



Toward the Creation of a New Broadcasting Culture



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On December 1, 2003, digital terrestrial television broadcasting was launched in the Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka regions. It was the most significant event of the 50th anniversary of TV broadcasting in Japan. Of the campaign's programs promoting the high picture quality, high sound quality, and high functionality of digital broadcasting, I watched a special program with particular interest. It introduced some of the research projects underway at STRL. STRL's research deals with a wide range of fields, from the fundamentals to their applications in broadcasting technology. They include topics such as network-linked portable terminals; advanced magnetic disks; an ultrahigh-definition video system with 4000 scanning lines; and flexible displays. Some of the research agendas are directly linked to the broadcasting field and others pursue longer-term goals.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the results of STRL's research have contributed to the development of broadcasting technology, not only domestically but also globally. We also anticipate a bright future, for our present research will hopefully lead to the creation of a new broadcasting culture.

The program showed that STRL's outstanding record of accomplishments couldn't have been possible without its brilliant human resources. While STRL has fewer researchers and a more limited research budget than the research institutions operated by major corporations, it has overcome difficult issues and has consistently reached its goals. I believe that STRL is a powerful organization with lofty ideals and researchers with overflowing drive.

The start of digital satellite television broadcasting three years ago on December 1, 2000, and digital services for terrestrial television broadcasting on December 1, 2003, marked the true beginning of the digital broadcasting era. This was also the realization of NHK engineers' long-held dream of "Integrated Services Digital Broadcasting (ISDB)," bringing together elemental technologies such as satellite broadcasting technology, Hi-Vision (HDTV) technology, digital technology, and multimedia technology.

Digital services involving a "linkage" of communications and broadcasting, the so-called e-Japan project, are also a project of national importance, as is a social system reform plan involving IT. As digital broadcasting has now started, NHK engineers must face new challenges before a new broadcasting culture can arise. We should constantly endeavor to adapt ourselves to the changing environment of research and development and the broadcasting needs of our viewers. Throughout this process, I believe that STRL must contribute to forming a social consensus regarding future broadcasting.

I hope STRL continues to be appreciated by NHK's viewers, and that as researchers, we continue to be proud of ourselves by living up to our full potential.

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