

Invited**The Future of the IT Industry and Japan's Role**

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Based on computers and communications (C&C) technologies, the information technology (IT) industry is growing on a global scale. Since every industry is innovating through the use of advanced C&C technologies, such as highly efficient distribution systems, the global economy will be changed dramatically. Advanced network connections between not only industrial organizations but also individual homes will generate many new business opportunities. Greater circulation of knowledge and mutual understanding will provide people with more time and resources for creative thinking. The IT industry contributes not only to economic growth, but also to advancements in science. Globally networked ultra-fast computer systems are becoming an increasingly powerful tool for scientific exploration, particularly for urgent global issues such as simulations of world climate changes, the synthesis of effective and safe foods, and development of new medicines and biotechnology. For these applications, data processing/transfer speed and capacity, as well as the usability of the human interface, will be improved through developments in LSI devices, optical/wireless networks, and display and storage technologies. Importantly, in all of these areas, those who dominate the materials, will dominate the technology. As we go forward, IT's growth will be enhanced by more global collaboration and will help bring greater prosperity to all of us.

