

“Mizu no Miyako – The Water City”: The Birth of a new Centre in Matsue aspiring to become a hub for the exchange of information regarding developments in the sphere of IT.

- ◆ **Matsue Open Source Lab** (opened on the 31st July)
“This Laboratory will be a centre for information and technological exchange in the area of Open Source Software”
- ◆ The Creation of a New Regional Brand:
The Evolution of the “**Ruby City MATSUE**” Project.

“Ruby City MATSUE Project”

The Opening of the “Matsue Open Source Lab” on Monday 31st July

On the 31st July the “Matsue Open Source Lab” (Matsue City Development Exchange Plaza), situated in front of JR Matsue Station, opened its doors, marking the advent of a new stage in the development of the water city of Matsue.

Located in the heart of the city, and specialising in open source software (OSS), a technology at the forefront of developments in the world of IT, the “Matsue Open Source Lab” offers a base for research, development and information exchange.

The “Matsue Open Source Lab” aims to create an environment in which businesses, technicians, researchers, students and users making use of open source software can both share and deepen their specialised knowledge of the subject, in turn helping to advance their technological know-how and competitiveness in the market place, and simultaneously cultivating a high-calibre IT workforce both for today and for the future. Concomitantly, this new facility aspires to further the industrial advancement of the city, by propelling Matsue into a new and exciting marketplace and creating a new regional brand for the city – Ruby City MATSUE.

A Brief Overview of the “Matsue Open Source Lab”

Location: Matsue Terrsa Annexe (2nd Floor), 478-18 Asahi-cho, Matsue City

Opening Hours: Weekdays, 9:30 ~ 19:00

If you apply in advance it is possible to use the facility on holidays or outside of the standard opening hours.

Holidays: Weekends, National Holidays, New Year Holiday (28th December ~ 5th January)

Usage Fee: Free

The Five Key Objectives of the “Matsue Open Source Lab”

1. To Establish a Facility in which the Community can Increase and Share their Knowledge of OSS
2. To Promote Academic-Industrial-government Alliance
3. To Foster Good Human Resources
4. To Create a New Regional Brand for Matsue
5. To Create a Hub for the Transmission and Dissemination of Information.

A Message from the Mayor of Matsue

Today marks the opening of “Matsue Open Source Lab”, a brand new facility located in the heart of Matsue which aims to operate as a hub for research, development, and information exchange in the field of Open Source Software (OSS). The creation of this facility launches Matsue into the cutting edge world of IT, revealing a further dimension to Matsue’s multi-faceted development.



The founding of the “Matsue Open Source Lab” also marks the genesis of the “Ruby City MATSUE” project initiated by the city authorities.

The “Ruby City MATSUE” project is an initiative which aims to create a new regional brand for the city, making use of the skills and knowledge of citizens together with the resources of the local area to revitalise the city and enable it to survive and flourish in an increasingly competitive world.

We are now entering an age plagued by depopulation, and thus if all cities and local authorities were to attempt to expand in the same manner, the result would clearly be somewhat problematic. Thus, henceforth, I believe that it is only those cities which adopt clearly distinct strategies for development which will be able to remain sustainable as independent self-supporting cities. Furthermore, adopting a distinct strategy for development involves creating a strong regional brand for your city.

In its search to find a strong brand, Matsue City decided to focus on the world-renowned programming language known as “Ruby”, and the pioneer of this language, Mr. Yukihiro Matsumoto. It is with the purpose of further increasing the widespread use of the “Ruby” programming language that Matsue City is implementing the “Ruby City MATSUE” project, along with a host of other activities designed to popularise the format.

Through utilising today’s newly opened “Matsue Open Source Lab”, companies, technicians, researchers, students, and users who specialise in open source software can come together from all over the country to exchange knowledge and information. Through such activities I hope that Matsue becomes a national centre for open source software development, duly leading to new technological innovation, increased competitiveness in the field of OSS, and above all else the development of a modern workforce well versed in the intricacies of the IT world. Ultimately, I hope to make Matsue a world-renowned Mecca for the Ruby programming language.

In conclusion, on the occasion of the opening of the “Matsue Open Source Lab”, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in the inception of the “Ruby City MATSUE” Project for their understanding and assistance. In particular I would like to thank the developer of the Ruby language, Mr. Matsumoto, for his kind-hearted support and assistance with the project.

July 2006.

The Mayor of Matsue, Mr. Masataka Matsuura.

A Message from Mr. Yukihiro Matsumoto



Open Source is one method of software development in which the “Source Code” – equivalent to the blueprint of the software – is made public and is thus available for other people to use free of charge in a manner they see fit. Traditionally, the software industry has kept Source Code hidden from view, however, Open Source software has overturned this trend and instead views Source Code as something which should be shared and developed by all.

There are various reasons why Open Source software became a reality, and one such reason is the commodification of software. Gradually software has come to pervade every sphere of our daily lives and has become just another commodity; just another daily necessity. However, this gradual commodification of software has meant that the budgets available to develop software have steadily decreased. As a result, developing software alone and not revealing the Source Code no longer seems to make sense; instead, sharing the source code and cooperating with others when developing software results in a better quality product for less financial outlay, and as such is a more intelligent method of software development.

A further reason behind the rise of Open Source Software is the increasing growth of the internet. The internet releases software developers from physical and geographical constraints, so developers based in Japan can cooperate with developers in foreign countries when producing software. Nationality and location thus become irrelevant, and it is not where you are which is important, but how much enthusiasm you have, and who you are connected to which become increasingly significant factors.

This factor works to the advantage of provincial cities such as Matsue. Matsue offers its residents an attractive living environment blessed with an abundance of nature, and there are many enthusiastic people in the region who are interested in getting involved with Open Source software.

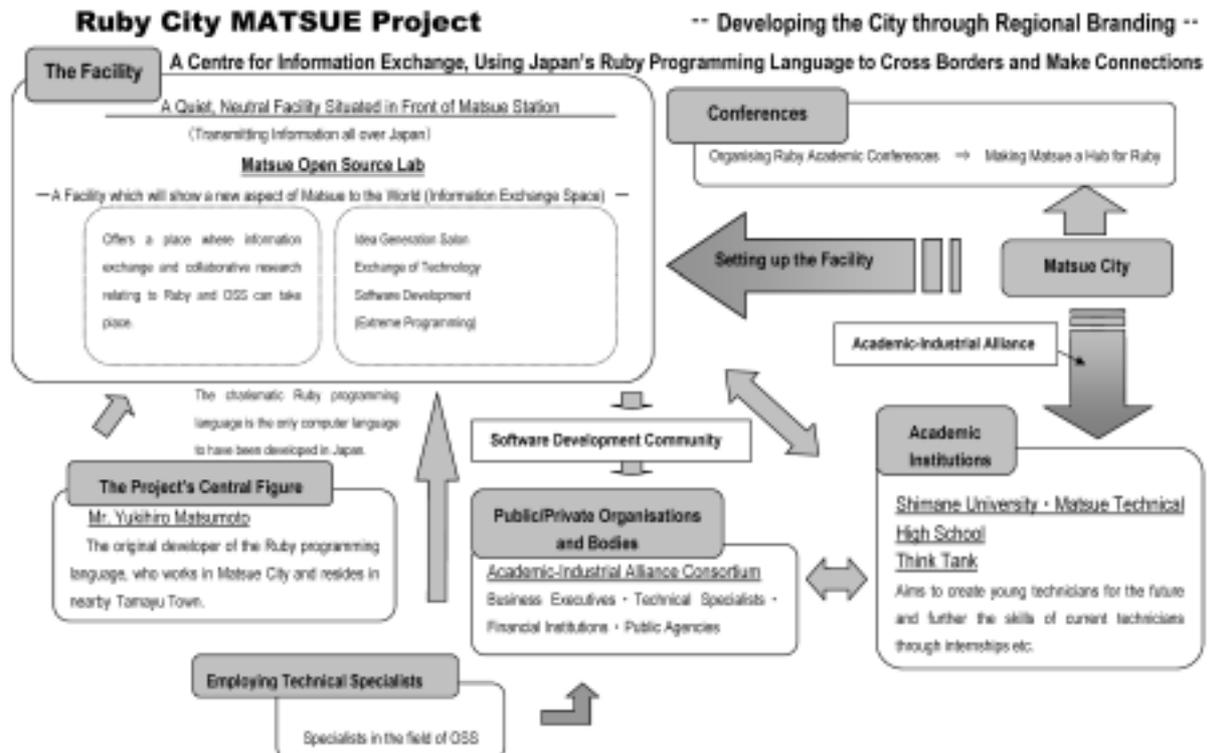
Through combining the talent and knowledge of the many people assembled at “Matsue Open Source Lab”, I hope that Matsue can do something to reduce the IT skills disparity between central Tokyo and more regional areas, and above all else I hope that Matsue can establish its own unique and successful brand of IT culture.

July, 2006.

Mr. Yukihiro Matsumoto.

Ruby City MATSUE Project

Matsue City initiated the "Ruby City Matsue" Project, which attempts to create a new regional brand for the city based around the Ruby programming language, as part of its efforts to regenerate the city and its environs. The project aims, through the "Matsue Open Source Lab" facility, to create a hub for all activities relating to Open Source Software (OSS) and make Matsue a centre for OSS research, development and exchange.



OS/OS - An abbreviation for Open Source Software. Software in which the program (source) is made publicly available, allowing others the use, edit, duplicate, and redistribute the software freely.

©Ruby - An open source software programming language first developed on 24th February 1993 by Mr. Yukihiko Matsumoto, a resident of Tamayu Town, who currently works at the Network Application and Transmission Research Centre headquartered in Matsue City. Since it was first published, Ruby has been developed and exchanged on a global scale by technicians who utilize mailing list technology. It has also been utilized in web and database applications.

For Further Information on this Project, Please Contact:

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