

Inside this
issue

u-blox has opened a second office in Japan	1 + 2
Japan's current economic situation	2
Japan to develop a standard on "Omotenashi"	3
JETRO's survey on Trans-Pacific Partnership	3
List of Japanese restaurants available on Internet	3
MRJ first flight test	4

u-blox has opened a second office in Japan

Headquartered in Thalwil (Canton Zurich) and founded in 1997, u-blox is a supplier of wireless and positioning semiconductors and modules. u-blox entered the Japanese market in 2002 and now has offices in Tokyo and Osaka.

Thomas Seiler, u-blox CEO, graduated from the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology in Zurich (ETHZ) and in Lausanne (EPFL) in the field of mechanical engineering. He completed his MBA at INSEAD (France).

"I served three technology companies before joining u-blox; for all of them, Japan is a major market. For over 20 years I have been visiting Japan several times per year. I have a good appreciation for Japan and its culture, which is a very rich one," Thomas Seiler said.

u-blox global business

u-blox is involved in three markets: (1) cellular connectivity, which provides communication via mobile phone networks; (2) positioning connectivity, which is based on information provided by satellites; and (3) short range con-



Thomas Seiler, CEO, u-blox

nectivity, which uses Wi-Fi and Bluetooth to connect devices. It supplies its products to customers in the automotive, mobile device and infrastructure industries. Employing a total of 675 people, u-blox has a global presence with offices in 23 locations in Europe, Asia and the USA. u-blox revenues amounted to CHF 161.9 million in the first half of 2015, showing a growth of 33.1% compared to the same period in the preceding year. Furthermore, its net profit increased by 3.9% to CHF 15.0 million in the first half of 2015. The financial results remain

strong despite the high value of the Swiss Franc compared to the Euro.

Opening an office in Tokyo

u-blox started to operate business in Japan in 2002. "Initially we needed to prove to the industrial community that we are a competent supplier and that our products are leading technology – we had no reference at all. We used academic people to build our reputation. They found our products interesting, and they recommended them to their colleagues in the industry," explained Mr. Seiler.

After building its reputation, u-blox opened a sales office in Tokyo in 2007, where it now employs 10 staff.

When asking about the reasons for opening an office in Japan, Thomas Seiler explained: "We saw the business potentials of the Japanese market. We also wanted to learn from Japanese technology developments".

Continued on page two

会見

INTERVIEW

u-blox has opened a second office in Japan

会見

INTERVIEW

Continued from page one

Expanding from Osaka

“u-blox business in Asia is growing strongly, now accounting for about 50% of our sales. And Japan is our number two market in Asia. We

are now expanding our business in Japan with the opening of an office in Osaka,” Mr. Seiler said.

Osaka’s office, with initially two employees, provides sales and technical support.

When this office opened on June 1, 2015, Tesshu Naka, Country Man-

ager of u-blox Japan said: “Since the foundation of u-blox Japan eight years ago, we have supported the Southern-Central region from Tokyo, including Osaka. With the continued expansion of the business in the Kansai region, we want to move closer to our customers”.

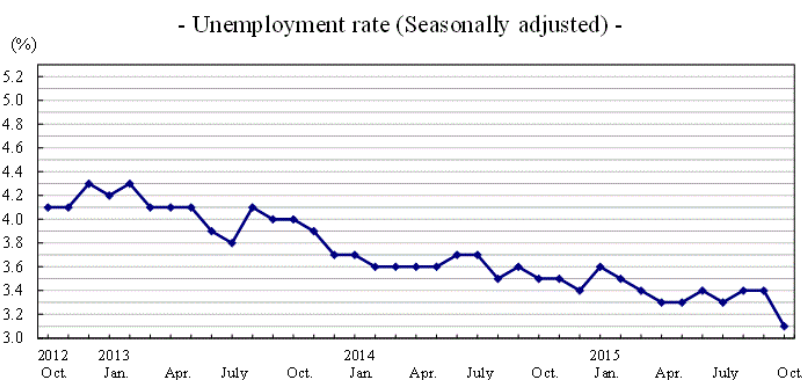
Japan’s current economic situation

動向

SITUATION

According to the Bank of Japan, “Japan’s economy has continued to recover moderately, although exports and production have been affected by the slowdown in emerging economies” (November issue). Japan’s GDP shrank at an annualized pace of 0.8% in the third quarter of 2015 (July-September). Since the GDP declined 0.7% in the second quarter, it marks a fall of Japan into recession.

Japan’s exports slightly declined 2.2% in October from the previous year to ¥ 6,542 billion, down 3.6%



Japan’s Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

in Asia, but up 4.7% in Western Europe and 5.9% in North America. On the domestic market, unemployment rate declined sharply

from 3.4% in September to 3.1%. Japan records lowest unemployment rate since July 1995.

Japan to develop a standard on “Omotenashi”

政策

POLICY

When looking in a dictionary, you will see that the Japanese word “Omotenashi” is quite difficult to translate into other languages: it means hospitality, treatment, reception, service. Its complexity is due to the fact that it also refers to a unique Japanese notion based on a highly demanding conception of the service.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade

and Industry has announced that it will establish a Study Group on the Omotenashi Standard Certification (provisional name). Its objective will be to elaborate a system for appropriately assess high quality services with the aim of raising standards in Japan’s service industry as a whole.

The service industry accounts for three fourths of Japan’s GDP. In

order to increase its potentials under the Abenomics, it appears essential to improve both productivity and profitability in the service industry. Omotenashi will contribute to provide a compensation that correspond to the quality of a service that is not necessarily been paid, by evaluating appropriately the quality of the service.

JETRO's survey on Trans-Pacific Partnership

From September 11, 2015 through October 16, 2015 JETRO conducted a survey on Japanese-affiliated firms in the US and in Canada.

639 valid replies were received from firms in the US (a 56.2% response rate) out of 1,137 to whom we sent questionnaires, while 130 replies were received for the Canada survey (a 62.5% response rate) out of 208.

81.4% to expect profit in 2015

In 2015, 81.4% of respondents operating in the US (against 82.3% in

2014) and 76% of Japanese companies operating in Canada (against 74.4% in 2014) expect their businesses to mark a profit.

High expectations for Trans-Pacific Partnership

Utilization rates of many FTAs have risen compared to those of the previous year. The rates are particularly high in trade with Canada and Mexico. The FTA with Korea (KORUS) was also frequently utilized both in import (52.9%) and export (34.5%).

More than 40% of respondents were considering utilization of the TPP, upon conclusion, both in imports and exports with Japan (45.3% for import and 42.9% for export). Regarding imports from Vietnam and Malaysia, the rate at which firms consider utilization of the TPP exceeded 50%. Regarding concrete effects of the TPP, a large number of respondents showed their expectations that the TPP will facilitate customs and trade of goods as well as market access for goods.

分析

ANALYSIS

List of Japanese restaurants available on Internet

Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (MAFF) has created a Website "Taste of Japan" to supply various information about Japanese cuisine. The website aims to bring closer to the audience the Japanese cuisine. It includes — among others —

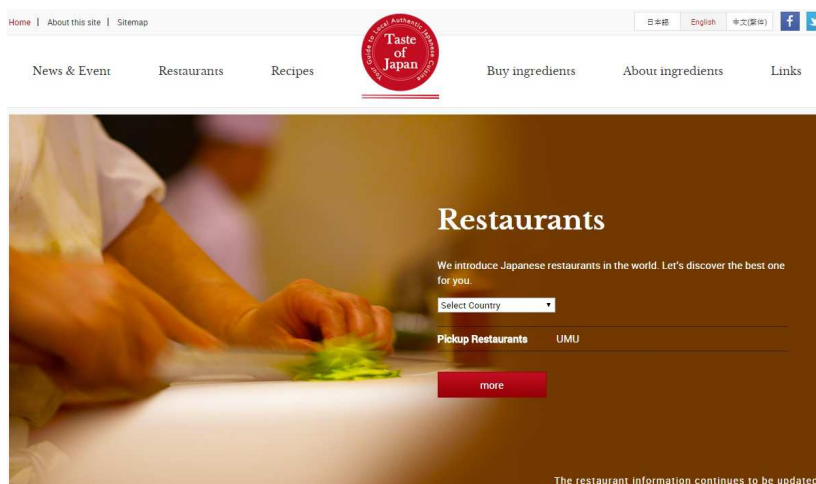
- Information on Japanese restaurants in different countries; with respect to Switzerland, a visitor can search by Canton, type of restaurant or category of Japanese cuisine (Traditional, Sushi, Ramen...);
- Easy recipes for Japanese meals, such as shabu shabu, miso soup and Japanese-style beef;

- explanations of typical Japanese food like rice or "wagyu" (Japanese beef).

Please visit Taste of Japan's Website at: <http://www.tasteofjapan.jp/>

活動

ACTIVITY



© Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

革新

INNOVATION

MRJ first flight test

The first flight test of the MRJ on November 11, 2015 marks the return of Japan in the aviation industry. The last previous passenger plane built in Japan was the NAMC YS-11 in 1965.

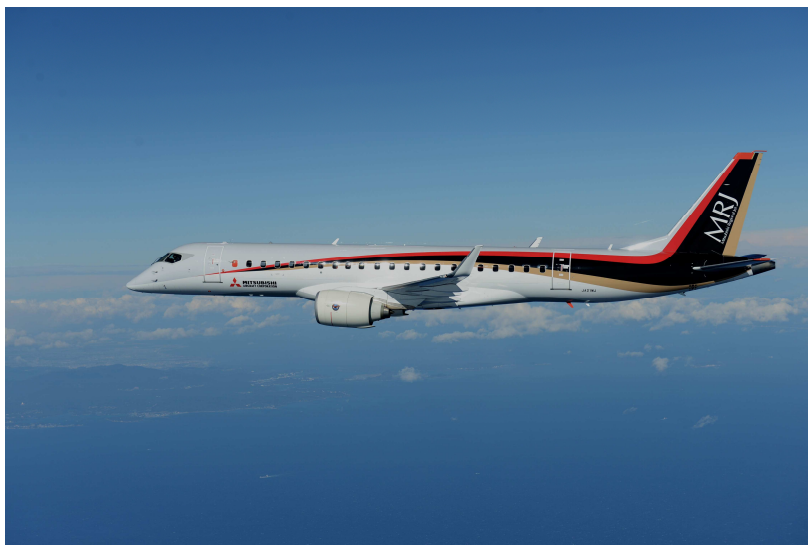
Test flight on November 11

The MRJ has been developed by the Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation and built by the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd.

It took off from Nagoya airfield and flew over the Pacific coast for one hour and a half.

"The MRJ successfully took to sky today thanks to ongoing cooperation and support from all members involved", said Hiromichi Morimoto, President, Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation.

"Operational performance of the MRJ was far better than expected. We had a significantly comfortable flight," said Pilot Yasumura.



© Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation (with permission)

Energy-efficiency and cabin comfort

The MRJ is a 88-seats jet intended for short or middle range routes. Based on an optimized aircraft shape by a sophisticated aerodynamic design and Geared Turbo-fan™ engine technology, it uses 20% less fuel than comparable commercial jets.

It produces spacious cabins with a

seat width of 0.47 m and a cabin height of 2.03 m. It provides only aisle and window seats— no middle seats.

A total of 223 orders with an additional 184 options and purchase rights have been made so far, mainly by US regional airlines.

Several additional flight tests will be conducted, with a scheduled delivery in the second quarter of 2017.

JETRO is a government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small to medium size Japanese firms maximize their global export potential.

The JETRO Switzerland Newsletter can also be viewed and/or downloaded online:
<http://www.jetro.go.jp/switzerland/newsletter>

JETRO

Japan External Trade Organization

JETRO Geneva
 80, Rue de Lausanne
 1202 Geneva
 Phone: 022/732 13 04
 Fax: 022/732 07 72
 E-mail: SWG@jetro.go.jp