

Interview with the Precision Machinery Company President

# The Present Situation of the Robot Business and its Development Going Forward



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## How is the robot market faring these days?

Despite the increasing uncertainty in the global economy, the robot market is growing at a steady pace. The market is expanding especially in China as a result of labor shortages and rises in personnel costs. In terms of the number of robots installed per country, the Chinese market has become the world's largest, exceeding Japan.

The current quantitative expansion in robot production has been supported by the automobile industry's demand for robots. However, demand for robots has recently started growing in other industries

as well. Customers have varying motivations, which include eliminating labor shortages and reducing costs. Despite such variations, the need for automation is more widespread than ever, expanding the range of industries that use robots.

There are also new trends. International standards regarding robot safety have been revised and robots that conform to the new standards are now being proposed as human-supporting and human-collaborative robots. Our company has developed a product called duAro to meet customers' needs. It is becoming more important than ever to meet these new needs and expectations in a timely manner and even to propose solutions.

## What do you think about future business development?

I would like to comment on three initiatives for future business development.

First, we need to create a new market for industrial robots. Industrial robots are used for established purposes, such as welding and applying coatings, which form the core of our robot business. We will strengthen this business and at the same time expand the use of industrial robots to a wider range of purposes. There are still many manufacturing processes that have not been automatized. By coexisting and cooperating with human beings, human-supporting, human-collaborative robots may provide a solution to such processes. To this end, we will use duAro as the core to develop new markets.

Secondly, we need to take up challenges in new areas. Our company is focusing on medical robots as one of the new areas of business. In 2013, we jointly founded Medicaroid Corporation, a venture company, with Sysmex Corporation to start a medical robot business. In FY2016, we started selling products developed based on existing robot technologies. In FY2019, we plan to commercialize surgery support robots.

Thirdly, we need to enhance the Kawasaki Robot brand. Producing high-quality products is a given, so we will focus on fostering a sense of security toward Kawasaki robots through new services that use IoT.

In August 2016, we also opened a showroom known as Kawasaki Robostage in Tokyo's Odaiba for the purpose of enhancing our brand. This facility provides us with opportunities to propose new relationships between humans and robots. We invite customers to familiarize themselves with Kawasaki robots through demonstrations, while we learn what direction we need to go in from customers.

## Could you make some comments about our company's technological development?

As a comprehensive heavy industry manufacturer, our company owns a wide range of cutting-edge technologies. We also manufacture a large variety of products used in processes that can be automated by robots. Our strength is that we can provide technologies validated through application to these processes as solutions for customers.

Robots are already being used in many production sites in our company, including welding in the manufacturing of ships and vehicles as well as handling in hydraulic machinery production lines. Our company is working with the Corporate Technology Division in a wide range of areas, from basic to applied technologies. By further promoting technological development and by installing robots in aircraft production lines, we would like to use our achievements to provide solutions to a wide range of customers.

## Closing comments

Precision Machinery Company aims to become manufacturer of the best motion controller brand in the world, creating and providing total solutions focusing on hydraulic machinery and robots. Our company was founded in 2010 by integrating the former Hydraulic Machinery Department and the former Robot Department. We would like to achieve our corporate goal by producing synergetic effects, thereby continuing to meet public expectations.