TV broadcasting in Japan has reached its 50th year. In December of this anniversary year, digital terrestrial broadcasting will begin. Digital terrestrial broadcasting will provide viewers with attractive services that make better use of the features of digital broadcasting. In addition to HDTV broadcasting, it will provide portable receiver services and local data broadcasting.

The start of digital terrestrial broadcasting will be the point that Japan truly enters the digital broadcasting era, and the revolution brought about by digitization will further accelerate. This coincides with a lowering of the barrier between broadcasting technology and its surrounding fields, such as communications and computer technologies. The catchphrase for this year's STRL Open House, "Mould-breaking Broadcast Technology," reflects our determination to envision a new role for broadcasting that goes beyond conventional ones and emphasizes technical development reflecting the trends of all the surrounding fields.

This year's exhibition included server-based broadcasting services by which users access contents via broadcasting, communications, or home server; advanced data services for portable receivers; an ultrahigh-definition video system with 4000 scanning lines; and a flexible display system.

The future will see STRL dealing with the following issues. First, we will work to ensure stable services for digital terrestrial broadcasting. Second, we will take on new research fields combining conventional broadcasting technology with information technology or Internet technology through which we hope to usher in the broadcasting of the future. Third, we want to strengthen our commitment to basic research in the long-term, for from it will likely come the breakthroughs needed for sophisticated TV. To advance these studies, we should consider the views of the public as well as the needs of producers. Collaboration with researchers in the fields of communication, computer science, chemistry, linguistics, psychology, etc., will be of great importance.

During the next 50 years, TV will continue to play an indispensable role in peoples' lives as an "integrated services terminal" for the home. It will not merely be a receiver of program images, but rather a method of accessing information closely affecting the lives of viewers, including information about medicine, government, education, and finance.