

**O**SAKA, JAPAN — October 25 – 26, 2001 — For any company in one of four key technology industries with an eye on Japan's hot high-tech market, Global Venture Forum (GVF) 2001 is one business development opportunity that comes knocking only once.

GVF 2001 is not a trade show, but rather a non-profit event — organized by the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry with financial assistance from the Japanese government and industry — to solidify partnerships in the fields of information technology, biotech and medical technologies, environment and energy and advanced materials. Only those companies with technology solutions having a broad appeal and wishing to grow their business overseas should apply. Companies should also have sufficient resources to handle the follow-up and should not already have an exclusive relationship in Japan.

Approximately 50 firms are selected each year from between 160 and 200 firms world-wide to deliver their business presentations at GVF, now in its seventh year. These presentations are also distributed through brochures, via the Internet and through the Japanese media to over 15,000 Japanese organizations seeking partnerships and investment opportunities. A

# Global Venture Forum 2001

firm can only be selected to present at GVF once, however that single opportunity is often all it takes to establish a beachhead in Japan.

Some participants have used GVF to find licensees for their technology,



and distributors and partners to establish sales channels in Japan. Other companies have found GVF to be an effective springboard to further their product and prototype development or to conduct joint R&D. Still others have used GVF to home in on financing. All companies presenting at GVF have benefited from the extensive coverage by the local and national

media, always on the look-out for interesting technology stories.

## The first step to a one-time opportunity

Applying to GVF costs nothing. Applicants simply submit a two-page draft business presentation before June 14, 2001 to a committee of volunteers, who will assess it based on a number of criteria. If selected to present, companies then pay a nominal registration fee of US\$1,300 which includes the cost of most meals, one night in a hotel, use of all AV equipment, the services of a professional interpreter at all times, and simultaneous interpretation of the presentation.

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job today is not to push inflation down, like in the 1980s, but to keep inflation low and stable. That means preventing both economic booms and recessions.

Second, a tax cut is coming. The form and substance of that tax cut may evolve as it makes its way through the Washington policy maze, but it seems very likely to arrive around mid-year.

Third, oil prices have receded significantly, and this constitutes another tax cut working its way through the economy.

Fourth, today's technology and inventory management systems

mean that the shock is working its way through the economy with a speed never seen before. That means that the abruptness of the slowdown is likely to give way to a rapid return to moderate growth later this year.

### Overall forecast moderate

Accordingly, a protracted downturn in the U.S. economy remains unlikely. U.S. growth this year will be U-shaped, but should average about 2%. Meanwhile, Europe should post growth of close to 3% this year. South American growth should remain solid, supported by relatively close ties to Europe. Asian

growth will be impacted by the U.S. slowdown, but both China and India have stronger fundamentals than they did just a few years ago.

The brunt of the slowdown will be borne by Mexico and Canada, both of which appear to have sufficient domestic momentum to weather the storm.

The bottom line? World economic growth is likely to average 3.5% this year. Canadian export sales should grow by around 2-3% in 2001 — a far cry from last year's stellar performance to be sure, but a respectable year nonetheless.