

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF JETRO SAN FRANCISCO

JETRO to Host Event in San Francisco on February 10th, Encourages Local Companies To Get Involved

January 31, 2014 - Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) will host the Japan-U.S. Business and Technology Symposium 2014, a free event to explore the economic opportunities driven by technology and enhanced relations between Japan and the United States. Toshiro Okada, Chief Executive Director of JETRO San Francisco, explained why it is crucial to hold this event now and what JETRO wants to deliver to businesses in the U.S. and Japan.



WHAT IS YOUR KEY OBJECTIVES OF THIS SYMPOSIUM?



Toshiro Okada, Chief Executive Director
JETRO San Francisco

Okada: I've always felt that Japan and the U.S. could collaborate more to facilitate two-way economic interaction. This symposium aims at bringing business leaders of both countries to learn how to achieve closer collaboration, vital to deliver innovative solutions to businesses and consumers.

As part of JETRO's mission, I hope more foreign companies may have better understanding of the Japanese business and economy along with its policy aspects since such knowledge can help these businesses to grow globally. It will be a great opportunity to introduce the senior official of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan who will talk about the latest movements of the widely-discussed "Abenomics" economic stimulus plan that drives our business moving forward and impacts the global economy. I hope our message is delivered to as many business leaders as possible who operate business globally.

WHY DID YOU SELECT THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA FOR THE EVENT?

Okada: Driving economic interaction through cutting-edge technology is what the Bay Area is all about. Especially, Silicon Valley attracts top talents from all over the world and continues to generate new technology and business without any boundaries. Given this, the San Francisco Bay Area is the perfect place to bring industry experts and business leaders together, break down “silos”, and leverage insights.

From a historical perspective, there is an inevitable connection between Japan and San Francisco. In 1860, the then-government of Japan delivered to San Francisco an instrument of ratification for the historic Treaty of Amity and Commerce signed in 1858, which opened up ports in Japan to trade with foreign countries including the U.S. It was also in San Francisco where the Treaty of Peace with Japan was signed between Japan and the U.S. in 1951. I believe San Francisco has always meant to be an epoch-making destination for the two countries.

WHY DID YOU SELECT THREE INDUSTRIES – IT, ENERGY/ENVIRONMENT, AND HEALTHCARE/MEDICAL DEVICE?

Okada: These industries are the fields where Japan and the U.S. should be able to proactively collaborate. The IT business has dramatically evolved and changed people’s life in recent years. The leading countries like Japan and the U.S. can join together to achieve further innovation. Energy, environment and medical industries face many challenges in the 21st century for which Japan and the U.S. should play a key role to provide innovative solutions.



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THE EVENT WILL GATHER SPEAKERS FROM VARIOUS BUSINESS FIELDS. WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DELIVER?

Okada: I am very grateful that so many business leaders agreed to speak at our event. They represent organizations with cutting-edge technologies and a successful global presence, especially in Japan and the U.S. They will share their perspectives on the economic and business opportunities between the two countries. JETRO was fortunate to get connected with these executives through our activities and I want to invite more business leaders in this great business network.

WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THE SYMPOSIUM?

Okada: I expect a wide range of business leaders who already do business with Japan as well as those who have an interest in Japanese markets and technology. Some may think the Japanese market is too complicated, closed or filled with mysteries. I believe the symposium will become eye-opening opportunities through the insights of both the speakers and attendees. I also want to welcome Japanese expatriates and their local business peers to expand their business horizons. Lastly, a cocktail reception will follow the symposium as a networking opportunity while enjoying Japanese sake.

The event will take place at the San Francisco Marriott, located near Union Square in San Francisco at 480 Sutter Street on Monday, February 10, from 1:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Please join our event with Japanese government officials and leading industry professionals, and explore how to boost economic growth in both countries. Seats are filling up quickly. If you are interested, please register as soon as possible.

Find out about sessions and speakers and to register:

<http://jetrosymposium2014.eventbrite.com/>

Read Our Press Release:

<https://www.jetro.go.jp/usa/usatojapan/Jsympopressrelease.html>

About JETRO USA (www.jetro.org)

The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) is a non-profit government related organization that promotes trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Our six U.S. branches located in Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco serve the following four main objectives: help U.S. companies establish a Japan office; help U.S. companies find Japanese business partners; connect U.S. investors with cutting-edge Japanese technology ventures; and showcase premium Japanese goods.

This material is distributed by JETRO San Francisco on behalf of Japan External Trade Organization, Tokyo, Japan. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.