



[NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE,
JANUARY 1, 2020]

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E-MAIL MAGAZINE

Issue 141 [January, 2020]

OOCCI e-Magazine

<Back number available at
<http://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/e/emagazine/>>



<< NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE >>

I offer my hearty wishes for all of your
happiness in the new year.



The world economy last year experienced an increasing sense of uncertainty in its growth prospects due to unstable international politics, such as intensified U.S.-China trade friction, the Brexit issue, and political tensions in the Middle East and Hong Kong. Although the Japanese economy advanced and then retreated, partly influenced by the world economy, the year for Osaka/Kansai was well suited for the beginning of the Reiwa period, attracting attention from both Japan and overseas for the opening of the G20 Osaka Summit, the world heritage registration of the Mozu and Furuichi Kofun Tumulus Group, and Dr. Akira Yoshino winning the Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

This year, while sustainable economic growth is being pursued, in Osaka/Kansai, various preparations will be accelerated toward Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan along with the opening of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. Taking the changes as opportunities, we would like to make this year the year leading to new growth.

The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry recently announced its “OCCI Action Program “Tanto” Business Osaka (FY2017?2019)?Innovating Japan and Asia,” a three-year mid-term plan starting in fiscal 2020. Aiming to drive Japan’s economic growth riding the tailwind of Osaka’s and Kansai’s momentum, and to become Asia’s innovation hub that can attract people, goods, and information from both Japan and overseas, we will work on a total of 39 programs established by strengthening the foundations of four fields, nine strategic projects, and five areas. Through these efforts, we would like to produce top runners who can lead the growth of Osaka/Kansai, and to realize improved productivity and strengthened management of small- and medium-size enterprises that will support the regional economy.

Especially for Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, it is necessary to improve the intended environment to create innovation anticipating the growth of Osaka/Kansai, not only before but also after the Expo. Enterprises both inside and outside Japan settling in Osaka to create new businesses from societal implementation by repeating demonstration experiments of various hypotheses or wide range of players, including small- and medium-size enterprises in Osaka, taking up challenges to produce results. By creating such a virtuous cycle with economic growth, we would like to establish a “People’s Living Lab (proving ground for future society),” the Expo’s concept.

We would like to clearly set out the shift of each program for the Expo by upholding “Toward and Beyond EXPO 2025” also in the new mid-term plan, and to introduce new innovation by promoting business contests and demonstration experiments with the use of the mechanisms of industry-academia collaboration and business-to-business cooperation that the OCCI has cultivated and by making the best use of societal implementations of Mobility as a Service (MaaS).

To continue and develop robust inbound tourism to Osaka, we will make efforts for a more advanced tourism industry and improved city brand of Osaka. In the field of food, no city other than Osaka can offer such colorful and abundant menu items ranging from delicious and cheap dishes for the general public to innovative and luxurious cuisines. Through the Organization for Promotion of Food Creative City Osaka (tentative), which we will jointly establish with the Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau, we will enhance the charms of Osaka that attract foreign visitors, including wealthy overseas people, through the branding of Osaka as a Food Capital where diverse foods can be enjoyed.

In addition to these activities that create new affluence, we will also focus our efforts on problems faced by small- and medium-size enterprises that support the growth of the regional economy. The introduction of IT is the key to solving the issue of improving productivity amid an aging society and labor shortage. The OCCI will boost the work efficiency of small- and medium-size enterprises through comprehensive support that includes the first consulting service, the newly established IT Contact Desk, information provision and consultation that utilizes five branches, as well as other consulting services.

Currently, the requirements for enterprises have become more advanced, including responses for the 4th industrial revolution such as for AI and IoT, and contributions to solving social problems based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ESG investments. In addition, in Osaka, efforts for the establishment of a new foundation for the city's future growth have been progressing, such as for the Expo, the second-term area of Umekita, and integrated resorts (IRs). During the coming year, the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry will further focus on its Action Program "Tanto" Business Osaka in order to enliven the region through corporate activities, thereby realizing Osaka/Kansai's larger dreams.

We look forward to all of your continued support and cooperation this year.



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As your one-stop service center for business investing, O-BIC provides a comprehensive yet detailed support system. International companies, foreign government offices and economic organizations as well as foreign-capitalized companies located in Japan are welcome to use the center to obtain accurate information and essential advice for creating a foothold in Osaka. For further information, please contact: o-bic@osaka.cci.or.jp



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