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Editorial

Dear Reader,

As I type, I'm on a ship sailing from Japan to South Korea. While on board, I've managed to connect to my office computer in the United Kingdom to access various files and services. More importantly, I've been able to use WhatsApp to video call my 90-year-old father who is in hospital in Wales. Despite being an intelligent man, my father finds it difficult to believe that such communication is possible. So much has changed during his lifetime.

Before boarding the ship, we spent a week travelling around Japan. A significant portion of that time was spent in Tokyo, a cutting-edge city in terms of technology usage. Even though many people do not speak English in Japan and I know only three words of Japanese, communication, thanks to translation software, was relatively easy. Moreover, navigating the amazingly efficient but complex public transportation system was very doable thanks to Google Maps that not only provided the best route to take from point A to point B but provided real time information on trains, tubes, and buses. Using other apps, it was again very straightforward to book sightseeing activities, restaurants, hotels, and taxis.

In Tokyo, we visited a restaurant where some of the table service was provided by robots. We also took a pleasant journey on a driverless train. One thing I found very amusing in the city were human like robotic traffic safety controllers. Japan has certainly deployed technology in many innovative ways.

The trip to Japan has been both relaxing and informative. It was good to see that many of the technologies that we seek to develop are not just abstract concepts. The endeavours we partake in have real positive potential to make communication, entertainment, transportation, and other aspects of our lives less stressful and manageable.

I hope that each one of us will at some stage have the opportunity for a break from our work. And whether we spend that time at home or travelling, that we will have the chance to see new things or to see old things in a new way.

Professor Andrew Ware,
On behalf of the Editorial Board,
Annals of Emerging Technologies in Computing (AETiC).