Enterprise Postgres Growth in Japan

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This talk explores why Japan was such an early adopter of Postgres, and how Japanese developers move Postgres forward.

https://momjian.us/presentations

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Outline

1. Outsider
2. Early years
3. Domestic use
4. Global engagement
1. Outsider

https://www.flickr.com/photos/giuseppemilo/
Alexis de Tocqueville

- French political philosopher
- Visited the United States for nine months in 1831-1832
- Wrote *Democracy in America*
- "Tocqueville saw democracy as an equation that balanced liberty and equality, concern for the individual as well as for the community."
- Saw the USA clearer than native citizens, still quoted today

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexis_de_Tocqueville
2. Early Years

https://www.flickr.com/photos/dharma-bum/
Tatsuo Ishii

- Started with Postgres in 1991 (five years before me)
- Wrote first Postgres book in 1998
- Helped create the first Postgres user group

https://postgresql.life/post/tatsuo_ishii/
https://pgsqlpgpool.blogspot.com
Re: 7.2 is slow?

- December 2001 report from Ishii-san
- 2x slower than Postgres 7.1
- Quad-CPU-socket server
- What are the Japanese doing with Postgres?

https://www.postgresql.org/message-id/flat/20011217133001.A90515%40ilse.nl#f4435b953e2572301fda525cb5a33da4
My First Visit to Asia

My first:

- Visit to Asia, December 2000
- Postgres conference
- Postgres interview, “Would you say that PostgreSQL is now ready for e-business?”
- Met Ruby author Yukihiro Matsumoto

(Left to right) Hiroshi Inoue, me, Tatsuo Ishii

https://lwn.net/2001/features/Momjian/
The Jerry Lewis Period

- USA entertainer who became more popular outside his country
- Will I ever know why Postgres is popular in Japan?
- Does Japan represent the future of other countries?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerry_Lewis
https://www.straightdope.com/21342501/do-the-french-really-love-jerry-lewis
3. Domestic Use

https://www.flickr.com/photos/meenaghd/
Japan PostgreSQL User Group (JPUG)

- Mailing list started in 1996 by Ishii-san
- Organization formed in 1999
- Non-profit formed in 2006
- Manage mailing list and hold regular events in Japan

Ship-board event in October 2006

https://www.postgresql.jp/npo/about
• Employed me from 2001 to 2006
• Created Pgpool in 2003
• Developed a commercial version of Postgres for Windows
  • contributed that code to help with the community port in 2003
• Created SRA OSS in 2005
March 2003 meeting at Fujitsu to discuss adding tablespace control to Postgres
Finally added in 2005
Fujitsu used Postgres source code in its Syfoware product
Fujitsu Australia Software Technology (FAST)
Eventually developed their own version of Postgres

https://www.linkedin.com/company/fujitsu-australia-software-technology/about/
https://www.postgresql.fastware.com/
• Ranked 43rd in Forbes Global 2000 for 2021
• Created the NTT OSS Center for Postgres in 2003
• Developed many tools for Postgres
  • https://wiki.postgresql.org/wiki/NTT
  • https://github.com/oss-c-db

https://www.rd.ntt/e/sic/team_researchers/team/251.html
Domestic Use Trends

• Software is global, not controlled by a single country or company
• Effective multi-character set support
• Focus on Japan domestic usage
• Easy for companies to create closed-source products for the Japanese market (e.g., SRA, Fujitsu) or customize for internal use (e.g., NTT)
• Tooling for Postgres developed by mostly Japanese teams (e.g., Pgpool)
4. Global Engagement

https://www.flickr.com/photos/mujitra/
First Postgres Conference Outside of Japan

15% from Japan; Toronto, July 2006
Global Engagement Challenges

- Flat organizational structure
- English language communication
- Distance
- Time zone differences
Postgres 14 Success

- 18% of Postgres features were developed by people from Japan
- 17% of current Postgres committers are from Japan

https://www.postgresql.org/docs/14/release-14.html
https://wiki.postgresql.org/wiki/Committers
Global Engagement Trends

- Japanese developers operating on the global stage
  - receiving training
- Japanese companies influencing database server development, e.g., high availability