Japan Conferencing News Updates

By CNA Report Japan

Conferencing News & Analysis for Japan market since 1997

Conferencing News focused on Japan reported for overseas readers   **July 4th, 2006 Edition**
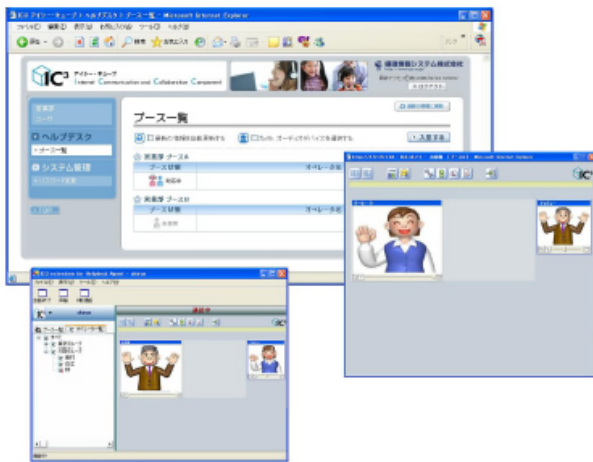
Edition covers news in May to June 2006

Exchange rate: 100 Yen = 0.88 US dollars

Conferencing News in Japan

>Chori Joho System now offers "IC³ extension for Helpdesk"

User interface for IC³ helpdesk

Chori Joho System based in Osaka, that markets "IC³" SDK for web collaboration software announced that they would add an option, "IC³ extension for Helpdesk", that would add features and expand capability of IC³ particularly tailored for Helpdesk application software development.

IC³ is a SDK that is particularly offering core features like communications and collaboration, used for software developers who are looking for applications like webconferecing, e-learning, helpdesk etc..

So with this IC³, the software developers can use it as software component that offers communications capability, so that software developers do not need to work on communications related features and functions from scratch by leveraging feature rich IC³ integrated into their already existed software applications and therefore, you can shorten the time to develop software application.

Chori works with some software vendors to offer groupware and IC³ combined solution where you can launch webconferencing from groupware system or IC³ combined CAD software that allows users to collaborate over the network. And some leading webconferencing CSPs in Japan standardize on IC³ for webconferencing services.

Besides "IC³ extension for Helpdesk", they have other options for such as web conferencing.

They currently offer Japanese, English and Chinese version of IC³ with a plan to expand the range of the language selection particularly through their IC³ partners who are serving customers in and out of Japan.

>Compunetix opens its Japan office

Compunetix opens its Japan Office by partnering JTS Corporation based in Yokohama. Compunetix has customers in Japan by its sales efforts over the past years and recently won a leading service provider in Japan to purchase their "ORCHESTRATOR" for their service expansion.

Compunetix over the years worked with NTT ME or now NTT Advance Technology to serve their customers in Japan. With the new office opened, JTS will work as

the representative in Japan under the direction of Compunetix to strengthen its presence and better provide customer support function needed to boost their business in Japan going forward.

JTS offers "Smart Japan Office" service for non-Japanese IT firms around the world to enter and penetrate into Japan market to facilitate their businesses in Japan. Mr. Tom Kojima president of JTS has more than 25 years of experiences in telecommunications industry. Compunetix will leverage the service to effectively and further penetrate into Japan market.

>NEC Engineering now offers new echo cancellation device

VoicePoint Ex

NEC Engineering based in Tokyo announced recently that they now added, "Voicepoint EX", a new echo cancellation device to the current Voicepoint echo cancellation device product line.

This new product is the second product added to the first one that is "Voicepoint mini". Voicepoint mini is a desktop device that has both microphone and speaker with an echo cancellation, connected to PCs through a USB port, suitable for desktop VoIP

software and webconferencing, allowing users to communicate hands-free.

This new Voicepoint EX has extended capability and it will come with two extended microphones each of which can cover around 10 conference participants/speakers. And it can add two more microphones as an option to cover almost 40 of them according to their theoretical estimate.

The product can be connected to a PC through USB port, so the good thing is that it will unleash the potential of desktop VoIP or webconferencing to accommodate more participants in a single online meeting session. And without this, setting up and coordinating effective audio environment for webconferencing session having dozens of participants in a single session might cause you to have some problems.

It is because it usually requires high level technical skills to take care of all this as you need to have speakers, microphones, audio mixers, and so on, and you have to put them in a coordinated way to work in concert, otherwise, you will have some problems such as audio noise and acoustic feedback that would hit you as headache.

Voicepoint EX has two microphones covering 2-3 meters in radius respectively and each of them can be daisy-chained up to four.

Also the microphone has Adaptive Beam Forming coupled with auto gain controller and noise cancellation, supporting up to 7khz audio, sufficient to have better audio quality than that of audio quality in telephone.

>WebEx Japan and Sony Japan work together to offer webconferencing service for VAIO users

WebEx Japan and Sony Japan work together to provide easy to use and inexpensive but still enriched webconferencing service tailored for Sony's PC VAIO users. With this, they will put a WebEx icon on a desktop screen of VAIO Notebook types, which will be linked to a web page where you can sign up for WebEx's web conferencing service and launch the online meeting immediately.

The service is based onWebEx MeetingCenter service currently offered by the company, however more focused on basic features.

The service includes desktop sharing, meeting scheduling, chatting, annotation, multi-point video bridging (up to four), Outlook/Notes integration, VoIP.

As for language support, they offer Japanese, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Simplified Chinese and traditional Chinese. 7,980 JPY per month with a discount applied if you sign up for the service on a yearly basis.

>Oki Electronics, Oki Network Integration, Polycom Japan, Tomen Cyber Business integrate SIP and H.323 communications environments by SIP/H.323 gateway
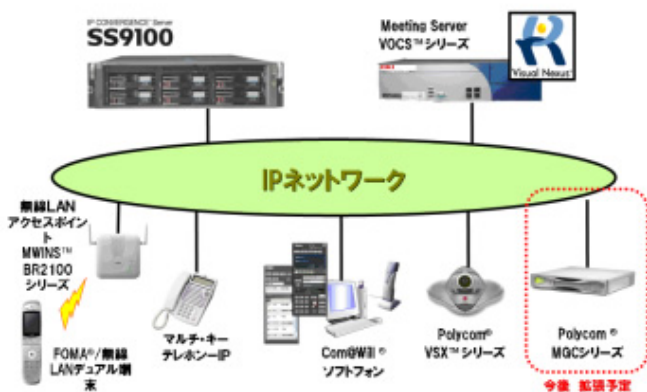
Having SS9100 on the upper left and VOCS on the upper right playing as a pivotal role provide interoperability between SIP and H.323 endpoints thorough IP network (green color area)

Oki Electronics, Oki Network Integration, Polycom Japan, and Tomen Cyber Business (TCB) introduce "ubiquitous IP telephony solution" combining Oki's "IP Convergence Server SS9100" together with products supplied from Polycom Japan and Tomen Cyber Business.

Oki Network Integration, Oki Electronics' subsidiary will take care of the integration part and will deliver the solution to their customers.

In this solution, "Visual Nexus SIP Option" will play a interoperability role as SIP/H.323 gateway connecting Oki's SIP and H.323 endpoints such as Polycom's and Visual Nexus.

One example is that Oki's "Com@WILL softphone" can now make a call to H.323 video endpoints via the gateway, supplied from vendors including Polycom, Visual Nexus and other H.323 terminals available on the market.

>Avaya Japan and Polycom Japan announces integrated solution for Japan market

Respective Japanese arms of Avaya and Polycom Japan join forces to offer "Avaya Video Telephony

Solution" to corporate customers in Japan.

This will be a Japanese rollout of previously announced strategic partnership by US headquarters of respective companies in 2003.

Avaya Japan's president Mr. Katsumi Fujii on the left shakes hands firmly with Mr. Tomomi Okuda, Country Manager of Polycom Japan in a joint press conference held in Tokyo to announce their partnership and the launch of their integrated IP telephony solution for Japan market

This solution will combine Polycom's endpoints into Avaya's IP telephony communications environment by which Polycom's endpoints will be registered at Avaya's Communication Manager so that the Communication Manager can process call features such as a call setup, connection, transfer, in a seamless manner among Avaya's terminals and Polycom's.

In this announcement made in Tokyo recently, both companies also introduced "Avaya Desktop Video Edition 2.0" leveraging the power of Polycom's PVX.

>Alcatel Japan and Polycom Japan announces strategic partnership driving SIP based video solution

Alcatel Japan and Polycom Japan jointly announced strategic multi-year partnership to deliver SIP based end-to-end videoconferencing solution for corporate customers in Japan.

The solution will include Polycom PVX, Polycom, VSX, Polycom MGC, integrated with Alcatel's IP communication platform "OmniPCX Enterprise", "IP Touch", "My Teamwork" all of which are combining modes like audio, video, web, and instant messaging under presence capability that plays a pivotal role in allowing seamless communications.

This also includes unified management system of directory services and dial plan pre-requisite for integrated communications environment.

>VTV Japan and Aethra launches eCommunications, Inc. in Japan

VTV Japan, Aethra's video distributor and reseller in Japan, and Aethra launch in last month a new sales company in Tokyo to boost their Aethra's video products sales in Japan. VTV Japan's president Mr. Masanori Kayano will lead the company as the president and the company will have Mr. Marco Viezzoli on the board of directors.

With this newly formed company, they will form "Aethra Communication Network(ACN)" trying to have sales partner in each prefecture(or state) in Japan. There are 47 prefectures in Japan. Partners under ACN umbrella will work together to share sales, marketing, technical information to facilitate sales and customer supports.

They plan to sell 2 billion yen or 17.5 million USD with more than 10,000 endpoints in 2010.

According to VTV Japan, Aethra is ranked fourth in Japan's video endpoint market after Polycom, Sony and TANDBERG.

This establishment of a new firm in Japan indicates their strong commitment to Japan market looking

forward.

VTV Japan was established in 1995 as a video sales company taking multi-vendor approaches to their sales activities in Japan. So other than Aethra products, they sell products from Polycom, TANDBERG, Sony, RADVISION and others. VTV Japan entered into a partnership with Aethra in July 2004.

>NEC introduces version 5 of its webconferencing solution

NEC introduces version 5 of its webconferencing solution "Communication Door Express". The software was developed by NEC System Technology, a subsidiary of NEC.

"Communication Door Express" is an easy to install and mange webconferencing at much lower cost and it can communicate with H.323 video endpoints.

"Communication Door Express" has features like application sharing, powerpoint slide and animation slide playing, whiteboarding, file transfer, meeting schedule and others, and you can show 36 participants on a single screen and eight of whom can speak simultaneously while in a session that can accommodate up to 50 participants at the same time. In order to expand the size of the meeting session, the multiple servers can be cascaded to have more capacity for a large scale webconferencing implementation.

As for language supports, "Communication Door Express" supports, Japanese, English, and Chinese.

Also the webconferencing software integrates AFC engine developed by NEC to have better audio quality even at bandwidth that is around 30 or 40kbps, automatically detect network congestion by which maintain audio quality at certain level while reducing bandwidth allocated for video quality to give more bandwidth for audio as the poor audio quality is detrimental to any conferencing session according to NEC." You can not simply continue the session any more without audio."

Speaking of codec used, they use MPEG-4 for video portion, and AMR and G.722 for audio portion.

NEC have been doing this webconferencing business since 2002 and initially launched webconferencing solution offered to finance sector such as banks and securities.

And then, they gave birth to "Communication Door Express" in 2005. Now they have two versions which are "Communication Door Express" and customizable "Communication Door /Kaigi SL" respectively.

The former is for easy to install targeting small and medium companies, or sections/departments in large companies, the latter is for a large scale company wide implementation of webconferencing solution requiring customizations, and more scalability and reliability.

>Creo announces "FACE Conference5 ORIGINAL" with now more than 210 corporate

customers using their web conferencing solution

Creo announces "FACE Conference5 ORIGINAL" a new version of its web conferencing solution in April 2006. FACE Conference5 has two versions, one for intranet, and another for the public internet. Both versions have easy to install and operate features and functions, and both support Japanese and English languages.

The software has features such as whiteboard to share files, web pages, Microsoft Powerpoint slides and Fuji Xerox DocuWorks and annotate shared documents. And with application sharing feature that is offered as an option to Intranet version, you can actually control and operate application software with your remote clients.

FACE Conference5 ORIGINAL

One server for "FACE Conference5 ORIGINAL" can have 50-60 web conferencing clients can be extended to 200 by cascading method. Bandwidth used for this web conferencing ranges from 16kbps to 128kbps depending on the network congestion.

One corporate user of Creo's webconferencing before purchase test-drove it by running a webconferencing session for an entire one month without any intermission or shut down. And they found the Creo's webconferencing was reliable, which met the purchaser's harsh requirements.

Creo started selling the first version of "FACE Conference" in 2002 followed by a series of major upgrades respectively in 2003 and 2004. They now have more than 210 corporate customers using their webconferencing solutions.

They now sell their webconferencing through their sales partners but now they are looking for OEM partners as well to be integrated into their products.

Creo is not only famous in webconferencing but also they develop software solutions for accounting/financing, human resources, payroll management, and consumer oriented applications.

The company was established in 1975 with 606 headcounts. The company is traded at JASDAQ.

>One Do, MessageOne and other three partners joined together to deliver one-on-one video CRM solution

One Do, MessageOne and other three partners joined together to deliver one-on-one video CRM solution,"Web Contact" from May 2006 as ASP service.

A user will log into a web page which automatically bring a user into a video session with an operator. In the session, both user and operator can share documents and the operator can remotely access the user's PC to for example take care of some technical problems.

"Web Contact" can be integrated into CRM or Call Center system, customer database.

Initial cost for the service is 49,800JPY and monthly charge per seat is 19,800JPY.

They plan to integrate a system that analyzes

operator's reaction and emotion being influenced by the operator-user session to see if there is any psychological burden on the operator so that the manager can promptly address any mental issues for the operator.

>CIAJ initiates a study group to promote usage of collaborative visual communications in Japan

The inaugural meeting was held in Tokyo for a group of conferencing experts and professionals from the industry

CIAJ, which stands for "Communications and Information network Association of Japan", initiates a study group on June 27th,2006, to promote the prevalence and usage of collaborative visual communications having 21 experts and professionals from 18 leading vendors and service providers from conferencing industry in Japan.

The study group is chaired by Mr. Kenji Hara, Senior Researcher of Seed Planning, based in Tokyo, and has Dr. Mitsuru Kodama,Ph.D from Nihon University, working as the special advisor.

The study group is intended to create an atmosphere where conferencing experts and professionals in Japan can network and work collectively to launch an initiative to drive the wider adoption of collaborative visual communications tools in Japan.

Also, CIAJ is looking for more companies to join the study group to strengthen its activities toward the future.

CIAJ was established as non-profit organization in 1947 to promote the prevalence and thereby usage of information and communications technology (ICT), facilitating enriched ways of living for people in Japan. There are 325 companies registered as member of CIAJ. http://www.ciaj.or.jp

Other short news in Japan:

>Polycom Japan announces V2IU or Polycom Voice Video Interface Unit in May, 2006 for Japan market.

>Polycom Japan opens up an interoperability test lab in a building in Tokyo that houses their Japan headquarters. This test lab will be used for testing, verifying and solving interoperability issues associated with new products from the company in the future, and for their customers who want to solve certain technical issues caused by particular video implementations in their respective corporate network environments, resulting in shortening the process needed to find and solve problems.

>NTT Communications, NTT holding's subsidiary, provides "ClearConference" or audio conferencing service in Japan. The company recently announced three new features to enhance the service;(1) emergency call setup allowing subscribers to register three phone numbers for each site, (2) security feature to password-protect conference session from any

unwanted incoming calls, (3) audio seminar mode that play background music to a participant who are waiting in a queue and talk to another participant in the same queue.

>NTT Advance Technology introduces tow echo cancellation devices, "RealTalk ST" and "RealTalk 72". RealTalk ST offers 20khz audio providing stereo echo cancellation and echo noise suppression technology. The list price in Japan is 498,000JPY will be shipped from July 3rd. 270mm(W)x150mm(D)x35(H)mm. Real Talk 72 has directional auto gain control and echo noise suppression technology. 210mm(W)x150mm(D)x35(H)mm. The product is priced at 248,000JPY.


Real Talk ST

Real Talk 72

>RADVISION Japan announces next generation platform "SCOPIA" and management application "iVIEW suite" and they start shipping from July for Japan market.

>Hitachi Hybrid Network, a subsidiary of Hitachi, based in Yokohama, announces their webconferencing solution "NetCS" now compatible with "Flet's Phone VP1500", NTT's IP videophone. NetCS runs on SIP protocol that can work with IP-PBX, 3G-H.324M, and Flet's Phone VP1000. NTT's IP videophone is compatible with both SIP and H.323 protocols.
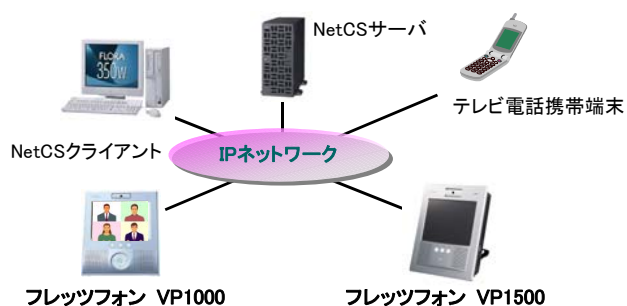
The above shows having NetCS server, NetCS client, working in conjunction with VP1000/1500 SIP/H.323 dually compliant endpoints, 3G324M handsets, seamlessly even if over different protocol networks.

>Tomen Cyber Business based in Tokyo announces their "Visual Nexus SIP Option" now interoperable with Microsoft Office Live Communication Server". Tomen Cyber Business develops H.323 desktop video solution "Visual Nexus" since 2003.

Exhibition report:

Visual Communications 2006
IP Telephony & Mobile phone solutions 2006

May 18th and May 19th,2006
Organized by NikkeiBP

http://expo.nikkeibp.co.jp/iptel/vc/index.shtml

NikkeiBP, Japan's leading IT magazine media organized two day IP telephony/ mobile phone, and visual communications exhibition on May 19th and 20th

2006 in Tokyo and drew more than 13,000 attendees for the two day event.

Totaling all of the exhibitors, 79 exhibitors were present including 31 exhibitors in visual communications exhibition.

The event was the largest of its kind ever in Japan when it comes to conferencing event in Japan. And they organize the event twice a year in May and October.

It is expected that the event will play a leading role in growing the conferencing industry in Japan.
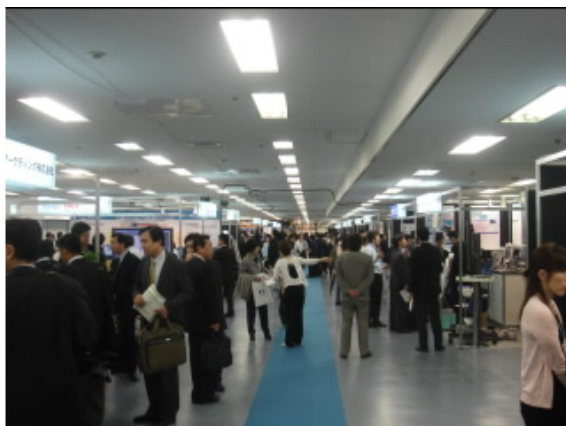
Visual Communications exhibition area
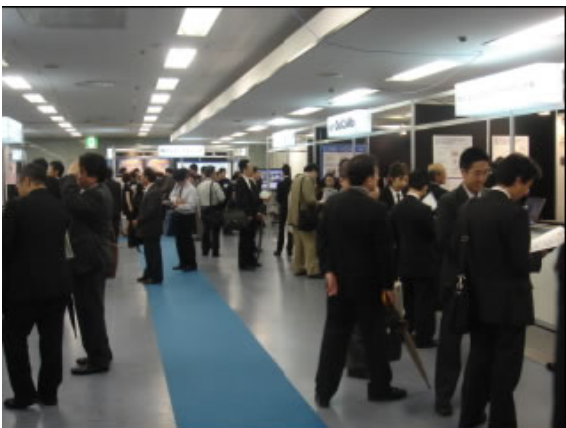
Visual Communications exhibition area

On the exhibit hall, exhibitors showed their new products and services for conferencing-savvy attendees and we saw here and there attendees gathered in a group looking at demonstrations of products and services by and discussing issues with representatives from respective exhibitors.

And the event also had product showcase where sponsors presented their products and services to attendees gathering at a seminar room adjacent to the exhibition hall. Most sessions filled out most seats with avid attendees.

Keisuke Hashimoto was there for two days and had an impression that most exhibitors were happy about their presence at the event with apparently generating fruitful business outcome for themselves, and they look forward to the future series of the event going forward.

This fall, NikkeiBP plans "BizInnovation 2006" the second one in October, merging "Visual Communications exhibition, and other exhibitions like World PC Expo and Security, eDocument, CRM, SFA, network, etc.. all kinds of products and services that drive "business innovation" for companies, or "arming business companies with IT armors".

Their intention is that by merging various business related IT solutions into a whole one large exhibition, they can create a synergy particularly leading to the increased traffic of attendees to the exhibition and benefit busy business people who are looking for solutions without spending multiple days of attending different events held at different dates and venues.

If you plan to do conferencing business in Japan, this event might be a good choice of yours for finding new business partners or prospect customers in Japan.

BizInnovation 2006

http://expo.nikkeibp.co.jp/biz/index.html

Visual Communications Autumn 2006

http://expo.nikkeibp.co.jp/biz/vc/index.html

A seminar session by a sponsor

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The next edition is scheduled early September. Thanks for your continued interest in "Japan Conferencing News Updates."

Thanks for reading this newsletter!
Japan Conferencing News Updates is monthly PDF newsletter for our non-Japanese readers who are interested in what is happening in Japan conferencing market.
This English newsletter is compiled based on our Japanese version of our newsletter that is published in Japan three times a month.

CNA Report Japan provides free PDF format newsletter in Japanese, conferencing market research & analysis, user training and consulting focused on Japan market since 1997

Detailed information on CNA Report Japan is available at http://cnar.jp/cna/cnar-e.htm and Keisuke Hashimoto can be reached at k@cnar.jp .

Send me any questions about conferencing in Japan. And well, yes, sure you can also ask me all about Japan, its culture and history, people etc.. if you find Japan as enigma. Look forward to talking with you.
We are in the midst of the rainy season here but hopefully it is going to end in a couple of weeks.
After that, we expect to have glaring sunshine all over. Yes the summer is around its corner.

Keisuke Hashimoto
Managing Editor
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