

IBM s'allie à SoftBank pour apprendre le japonais à son super-ordinateur Watson

Marks the first time IBM Watson will be trained in native Japanese language

Companies to jointly develop and deliver cognitive computing capabilities powered by Watson

IBM and SoftBank will jointly lead the development of local ecosystems, partnerships and client opportunities

Paris - 11 févr. 2015: IBM (NYSE: IBM) and SoftBank Telecom Corp. (hereinafter "SoftBank"), a wholly owned subsidiary of SoftBank Corp (TYO: 9984) today announced a landmark global alliance to bring Watson to Japan, one of the world's largest economies and technology markets. The alliance, which involves training Watson to understand Japanese, represents a major milestone in IBM's efforts to accelerate the adoption of cognitive computing and a powerful example of how SoftBank is transforming Japanese businesses and society.



The goal of the collaboration is for SoftBank and IBM to bring new apps and services powered by Watson to market in the region, by establishing a broad local ecosystem of partners, entrepreneurs, and app developers who will apply Watson in new and innovative ways.

The alliance combines SoftBank's leadership in the Japanese business and technology markets with IBM's unmatched Watson cognitive computing technologies, research capabilities and services to help transform entire industries and professions.

"The alliance with SoftBank, an industry pioneer, will bring new Watson capabilities to organizations in one of the most innovative parts of the world," said Mike Rhodin, senior vice president, IBM Watson Group. "Together, we will be able to more quickly deploy Watson to enterprises throughout Japan, while building a rich ecosystem of partners, entrepreneurs, developers and other third-parties to design and deliver an entirely new class of cognitive computing apps."

"Through this strategic alliance, we are excited that SoftBank and IBM will further develop IBM Watson with Japanese language capability and drive its adoption in the Japanese market," said Ken Miyauchi, Representative Director and Chief Operating Officer, SoftBank. "Watson's technology, which analyzes large volumes of data, and can understand and answer complex questions posed in natural, is in harmony with SoftBank Group's corporate mission of 'Information Revolution - Happiness for Everyone.' We believe the technology will be applied to a broad range of areas, from enterprise to consumer sectors, and create new value for people."

"The Japanese language presented IBM researchers with a number of unique challenges to overcome, most notably the first time the Watson system has learned a language that relies on characters not shared by the Western alphabet," said Paul Yonamine, General Manager, IBM Japan. "We expect Watson will deliver innovation

to the academic, government services, and various industries, while improving overall agility and decision making for our clients.. SoftBank and IBM will apply the technology in multiple industries and business domains to usher in a new era of computing in Japan.”

Watson is the first commercially available cognitive computing capability. The system, delivered through the cloud, analyzes volumes of data, understands complex questions posed in natural language, and proposes evidenced-based answers. Watson represents a new era in computing where systems will understand the world in the way that humans do: through senses, learning, and experience.

As part of the collaboration, IBM and SoftBank intend to deliver new powered by Watson cloud-based services. The two organizations will initially target Japan’s education, banking, healthcare, insurance and retail industries, where companies are striving to give customers more relevant information about products and services, and improve overall decision making by analyzing diverse, high volume data streams.

The alliance builds upon an ongoing, joint technical collaboration around cognitive computing technology between SoftBank and IBM Research – Tokyo. Watson’s ability to understand Japanese is the result of more than two decades of research and development undertaken by IBM Research in the areas of natural language processing, both in Japanese and other non-European languages. The Japanese language uses thousands of characters, many of which can carry different meanings and pronunciations depending on the context of conversation, the relationships between participants, their age and gender. Like any major language, there are many unique idioms that must be fully understood for natural human interaction.

To capture new and emerging opportunities, IBM and SoftBank will focus on the following strategic areas to deliver Watson solutions in Japan:

- **Expand Watson’s Knowledge:** IBM and SoftBank will work together to further teach and train Watson in the Japanese language as well as various industry domains.
- **Develop Localized APIs and Development Environments:** The two companies will provide localized APIs and development environments that can be used to create new powered by Watson apps. This will include new resources and services delivered through the IBM Watson Developer Cloud.
- **Build and Expand the Watson Ecosystem:** The two companies will work together to establish a robust local ecosystem of partners, developers, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and academics who will advance the adoption of cognitive computing throughout Japan.

As global demand for cognitive computing increases, the IBM and SoftBank alliance will accelerate IBM’s strategy to deliver the transformative capabilities of Watson to clients around the world, as well as the objectives of SoftBank to advance the information and technology industries through superior business models.

SoftBank will be IBM’s preferred technology delivery partner for Watson solutions in Japan, where the technology could be embedded into various form factors such as desktop, tablets and mobile devices, as well as robots, offering both organizations an opportunity to reach a far broader audience of users.

Watson will be hosted by SoftBank’s data centers across the country.

IBM Watson: Pioneering a New Era of Computing

IBM Watson represents a new era of computing in which apps and systems interact with human users more naturally, augment our knowledge with Big Data insights, and learn to improve how they assist us.

Fueled by innovation from a mission to transform industries and professions, Watson is uniquely positioned at the forefront of the new era of computing, evidenced by an unmatched demonstration of what cognitive systems can bring to transform decision-making. IBM is delivering a range of cloud-based products and services to clients in industries such as banking, healthcare, insurance, retail and education.

In January 2014, IBM launched the IBM Watson Group, a new business unit dedicated to developing and commercializing cloud-delivered cognitive advisors. The move signifies a strategic shift by IBM to deliver a new class of software, services and apps that think, improve by learning, and discover insights from massive amounts of Big Data. IBM is investing \$1 billion into the Watson Group, focusing on development and research and bringing cloud-delivered cognitive applications and services to market. This includes \$100 million available for venture investments to support IBM's ecosystem of start-ups and businesses building cognitive apps made with Watson.

About the SoftBank Group

The SoftBank Group comprises SoftBank Corp. (TYO: 9984) and its subsidiaries and associates that offer a comprehensive range of advanced mobile communications, fixed-line communications and Internet services around the world. With Sprint joining in July 2013, the SoftBank Group became a leading global carrier that now has over 100 million subscribers. Maximizing synergies across its Group companies worldwide, SoftBank aspires to realize lifestyle innovation through IT. The SoftBank Group is also encouraging the adoption of clean and safe energy through its business activities and recently developed "Pepper," the world's first personal robot that can recognize emotions. To learn more, please visit: <http://www.softbank.jp/en/corp/>

About IBM Watson and IBM Research

IBM Watson, which made its debut on the TV game show Jeopardy! in 2011, was developed by IBM Research. Now in its 70th year, IBM Research continues to define the future of information technology, with more than 3,000 researchers in twelve labs located across 10 countries on six continents. Scientists from IBM Research have produced six Nobel Laureates, 10 U.S. National Medals of Technology; five U.S. National Medals of Science, six Turing Awards, 19 inductees in the National Academy of Sciences and 14 inductees into the U.S. National Inventors Hall of Fame – the most of any company. For more information on IBM Watson, visit: www.ibmwatson.com.

To join the social discussion about Watson, include the hashtag #ibmwatson.

Follow Watson on Facebook and see Watson on YouTube and Flickr.

Learn more about today's news on IBM's Smarter Planet blog <http://ibm.co/1Fm8GEg>

Check out the IBM Watson press kit at: <http://www-03.ibm.com/press/us/en/presskit/27297.wss>
