



Preface

Special Issue on Human Centric IoT

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The environment surrounding us is constantly changing—we have entered an era in which what was surprising yesterday is normal today and nonsensical tomorrow. The proliferation of smart devices is revolutionizing lifestyles and workstyles, and while we can now obtain information from anywhere in the world in real time, we can also post information that can be seen throughout the world instantly. In short, the Internet is creating a borderless world, but at the same time, it is driving all sorts of things toward commoditization while stimulating market creation and competition on a global scale. As a consequence, a company that targets only the Japanese market must realize that its customers will likely be knowledgeable about global trends and evaluate value, which means that the company must still compete on a global scale. In such an era, a company must understand what its customers see as value, grasp beforehand how this sense of value is changing on a practically daily basis, and provide new value. Against this background, the concept of the Internet of Things (IoT) appeared as a means of strengthening connectivity and interactivity, with the Internet as a base.

What exactly, then, is IoT? How does it differ from machine-to-machine (M2M) technology, and how do people view IoT? Today, there is still no clear-cut definition of IoT that is commonly accepted. To begin with, the idea behind M2M is to connect things of interest to a network with the aim of visualizing the state or condition of those things and controlling them remotely to maximize their value from the user's point of view. IoT, on the other hand, goes beyond such machine-related things by connecting everything to the network. This makes it possible to comprehend a wide range of phenomena, such as the environment surrounding those things, the state or condition of interconnected things or systems, and the state or needs of people using those things. This knowledge can then be used to optimize and maximize the value of diverse activities in the present as well as activities planned for the future. The activities may be related to such areas as the home and office, production, medical care, and movement.

With M2M, the automobile can be transformed from a simple means of conveyance into a smart car while with IoT, the automobile has the potential of becoming the user's concierge. Similarly, IoT can transform the convenience store from a retail store into a truly convenient place and even a "town concierge." In these ways, the emergence of IoT will free us from preconceived ideas and enable the creation of new markets. Uber and Airbnb are good examples of what IoT can do for us.

Fujitsu announced its "Human Centric IoT" initiative in 2014, which it considers to be the first year of genuine IoT, and followed this with the launch of its IoT platform service in 2015. At

Fujitsu, we are committed to the pursuit of value that provides people who create things and people who use things with a sense of safety and security and comfort and convenience. We are working to co-create value with our customers and to provide a totally new user experience (UX). To this end, we give great importance to a cycle of making connections, collecting data, analyzing data, creating value, and performing feedback and control, and we provide this cyclical process on FUJITSU Digital Business Platform MetaArc. Of course, there are portions of this cycle that we cannot provide on our own, so we are forming tie-ups with partners from around the world to create an IoT ecosystem. Fujitsu is the only company in Asia to have participated in the Industrial Internet Consortium (IIC) in the United States as a member of the steering committee and the only Japanese company to have its testbed adopted. Furthermore, since IoT has a dark side in the form of security threats, we are also working to achieve safety and security in the use of IoT. It would give us great pleasure to face the challenges of the IoT era together with our customers and partners with the aim of forming new markets and creating new value.