



## Preface

# Special Issue on Universal Design

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chiaki Ito', written in a cursive style.

Chiaki Ito  
Corporate Executive Vice  
President

A special article covering universal design (UD) was printed in the May 2003 issue of the FUJITSU Magazine circulated throughout Japan. Around that time, with the announcements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act in the US and the Japanese Government's e-Japan Priority Policy Program as the background, people started paying attention to universal design and environmental issues from the viewpoint of corporate management.

In Japan, the concept of universal design, which originated in the US, has been regarded as an important issue for improving the operability of products and services. Moreover, the concept has spread throughout the industrial world of Asian countries, beginning with South Korea. Now, it is not an exaggeration to say that universal design is a global theme. With the superior products and services that have come from the application of universal design, it can be expected that universal design will make further inroads into a wider range of markets. In addition, the universal design theme is one that not only IT manufacturers but all enterprises must promote in common.

Fujitsu quickly began working on providing user-friendly products and services. For example, we have provided universal-design products such as the automated teller machine FACT-V and the Raku Raku PHONE and made public the Fujitsu Web Accessibility Guidelines. The promotion of universal design has become a very important factor in the realization of a ubiquitous society in which information can be accessed anytime, anywhere, and by anyone to bring about a richer lifestyle and more creative and efficient work. To achieve these goals, Fujitsu has initially positioned universal design as an overall corporate issue, created development processes centered on Fujitsu's customers, and promoted improvements of individual products and services while

taking into consideration the opinions of its customers. Moreover, we have widened the scope of universal design to cover IT products and services such as hardware, software, and Web content; the equipment and facilities (spaces) to use them; and the applications and communications that are used and performed at those facilities. We first applied universal design in-house and are now making efforts to exploit the results we obtained to provide our customers with solutions from a total viewpoint. We are convinced that promoting the improvement of all products and services through the application of universal design will lead to customer-focused corporate management.

This special issue of the FSTJ looks at the latest trends in universal design in the US, Europe, and Japan. It then introduces the background of cross-sectional promotions and specific approaches in Fujitsu. We hope that this special issue will promote a better understanding of the current situation and handling of universal design, which is quickly becoming a global consideration. We also hope that this special issue will act as a catalyst for promoting universal design by Fujitsu and its customers.