

SOUTHWESTERN USA

Produced by: GLOBAL MEDIA POST

How to beat the odds

The Southwestern United States projects the quintessential image of the American spirit. From the unforgiving Sonora Desert in the south to the snow-capped mountain ranges of Colorado and Utah, this region has formed a people of boundless optimism.

Epitomized by the cowboy, the Southwest evokes the enduring spirit of risk-taking and grit. The qualities that have defined a nation are the same as those that have determined success in business and in life.

The Southwest's success shows how a landlocked economy can defy the odds and be a major force in the growth of the country and the world.

Japanese investments in the region have realized that this resurgence is fueled by the right combination of an attractive business climate and an unprecedented influx of young, highly educated workers.

space and in the life sciences.

Hoping to extend the boundaries of scientific knowledge, the **University of Arizona** reached out to the Japan Institute of Space and Astronautical Science to discuss a possible joint venture regarding outer space research.

"Our trip to Japan was an effort to improve space science through scientific joint venture. The University of Arizona has the OSIRIS-REx (mission), which is going to do the asteroid sampling, while the Japanese have the Hayabusa II (mission)," explained **Board of Regents President Eileen Klein**.

"We had our team of engineers discuss our approach to space exploration, data exchange and the science behind the project. And we are equally excited to talk more about how we can collaborate further," Klein added.

CO: Towering above the rest

Ranked the fastest-growing economy in 2014 by Business Insider, Colorado has maintained its status among its Rocky Mountain neighbors, as the state continues attracting more foreign capital.

"In Colorado, we have approximately 4,000 Japanese people. Apart from that, we have 20,000 Japanese-Americans and there are 90 Japanese-related companies," said Ito.

Among the Japanese-related companies in the state are global giants such as Panasonic, Hitachi, Sumitomo and Terumo, to name a few.

"Colorado has had a long and prosperous relationship with Japan. The country is one of our state's closest friends and is Colorado's fourth-largest trading partner. Colorado and Japan share a deep and lasting connection that dates back to the 19th century," said **Gov. John Hickenlooper**.



Consul General of Japan in Denver Makoto Ito

"The Southwest has a high-quality workforce and a good business climate. It's also an excellent place to live with your family. Some Japanese and international companies have been moving in the Southwest for these reasons," said **Consul General of Japan in Denver Makoto Ito**.

AZ: The crossroad of trade

The Phoenix metro region, the political and economic capital of Arizona with a population of more than 4 million, has attracted the largest concentration of Japanese investment in the state, which is home to about 50 Japanese-affiliated companies that have so far created more than 7,000 jobs.

"Arizona's southwest location, adjacent to two of the world's largest economies - California and Mexico - gives our state incredible strategic advantages for businesses, including export opportunities and access to supply chains," **Arizona Commerce Authority President Sandra Watson** said.

The state's competitive edge lies in its proximity to Mexico. The area from Phoenix down to Nogales at the U.S.-Mexican border is known as the Sun Corridor, a region with a population the size of Indiana. And at the heart of this bustling corridor is Tucson, Arizona's second-largest city.



Walbro CEO Matthew Riddle

Walbro, based in Tucson, has capitalized on its location to optimize its operations and build its customer base as a lot of their clients are in Mexico and in the surrounding area.

"We have a number of customers in Arizona, as well as a large warehouse and a facility in Mexico. As we are a global company, having our headquarters in Tucson is an ideal situation because key markets are easily accessible to us," **CEO Matthew Riddle** said.

Arizona also possesses a young, competent workforce that is prepared to meet the needs of employers, especially those in high-tech manufacturing, aero-



Gov. John Hickenlooper of Colorado

A reflection of deepening ties between Japan and Colorado, United Airlines inaugurated the first nonstop flight between Tokyo and Denver in 2013, further facilitating growth in business and tourism.

"I think the timing of our direct flight to Japan has been ideally set. Both airports in Denver and Narita are transit hubs. The flight has definitely helped boost trade and tourism. It's been a phenomenal win for us and our relationship with Japan," **World Trade Center Denver President Karen Gerwitz** said.

Shedding its reputation as mainly a transit hub, Denver has become a bona fide destination for business and leisure travelers.

"In terms of foreign direct investment in Colorado, Japan is the clear leader from Asia and is among the top foreign investors in the world and in Colorado's economy. In order to continue strengthening our ties, I visited Japan in October of 2015," Hickenlooper said.

During the governor's visit to Japan, he met with several Japanese business executives and government leaders and signed various agreements aimed at expanding collaboration on investment and trade.

Historically dominated by the telecoms and the oil and gas industries, the state's economy has witnessed a burgeoning of new tech startups the past few years, particularly in technology.

One of the state's strengths is a talented and innovative workforce able to support startups and multinational giants. One local company that has benefitted from this talent pool is **Level 3 Communications**, a global communications firm that provides services to more than 60 coun-



The economies of the U.S. Southwest states have begun to soar following efforts to diversify their sources of growth beyond tourism. Among the main tourist attractions in the region is the International Balloon Fiesta held yearly in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

tries, including Japan.

"As a global service provider that operates in hundreds of markets around the world, we wouldn't be in existence today if we didn't have a stellar reputation," said **Chief Marketing Officer Anthony Christie**.

"The vision of the company is to be the trusted connection to the networked world. We take the element of trust very seriously, and that translates well to our work in Japan," he added.

As more business grows between Japan and Colorado, the future remains promising.

"In Colorado, we're a lot easier to do business with compared to the coasts. We welcome Japanese companies here. We want to maintain a strong relationship with our investors," Gerwitz said.

NV: Rebuilding an economy From 2008 to 2010, the U.S. was dealing with a deep, protracted recession. One of the hardest-hit states was Nevada, where unemployment surged to 14.5 percent.

With unemployment sinking to a five-year low of 6.4 percent, the state has now recovered, thanks to the government's efforts to diversify its economy.

Formed in 2011, the **Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED)** assists companies looking to expand or relocate to the state. Its focus has shifted over the years to expanding the state's economic profile.

"Our hospitality industry brings in 45 million visitors into Southern Nevada. We have a convention industry that's unmatched around the world. Our mining industry is very robust. We have a lot of copper, silver and other assets. We want to see continued growth within these industries," said **GOED Director of International Trade Kris Sanchez**.

"Now, we want to impart this message of a 'New Nevada.' This includes our focus on our new industries because we want a second look," Sanchez added.

In line with his vision to diversify the state's economy, Gov. Brian Sandoval is aggressively pursuing foreign investment in healthcare, high-tech robotics, sustainable energy and self-driving vehicles.

Home to Faraday Future and Tesla's future Gigafactory, in partnership with Panasonic, the state is very proud to be the showcase of a new breed of companies that represents the future of technology.

Nikkiso Cryo Inc., a Japanese manufacturer of cryogenic pumps, has tripled its workforce in the last three years.

"Aside from Nevada's attractive business climate, we have found Nevada's desert climate to be advantageous for our testing needs. Despite the oil glut, our leading technology gives us reasons to see a bright future for the industry," **Nikkiso Cryo CEO David Cameron** said.

While 90 Japanese affiliate companies currently operate in the state, many business leaders remain unaware of this 'New Nevada' and its opportunities.

"What we like to see are companies that are highly innovative - companies that can contribute to our growth sectors and companies that will be good stewards of our communities. And there are a lot of opportunities for Ja-

pan. When I look at Japan, I see a country that's innovative. I see companies coming here and observing the technology that's being developed. Japan is looking toward the future," Sanchez said.

NM: State of Innovation

South of Colorado and west of Texas is a state at the forefront of technology and innovation. Home to the Los Alamos National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratories, the Air Force Research Laboratory and the White Sands Missile Range, research and technology are at the heart of New Mexico.

"The national and international awareness of New Mexico is low. As a result, we are collectively working hard to share more of Albuquerque's opportunities and stories. We play an important role as we understand that tourism leads to economic development," said **Tania Armenta, President and CEO of Visit Albuquerque**.

"Japanese travelers have a myriad of opportunities when they travel to the U.S. And there is great pride in history merging with innovation and technology here in Albuquerque, making it a very unique travel destination," she added.

From 2009 to 2015, Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industries and the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization invested \$80 million into the state through the U.S.-Japan Smart Grid Project.

Together with several Japanese-affiliated multinational corporations, the main objective of the project was to integrate large volumes of renewable energy into the power distribution system.

In 2015, the University of New Mexico Center for Emerging Energy Technologies took over the project, in partnership with the Mitsubishi Research Institute.

Earlier this year, **University of New Mexico President Robert Frank** visited Japan to boost ties with companies, research organizations, and other universities in line with the state's pursuit for innovation and job creation.

New Mexico is also accelerating efforts to commercialize its homegrown technologies, most of which are developed in the Albuquerque metro area.

"We are at the forefront of entrepreneurial movement. Here in Albuquerque, we have more science being done per capita than anywhere in the world," said **Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry**.

"We have tremendously fertile ground here. The huge upside is that all the parts and ingredients are here. We're telling people that if you're struggling to be heard in Silicon Valley, look at Albuquerque. We may just be the ticket for you," he added.

In 2013, **Gov. Susana Martinez** signed into law a package of incentives, including new tax measures, aimed at attracting more investment, creating more jobs, strengthening existing industries, and supporting burgeoning sectors, such as renewable energy.

"Companies are discovering that our new tax and incentives policies have repositioned New Mexico to effectively compete for new business investment against any other U.S. state. We also have

an experienced technical workforce and a network of universities graduating talented young people. This winning combination provides expanding companies with the environment and support they need to achieve success," **Albuquerque Economic Development Inc. President Gary Tonjes** said.

With Japan currently New Mexico's sixth-largest trade partner, it is clear that the state still has a lot of potential to grow those ties.

UT: Hotbed of technology

Gov. Gary Herbert's trade mission to Japan in April 2015 was a testament to his state's strong efforts to strengthen relations with the world's third-largest economy.

The trade delegation, according to **Val Hale, the executive director of the Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development**, met with executives of more than 70 Japanese companies and laid out the advantages of doing business in one of the fastest-growing economies of the U.S.

"Japanese companies are a critical part of what makes Utah great. We have similar priorities: to create better economies and a better world. We are committed to our business relationships with our friends in Japan and strive to provide the right business environment that will enable them to grow for years to come," the governor said.



Gov. Gary Herbert of Utah

In the past few years, the Salt Lake City metro region has emerged as a top hub of high-tech innovation. **LANDESK**, which provides asset management software systems and services to major Japanese companies and institutions, is among the leading companies whose presence in the city has spanned three decades.

CEO Steve Daly attributes the bustling IT scene to the area's network infrastructure, global talent and attractive business climate.

"There are a lot of Utahns who spent time in Japan. When it comes to language and culture, that makes it easier for us to do business with the Japanese," he said.

To maintain the momentum of growth, the state has relied on fresh and young talent to fill in the ranks. **Utah Valley University** has become a source of graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

"UVU and Saitama University are in the process of setting up a robotics program to benefit both schools' students. We also have a 15-year relationship with Saitama Technical College, where we receive about 100 students every summer for the Auto Tech program," said **UVU President Matthew Holland**. ■

DEN: The airport of the future has arrived

Denver International Airport (DEN) recently celebrated its 20th anniversary by opening a new 519-room Westin Hotel adjacent to the iconic Jeppesen Terminal and its white, tented roof. The opening was followed by the inauguration in April this year of a train that transports commuters between the airport and downtown Denver in just 37 minutes.

"The opening of our luxury hotel that sits just 200 feet from the Jeppesen Terminal, combined with the commuter rail, helps ensure DEN's place among the world's finest airports," said airport **CEO Kim Day**.

In addition to luxury amenities and upgraded shopping and dining options, DEN is centrally located in the U.S., making it easy for passengers to fly to the East and West coasts and beyond.

DEN is also known for having one of the most efficient customs processes in the country, making it easier for passengers on flights from 20 international cities in eight countries, including a

nonstop flight to Tokyo.

The 17th-busiest airport in the world and the fifth-busiest in the U.S., DEN is a vital engine of economic growth for the state of Colorado, as it generates more than \$26 billion for the region annually. ■

→ www.flydenver.com



The new Westin Hotel is linked to DEN via train.

Metro Denver is poised for global growth

With a diverse and innovative economy, burgeoning infrastructure development and the second-most highly educated workforce in the U.S., **Metro Denver** in Colorado is an ideal location for Japanese firms seeking investment or expansion opportunities.

A daily, nonstop flight between Denver and Tokyo's Narita International Airport supports bilateral commerce, research partnerships, and educational and cultural exchanges between Japan and Colorado.

While there are more than 50 Japanese companies operating in Colorado, several high-profile firms such as Hitachi Data Systems, NTT Communications, Panasonic, Ricoh, Sumitomo, Terumo and the Toyo Seikan Group have chosen to locate in Metro Denver.

In fact, the region continues to stand out as a top destination for foreign and domestic business, with Japan serving as Colorado's fourth-largest international trade partner. Key industries that have thrived in Metro Denver include

aerospace, bioscience, energy (including hydrocarbons and renewables) and information technology.

The region has become a hotbed for high-tech innovation and entrepreneurship in the heart of the U.S. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office located one of four new satellite offices in Denver to capitalize on the region's knowledge-based companies and highly skilled workers. ■

→ www.metrodenver.org



Downtown Denver at night

Las Vegas airport gets facelift for the luxury traveler

As airlines engage in the so-called luxury arms race 30,000 feet up the air, several airports around the world have built new terminals and renovated their facilities to accommodate more flights and attract a new breed of discriminating travelers.

Keeping up with the competition, **McCarran International Airport** in Las Vegas unveiled its newest terminal in 2012 and has provided the kind of world-class service and amenities expected by the growing number of premium cabin passengers arriving from Asia and Europe.

Located in the heart of Las Vegas, landing at McCarran International Airport gives passengers an early glimpse of the iconic hotels and casinos along the Las Vegas Strip before they even step off the plane.

Upon arrival at the airport, visitors get an instant taste of the city's world-famous buzz, with a mural of showgirls greeting passengers in the arrivals hall, signage reminiscent of the famous "Welcome to Las Vegas" sign and slot machines throughout its terminals.

It's apparent that Las Vegas has recovered from the 2008 global recession and has seen a fresh entry of luxury hotels, top-rated restaurants and futuristic convention centers. In the past few years, the city's economy has grown by an average of 4 percent every year.

"We doubled the number of international passengers once we inaugurated Terminal 3," said **Rosemary Vassiliadis, director of aviation for Clark County**, the owner and operator of McCarran International Airport and four other general aviation airports in Southern Nevada.

Beyond tourism, business travel to and from

Asia has also been expanding. With more than 22,000 business meetings taking place in Las Vegas in 2015, the destination remains the busiest city in the Americas for trade shows and conventions.

Between 2010 and 2014, the number of visitors from Asia to Las Vegas has increased by more than 41 percent. In response, McCarran International Airport has allotted more gates for Asian carriers and is making a concerted effort to cater to Asian aesthetics.

"Highlighting the expansion of Asian-focused business meetings and events in Las Vegas has strengthened our position as the gateway to the Southwest U.S. for many Asian travelers. We are grateful for our current Asian airline partners and look forward to building new partnerships and bringing on additional routes that will allow us to expand our reach throughout Asia," Vassiliadis also said. ■

→ www.mccarran.com



In the last few years, travel to Las Vegas has grown sharply and required a renovation of its airport.

City of Albuquerque: More competitive than ever

With its low cost of doing business, skilled workforce, low-risk location and attractive quality of life, it's easy to see why companies such as Canon Information Technology Services have chosen to locate in **Albuquerque, New Mexico**.

Canon's investment in Albuquerque is yielding opportunities beyond its daily business activities such as promoting the city as a world-class destination for travel and leisure. The Japanese company is also the sponsor of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, one of the most photographed events in the world.

That is just one example of why Albuquerque is an attractive location for foreign direct investment from countries such as Japan.

"Give us the opportunity, come to Albuquerque and let us show you what we have," said **Mayor Richard J. Berry**.

Albuquerque Economic Development, Inc. President Gary Tonjes adds: "Investors, especially high-tech businesses and manufacturing operations, find Albuquerque appealing because of the state's available workforce, competitive incentives and attractive business environment."

In addition to its appeal among businesses and tourists, Albuquerque is among the preferred cities in the country for entrepreneurs.

The downtown district, known as Innovation Central, has attracted many innovators and startups. The area offers frequent activities for entrepreneurs and educational business programs, of-

fice spaces, residential lofts, street art, microbreweries, cafes and nightlife venues.

Innovation Central is a walkable, urban setting that embraces quirkiness, inspires ingenuity and encourages collaboration.

Albuquerque serves as a model for other vanguard cities seeking to establish an innovative economy that creates jobs, empowers its residents, attracts outside business and wows visitors.

"New Mexico is a breath of fresh air for people. It's something different that they haven't really seen before," said **Visit Albuquerque President and CEO Tania Armenta**. ■

→ www.abq.gov

→ www.abq.org

→ www.visitalbuquerque.org



A view of downtown Albuquerque

SOUTHWESTERN USA

www.gmipost.com

How to safeguard a revered Japanese brand

Established originally as Rocky Mountain Equipment Co. in 1952, **Komatsu Equipment** is the sole distributor and maintenance provider of Komatsu construction and mining equipment for the states of Utah, Nevada and most of Wyoming. Merging innovative technology and precision engineering, Komatsu's construction and mining equipment remains the first choice for many companies because of its respected reputation around the world and its prestigious heritage. Through its North American subsidiary Komatsu America, Komatsu Ltd. launched a new line of construction equipment with its iMC or intelligent machine control technology, which allows operators to handle the machinery more easily and shorten the learning process drastically. "The Japanese identity suits

us very well, particularly in this distributorship. Komatsu products are well engineered. That high quality, like a lot of Japanese products, rings true with a lot of our customers," said **CEO John Pfisterer**. While leading-edge technology found in Komatsu's machines is one aspect that has helped clients become successful, a client-first philosophy has also consolidated its customer base. Pfisterer, who has been Komatsu Equipment's CEO for almost a decade, must know because he was once a buyer of the equipment he now sells. "I want our people to be good listeners when customers seek solutions from us. I really want to understand what our customers need. If we can help make the customer more successful, then we get to share in that success. And that differentiates us from the competition,"

he said. Obtaining knowledge about their customers, Pfisterer emphasizes the importance of maintaining a relationship with them once the equipment is sold. "Equipment maintenance is my background. What happens after the sale is key to this business. Our growth strategy is to consider after-sales relationships as integral to the company's growth," he explained. Safety is another hallmark of Komatsu Equipment. In fact, its Salt Lake City branch and four other branches recently garnered the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) Certification from the U.S. Occupational Health and Safety Administration. "Safety is not just our priority, it's a value. Priorities change, but values don't," Pfisterer said. Despite a downturn in min-



Komatsu Equipment CEO John Pfisterer ing, the company chief sees continued opportunity in all areas of the business in the coming years. "We've grown this company significantly in all aspects since 2007. We'll continue to be partners of Komatsu America and Komatsu Ltd. in their success," he said. [→ www.komatsueq.com](http://www.komatsueq.com)

ASCENT SOLAR Lightweight portable, solar-powered products for every home

About six months after the devastating earthquake that struck Eastern Japan and caused the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced his plans to diversify his country's sources of energy and reduce its dependence on nuclear power. Since that announcement, Japan has steadily increased power generation from renewable sources such as wind and solar energy. Last year, the country generated 12 gigawatts from renewable sources, compared to 7.3 gigawatts in 2013. While traditional photovoltaic (PV) panels, seen mostly in large solar farms and on rooftops, remain the standard PV solution, technological advances in the field have already yielded lighter, stronger, more flexible and affordable products, among them the thin-film solar modules made from copper, indium, gallium and selenium, widely

known as CIGS technology. **Ascent Solar Technologies Inc.**, based in Thornton, Colorado, is the "One and Only" CIGS producer globally which manufactures on a flexible plastic substrate using its award-winning, patented "monolithic integration" technology. Given the extremely lightweight and flexible nature of the plastic substrate, Ascent has enabled a previously unimaginable potential for wide varieties of application currently not available to traditional glass-backed solar. Besides being lightweight and flexible, the most important aspect is the extreme durability of the panels as compared to glass-backed panels. Ascent's panels are literally "bullet-proof" as they continue to produce power even when punctured. In fact, Ascent's panels have passed the U.S. military MIL-STD 810G testing



Ascent's solar technology is both the world's most lightweight, and customizable as seen in the application of the company's solar to the Silent Falcon UAV. and selected modules have also obtained the IEC61646 Certification from the International Electrotechnical Commission. Recently, Ascent set up a consumer products division, EnerPlex, to focus on providing every individual with complete mobile, outdoor and emergency power solutions. EnerPlex products range from portable solar chargers, solar-integrated backpacks and energy storage devices such as powerbanks and generators that were primarily designed for off-grid situations, especially in disaster areas where the sun could be the only source of power. "Ascent's PV panels can operate in low-light, overcast or even indirect sunlight conditions,

Nikkiso Cryo: a valuable link in the LNG supply chain

Submerged electric motor pumps are indispensable components in the oil and energy industry for the safety and efficiency they bring to the extraction and transport of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other liquefied gases. Located in North Las Vegas, Nevada, **Nikkiso Cryo, Inc. (NCI)** became a pioneer in its industry for having designed the first cryogenic submerged electric motor pumps for use on LNG gravity-based structures (GBS). Among its innovative products are compact high-flow pumps for what will be the world's largest floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) vessel in the world. NCI's original technologies have increased the reliability of submerged motor cryogenic pumps that is unmatched by other suppliers. Their pumps are able to operate for up to 40,000 hours before maintenance is required. With their innovations to the pump hydraulics, NCI developed a compact, high-flow design that can be applied to the latest FPSO vessels for cargo offloading in a removable configuration to allow for pump maintenance without the need to empty their tanks. The design includes an advanced high-speed suction feature that enables liquefied gas to be pumped down to an extremely low level. [→ www.NikkisoCryo.com](http://www.NikkisoCryo.com)



Nikkiso Cryo, Inc. CEO Dave Cameron



Nikkiso Cryo's production plant in Las Vegas

Teikoku Taping System thrives in Arizona's emerging high tech hub

The "Internet of Things" is altering how people interact with their devices. From smartphones to smart homes and self-driving cars, the speed of innovation is dependent on how fast the semiconductor industry develops microelectromechanical systems (MEMS). **Teikoku Taping System (TTS)**, a Nagoya-based company that designs and builds semiconductor-manufacturing machines, has led innovation in MEMS technology. Celebrating its fourth year in Arizona, TTS manufactures tools that allow innovation in production methods for various applications such as semiconductors, automobile sensors and medical devices. In the last few years, many Japanese companies, particularly those in the semiconductor sector, have moved to Phoenix, attracted by the city's new reputation for innovation. For a company that invests heavily in research and development, TTS found the perfect place in the state. While most of Teikoku America's success stems from its cutting edge technology in manufacturing 300-mm wafer-related machines, the company has identified new areas of growth.



Teikoku Taping System President H.C. Lee "Aside from MEMS, we now see exciting opportunities in enhancing solar technology and medical devices," said **President H.C. Lee**. Amid fierce competition, Teikoku has differentiated itself from rivals by combining technology, attractive costs and robust after-sales support. "A lot of end users endure slow customer service from other providers. We want the industry to consider us as partners throughout the customer journey," Lee said. [→ www.teikoku-taping.com](http://www.teikoku-taping.com)

Walbro designs for the future

In the highly competitive small engine market that focuses on sales volume for growth, **Walbro** has concentrated on research and development, believing that very well-designed products will attract loyal customers. With R&D offices in the Japanese city of Kakuda, Miyagi Prefecture and Cass City in Michigan, Walbro capitalizes on the engineering and manufacturing expertise in those two areas and uses that know-how to produce engines that will meet the future needs of its customers. "What's unique with Walbro is that we can look at design and engineering from two cultural points of view. This gives us a unique strength to offer to Japanese and American customers," said **Yukio Goto, Vice President for Global Operations and President of Walbro Japan**. The company's culture of innovation also demands that it stays abreast of the stringent standards in the U.S. "One of the keys to our success is to understand and anticipate what's coming down the pipeline and have our engineers innovate around these developments," said **CEO Matt Riddle**. When Riddle became CEO in 2015, he wanted to strengthen Walbro's relationships with Japanese companies as they accounted for half of the customer base. He remains resolute in that mission. "We are your partner through great times and moments of challenge. We have been here for 65 years, and will be here for you for 65 more years and beyond," he said. [→ www.walbro.com](http://www.walbro.com)



Walbro Vice President for Global Operations and Walbro Japan President Yukio Goto dards in the U.S. "One of the keys to our success is to understand and anticipate what's coming down the pipeline and have our engineers innovate around these developments," said **CEO Matt Riddle**. When Riddle became CEO in 2015, he wanted to strengthen Walbro's relationships with Japanese companies as they accounted for half of the customer base. He remains resolute in that mission. "We are your partner through great times and moments of challenge. We have been here for 65 years, and will be here for you for 65 more years and beyond," he said. [→ www.walbro.com](http://www.walbro.com)



Ripe for success in Japan

In 1998, just one year after founding the company, long-time produce exporter **Miguel A. Suarez** saw orders from the U.K. plummet for his Mexican grapes, as North African fruit exporters became more economical suppliers to Europe. "Our exports to the U.K. vanished almost overnight when countries closer to the U.K. such as Egypt, began developing their grape markets," Suarez recalled. Suarez soon learned from Mexican embassy officials that, across another ocean, the Japanese had

developed a huge fondness for melons and grapes. Nearly 20 years after, business from a highly discriminating Japanese market has not waned. "I have a big admiration for the Japanese culture of excellence. The high standard that we were initially required to meet greatly helped us raise the bar," said Suarez, who keeps abreast of his customers' preferences. "One of our values is to respond as quickly as possible to rapid changes in the market. In this way, we ensure that the pro-



MAS Melons & Grapes President Miguel A. Suarez duce that ends up on the shelves exceeds even the smallest details," the president added. Operating under the Four Star brand in Japan, the company

wants to introduce new products, such as avocados, broccoli and seedless grapes. "Our business in Japan could not have been as successful as it is today without our Japanese employees and our critical partnerships with Sumifru and Mitsui. We've gained their trust and we'll do whatever it takes to keep and improve that," he said. [→ www.masmelons.com](http://www.masmelons.com)

Gilbert, Arizona lures world tech leaders

Located in the southeast valley of the Phoenix metropolitan area, **the town of Gilbert in Arizona** has recently seen an influx of world-class facilities, talent, innovations and public-private partnerships. Gilbert's pro-business environment brings together cutting-edge companies from around the world. Amid its strong efforts to attract talent in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) occupations, the town has become a hub for software development, aerospace and defense. In March 2016, Orbital ATK, one of the world's leading aerospace and defense technology firms, announced the expansion of engineering operations in Gilbert. The expansion complements Arizona's prominent aerospace and defense sector, which contributes \$38 billion annually to the state's economy and employs more than 52,000 workers. Other notable companies that have found a home in Gilbert include Lockheed Martin, GoDaddy, Banner MD Anderson, and Helix. As one of the country's fastest-growing communities, Gilbert has been named a Top-25 Best Place to Live in the U.S., Third-Best City in the U.S. to Find a Job, and Second-Safest City in the Nation. Gilbert fosters a young and educated workforce, geographically provides convenient access to the Phoenix metropolitan area and offers a unique quality of life appealing to all ages. [→ www.gilbertedi.com](http://www.gilbertedi.com)



The Iridium NEXT satellite designed and developed by Orbital ATK, based in Gilbert, Arizona

LANDESK helps IT keep up with ease

As the power of computers double every 12 to 18 months, the technologies that rely on their capabilities must do so too. With that rapid pace of innovation, businesses — both large and small — face cybersecurity threats and information management challenges. For **LANDESK CEO Steve Daly**, improving the relationship of end-users and businesses with information technology is key to surmounting those challenges. "Our mission is primarily around industry enablement, or we can help businesses improve their productivity by making it easier for them to manage and secure devices," Daly explained. Managing over 250 million computers globally, LANDESK, solves key issues that businesses worry about such as managing different devices using different operating systems, improving end users' experiences through simple interfaces and harmonizing different applications under one system. In addition, customers can mitigate up to 85 percent of targeted cyberthreat intrusion techniques using preventative end-



LANDESK CEO Steve Daly point security solutions from the company. The Salt Lake City-based company sees Japan as a foundational market as the country sets the pace in IT development for the rest of Asia. LANDESK has a team of engineers dedicated to Japanese customers, and works with CISC and local partners to ensure customers get the most from their investment. [→ www.landesk.com/ja/](http://www.landesk.com/ja/)



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Full Range of Cryogenic Pumps

- In tank, removable pumps
- Vessel-mounted pumps
- Fixed mounted pumps

Low total cost of ownership

Unparalleled quality

Exceptional pump-down capability (Extremely low NPSHR)

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www.gmipost.com

Casino slot manufacturer attributes success to hard work, vision, and dedication to core values

For the past 20 years, the highly regulated casino industry has made a dramatic shift from a limited number of select destinations — Las Vegas representing the most famous — to a global industry powerhouse that provides casino entertainment to more customers than at any time in its history.

Gaming entertainment and technology, once restricted to a few select places, have over time arrived in countless international markets, U.S. tribal areas, race-tracks, riverboat operations, large corporate portfolios and even online mediums.

As the era of extreme global growth was beginning, gaming entertainment giant **Konami Holdings Corp. (TSE: 9766)** established its first casino gaming operation with the launch of Konami Australia Pty Ltd. in 1996.

One year later, in 1997, Konami expanded its casino division to what became the global headquarters when **Konami Gaming, Inc.** was founded in Las Vegas. Since then, Konami's casino gaming companies have demonstrated success under the leadership of **President and CEO Satoshi Sakamoto**.

Entry into the heavily regulated casino gambling sector occurred for Konami only after it carried out extensive research and investment to realize its vision.

"With each new market we examined, there was a great depth of strict regulatory requirements and licensing conditions unique to the individual jurisdiction's authority. It was a monumental task to become a global supplier for a sector so strongly protected by legislative and governmental control. But today, Konami has secured gaming licenses in 392

locations worldwide, enabling us to responsibly reach the broadest scope of casino players and properties," Sakamoto said.

Konami exercised measured investment and committed to organic growth as its video slot machines and mechanical steppers saw sustained success in the field in part due to the company's heritage in gaming entertainment.

Creative gameplay, captivating sounds and graphics and proven slot mathematics were the core elements of Konami's earliest casino games. These same components still contribute to the success of Konami games found at casinos today, such as the all-new Concerto slot machine, the Rapid Revolver video-mechanical hybrid slot and the revolutionary Titan 360 multistation machine.

Just five years after the company's casino division was created, Konami entered the casino management systems business by acquiring Paradigm Gaming Systems, Inc. and developing industry-leading systems technology.

Crucial operational functions such as slot and table accounting systems, player account tracking, and marketing analytics form the reliable backbone for Konami's award-winning casino management system, SYNKROS, which is being used to manage successful casino operations around the world.

Operator partners, including Star Entertainment, Casinos du Quebec, New Mexico-based Sandia Resort & Casino and Barona Resort & Casino in southern California, are among those key companies relying on the strength and advantage of SYNKROS to compete in their markets.

The period from 2014 to 2015 marked unparalleled merger and acquisition activity for the casino

gaming manufacturer market. Many of the top ten slot suppliers were involved in some form of ownership change.

Konami stands in marked contrast, relying on the steady organic growth characteristic of its culture. In terms of annual market share, Konami consistently maintains its top tier position. Tens of thousands of Konami machines are currently operating across the globe largely because of the success of the Podium slot cabinet and the global expansion of its new Concerto slot cabinet.

"Our central locations in Las Vegas, Sydney and Japan have empowered us to support the worldwide casino market with our primary objective being the delivery of long-term product quality and service. Those enduring values are a primary contributor to the success of our company as a leading gaming equipment and technology supplier," said Sakamoto.

Amid historic regulatory changes in the passage of skill-based gambling legislation in limited areas of the U.S., Konami has expressed its intent to pioneer this new gambling product sector.

In the past, Konami Holdings Corp. assisted in strategic projects for its casino division, including the development of the Titan 360 machine, creation of the Advantage Revolution slot, and the introduction of iconic Konami arcade brands such as Frogger to casino audiences for the first time. This relationship becomes very critical as casino operators look to attract new segments of millennial consumers with alternatives to traditional slot products.

"As we pursue emerging game development, our organization

maintains a focus on creating what we call 'valuable time' — that players not simply spend a length of time with our games, but that they experience a premium level of entertainment and delight that goes beyond the minutes on the clock," said Sakamoto.

"Working alongside our customers and parent organization, Konami Holdings Corp., we are well-positioned to simultaneously deliver world-class products in emerging gaming sectors, while continuing to innovate across our library of proven core products," he added. ■
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Konami Gaming, Inc. President and CEO Satoshi Sakamoto



Konami Gaming, Inc.'s Las Vegas headquarters, spanning 360,000+ square feet of R&D, administrative, and manufacturing facilities

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