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HOW TO STAGE A COMEBACK

The year 2023 was going to be Northern California's time of reckoning, as it struggled to deal with the worst effects of the pandemic and the ensuing supply chain crisis. Ahead of the release of final year-end figures, however, the region appears to be on the road to full recovery.

According to the latest forecast, the state's labor market is expected to grow by 2.2%, which translates to 398,000 jobs, 80% of which will come from the public sector and the hospitality and health care industries.

While some sectors remain more dynamic than others, for the Port of Stockton the pandemic caused a welcome disruption in the supply chain.

"We saw about a 30% increase in volume during that supply chain crisis. Many commodities that were typically in containers were taken out because costs were high. They were thus moved in break bulk, and we handled a large part of that business. We had a record year in 2022 when 4.9 million metric tons were processed through the port. Our volumes have since returned to pre-pandemic levels," said **Port of Stockton Director Kirk DeJesus**.

Although the agricultural sector suffered the biggest blow, certain crops, like almonds and cherries, retained Japan as a major market, according to California Cherries.

As the industrial landscape continues to evolve, organizations like the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Northern California emphasize the importance of staying closely connected with the Japanese community and its partners.

"The tendency is for Japanese companies to establish R&D (research and development) hubs. Legacy companies create venture capital arms that seek investment opportunities. These ties strengthen the partnership of Northern California and Japan. The ecosystem in Silicon Valley is still the biggest in the world. That's why I believe that there are opportunities here," said **JCCNC Executive Director Keijiro Hora**.

As a result, Japanese multinationals such as Mitsubishi Corp. and Furukawa Sangyo have established investment groups focused on start-ups in Silicon Valley.

With the continued thrust to integrate intelligent systems, educational partners are exploring innovation management and its corresponding impact on the relationships between innovation groups and larger companies. Among them is Stanford University's US-Asia

Technology Management Center.

"We look at the kind of impact that new technology businesses have on industry value chains. We interact directly with innovation groups and help them design the best strategic relationship with headquarters. There's heightened interest, usually from large Japanese companies with U.S.-based innovation groups because of the exciting entrepreneurial ecosystem here in Silicon Valley," explained **US-ATMC Director Richard Dasher**.

Nevertheless, independent startups like **Omneky** have proven that one can be independently successful. For **Founder and CEO Hikari Senju**, it became a personal mission to integrate technology and art.

"From day one, the objective was to disrupt the creative services industry with generative AI," Senju said.

In the clean energy sphere, **Principle Power** is a global technology and services provider for the floating wind market. Its trademarked **WindFloat** technology, deployed in 75-megawatt projects across Europe, has proven its resilience in challenging environments, while delivering energy to 55,000 homes annually.

"We're expanding to Japan by partnering with local stakeholders like Tokyo Gas and leveraging programs like NEDO's (New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization) Green Investment Fund to secure and accelerate the pathway for the deployment of commercial scale projects," said **Principle Power Vice President for Engineering Antoine Peiffer**.

With the inevitable integration of such mechanisms, the increasing reliance on advanced technologies has yielded effective cost-cutting measures for many firms.

But the increasing impact of machine innovation has raised issues about the value of humans and the traditional labor force that once dominated. In light of this, institutions like **Sofia University** are helping business leaders and managers design human-centric artificial intelligence systems through its flagship program in transpersonal psychology.

"The humanistic aspects of an organization, like the culture of engagement and communication, are embodied in transpersonal education. Our leadership and coaching certification programs are good options for companies that are looking into promoting people to key organizational roles," said **Sofia University Director of Marketing and Communications Roland Reese**. ■

OMNEKY: A TRUE TECH DISRUPTOR

"We are entering a world where attention is going to be scarcer as the cost of creating content approaches zero," said **Hikari Senju**, who typifies the successful tech entrepreneur with an exceptional educational background.

A computer science graduate of Harvard University, Senju founded **Omneky** in 2018 after selling his previous startup **Quickhelp** to **Yup.com**, where he led growth. With that, **Omneky** became the first mover in generative AI to engage ad tech.

Today, **Omneky** is the world leader and best capitalized company in generative AI and advertising. **Omneky** generates omnichannel advertisements personalized to drive conversions for each customer and brand.

"All individuals live in their own filter bubble. Our technology generates content that breaks through the filter bubbles and communicates product values personalized to each user's content preferences while maintaining brand safety," Senju explained.

Through state-of-the-art deep learning, **Omneky** generates content targeting specific



Omneky Founder and CEO Hikari Senju

audience segments that drive conversions due to better personalization and omnichannel orchestration. **Omneky** advertising campaigns increase return on ad spend by 3.5 times while driving cost savings as much as eight times higher. Customers can maximize the impact and reach of their advertisements and content across all digital touch points.

With a steadfast mission to democratize the growth of businesses by scaling creativity through technology, **Omneky** displays a deep passion for human ingenuity. ■

→ <https://www.omneky.com>



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For international students who dream of an American education, **Sofia University** invites them to experience its unique "transpersonal education approach" at either of its California campuses in Palo Alto and Costa Mesa.

Transpersonal education: **Sofia University** sets itself apart because of its emphasis on holistic growth. Its transpersonal approach integrates mind, body, spirit and culture into every program. The school does not just award degrees. It provides students with a purposeful future.

Affordable excellence: The school understands the importance of a cost-effective education. At **Sofia**, students can attain their academic goals without breaking the bank. Its northern and southern California campuses provide ample opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Campuses: The Palo Alto campus is in the heart of Silicon Valley, very close to giants in the tech industry. The Costa Mesa campus benefits from the energy of Southern California. Both locations offer their own cultural and academic experiences.



Sofia University delivers quality American education to international students.

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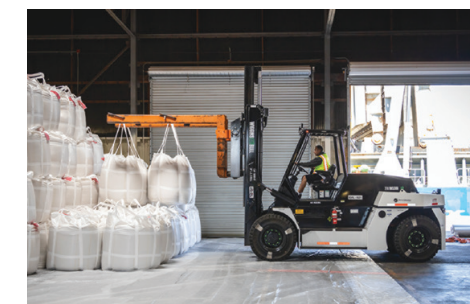
PORT OF STOCKTON: 90 YEARS STRONG

The **Port of Stockton** is focused on becoming the preferred logistics hub on the U.S. West Coast as **Director Kirk DeJesus** increases investments to improve rail connectivity and berth capacity.

DeJesus realizes the importance of the port to Northern California — it generates over \$1.7 billion in economic activity and provides nearly 11,000 jobs.

"We're anticipating significant growth in the coming years as soda ash, primarily headed to Southeast Asia, becomes one of the top export products for the region. Funding from the state of California enables us to invest in a dual rail track system that will help transport 5 to 7 million metric tons of soda ash per year," **DeJesus** said.

"Every progress made is to enhance our service level to businesses and end-users. We won't exist without our customers and Japan has consistently been one of our most committed partners," he added.



The Port of Stockton has increased its capacity and connectivity ahead of a rise in activity.

Marking its 90th anniversary last year, the **Port of Stockton** is confident it will grow for many years to come as long as its focus is centered on clients, its services remain reliable and operations stay adaptable to changes in global business and trade. ■

→ <https://www.portofstockton.com>



Port of Stockton
CALIFORNIA

UNVEILING INNOVATION: INSIDE STANFORD'S US-ASIA TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT CENTER

Marking its 32nd anniversary this year, **Stanford University's US-Asia Technology Management Center** positions itself as a leading education and research center focused on integrating practical perspectives into international strategic technology management.

The center offers a unique industrial affiliate program, facilitating collaborative research discussions among faculty and corporate members in a pre-competitive environment. Corporate affiliates can also send employees as visiting scholars to engage with Silicon Valley's ecosystem directly.

"Companies want to know about the most effective innovation programs. That's why they join **US-ATMC**," said **Director Richard B. Dasher**, who has led the organization since 1993. **Dasher** holds a doctorate in linguistics from **Stanford**.

Although research motivates industry leaders to engage with the center, according to **Dasher**, one of its main functions is determining the most effective value chains. **US-ATMC** often acts as a coordinator between innovators in Silicon Valley and their respective corporate headquarters outside California.

In facilitating partnerships among businesses, researchers, and government entities from the U.S. and throughout Asia, the center leverages its unique position to foster robust information exchange.

Dasher's dedication to strengthening international ties earned him a **Foreign Minister's Commendation** from Japan in August 2023 in recognition of his contributions to fostering friendship between Japan and other nations. ■
→ <https://asia.stanford.edu>



US-Asia Technology Management Center Director Richard B. Dasher

