- Platform Support Program
- Innovate on Program
- Human Resources Development Support Program

Facilities (servers, network, storages)

Microsoft's Business Partners and Channels

MIC Affiliates
City of Sapporo, Gifu Prefecture, City of Asahikawa

Universities, Research Institutions

1 Technology Innovation Program

The Technology Innovation Program offers technologies and verification facilities at Microsoft Research, Microsoft's main R&D lab, as well as Microsoft's global business partner channels. This program supports realizing technological elements and ideas in those fields such as HPC (High Performance Computing), data mining, and robotics, to business development in Japan and in the world market.

Target		Eligible Applicants	
• Those who plan to develop new products • Those who want to utilize existing technologies and components • Those who want to introduce their products and services to the world market		• Entrepreneurs • Independent software developers • Universities and research institutions	

2 Interoperability Program

The Interoperability Program offers licenses of various protocols and data formats used by Windows and other Microsoft products and applications to connect and communicate with each other, as well as environments required to verify connectivity and interoperability between such services and applications.

Target		Eligible Applicants	
• Those who need to verify connectivity and interoperability between Microsoft products including Windows and other solution partners. • Those who plan to develop new products based on connectivity and interoperability.		• Independent software developers • System integrators	

3 Quality Assurance Program

The Quality Assurance Program offers support from Product QA Management Team to verify the integrity and compatibility between the partners' application products and Microsoft's new products under development.

Target	• Those who need support to verify the integrity and compatibility with Microsoft's enterprise products intended in this program.	Eligible Applicants	• Independent software developers

4 Platform Support Program

The Platform Support Program offers software/hardware environments required to realize and verify the cutting-edge ideas in the fields of enterprise, mission-critical, and HPC for MIC affiliates and partners.

Target	• Those who need advanced hardware environments for product development and verification. • Those who need Windows platforms and advanced hardware environments to run Windows platforms for scientific/technological calculations and research.	Eligible Applicants	• Entrepreneurs • Independent software developers • Universities, research institutions

5 Innovate on Program

The Innovate on Program, designed for the package software developer partners, offers support to help their products comply with Microsoft's latest products, providing technical information, trainings, product evaluations, and marketing resources about the latest Microsoft products based on the application scenarios per product.

Target	• Those who need support for migration to Microsoft platforms	Eligible Applicants	• Independent software developers

6 Human Resources Development Support Program

The Human Resources Development Support Program, aiming to develop human resources in the IT industry, provides Microsoft Innovation Center's affiliate organizations with various contents to support human resources development and software business generation (technology, business operation, marketing, etc.). It also offers support to foster training instructors. In addition, with internships from Microsoft Innovation Center's affiliate organizations, participants can improve their skills in the practical production environment.

Target	• Those who develop and maintain systems on Microsoft platforms	Eligible Applicants	• Entrepreneurs • Independent software developers • Universities, research institutions

IP License Offerings

Microsoft actively makes its intellectual properties (IP) available to the public and offers related licenses. In addition to the use within the programs above, IP licenses alone can also be obtained. These technologies include various findings at Microsoft Research, protocol specifications developed by Microsoft product development teams and used in Microsoft products, and other libraries.
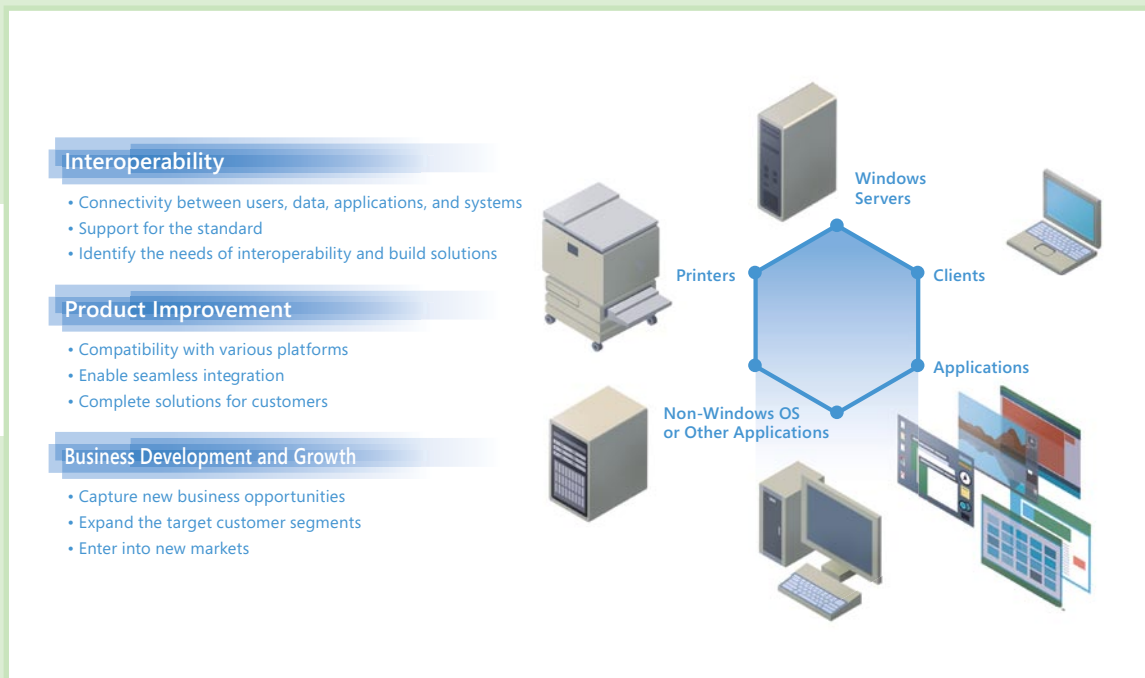
Technologies

Microsoft's research department has been conducting a number of research projects to contribute directly to current software and business solution development, as well as other research in cutting-edge technologies and innovations.
By licensing its technologies, Microsoft helps to reduce costs and development cycles in realizing ideas and development of required technologies.

Protocols

Microsoft discloses technological specifications of various protocols used by Microsoft products, including Windows clients, servers, Exchange Servers, and offers licenses and technological support.
Using these protocols enables interoperability with various services including authentication services, printer services, and directory services on Windows servers. For these licensed technologies, there is no limitation on the target platforms.

Innovations Enabled by using IP Licenses

Interoperability

- Connectivity between users, data, applications, and systems
- Support for the standard
- Identify the needs of interoperability and build solutions

Product Improvement

- Compatibility with various platforms
- Enable seamless integration
- Complete solutions for customers

Business Development and Growth

- Capture new business opportunities
- Expand the target customer segments
- Enter into new markets

Windows Servers

Printers

Clients

Applications

Non-Windows OS or Other Applications

Facilities

Microsoft has been making efforts to improve the quality of product development, deployment, and operation.

In particular, Microsoft provides the Technical Adaptation Program (TAP) that helps customers deploying Microsoft products verify the products before actual deployment, Proof of Quality Verification Program (PQVP) that enables verifications by building the test environments based on the various customers' deployment and operation scenarios, and other pre-deployment verification programs to verify sizing and functionality before product deployment.

Microsoft Development Department holds one of the largest development and verification facilities in Japan at the Microsoft Otemachi Technology Center* (Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo). The Center can meet demanding hardware requirements in highly sophisticated areas including mission critical systems, HPC (High Performance Computing), and interoperability.

The Microsoft Innovation Center will make this facility available for partners to support a wide range of verifications, and offer a variety of programs to utilize these facilities.

Microsoft Innovation Center

* The facility consists of over 100 x64 8-way and other servers, over 300 x64 compatible client machines, a storage environment capacity of over 500 TB, and a network environment enabling a 10G WAN environment emulation -- all of these are regularly updated with the latest equipment.

Microsoft Innovation Center will make this facility available for partners to support their wide range of verifications, and will offer a variety of programs for partners to utilize this facility.

Executive Interview vol.3
Adoption of Latest Microsoft Technologies Enables Human Resource Development Activities

Akihiro Oba

General Manager, Developer & Platform Evangelism,
Microsoft Co., Ltd., Japan

Microsoft has long been engaged in many kinds of Corporate Citizenship Programs. What activities are taking place as its IT industry support activities, including Microsoft Innovation Center programs?

Microsoft's corporate mission statement is "Realizing Potential: Helping people and businesses to realize their full potential." In order to achieve this mission by the power of software, Microsoft not only provides platforms and technologies, but is also engaged in a variety of activities as part of its Corporate Citizenship initiative.

Contributing to local society is one of these activities.

In Japan today, there is a major concern that regional gaps in industrial economy exist, while business is concentrated in the metropolitan area. For this reason, Microsoft provides information about IT utilization and promotes the IT industry itself, both of which are crucial links to the revitalization of local areas.

As our first step, Microsoft is committed to working to eliminate the information gap. Some people in local regions are concerned that access to information is rather limited. For these people, Microsoft is working to communicate information as quickly as possible through various educational activities on the latest technologies, so that they can consider adopting the latest technology at the earliest possible stage.

For example, we offer a series of Microsoft Innovation Center seminars and other programs in which people can download and evaluate out technologies. We have been promoting the earliest possible use of the latest technology by having people use these programs.

What do you think about the current situation and challenges of the Japanese IT industry?

In addition to the industrial gap between regions I mentioned, another concern I have is that the industry needs to try more to bring changes.

For example, looking at the entire IT industry in Japan, I feel that there is still a culture left over from the mainframe era. In particular, large corporate customers still tend to rely on their system integrator partners. In the western world, on the other hand, the in-house IT departments evaluate new technologies and adopt them. There are just a few cases like this in Japan.

Meanwhile, many small- and mid-sized companies make technological innovations, no less valuable than those of large companies, to expand their business. However, this requires tremendous effort. In various regions, the government and local municipalities offer various support programs, but the reality is that only few local regions have made any strides forward.

To aid in solving challenges like these, Microsoft is carrying out many kinds of support activities at the Microsoft Innovation Center. Regardless of location or scale, our engagement is to give a boost to those who are eager to take big opportunities.

What kind of support does the Japanese IT Industry need?

In offering platforms and carrying out our Corporate Citizenship initiatives, Microsoft believes that providing environments in which "new business opportunities are open to all" is important, and we have taken various steps to ensure this.

For example, at Microsoft we have expanded our business into the world of cloud computing. The unique feature of a cloud computing environment is that anyone can participate in business regardless of their location or system. For Japanese companies, with their superior skill for high quality, it would be a big opportunity to break out into many kinds of new businesses.

Not only in cloud environments, but in current IT environments where many kinds of devices are used, it is necessary to focus on software development for devices other than PCs. However, it would take a lot of time to stand at the business start line if a company needs to learn the new development environment from square one. Making the best use of our skills in PC software development, Microsoft provides development environments for devices other than PCs, including cellular phones, other types of devices, and clouds.

It is one of our IT industry support activity themes to provide opportunities to participate in new business regardless of business location or size.

How do you think Microsoft's latest technologies will change the IT industry?

First, we expect that the world of Software plus Service (S+S) will take hold. In the history of enterprise IT environments, the client/server-style systems were introduced, and then widespread use of the Internet drastically changed business. Now, the next big wave everyone anticipated was SaaS (Software as a Service). But because only service was taking the lead, this market still has yet to grow.

Microsoft's cloud computing environment provides a platform, consisting of Windows and Office, which our customers use most, and other server products. This platform is also suitable to use with on-premise (company-implemented) servers, and it is an easy-to-use environment when providing software not only for PCs, but also cellular phones and other devices. I believe that it will contribute greatly towards increasing efficiency in business IT system operations.

Also, we often hear that the IT literacy gap is widening between those in the IT industry and those who are not. This can point out the difference of software usability between those who use PCs for their work, and those who use other devices including cellular phones and digital cameras. As software becomes more highly functional, the

command array gets more complicated. People who are not used to using PCs may find such software "difficult" to use.

To improve this situation, Microsoft is advocating UX (user experience). An excellent UX is an interface in which the software functionality can be fully utilized regardless of IT literacy or the device used. Microsoft provides the latest technologies and development tools for developers to create better UX. In turn, the developers provide us great feedback. I expect UX technology will improve the operability among devices, help software emerge that is easy-to-use for everyone, and help new business opportunities arise for a number of IT companies.

Have these support activities produced results?
We are beginning, bit by bit, to see solid results.

For example, Microsoft Innovation Award (MIA), which is presented every year to exceptional IT companies, is a solid result of our IT industry support activities. MIA introduces solutions utilizing the latest technologies, and there is a lineup of surprising cases of technology adoption every year, which I think is a wonderful outcome of our efforts.

Another example that has posted results in our human resource development activities for students is the Imagine Cup, an IT contest entered by students from all over the world. The selected Japanese students participated in the World Finals and won third place in the algorithm division last year, and in the photography division this year. Microsoft technologies are being adopted not only by companies, but among students as well, and we are very pleased that challengers like these are performing on the world stage.

Also, Microsoft Innovation Center has local alliance organizations in Gifu, Sapporo, and Asahikawa, and is engaged in a number of human resource development activities. For example, at Asahikawa Innovation Center, which is focusing efforts on UX technology at Asahiyama Virtual Zoo, over 1000 participants have attended its seminars in only six months since the establishment of the center. Microsoft provides support through supplying resources such as technologies, information, and tools, but dispatching lecturers is extremely rare. Most of the lecturers are all from local companies or alliance organizations, who acquired the latest technologies through Microsoft's programs.

In this way, local regions that make effective use of the partnership with Microsoft are increasing, and we believe this leads to the revitalization of local IT companies through the spread of technologies.

Who can benefit from Microsoft's support activities?
Microsoft provides an array of programs for use by a number of people who have an interest in utilizing the latest technologies.

To promote technologies, technical information is extremely important. Microsoft strategically invests in such technical information, striving to be the first to provide high-quality information in Japanese. This information is available to anyone.

At the same time, Microsoft has implemented the DreamSpark program, through which students may download development software and resources to use for self-study. Also, for those IT venture businesses that have been in existence for less than 3 years, or individual business owners seeking to start companies, our BizSpark program provides a way to use Microsoft platforms and development tools.

By providing many opportunities to use technical information and

"It is precisely such an attention to detail in making products that Microsoft believes will be the catalyst to creating a completely new software."

Akihiro Oba

General Manager, Developer & Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Co., Ltd., Japan

development tools, we hope to deepen people's understanding of the latest technologies.

How would you like Japan's IT industry to change through Microsoft's support activities?
We believe that there are many more opportunities for all those involved in business, software development, and who utilize IT to challenge on the world stage.

As I said, in the world of cloud computing, it is now possible to create a new business that transcends many barriers like location and size. Also, through widespread use of clouds and UX technology, it will be possible for those utilizing clouds to access the latest information with easy-to-use software, and from any device.

I hope those in Japan's IT industry make use of these new technologies from Microsoft, and expand their business onto the world stage.

Also, in Japan there are unique characteristics of product manufacturing with detailed concern for the end-user's perspective, or with regard to the end-user's viewpoint. We are sure this sensitivity can be exploited in the UX technology sector. Using the latest UX technology to make use of Japan's unique manufacturing sensitivity in software development will cause big changes in the IT world. It is precisely such an attention to detail in making products that Microsoft believes will be the catalyst to creating completely new software.

Reports

Microsoft Innovation Center Report 2009-2010 vol.1
Windows 7 and Internet Explorer 8 Interoperability Information Disclosed to Windows Developers

June 15, 2009,

Microsoft Co., Ltd. Japan, Shinjuku HQ, Seminar Room

wipse, an organization aimed at the proliferation and promotion of the new generation of user experience where Windows platforms and services integrate, held the 6th wipse IT Venture Community Seminar. In addition to outlining the excellent usability provided by Windows 7 and Internet Explorer 8, the seminar discussed their compatibility and some key points to consider.

Other Windows 7 seminars were also held at Gifu Innovation Center and Asahikawa Innovation Center, the affiliate organizations of Microsoft Innovation Center. A number of developers and IT administrators in each region joined the sessions.

Providing Sneak-Preview Information on Windows 7 Attracts a Great Deal of Expectation and Attention

wipse IT Venture Community, a community to support technology-oriented IT venture companies, offers various seminars and workshops designed to cultivate seeds with good potential and help them grow to become commercial layers and global businesses.

The theme of this seminar was the merits of Windows 7 and compatibility information for developers. Windows client operating system (OS) has recently attracted a great deal of attention in the market.

"Windows 7 is one of the products Microsoft is focusing on the most this year," said Nobuaki Nagai (Senior Manager, Business Incubation (LSE), Developer & Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Co., Ltd., Japan), "We hope all of you gain the latest product and compatibility information in advance, and make the most of it for your future development processes."

As it is anticipated that Windows 7 will be deployed in a wide range of companies, a number of business opportunities will arise, including in-house software compatibility adjustments and legacy LOB application modifications. The participants attended the seminar with enthusiasm to get as much of the latest information as they could.

Ease of Use, Reliability and Performance of Windows 7 Approved by Professional Trainers

Known among many of the participants, Akiko Yamazaki ((Manager, IT/NW Learning Div., NEC Learning, Ltd.) was in charge of this seminar. NEC Learning, Ltd. is a training partner of Microsoft that offers primarily human resource development programs, training services and e-learning sessions. Its training courses on Microsoft technologies have developed a good reputation not only for the rich content in the industry but also for provisioning for new technologies.

In the seminar, Yamazaki, prior to the compatibility information, outlined the major merits provided by Windows 7. Using a PC running Windows 7 RC (Release Candidate), she illustrated the better user experience and significantly improved performance.

"I think Windows 7 is the easiest to use of any in the history of the operating systems," noted the lecturer Yamazaki, "It contains a number of compelling features, and it makes me feel like having a whole-day course for its operating instructions. I'd like to encourage the application developers to understand these merits and consider your applications' compatibility as soon as possible."

Explanations for Compatibility Verification and Key Points to Consider

The participants consisted of developers and IT administrators with a ratio of 2:1, respectively, and most of them obtained Windows RC. Many commented that they had already resolved Windows Vista compatibility issues for their software.

"Addressing Windows 7 compatibility issues is very much the same as addressing Windows Vista compatibility issues," explained Yamazaki, "Applications that run on Windows Vista should run on Windows 7. Applications that encountered problems when migrating from previous versions of OS to Windows Vista could, however, experience similar problems on Windows 7. If you have not addressed such compatibility issues, please consider taking care of them now."

Windows 7 has such high compatibility with the previous version of Windows, which most applications should run without any modifications. Because of a number of new features and modifications added in order to maintain a higher level of security, however, some applications may not function or some features may be unavailable. Yamazaki's session picked up the key elements that cause the current applications' compatibility, and explained the workarounds and solutions for each cause. Yamazaki also discussed what software designs and development approaches would be ideal for the latest desktop environment based on Windows 7 and Internet Explorer 8.

Exclusive Early-Bird Marketing Information

In the last session of this seminar, Satoshi Hosoi (Sr. Executive Product Manager, Commercial Windows Business Group, Microsoft Co., Ltd. Japan) shared the latest marketing information, including videos that illustrate the history of Windows and the merits of Windows 7 in a few minutes, as well as the upcoming marketing schedule and brand designs. This information was provided in advance exclusively to the participants only.

"Microsoft now offers Windows 7 RC, and we've received positive feedback from the users evaluating the RC," said Hosoi, "The product is now scheduled to be shipped to the market this fall, while a number of companies are planning for early adoption of the product."

In addition to the marketing information, this session also discussed the five approaches that Microsoft takes about compatibility. In developing Windows 7, Microsoft has made much effort for hardware and software compatibility.

The status of the hardware and software currently used would be verified by "Prior Check" tools. Incompatible applications would be supported via a series of solutions including compatibility functions, compatibility tools and virtualization technologies. Compatible hardware and software would be eligible for the Windows 7 compatibility "log program".

"Virtualization technologies such as MED-V (Microsoft Enterprise Desktop Virtualization) and Windows XP Mode for Windows 7 would be very useful as temporary solutions until the application compatibility issues are fully resolved," emphasized Hosoi, "Many customers who have rather negative concerns for migration due to their legacy application compatibility issues can utilize their application assets in the latest desktop environment.

Opinion Exchange among Developers Who Have High Expectations of Windows 7

After the seminar sessions, a fellowship banquet was offered. Following their self-introductions, the speakers, participants and other staff members exchanged opinions on their expectations of Windows 7 and the current market trends.

> " *We've received positive feedback from many users evaluating Windows 7 RC.*"

Satoshi Hosoi
Sr. Executive Product Manager, Commercial Windows Business Group,
Microsoft Co., Ltd. Japan

Windows 7 Seminars Overview

Hosted by wipse IT Venture Community, Gifu Innovation Center and Asahikawa Innovation Center, the Windows 7 seminars were held at various locations.

Windows 7 Seminars

- **Hosted by wipse IT Venture Community:** June 15, 2009, Microsoft Co., Ltd., Japan, Shinjuku HQ, Seminar Room
- **Hosted by Gifu Innovation Center:** June 9, 2009, Softpia Japan Center Bldg. 1st Floor Seminar Hall.

- **Hosted by Asahikawa Innovation Center:** June 19, 2009, Asahikawa Research Center, 2nd Floor Training Room

Seminar Overview

Merits of Windows 7 and Compatibility Information for Developers
Instructor: Akiko Yamazaki (Manager, IT/NW Learning Div., NEC Learning, Ltd.)

- **Outstanding User Experience of Windows 7**
- **Performance Innovation of Windows 7**
- **Windows 7 Compatibility Information for Developers**

Merits of Internet Explorer 8 and Compatibility Information for Developers
Instructor: Akiko Yamazaki (Manager, IT/NW Learning Div., NEC Learning, Ltd.)

- **Merits of Internet Explorer 8**
- **Internet Explorer 8 Compatibility Considerations**

Microsoft Innovation Center Report 2009-2010 vol.2

Microsoft and Academia Offer CIO Training Course: Waseda University Graduate School of Global Information and Telecommunications Studies, CIO/IT Course for Master's Degree

June 22, 2009,

Waseda University, Nishi-Waseda Campus

Since 2004, Waseda University Graduate School of Global Information and Telecommunications Studies has offered a CIO (Chief Information Officer) and IT Professional Training Course (CIO/IT course). Microsoft dispatches its architects to conduct the IT Solutions class of the CIO/IT course. Microsoft, in collaboration with academia, aims to foster IT human resources with greater knowledge and practical skills.

Waseda University Graduate School Implements Japan's First Full-Scale CIO Training Curriculum

Since 2004, Waseda University Graduate School of Global Information and Telecommunications Studies has offered a two-year CIO and IT Professional Training Graduate School Master's Course (CIO/IT Course). According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan has an IT human resource shortage of 420,000 people. The CIO/IT course plays a crucial role in the development of CIO and IT managers, the foremost issue of the e-Japan strategy, which encompasses the initiatives, strategies and policies needed to establish a Japanese-style IT society. According to Professor Toshio Obi (Prof. Dr. GS of Global Info. & Tel Studies; Director, Institute of e-Government, Waseda University) of the CIO/IT Course, the graduate school's full-scale CIO Development curriculum is the first of its kind in Japan.

"The goal of this course," notes Professor Obi, "is to get the students to understand the role and tasks of a CIO (Chief Information Officer) and to gain practical skills. We want the students to achieve a CIO background as quickly as possible through theories and hands-on training to grow into a reserve unit of CIOs."

The CIO/IT Course's IT Solutions classes, headed by Professor Obi, have Microsoft architects as the lecturers, adding more practical contents to develop CIOs with both theoretical and practical skills.

"Students aiming to become CIOs are selecting this master's degree course," says Professor Obi, "In addition to the full-time students, we have many adult students with work experience as well as those who currently working for companies. Many of them expect more businesslike contents. In the IT Solutions classes, Waseda University instructors deliver the IT solution theories, while Microsoft instructors discuss the latest information and various aspects of things in the workplace, which is valuable for the future CIOs."

Practical Course Contents Geared to Future CIOs' Needs

The CIO/IT Course focuses on a wide range of fields including, e-government directors, IT strategy procurement technicians, information department directors, security specialists, IT investment officers, operations innovation/solutions promoters and chiefs of IT strategy planning and government/business evaluation. It is of particular note that such positions comprise a wide range of jobs urgently needed by society. For this reason, much hope is pinned on Microsoft, which has long provided the latest technologies and a number of solutions, as well as it has architect instructors who have been at the forefront of most of those cutting-edge solutions.

"Many of our alumni are designing their own careers as, for example, local governments' CIOs, entrepreneurs or business consultants with SE background," comments Shotaro Suzuki (Architect Evangelist, Customer Technology Engagement Group, Developer & Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan), "A lot of decision-making is required of CIOs, and we often receive questions via e-mail from our students after they graduate. So, with the IT procurement perspective, we consider what kinds of guidelines can be used to make better decisions, and provide lectures based on hands-on practice to develop a manager's mindset for better decision-making."

In his class, Suzuki first outlines the overall optimization of a corporate system, followed by a description of the general concept of EA and SOA as its means. A discussion of the reference architecture has also been held as an example of such optimization. He also introduces team models and process model outlines that are required for the optimization project, as well as other concepts including EVM (Earned Value Management), a cost management concept in a large project management.

"As the next step, we demonstrate how to correctly evaluate the result of the IT investment," added Masayoshi Hagiwara (Architect, Developer & Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan), "Students learn modeling basics to be able to discern good and bad designs. We also explain how the workload is divided at a real site, where development is dispersed by different teams and various kinds of tools are used. Our goal is to help the students, even those without programming experience, to understand the development process and to gain the skills needed to evaluate the results."

IT Human Resources Needed: Gap between Ideal and Reality

Another CIO/IT Course instructor Naoko Iwasaki (PhD. Assistant Professor and Deputy Director, Research Institute of e-Government, Waseda University) is specialized in the field of CIOs, and conducting CIO core competence researches. Since she found a gap in the ideal CIO and the reality in a needs analysis among companies in Japan, Iwasaki has been working on the design of this course with Professor Obi.

"It's been said," said Iwasaki, "that in Japan, communication ability and leadership are lacking when compared to other countries. In the meantime, many leaders in Japan point out that there are few graduate school programs and curricula to nurture these abilities."

Iwasaki also notes that the United States is the leading country in CIO training. The government played a central role in formulating the CIO Core Competence in 1996. It has been revised four times since then and is currently in use in CIO training at six CIO universities.

"The instruction methods in the US differ from those of Japanese universities," remarks Iwasaki, "Through education using PBL (Problem Based Learning) and case studies, they nurture leadership and communication ability as well as practical skills. Because CIOs are supposed to have not only technical ability, but also managerial and business strategy abilities, there is a need to develop human resources with both managerial and information skills. For these reasons, we believe a course like this, combining theory and practice in the curriculum, is effective for CIO training in Japan."

"Through strong collaboration between a university that produces new findings and a company with the latest technology and operational ability, we believe this will lead to future innovations."

Toshio Obi
Prof. Dr. GS of Global Info. & Tel Studies; Director, Institute of e-Government, Waseda University

Partnership between Academia and Industry: Human Resource Development for Innovation

The biggest reason that the CIO/IT Course asked Microsoft for its architects to conduct the classes is to help the students gain practical skills. Professor Obi believes, in training human resources for IT where progress is rapid, a partnership between industry and academia is essential.

"In the United States, people arrive work-ready at firms after graduating from university," notes Professor Obi, "Even in Japan, there is a greater need for practical courses these days, and the number of students in graduate school with work experience is increasing. Advances in the IT industry are rapid, however, you cannot gain practical skills if you are not at the cutting edge. This course is a pilot course. We expect students to learn not only technical skills and information from instructors at the cutting edge of their business, but their very way of life."

To fulfill such expectations, Suzuki keeps in mind, in addition to introducing the latest topics to his classes, that he should explain what business impact may be anticipated from the technologies. Hagiwara, another instructor from Microsoft, strives to teach not only how-to's, but to develop students' ability to identify problems for decision makings in crucial situations.

"We asked Microsoft to work with us," comments Professor Obi, "because Microsoft has been a company which, in addition to providing the latest technology and a long list of IT solutions, also contributes to society on a global level, including human resource development, and they make a good deal of effort to foster CIOs. Through strong collaboration between a university that produces new findings and a company with the latest technology and operational ability, we should be able to establish a new hands-on education style to play a leading role in IT human resource training. We believe this will lead to future innovations."

At Waseda University Graduate School of Global Information and Telecommunications Studies, the campus atmosphere has changed since the number of adult students and learn-by-doing classes increased. The campus now experiences more discussions and students share the experiences of the adult/working students. Such an environment often provides opportunities to help students start new businesses.

Professor Obi's lab will present the results of this course at a conference. They also plan to make materials of the course contents to promote CIO development in Japan.

Microsoft Innovation Center Report 2009-2010 vol.3
Future Engineers and Creators Take on the World
– Imagine Cup 2009 World Finals in Egypt

July 3rd – 7th, 2009,
Cairo, Egypt

Imagine Cup is a global technology contest for technology students from all over the world. A total of 444 students in 149 finalist teams from 70 countries, made it to the finals from over 300,000 nominees worldwide, gathered in Cairo, Egypt. The finalists waged an exciting weeklong battle tackling a theme based on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals: "Imagine a world where technology helps solve the toughest problems."

Entrants from Japan vied for the crown in the most competitive divisions of the world finals: Software Design, Embedded Development and Photography. Each team, working with its mentor, competed at the Imagine Cup 2009 World Finals.

Next Generation Engineers and Creators Seeing and Remaking the World Anew with Technologies

The Imagine Cup is a technology contest that encourages students with passion and creativity who would like to use technology to make changes in today's world. This year marks the 7th contest since the first World Finals in 2003. Every year, the contest's scale has expanded, and it is now widely recognized as a premier world-class student contest. Two years ago, 100,000 students participated in the competition, while the participants numbered over 200,000 last year.

"Welcome to the 7th Imagine Cup World Finals," Ray Ozzie (Chief Software Architect, Microsoft Corporation) said to the finalists, "I am very glad to welcome 444 students in 149 teams from 70 countries here in Cairo. To be here at the World Finals is a great achievement for you all. You have all demonstrated your ability to make it this far to this day. Single-handedly, you have proven your ability to overcome a variety of challenges using your imagination and technical knowledge."

The finalist students at the Imagine Cup 2009 World Finals in Egypt first had to succeed in their country's preliminary competitions and Internet competitions before qualifying for a ticket to the World Finals. At the opening ceremony, Ray Ozzie (Chief Software Architect, Microsoft Corporation) highly commended the abilities and efforts students put in thus far, and described the new possibilities open to the students who competed at these World Finals.

Ray Ozzie spoke to the finalists, "President Obama spoke several months ago at Cairo University and he said: 'You, more than anyone, have the ability to remake this world.' You all, in these few days, will make a lot of new friends. You will be exposed to new values you didn't know, and by integrating many ideas that supersede culture, you can solve challenges that until now you thought were impossible to overcome."

In the Spotlight: Japan Teams Compete in 3 Divisions

At Imagine Cup 2009, students from around the world competed in 9 divisions: Embedded Development, Software Design, Game Development, MashUp, Robotics & Algorithm, IT Challenge, Short Film, Photography (Photo Story) and Design. Each year, students present solutions based on topics related to global problems. This year, the finalist teams from various countries pitted their creativity and engineering skills to compete based on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals: "Imagine a world where technology helps solve the toughest problems."

> **United Nations Millennium Development Goals**
>
> - Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
> - Achieve Universal Primary Education
> - Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
> - Reduce Child Mortality
> - Improve Maternal Health
> - Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases
> - Ensure Environmental Sustainability
> - Develop a Global Partnership for Development

The Japanese finalists competed in 3 divisions: Software Design, Embedded Development and Photography. In the Photography (Photo Story) division, Shiori Terada (3rd year student, Musashino Art University) won the 3rd place award at the world finals. Nevertheless, NISLab++ in the Software Design division and CLFS in the Embedded Design division had strong showings in the first round of competition, they were unable to advance to the second round.

However, Software Design division judge Kotaro Nakayama (Assistant Professor, The Center for Knowledge Structuring, The University of Tokyo) commented, based on his own experience in Imagine Cup World Finals in 2005 and 2006, that there are more important things than winning or losing.

"The battle is always fierce every year," said Nakayama, "and to win the high place awards in Imagine Cup is very hard. On the other hand, there are more to gain at the World Finals than wins or losses. There is no other engineering contest of this scale where students with high levels of motivation and technical skills come together from all around the world. I believe the students made a lot of new friends at the Imagine Cup World Finals, and gained a wealth of experience that will enrich their future."

Imagine Cup 2009 Japan National Teams

Division (Ranking)	Japan National Team and Mentor
Software Design Division (World Finals First Round)	Team: **NISLab ++** • Shinji Nakajima (2nd year student, Doshisha University) • Hiroki Kato (2nd year student, Doshisha University) • Shinya Maeyama (4th year student, Doshisha University) • Kohei Kadowaki (PhD program student, Kyoto University) **Mentors** • Takahiro Koita (Assistant Professor, Department of Information Systems Design, Doshisha University) • Sadahiro Shimoozono (ManaBing Co., Ltd)
Embedded Development Division (World Finals First Round)	Team: **Team CLFS** • Masanori Sato (2nd year student, Tokyo National College of Technology) • Manabu Osada (2nd year student, Tokyo National College of Technology) • Ryunosuke Miyauchi (2nd year student, Tokyo National College of Technology) • Yuki Aruga (Department of Computer Science, 5th year student, Tokyo National College of Technology) **Mentor** • Katsushi Matsubayashi (Professor, Computer Science, Tokyo National College of Technology)
Photography Division (3rd Place)	Team: **Team Terada** • Shiori Terada (3rd year student, Visual Communication Design, Musashino Art University) **Mentor** • Hiroshi Seo (Musashino Art University)

"You will be exposed to new values, and by integrating many ideas that supersede culture, you can solve all kinds of challenges that until now you thought were impossible to overcome."

Ray Ozzie
Chief Software Architect, Microsoft Corporation

Fostering Highly-Skilled ICT Human Resources: Establishing Ideal Style

NISLab++ was a strong contestant in the Software division. Having won the national competition last year, NISLab++ posted the second consecutive championship in Imagine Cup Japan 2009. The team's solution addressed the Millennium Development Goal "Achieve Universal Primary Education." The team presented to the world "PolyBooks," an electronic textbook solution that resolves a lack in the number of textbooks, which hampers learning opportunities at the elementary school level. With the guidance of their mentor, they brushed up the solution to aim at winning a high place award which they could not get in last year's world finals in Paris, France.

"Before this year's world finals, we received a lot of advice from our mentor company, and we incorporated it into our solution. There were suggestions that we could only get from someone at the front line in the industry, which had a very good impact on our solution." Shinji Nakajima (Doshisha University)

Despite three schedule changes in the 1st round of the World Finals, NISLab++, with their previous experience of the World Finals, completed setting up their solutions without major problems. After the presentation, Kohei Kadowaki (Kyoto University) summed it up "We did everything we could do at that point." Expectations rose as everyone awaited the judges' decisions, but the team could not advance to the 2nd round.

Each member of NISLab++ commented on their own experience. For example, Hiroki Kato (Doshisha University) said "I would like to continue my studies," and Kohei Kadowaki (Kyoto University) commented "I would like to think about how to use technology to benefit people." The team's mentor Koita also believes that Imagine Cup plays an important role in establishing a style of developing human resources.
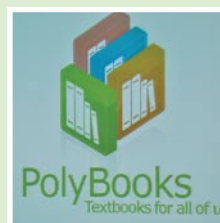
"In my lab, seven other teams aiming for the next Imagine Cup are honing their skills right now," noted Koita, "There are students who struggle to decide what kind of research they should do, and thus participating in the Imagine Cup not only provides them with research topics, but makes the contest itself a great motivation. Students who compete in the event are greatly influenced by their mentor companies and the people from Microsoft who support the contest in so many ways. The students grow exponentially from this experience. It is not an overstatement to say that this is one activity that leads to ideal human resource development."

Future Professionals of Manufacturing Country Felt Positive Feedback

Team CLFS from Tokyo National College of Technology is the first Japanese team from a specialized vocational high school to advance to the World Finals. The team attended the world finals as one of the best 20 finalist teams that won the online world semifinals out of 150 teams.

The team focused on the Millennium Development Goal, "Reduce Child Mortality," and developed an electronic mother-child health handbook system called "The Electronic Maternal and Child Health Handbook." The team got the idea from Japan's Maternal and Child Health Handbook. It is said that Japan's Maternal and Child Health Handbook helps to keep the health of pregnant women in better condition and child mortality low. By embedding a scale and blood pressure monitor in a handheld device running Windows CE, the team created a system that records and shares various data, allowing people to respond in the event of an emergency: all of which a paper Maternal and Child Health Handbook cannot.

As Manabu Nagata (Team CLFS, Tokyo National College of Technology) noted "Thanks to our teacher Ramona who helped us to give a presentation in our limited English," Ramona Lynne Coulson-Watanabe (Tokyo National College of Technology) assisted the team as a language advisor. Each member of the team spoke in turn, which resulted in a poised English presentation.

Masanori Sato (Team CLFS, Tokyo National College of Technology), who plans to enter a robotics-related lab at graduate school next year, says of his experience with embedded development: "This experience will definitely be useful to my future." In the same way, the team members felt a big sense of achievement even though they could not advance to the 2nd round of the competition. Ryunosuke Miyauchi (Team CLFS, Tokyo National College of Technology) calmly analyzed the differences between his team's performance and that of the teams who got top places: "It was just a matter of our enthusiasm gap for the solution, and we were not beaten at all in terms of technology."

"I would like to compliment the students who made it to the top 20," commented Katsushi Matsubayashi (Professor, Computer Science, Tokyo National College of Technology), "as they just started working for the Imagine Cup since January of this year. We were able to come this far because of all the support we received from many people including Microsoft staff. I see the winners' solutions were carefully researched, but the ideas and technology implementation are not beyond our reach. We will get started on it today for the next competition."

Photography Division: Finding "Differences" from Creative Perspective in the Technology World

In a technology contest of the technology-oriented budding engineers, Shiori Terada (3rd year student, Musashino Art University) stood out in the crowd. She competed in the Photography (Photo Story) division, and accomplished the great feat of winning the 3rd place at the World Finals.

In the Photography Division, students created photo stories based on the theme, "Kaleidoscope of Cairo: Ancient culture facing technology" in 36 hours using the cameras and Windows PC's provided. Terada, who is not a photography major, used a different method than other competitors to film the images. While other finalists were leaving to shoot on location, she stayed on site and created hand-made paper art objects, arranging them on an arabesque mat, and created an ad photography-like photo story.

"I intended my work to emphasize concept over photographic skill," commented Terada, "because I am studying advertising. The other 6 finalists have better camera technique and more photo processing skills than I do, but my approach to creating the work was different. And the instant I saw the works of other finalists, I thought that I might be able to win one of the top three places."

Seeing the work of other Japanese teams in other divisions, Terada feels work concept and design may "likely function as a guidance on creativity." She is now considering entering next year's competition in Poland; in the Short Film division or in the other technology-related divisions as a designer.

"I was just unsure which route to take," noted Terada, "I have been thinking about other kinds of work other than graphic design. By participating in Imagine Cup and seeing the work of the people at Microsoft, I now know I would like to do 'work that helps people' in the future."

It seems to some extent that students at Imagine Cup had a chance to reconsider their future careers by meeting people at Microsoft and learning Microsoft is engaged in various corporate citizenship programs including human resource development.

"By participating in Imagine Cup and seeing the work of the people at Microsoft, I now know I would like to do 'work that helps people' in the future."

Shiori Terada
3rd year student, Musashino Art University

Imagine Cup 2009 World Finals in Egypt Winners	
Software Design	• 1st Place: SYTECH (Romania) • 2nd Place: Vital Lab (Russia) • 3rd Place: Virtual Dreams (Brazil)
Embedded Development	• 1st Place: Wafree (Korea) • 2nd Place: iSee (China) • 3rd Place: Intelletronics (Ukraine)
Game Development	• 1st Place: LEVV It (Brazil) • 2nd Place: Epsylon Games (U.S.A.) • 3rd Place: Sanquine Labs (U.K.)
Robotics & Algorithm	• 1st Place: Lukas Perutka (Czech Republic) • 2nd Place: Byron Knoll (Canada) • 3rd Place: Lin Fuming (China)
IT Challenge	• 1st Place: Cosmin Ilie (Romania) • 2nd Place: Wu Chang (China) • 3rd Place: Miklos Cari Sivila (Bolivia)
MashUp	• 1st Place: CURIOS (U.S.A.) • 2nd Place Monastery of Innovations (Poland) • 3rd Place PlanetKY (Singapore)
Photography Division	• 1st Place: Voodoo Delirium (Croatia) • 2nd Place: Woolgathering (Singapore) • **3rd Place: Shiori Terada (Japan)**
Short Film	• 1st Place: Fulham Four (U.K.) • 2nd Place: ChennaiCoolers (India) • 3rd Place: Just4Fun (Ukraine)
Design	• 1st Place: Willburn (Brazil) • 2nd Place: eXchangeFun (U.S.A.) • 3rd Place: Paindepices (France)

Reports

Microsoft Innovation Center Report 2009-2010 vol.4
Latest UX Technology Introduced at Asahikawa Innovation Center Seminar 2009

July 31, 2009,
Asahikawa Terminal Hotel

At Asahikawa Innovation Center, one of Microsoft Innovation Center's local alliance organizations, Microsoft hosted a technology seminar entitled, "From 'Think' to 'Experience': the Future of IT and the Power of Design." Microsoft introduced its ideas on the world of next-generation IT and the latest user experience (UX) technology that will support it.

The number of participants who applied to attend the seminar exceeded the 100 available spots. Not only developers, but many others from the general public attended and listened eagerly to talks given by Akihiro Oba (General Manager, Developer & Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Co., Ltd., Japan) and other members of Microsoft's team of lecturers.

Asahikawa Innovation Center: Making Effective Use of the Value of Partnership

Asahikawa Innovation Center is a Microsoft Innovation Center local alliance organization operated by Asahikawa Research Center. The City of Asahikawa, Asahikawa Information and Communication Technology (ITC) and Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan agreed to work together to actualize the vision "Asahikawa: City of Web Design" and to revitalize the local IT industry. They established the Asahikawa Innovation Center at the Asahikawa Research Center, and are promoting IT at the local level, focusing on human resource development activities.

"In Asahikawa, human resource development is an important theme," said Junji Hirashima (General Manager, Planning Division, General Coordination and Policy Planning Department, Asahikawa Research Center; Secretariat, Asahikawa Information & Communication Technology), "We have been introducing the latest technology through various events like seminars. But since the establishment of Asahikawa Innovation Center, in just six months, we've had seminars with over 1000 participants."

In the IT industry, gathering information about the latest technologies is equally as important as human resources. Many at Asahikawa's IT companies felt that as with business, information was also concentrated around the Tokyo metropolitan area, and they have had difficulty accessing the information.

"For development of the Asahiyama Virtual Zoo, Microsoft provided the latest technology," noted Hitoshi Seki (President, Computer Business Co.,Ltd; Steering Committee & Joint Development Division Chief, Asahikawa Information & Communication Technology), "At today's seminar, we have Microsoft's UX technology evangelists here with us. And at the September event, Microsoft plans to provide touch panel PC's. All of these are big opportunities to introduce the latest technology to the local community. The survey sent to local businesses suggests that while they expect collaboration, most businesses are pleased that Microsoft has created a path for information gathering. By establishing the Asahikawa Innovation Center, the entire local community can feel the impact of this partnership with Microsoft."

UX Technology: Crucial Element of Microsoft's Strategy

As the Asahikawa Innovation Center Seminar 2009 was featured in local newspapers, participants were not only engineers who use UX technology, but also many non-engineers. The venue was filled to such capacity that extra chairs prepared were still not enough.

In the seminar, Akihiro Oba Akihiro Oba (General Manager, Developer & Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan) introduced Microsoft's vision of the near future lifestyles, featuring advanced IT, using a series of videos and demonstrations. He also explained the importance of the UX technologies that the Asahikawa Innovation Center is working on and how Microsoft's products and technologies fit in.

"When cloud computing becomes widely adopted, not only PCs," explained Oba, "but cellular phones, digital cameras and all kinds of devices will be connected to one network to use services. In this kind of environment, a simple, easy-to-use design is important for whatever device is used, and Microsoft is strategically focusing its effort on the user experience field."

Following Oba's session, two Microsoft evangelists introduced the latest UX technology.

Yoshitaka Kasugai (Evangelist Lead, UX Technology Engagement Group, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan) introduced the latest technology in Silverlight 3, which implements Rich Internet Applications (RIA). Kasugai's explanation included descriptions of how to use the

technology with high-definition video and digital camera photographs, which enabled most participants to understand and feel the relevance of this kind of new technology.

Noriko Kanbara□UX Evangelist, UX Technology Engagement Group, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan) introduced natural user interfaces, such as the multi-touch technology in Windows 7. In this interactive session, participants actually touched the touch-panel PC that Kanbara brought for demonstration, and gained a greater appreciation for the new user interface.

Asahikawa Innovation Center Seminar 2009 "From 'Think' to 'Experience': the Future of IT and the Power of Design"

July 31st, 2009 Asahikawa Terminal Hotel, 6th Floor, Keiun Higashi no Ma Room

Hosted by the Asahikawa Innovation Center, a seminar was held featuring Microsoft UX Evangelist speakers. The speakers introduced Microsoft's ideas for the world of next-generation IT and the latest user experience (UX) technology that will support it.

- **Lifestyles of the Near Future Changed by Next-Generation IT Infrastructure -Latest Trend in Microsoft Technologies**
  Akihiro Oba (General Manager, Developer & Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan)

- **Use of Digital Media with the Latest Version of Silverlight**
  Yoshitaka Kasugai (Evangelist Lead, UX Technology Engagement Group, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan)

- **Natural User Interface Enabled by Next-Generation Technology**
  Noriko Kanbara (UX Evangelist, UX Technology Engagement Group, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan)

" By establishing the Asahikawa Innovation Center, the entire local community can feel the impact of this partnership with Microsoft."

Hitoshi Seki
President, Computer Business Co.,Ltd; Steering Committee & Joint Development Division Chief, Asahikawa Information & Communication Technology

Seminars Tip Off New Way to Uncover Human Resources

Through seminars and other such activities at the Asahikawa Innovation Center, a new way to uncover human resources is coming to life.

Engineers requiring a new work style, for example, represent one such trend. There is a gradual increase in the number of engineers from Asahikawa who, seeking a better work-life balance, are quitting companies in the Tokyo metropolitan area and returning to Asahikawa. However, some worry that without finding a place to exhibit their abilities, such human resources will remain undiscovered.

"For these people," commented Junji Hirashima (President, Computer Business Co.,Ltd; Steering Committee & Joint Development Division Chief, Asahikawa Information & Communication Technology), "providing opportunities for communicating with other people is extremely important. If they attend a seminar even once, they can exchange business cards, be introduced to local companies, as well as receive other kinds of guidance from us. Microsoft has had an effect on communication, and the attendance at this seminar far exceeded the capacity. In addition, more than half the participants were non-engineers. Recently, we've been interacting with people from Web development companies established in this region."

Also notable is the increase in the number of students applying directly for seminars since the establishment of the Asahikawa Innovation Center. Hitoshi Seki (President, Computer Business Co.,Ltd; Steering Committee & Joint Development Division Chief, Asahikawa Information & Communication Technology), who has had long relationships with university instructors, believes the ability to carry out human resource development activities inside the schools themselves now has produced some dramatic results.

"*Through these opportunities for exchange we hope that people in Asahikawa would use the facilities of Asahikawa Innovation Center to access new information, discover the things they want to do, and realize their goals.*"

Junji Hirashima
General manager, Planning Division, General Coordination and Policy Planning Department, Asahikawa Research Center;
Secretariat, Asahikawa Information & Communication Technology

"To realize the 'City of Web Design,' the Asahikawa Virtual Zoo has utilized Silverlight and Photosynth," noted Seki, "and we are aggressively pursuing research in UX technology at the Asahikawa Innovation Center including this seminar. There are students who are interested in Silverlight, and we received requests, for instance, to expand the scope of our research projects to schools. Our activities are expanding, involving schools."

Utilizing IT to Create a "Town Geared for Everyone"

stablished with the aim of creating a 'City of Web Design,' Asahikawa Innovation Center has actively promoted the widespread use of UX technology utilizing Silverlight. Right now, the center is pouring its energy into another big project: For the City of Asahikawa's vision, Town Geared for Everyone, Asahikawa Innovation Center is now engaged in a number of support activities for disabled people.

"IT can be a great help to develop employment opportunities for disabled people," explained Junji Hirashima (General manager, Planning Division, General Coordination and Policy Planning Department, Asahikawa Research Center; Secretariat, Asahikawa Information & Communication Technology), "Asahikawa Innovation Center has a great track record in this area, providing training for disabled people that leads to employment opportunities."

In the future, there are plans to utilize IT, beyond developing employment opportunities, in various support activities in other areas including tourism. Also, Asahikawa Innovation Center provides, for the vision of Town Geared for Everyone, facilities where local people can experience the latest technologies.

Asahikawa Information & Communication Technology had built a relationship with Microsoft before their collaboration agreement. Hirashima, a representative of the office, has long introduced exciting technologies from Microsoft to local companies at every occasion.

"Until now, if you were interested in the latest Microsoft technologies, you had to search the Web or books, or ask them directly," said Hirashima, "Now, you can join a talk seminar at Asahikawa Innovation Center, which is a local alliance organization of Microsoft Innovation Center. We will be hosting a number of events, and through these opportunities for exchange we hope that people in Asahikawa will use the facilities of Asahikawa Innovation Center to access new information, discover the things they want to do and realize their goals."

Courtesy Call to Asahikawa City Mayor

July 31st, 2009, Asahikawa City Hall

Akihiro Oba (General Manager, Developer & Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan) and Nobuaki Nagai (Senior Manager, Business Incubation (LSE), Developer & Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan) paid a visit to the Asahikawa City Hall with the staff from Asahikawa Information & Communication Technology. The group met with Masahito Nishikawa (Mayor, City of Asahikawa) and Kenji Tachibana (Director, Economy & Tourism Department, City of Asahikawa).

The group reported on the activities of the last six months and received thanks from Mayor Nishikawa regarding the partnership at Asahikawa Innovation Center. Oba commented, "We have been engaged in corporate citizenship activities in various local areas, but the results we have gotten here in such a short time could not have been possible without the passion of the people of Asahikawa City," and the parties confirmed a number of results.

To Mayor Nishikawa's question, "There are many people active in the field of furniture design in Asahikawa. Will design be important in the IT world as well?" Oba explained the importance of easy-to-use design in the cloud computing environment where numerous devices are connected. The parties confirmed that their collaborative relationship is set to continue for promoting UX technology.

Just the Facts (Excerpts from achievements in fiscal year 2009*)

Programs Offered by Microsoft Innovation Center

- **Interoperability Program**
  For partners developing business solutions that allow interoperability of various data using Microsoft technologies, including Windows, this program offers environments to verify interconnectivity and interoperability of services and applications. About 300 companies participated in this program through Microsoft Innovation Center last year.

- **Technical Innovation Program**
  Targeting a large number of customers, Microsoft Innovation Center has provided support to migrate partners' solutions to Microsoft platforms. In other words, Microsoft Innovation Center has, through this program, promoted the partners' businesses to help them grow.

Education and Training Offered by Microsoft Innovation Center

- **Developer and IT Professional Training**
  In the last year alone, over 3,300 software developers and IT professionals in Japan took Microsoft's training courses.

- **Employment**
  Among 144 trainees last year, 50 successfully found employment.

Support for Domestic Software Development Companies Offered by Microsoft Innovation Center

- **Alliance with Domestic Software Development Companies and Entrepreneurs**
  Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan has established partnerships with approximately 630 software development companies in Japan, and provided them with various resources including technology, marketing, and business development.

Support for Universities and Educational Institutions Offered by Microsoft Innovation Center

- **Alliance with Universities and Educational Institutions**
  Microsoft Co. Ltd., Japan has established partnerships with approximately 60 universities and educational institutions, and, through Technology Innovation Program and Platform Support Program, provided them with various resources from Microsoft Innovation Center.

Activities of Alliance Organizations/Innovation Centers

- **Sapporo Innovation Center**
  Sapporo Innovation Center has held over 40 events and seminars including Sapporo Innovation Day. Over 1,000 people in total participated in these events and seminars, and 68 participants obtained MCP (Microsoft Certified Professional) certification. In addition, 8 participants were employed through IT Human Resources Employment Program.

- **Gifu Innovation Center**
  Gifu Innovation Center has held over 100 seminars and lectures and over 2,000 people in total attended these seminars. Gifu Innovation Center also provides training for Institute of Building SOA Components and Assembly in Distributed Development Environment at Softopia, Gifu (NPO).

- **Asahikawa Innovation Center**
  Asahikawa Innovation Center has held over 50 seminars and lectures and over 1,000 people in total attended these seminars. Through Asahikawa Innovation Center Human Resources Nurturing Program, 37 participants were employed. In addition, Asahikawa MIC provides Silverlight material creation training for disabled people as part of the grant-aided IT human resource training project of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication.

* July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009

MIC Office and affiliates in Japan

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Regional Microsoft Innovation Center

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International Academy of Media Arts and Sciences)**
   3-95, Ryoke-cho, Ogaki City, Gifu 503-0014, Japan
      http://www.iamas.ac.jp/index_E.html

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   1-10, Shimonopporo Technopark 1-chome, Atsubetsu-ku,
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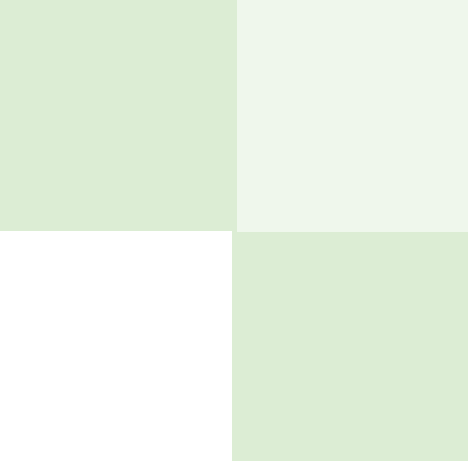   http://www.sec.or.jp/elecen/index.html

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