

Preface

Promotion of safe and trusted ICT tourism

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The importance of tourism industry is increasing in Japan. The number of foreign tourists to Japan in 2016 exceeded 20 million as of Oct.30. The number will amount to about 2.4 million by the end of this year. It increases by 20 % compared to the previous year. It will rank around 15th in the world. Many foreign visitors (inbound tourists) are interested in Japanese food, traditional crafts and the history. Main visiting spots are temples and shrines (Fushimi Inari-taisha, Itsukushima Shrine and Todaiji Temple). Religious culture is well spread in rural areas because there are temples and shrines throughout Japan.

Many inbound tourists are coming to the golden route (Osaka-Kyoto-Nagoya-Shizuoka-Tokyo). However, some inbound tourists are visiting local areas of Japan recently. Especially, repeat visitors have a higher tendency to visit the areas. It is said that there is an essential Japanese culture in a local area. The tendency is recognized in the information from SNS. The related research papers are published in this issue.

The necessity of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) increases in tourism sectors. The applications of the following techniques, which are a trend in the field of ICT, have been investigated remarkably. There is a case that a robot is adopted in the works at a front desk and porter works in a hotel. It is also adopted in a travel guide operation. The adoption (employment) will contribute significantly to Japanese tourism industry.

Cloud, Internet of things (IoT), Big Data, AI, Robot

Environmental improvement to make a journey safe and secure for inbound tourists is required strongly since the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred in 2011. Tohoku district had a big damage due to the disaster. Development of infrastructure for taking refuge safely at the time of disaster is urgently needed. Displaying evacuation routes using their mother tongues is essential. Portable translational apparatuses for more than 10 languages have been being developed for the Tokyo Olympics. In Japan, utilizing ICT innovation can be a clue to development of tourism industry. It is a Japanese unique technology.

Of course, it is also necessary to introduce scientific research results on Japanese local areas to the world. Inbound tourists prefer a wide-area sightseeing. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce academic information not only from Japan but also from Asian countries (China, Korea, Thailand, etc.). It is with great pleasure that we publish the second issue. We will appreciate many academic articles from all over the world in the near future.

We are deeply indebted to our editing committee members for their support and would like to conclude our remarks by wishing every member's success and prosperity.