
From the Editor

This is the first time an issue of *Hitachi Review* has focused on intellectual property (IP).

“Invention is an engineer’s life.” Namihei Odaira, who established Hitachi in 1910 and became its first president, was involved in invention himself and actively encouraged colleagues to invent. Hitachi has identified its Mission of “contributing to society through the development of superior, original technology and products.” We have continued this noble tradition by protecting inventions with patent rights and supporting our business with them.

Since 2000, Hitachi has been facing difficult financial conditions that have forced it to make major changes to its business portfolio. With electronics businesses such as semiconductors, liquid crystal displays (LCDs), hard disk drive (HDDs), and televisions (TVs) having become highly volatile, Hitachi was forced to divest or otherwise dispose of most of its operations, including the associated patents. More recently, Hitachi has been seeking to achieve more stable operations by setting out to meet the needs of the world through its Social Innovation Business, strengthening its service businesses, which undertake collaborative creation with customers by working together with them to create and deliver solutions to problems.

Along with this transformation in Hitachi’s business portfolio, the Intellectual Property Division has also been through a major change in direction, moving away from managing IP with a focus on the electronics business, where the primary objective was to increase income from patent license royalties, and toward activities that contribute to the Social Innovation Business. In FY2014, Hitachi adopted “Let’s make it happen with the Power of Patents” as its group-wide slogan for IP to mark a new approach to IP management in which it aims to extract maximum benefit from IP and use it as a driver for business growth.

This issue of *Hitachi Review*, entitled “Role of Intellectual Property in Supporting Hitachi’s Social Innovation Business,” focuses on a number of initiatives related to new business and IP at Hitachi.

SOCIAL INNOVATION - IT’S OUR FUTURE

I hope that this issue will help readers gain a deeper understanding of the IP that supports our Social Innovation Business, which is based on collaborative creation with customers, as well as of the potential of Hitachi as it seeks to build the future by working with customers to deal with management challenges and the challenges facing society (including energy and urban problems) at a global level.

Editorial Coordinator,
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