Season’s greetings and best wishes for the new year! Many people are concerned about the state of the world economy as we move into 2012. While the economic climate is less than favorable, the demand for robots continues to remain brisk. One of the main factors contributing to this steady demand in the robot market is the progression of aging populations around the world. In addition to China, other Asian countries are adopting a new manufacturing strategy that moves away from low-cost labor and places greater emphasis on automation and robotization. At Kawasaki we continually work to keep pace with global trends. This driving commitment is what enables us to develop new robots and robot systems that fulfill the needs of our customers. We look forward to your continued patronage and eagerly await the opportunity to serve and work with you again this year.

The International Robot Exhibition—a biennial event—was held at Tokyo Big Sight from November 9 (Wed.) to 12 (Sat.), 2011. This year’s exhibition attracted the largest attendance ever, with more than 100 thousand people coming to the venue to see the latest developments in robot technology. We are extremely grateful to all the people who took the time to stop by the Kawasaki booth.

This year we exhibited and gave demonstrations of seven different items. The main objective of these demonstrations was to boost sales by promoting system solutions to our target customers. Many visitors were interested in the "high-speed picking system" featuring a parallel link robot, a system that robot manufacturers have put a lot of effort into developing over the last few years. We also gave a palletizing demonstration using our newly-developed 3D image sensor LSC (Laser Slit scan Camera), as well as showcased our KCONG-based milling robot, which is capable of performing off-line teaching.

A variety of different visitors came to the booth during the exhibition. In addition to manufacturers from outside Japan, there were also a number of academics and individuals from other fields. We believe the exhibition provided us with a great opportunity to not only demonstrate the high performance of our robots, but also our ability to deliver system proposals adapted to customer needs.

Twenty-two years ago we opened our service center in Nagakute-cho, Nagoya City. Since its founding the center has acted as Kawasaki Robot's base for providing service to customers in the Chubu region of Japan. The diligent efforts of our staff over the years have enabled us to expand our customer base, securing orders largely from leading companies in the automotive industry. In recent years stagnant economic performance has led many companies to slash corporate spending on factories and equipment. As a result, they have shifted their focus to maintaining existing machinery. Likewise, limited spending has also generated a greater need for robot maintenance, refurbishing, and modification. To answer these new emerging needs, we opened our second plant last October, conveniently located 1 minute by foot from the old robot center. For many years we have dreamed of building Plant No. 2 and are extremely pleased this dream has come to fruition. We look forward to further enhancing our after-sales service and will strive to achieve an even greater level of customer satisfaction. Please feel free to visit our new plant.