Meeting the Challenge of the Coming 50 Years
Turning Dreams into Practical Research

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We have just finished celebrating Japanese TV’s 50th anniversary. We took this opportunity to pay our respects to our precursors who built the world of broadcasting. At times like this, I believe that it is important for us to anticipate the next 50 years as well as to reflect on the last 50.

One of the most encouraging bits of news from last year, which happened to be closely related to technology research, was the two Nobel Prizes won by Japanese researchers. We were especially encouraged by Dr. Koichi Tanaka who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, as he is an electrical engineering school graduate and is currently a corporate researcher.

With a desire to “contribute to society” in their hearts, many researchers work quietly on their research, sometimes even missing sleep or meals. Dr. Tanaka’s winning of the award has reminded us of the importance of something that has long been cherished by Japanese, that is, the value and spirit of never giving up. If we are determined to meet the challenge, we should be confident that our continuous effort will be rewarded in due time.

At a time when technology is rapidly advancing, researchers in many engineering fields, including broadcasting technology, have begun to realize the significance of having extensive knowledge in other areas, such as chemistry, medical science, physiology, psychology, linguistics, and sociology. Broadcasting technology research also demands an interdisciplinary foundation that exceeds the boundaries of traditional engineering fields. For instance, research on contents production technology now requires insight and experience in areas such as program direction, editing, and copyright management. Likewise, knowledge of the visual and auditory senses is indispensable for studies involving a 4000-scanning-line ultrahigh-definition image system, and linguistics is essential to automatic closed-captioning and automatic translation using speech recognition. It can be said that new advanced devices and materials cannot be achieved without a background in chemistry. We also see that information exchange and mutual cooperation on a global scale can generate the driving force needed for significant accomplishments to be made.

Accordingly, STRL will emphasize research and development aimed at the smooth launch of digital terrestrial broadcasting as well as the advancement of digital broadcasting in general. We will also concentrate on the development of an environment in which broadcasting can be received “anytime, anywhere” and on a broadcasting system based on home servers. With regard to contents production technology too, development will continue on a production system that will allow producers to share materials and on a production environment using IP and IT technologies. This will be done along with studies aimed at enhancing the attractiveness of current broadcasting services.

We are going to steadily work towards a broadcasting system that conveys to the viewer a sense of reality exceeding that of Hi-Vision (HDTV), and on fundamental technologies for imaging/recording/transmission/display systems, while maintaining our awareness of the original reason for creating these technologies.

We are resolved to bravely meet the challenge of realizing our dreams in a spirit of global cooperation, in order to provide our viewers with better broadcasting services. We hope that the centennial anniversary of Japanese TV will be in a flourishing environment.