

March 22, 2005  
Japan Association for the 2005 World Exposition  
Social Service Association  
IBM Japan, Ltd.

**EXPO 2005's Official Website Offers Reading Function for Seven Languages  
—Helping Older/Visually Impaired Persons and Visitors from Worldwide to View  
Web Pages—**

The Japan Association for the 2005 World Exposition (chairman: Shoichiro Toyoda), the Social Service Association (chairman: Shinsaku Sakata), and IBM Japan, Ltd. (president: Takuma Otoshi) announced today that they would use the Internet support solution Easy Web Browsing® for the official website of the 2005 World Exposition, Aichi, Japan (EXPO 2005 AICHI, JAPAN) and offer a function for reading text aloud in seven languages—Japanese, English, French, Chinese (in original and simplified forms of characters), Korean, and Spanish. This solution enables PC novices, older persons and persons with visual impairments to view the pages of the website easily. This is the world's first instance in which this sort of function is provided using the solution, and the function will begin to be provided on March 23.

EXPO 2005 offers its website in seven languages—Japanese, English, French, Chinese (in original and simplified forms of characters), Korean, and Spanish—in order to provide information to visitors from worldwide. Six of the language versions of the website, excluding Japanese, are produced and operated by IBM Japan based on its expertise and know-how in the operation of global websites. Since the Internet is gaining importance as a source of information and is being used by a wider range of people, IBM Japan's Easy Web Browsing has been adopted as part of the EXPO 2005's hospitality in order to enable visitors to access its official website more easily. The solution was implemented jointly with the Tokai office of the Social Service Association, an organization dedicated to providing barrier-free websites, with the aim of reducing the digital divide.

Adoption of Easy Web Browsing enables visitors to the EXPO 2005's official website to utilize the functions of having text read aloud, displaying enlarged text, and changing coloration. When first accessing the official website, users can download necessary software with simple operations through an explanatory page. Afterwards, simply by

moving the mouse pointer to the part of the screen one wishes to read, characters are automatically enlarged and the text is read aloud. The speed of reading can be adjusted, and in addition, the coloration of the background and characters can also be changed so that even persons with color-vision impairment and cataract patients can easily view them. Through these functions, the Japan Association for the 2005 World Exposition hopes that those in Japan and abroad who are unable to visit the EXPO 2005 site for various reasons, including older persons and those with disabilities, can feel that the international event is being brought closer to them. The organization also hopes that many visitors will utilize information offered by the official website.

The functions described above can be used at the following websites:

- For foreign languages (from the top page of the EXPO 2005's website): <http://www.expo2005.or.jp/>
- For Japanese: <http://www.expo2005.or.jp/jp/index.html>

The Internet browsing support tool Easy Web Browsing was developed by the Accessibility Center of IBM Japan's Tokyo Research Laboratory in 2002 as a solution to eliminating the digital divide. The principal functions and strong points of the tool are as follows:

- Users can display enlarged characters in another window (the character enlargement window) and have the tool read them aloud using a voice synthesizer simply by moving the mouse pointer to the part of the page they wish to read.
- The size of characters being viewed in the screen, as well as the coloration of characters and the background, can be changed. Patterns are offered that enable even persons with color-vision impairment and cataract patients to easily read them.
- Minimum necessary functions, including website operation, character and voice settings, and printing, are displayed and arranged using large buttons for ease of understanding.
- Viewers of the website can use the browsing tool simply by clicking the activation link for Easy Web Browsing on the website covered by the tool.

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Use of foreign-language sites requires font installation and other procedures to put in place an environment that enables display of characters in the language.