

It's Our Birthday Again

We're wiser, thinner and poorer as we turn three, but dammit, we're still here! *By the editors*

Wow. What a year. We know what pediatricians mean when they talk about the "terrible twos." Our last year was one of transition – from a magazine that grew up in the Internet bubble to a magazine that knows how to survive in an anemic economy. It was also a transition in terms of what we covered; while tech news is still our bread and butter, we branched out into politics and economics and even covered some social issues only tangentially related to tech. So here we are – thinner, wiser and more, shall we say, fiscally responsible, and we're still covering the world's second biggest economy. Gotta love it.



NOVEMBER 1999
J@pan Inc launched, and the race to keep up with the times was on. About our launch, columnist Brad Glosserman wrote in *The Japan Times*: "My sense is that these folks have timed things pretty well. Just as multimedia was the buzzword a few years ago, 'venture capital' is on everybody's lips today." Indeed it was. The magazine looked to be at the right place at the right time.
 We had a sad follow-up assignment during the last year: We covered the murder of GOL founder Robert Boisvert, who appeared on our first cover.



APRIL 2001
 Napster, Gnutella and FreeNet. The term P2P first emerged to describe these and other distributed sharing systems, but *J@pan Inc* was the first English-language magazine to examine how the emerging P2P scene in Japan could mix with the country's ubiquitous mobile phones to create a pocket-to-pocket, person-to-person, impossible-to-monitor network.



SEPTEMBER 2001
 The ATR laboratories are a child of the 1980s mindset in Japan, when the nation needed to dispel its image as a borrower of ideas and a destroyer of Western industries. Our cover story took a close look at how these labs are on the cutting edge of research in Kansai.



OCTOBER 2001
 Within the debris of the burst tech bubble, a small, separate bio universe is enjoying expansion. Issue 24 saw us covering the biotech micro-boom, concentrating on the smaller startups.
 Our redesigned *Investor Insight* section got in-depth and up-close to Japan's financial pulse. Forget dot-coms – many recent IPOs came from the restaurant industry.



SEPTEMBER 2002
 John Wocher is one of those expats who just has to be in Japan – it's his calling. The changes he and the Kameda family have made at the Kameda Medical Center in Chiba were the subject of our cover story this month. *J@pan Inc* also ran the first of a series of photo essays. "Tokyo: The High-Tech Slum" explained why the capital city can look like such a mess and still be on the cutting edge of technology.

2000

2001

2002

To be continued...



JUNE 2000
 Our cover said it all, and within 12 months the world was for the most part agreeing with us. Wrote Mark Thompson in *The Japan Times* a few months later: "For original coverage of the deals and the developers you can do no better than the magazine/Web site *J@pan Inc*." At this point, though, hardly anyone was covering Japan's wireless scene. It would be a while before the world caught up – and before the bigger media players started to cherry-pick our articles.



As ever greater numbers of non-Japanese investors move in to take over the country's ailing firms, the June 2002 cover story, "Doctor in the House," took a look at exactly who's got money to spend. We also showed how buyout guru Wilbur Ross has raised one bank from the dead.



APRIL 2002
 In one of the first signs that we were altering our editorial focus, we featured the former president of disgraced Snow Brands apologizing for a labeling scandal. Our cover story ridiculed the corporate giants of Japan for their ineptitude and corruption, and also unearthed some vital small companies that were doing things right.
 Wireless hotspots were just about to become all the rage in Japan. *J@pan Inc* was one of the first English media to offer extensive coverage on this emerging technology, which is still popping up in restaurants, hotels and coffee shops in major Japanese cities.

TURNING THREE:
 WHAT WE COVERED

Despite the pledges by prime minister Junichiro Koizumi to fix the economy, his cabinet got it all wrong – or so said veteran Japan watcher Gregory Clark in our May 2002 cover story, "Running on Empty." Clark argued that politicians were tinkering with supply while the real problem is the lack of demand. He also called Koizumi a "frilly lizard."

Photography and illustrations by Andrew Potheccary, Jun Takagi, Jay Muhlin, Shannon Higgins and Eiko Nishida.

Why is *J@pan Inc* covering China, some of you may ask. The reason is twofold: Too few other publications are telling these stories in English, and despite the political rhetoric, the economic ties between China and Japan are tighter than ever. In our July 2002 issue, "Wireless China: Japan + 400 Million," covered how the world's largest market is learning from the world's most advanced keitai nation.



OKINAWA

Okinawa, once an ancient international trading post of the prosperous Ryukyu Kingdom, has more recently been known as Japan's poorest prefecture. Our May issue took a close look at today's Okinawa and its efforts to become an IT paradise: The central government plans to turn the troubled island into a multimedia center.



Our November 2002 cover story, "Nose For a Deal," profiled Noriko Kajiki of Office Noa. Her company's video clip compression technology, Nancy, is used for J-Phone's Movie Sha Mail. We've got a feeling that Kajiki-san is going to see a lot more media attention before we turn four.

