

TECHINTERVIEW

# Nokia leads converged devices

Ako Shiraogawa is head of go-to-market of Nokia Nseries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, and as such is responsible for identifying and defining the right portfolio for the Asian market.

In her previous capacity, Shiraogawa headed the product-marketing team for Nokia Multimedia in the Asia Pacific region, where she oversaw the device portfolio in the Nokia Nseries range of high performance multimedia computers.

Shiraogawa graduated from Kyushu University in Japan and earned her MBA from the Helsinki School of Economics. Prior to joining Nokia in 1997, she worked for IBM Japan as a systems engineer. StarTech caught up with her by e-mail.

**StarTech: What does Nokia mean when they talk about converged devices?**

**Ako Shiraogawa:** Nokia is the leading company driving digital convergence and mobilizing the Internet, and we are at the forefront of change and consumer understanding in the converging mobility industry.

Converged devices for us, are multipurpose devices which allow consumers to access a myriad of functionalities including advance features such as high-resolution cameras, video capabilities, 3G, Wireless Lan, and Global Positioning Systems (GPS), high quality music, just to name a few.

Nokia leads the converged device category with products from the Nseries and Eseries ranges.

As we announced in our Quarterly results in July, in Q2, 2008 - Nokia had over 40% market share overall in the converged devices, and in 2007 - we sold more than 60 million converged devices.

**ST: With many countries in emerging markets not equipped with the infrastructure how relevant/important are converged devices?**

**AS:** Nokia is a leading provider of mobile devices in emerging markets. Converged devices have become for many people in these markets, their first experience with multi-functionality in a single device. There are many people in the



Ako Shiraogawa

emerging markets who will have their first experience of the camera, the internet and their radio or music on a mobile device.

The internet for the next billion will be fundamentally different to the internet for the first billion and will be driven by relevant local service offerings paired with our devices. As such there will always be a place for converged devices in these markets - for example, in the metropolitan/more urban areas where there are technology leaders who want such features in their mobile devices.

**ST: How is Nseries different from other Nokia devices? How does Nokia Nseries and converged devices compare with competitors, especially iPhone? Will converged devices ever replace laptops and palmtops?**

**AS:** Nokia Nseries devices usher in the next era of convergence by combining the most advanced functionalities available with compelling Nokia (Ovi) & third

party services which enable people to spontaneously share and discover the Internet from the palm of their hand.

Nokia Nseries devices are more than mobile phones; they are high performance pocketable computers with the most comprehensive set of multimedia features on the market. Nokia Nseries multimedia computers represent the next leap forward in personal computing, offering the world's most powerful functionality in your pocket.

It offers all the functionalities of a PC and many portable single purpose devices (camera, music player, PDA and more) in a connected mobile device that is always with you and always connected. Because multimedia computers have a programmable operating system, people can install additional software applications. Nokia Nseries devices support a range of wireless broadband technologies such as 3G, WiFi, Bluetooth, mobile broadcast TV

(DVB-H) and GPS.

Since we first launched the Nokia Nseries devices, we have shipped over 60 million of them to-date (as of June 2008), and we are also today, the world's largest maker of digital cameras, music players having sold over 550 million camera devices, and over 300 million devices with music players.

**ST: Will converged devices eventually phase out low specs devices?**

**AS:** Not at all. As a leading provider of mobile devices in emerging markets, Nokia has an unrivalled and wide product portfolio of devices to suit consumers' needs in every market segment, bringing style, design and rich featured mobile devices to all people, not only catering to first time buyers but also providing choice for the growing replacement market. We are committed to give consumers from emerging markets a choice of easy-to-use, durable products and services which offer the right balance of technology and design to meet every lifestyle and budget.

**ST: Can you explain the term 'web is now made by hand' and how Nokia fits into the picture?**

**AS:** Internet convergence is the mega trend that will have a major impact on both communications and media industries. Internet convergence enables Nokia to offer rich multimedia experiences to people. The Internet is evolving into a place where people participate, interact and share their experiences with the world, often referred to as web 2.0. Nokia Nseries multimedia computers are the optimal devices to take part in this web 2.0 evolution.

The Web, Now Made By Hand -- shows how far we have come in the evolution of communication and the internet. Some of us may have grown up in a world where our very first telephone call was made on a fixed line phone. In today's world, for many, that is made on a mobile device.

Technology is enabling us to do new things, and change the way we live our lives, such that we no longer need to be deskbound. The internet is no longer passive as a mere source of information. It has become collaborative, interactive and participative. This is the convergence of mobility and the internet. At Nokia, our vision is a world where everyone can be connected. That includes connecting you to your family and friends, to your music collection, to your games, to your email and to help guide you to your destination. The mobile device is also becoming a great social networking tool. Nokia understands the compelling benefits of this convergence. We introduced Nokia Nseries in 2005 to address the need for a multi-purpose converged device that is always with you and always connected. Since then, the Nokia Nseries product portfolio has grown. We have sold to-date over 60 million Nseries devices worldwide (as of June 2008), and we see that consumers want a converged device in their hands.

**ST: What are you plans to localize internet services in emerging markets?**

**AS:** As a leading provider of mobile devices for the emerging market, we have a unique opportunity to provide services to the next billion subscribers. We also believe that the right balance of information and vital services along with communication and entertainment services can create value for our customers in these markets.

The internet for the next billion will be different, and be driven by insights from the local context and relevant local service offering, services available in multiple local languages and services to be consumer on the mobile device, not on PCs.

**ST: Do you think Nokia is innovative? Why? How do you keep the stream of ideas flowing?**

Innovation is at the core of our DNA. Nokia has a history of reinventing itself from a wood pulp and rubber producer to a world leader in mobile phones. Today this renewal continues towards services as well. The whole process progresses as the company continues to innovate not only in technologies but in the way it approaches research and development.

TECHVIEWS

# Computer programming to be compulsory for schools?

MAHDIN MAHBOOB

**H**OLD on to your seats people! This isn't news yet, but is very likely to become so in the near future!

If Governor of California (USA), Arnold Schwarzenegger and the State Board of Education have their way, soon every California student will have to pass an algebra test to graduate from the eighth grade.

Although there is strong opposition to this decision, authorities argue that if the U.S. is to remain competitive in the 21st century, American students need to be brought up to par with those in the rest of the world. Math and science education is crucial to closing that gap.

On this note, Neil McAllister, of the Info World Magazine (US) is of the opinion that if modernising education is the name of the game, maybe it's time that the gov't incorporates fundamental computer literacy into the curriculum of U.S. public schools. If eighth graders should know algebra, by the tenth grade, they should be programming in Java!

But question is, is mandatory programming coursework somewhat like 'putting the cart before the horse'? McAllister doesn't think so. He says that it's time we shed some of the popular prejudices and misconceptions surrounding computer literacy, many of which are simply remnants of a bygone era.

He goes on to say that, "When I was in school in the 1980s, movies like *War Games* and *Tron* popularised the image of the computer hacker as the *inscrutable, impossibly intelligent outsider*. Video games were cool, but if you actually made them, you were probably a socially-stunted nerd."

However, all of that has

changed. Today, every modern school-age kid does have access to a PC -- and with it an e-mail address, MSN, Yahoo and Gmail accounts, a Facebook page, games, applications, and the resources of the World Wide Web. Today our phones are digital, our cameras are digital, our music is digital, our DVD movies are digital, even our television is slowly turning all digital.

Like it or not, computing devices are everywhere. But the one thing that hasn't changed is the idea that computer programming -- real, deep-down, core computer literacy -- is something for nerds, geeks, and outsiders. A common misconception!

Today's kids have every incentive to delve into the world of programming. Whether it's to trick out a Web page or interface with Facebook, programming has real-world applications that have relevance to kids' lives.

Instead of labelling their enthusiasm for computers as 'disruptive' or 'aberrant' behaviour, it is high time that we should harness it as an educational tool. By integrating computer literacy into school curriculum from an early age, we would give students a learning experience that more accurately reflects the modern world around them.

The old-fashioned idea that computers allow students to cheat in their homework is also a common misconception that



needs to be addressed. Computer programming languages are really just alternative ways to represent solutions to logical problems. Instead of the regular math exercises, why not challenge students with assignments that engage their creativity as well as their capacity for logical thinking?

Where traditional math problems can be *unforgiving*, programming languages like Python or JavaScript offer students interactive environments that encourage them to explore and experiment a lot. The immediate feedback they receive when they solve problems gives them individual encouragement and positive reinforcement -- things that textbooks alone can never provide!

In Bangladesh, the Informatics Olympiad and other such events, encourages the young guns to experiment with programming languages, but making it a compulsory subject for all schoolgoers seems to be a far fetched plan at this point, but one that needs some considerable amount of thought!

TECHVIEWS

# BlackBerry Storm has touch screen you can feel

AP, New York

**R**ESearch in Motion Ltd., maker of the BlackBerry, is taking on Apple Inc. with a touch-screen phone that puts a new twist on the technology.

RIM is known for its e-mail-oriented phones with large keypads. With the new model announced Wednesday, the Storm, RIM is for the first time giving up the physical keypad in favor of a large screen, just like the one on Apple's iPhone.

But RIM has listened to users who find the iPhone's glass screen awkward to type on because its virtual buttons provide no tactile feedback. The Storm's whole screen is backed by springs, and when pressed, it gives under the finger.

The long-rumored Storm will be available from Verizon Wireless in the U.S. and from Vodafone Group PLC overseas before the holidays, the companies said. No price has been disclosed yet.

In an unusual twist, the phone will work both on Verizon Wireless' network and on Vodafone's, even though they use incompatible technologies. Like a few other Verizon Wireless handsets before it, the Storm will be equipped with radios to handle both networks, making international roaming a possibility. The iPhone, carried by AT&T Inc. in the U.S., can already roam internationally.

The addition of a touch-

screen phone to the BlackBerry lineup, the mainstay of e-mail-addicted executives and managers, is a testament to the effect of the iPhone. RIM's share of the U.S. smart-phone market has stayed above 50 percent, but the iPhone has clearly helped expand that market.

Over the last year, technology buyers at large corporations have found their employees demanding a touch-screen phone, said Mike Lanman, chief marketing officer of Verizon Wireless.

"Everybody eventually leaves work ... and becomes a person," Lanman said.

The iPhone's facility with Web browsing and movie playing are big reasons for its appeal. The Storm will initially lack an equivalent of Apple's iTunes movie store, though shorter clips will be available through Verizon Wireless' VCast service.

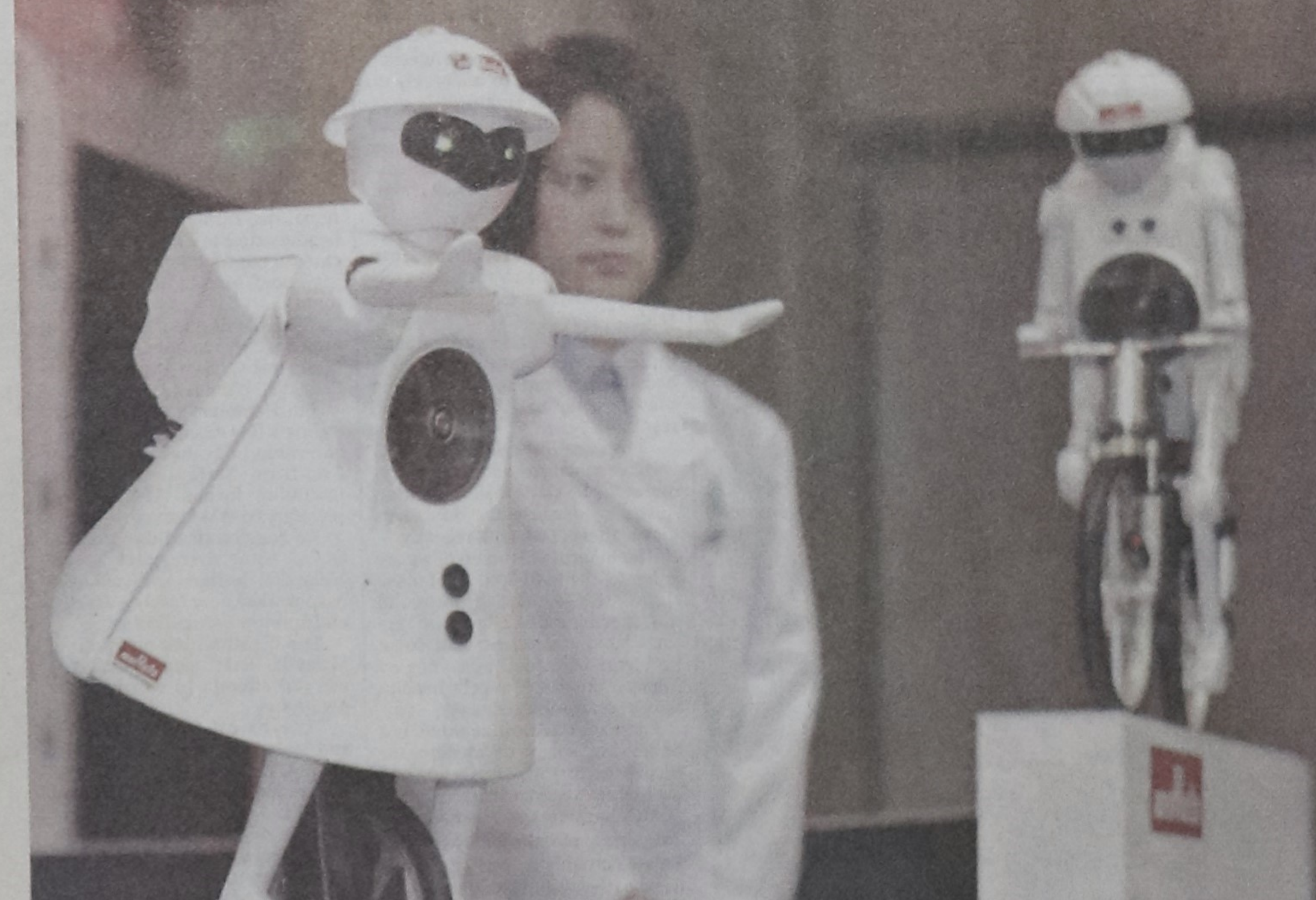
As a Web browser, the Storm more closely emulates the desktop experience than the iPhone does. That's because the screen can distinguish between light touches and firm presses. A light touch can move



around a cursor, while a firm press activates a link, much like moving a mouse cursor has a different effect from clicking a mouse button, said Mike Lazaridis, RIM's co-chief executive.

Verizon Wireless is the last of the four national U.S. brands to unveil a flagship touch-screen model. AT&T has the iPhone, Sprint Nextel Corp. sells the Samsung Instinct, and T-Mobile USA just announced the G1, the first phone to run Google Inc.'s software. Verizon Wireless does have other touch-screen phones in its lineup, but none that it has promoted with as much vigor as other carriers have.

PHOTO TECH



## UNICYCLE ROBOT - MURATA-SEIKO-CHAN

Japanese electronics parts maker Murata Electronics unveils a unicycle robot called the "Murata-seiko-chan" (L), which has various sensors to keep its balance, during a demonstration at Asia's largest electronics trade show CEATEC in Chiba, suburban Tokyo on September 30, 2008, while a similar bicycle robot "Murata-seisaku-kun" (R) stands still. The annual CEATEC trade show of consumer electronics opened on September 30 for a five-day run.

TECHNEWS

## ASUS introduces first ever PCI-E Interface Audio Card Xonar D2X

**A**SUS, worldwide leader in motherboard and graphics cards, introduced first PCI-E interface audio card Xonar D2X to users, with more audio choices. An exclusive ASUS technology provides solutions for the gaming audio issue found in Windows Vista by utilising DS3D GX.

It provides full support for surround sound and hardware-accelerated features by rendering DirectX to the DS3D GX. Gamers now can enjoy DirectX gaming with hardware-enhanced surround sound and EAX effects automatically immedi-



ately after installation. The Xonar D2X also includes the innovative "Acoustics Echo Cancellation" (AEC) technology to facilitate the best online voice communication quality. It also features a signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) of 118 dB for both audio in and out reaching the maximum limit of audio quality on most PC platforms. Unlike generic audio cards in the market that provide the highest SNR to only the front stereo outputs, the Xonar D2X is able to deliver 118 dB quality audio for all 7.1 channels. The product has a price tag of Tk 13,000.