

## Let's talk Japan (March 26, 2018): Panelist Profiles

**Eric De Groot**  
**President, Icynene Asia Pacific Inc.**



Eric De Groot is President of Tokyo-based Icynene Asia Pacific Inc. He previously worked in Japan for many years including the B.C. Government's Trade and Investment Office in Kobe and B.C. Wood Specialties Group. In 2003 he joined Forbo Industries, a Swiss-based manufacturer, as Japan Country Manager of the Flooring Systems Division before joining Icynene in 2014. Established in Mississauga in 1986, Icynene helps to build energy efficient residential and commercial structures in over 31 countries worldwide. As well as direct experience managing entities in Japan, Eric has also been active in broader areas related to policy and lobbying on behalf of foreign companies in Japan having been elected to a two-year term as President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan (CCCJ) and continuing to serve as an officer on CCCJ's Board of Governors.

**Robert Crane**  
**Corporate Development Director of Equiom (Canada)**



Robert is the founder of Solid Japan KK and Solid Business Solutions Hong Kong Limited and served as Managing Director of both companies prior to their integration into the Equiom Group. He provides operation oversight and guidance to Equiom's Japan office and strategic regional business development and advisory services to Equiom's Hong Kong office. Most recently he's been appointed as the Corporate Development Director of Equiom (Canada) Limited. Robert has over 16 years of experience advising multinationals and startups in Tokyo and Hong Kong. He also served as Assistant Director for the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) from 2001 to 2006 where he focused on inward investment into Japan, and was in charge of research and FDI promotion. He has helped many companies set up their operations in Tokyo and Hong Kong and has an excellent knowledge of the Japanese market. A former president of the Entrepreneur Association of Tokyo, Robert was a founder of Tokyo Executives LLC, a high-level private business community in Tokyo. He is a graduate of McGill University and John Abbott College.

**Ron Di Carlantonio**  
**Founder and CEO, iNAGO**



Ron is the CEO and founder of iNAGO, a Tokyo/Toronto-based company creating next-generation conversational digital assistants. Graduating from Mathematics and Computer Science at the University of Waterloo, Ron moved to Japan and created the cult software AQUAZONE – a virtual aquarium with artificial life. Wanting more, Ron focused on making computers more human-like. In 1998, he founded iNAGO and created netpeople, a software platform enabling humans to interact naturally with computers. In Japan, Toyota, NEC and others have used netpeople in next-generation solutions from smartphones to robots. In 2015, Ron launched netpeople in North America to power automotive and all smart devices.