

## Editorial

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# Broadband, Mobile Moment and Ubiquity Top Priorities in Asia

This special issue of I-Ways contains diverse themes revolving around advances in communication technologies and how their applications are changing the world. A subject of rising importance is “the ubiquitous network society,” addressed in an article by Professor Toshio Obi of Waseda University. Along other lines, I-Ways examined policy implications of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). A new assessment of European Union initiatives to “achieve the integration of ICT in European economy and society” is presented. Another important theme is the work of the Council of Europe to implement its recently ratified treaty.

The Asia-Pacific is committed to achieving the potential of becoming an ICT hub of the world with well-developed broadband networks and advanced applications. This was the theme of the 25th Anniversary Ministerial Conference sponsored by the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) in Bangkok. In addition to addresses by some 30 ministers of communications, officials prepared the Bangkok Agenda for Broadband and ICT Development in the Asia-Pacific Region. Details

of this event are provided in a special conference report.

ITU Telecom Asia in Busan focused on the Mobile Moment, particularly in terms of the promise of handset functionality. Mobile is clearly poised for a great leap forward, which equipment vendors almost in unison are making handsets the centerpieces of their marketing programs.

The In-Focus section describes the high degree of E-Commerce diffusion in several German sectors. This applies both to large manufacturers, retailers, banking and insurance, as well as small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in these sectors. It appears that many large German companies believe they are competitive in international markets, even in the pre-E-Commerce era. However, SMEs are presently at the forefront of E-Commerce and thus important drivers of innovation diffusion in Germany. Research shows by employing Internet-based E-Commerce, SMEs have been able to improve their business processes.

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