= A Serial Introduction Part 1 = Winners of ITU-AJ Encouragement Awards 2025

In May every year, The ITU Association of Japan (ITU-AJ) proudly presents ITU-AJ Encouragement Awards to people who have made outstanding contributions in the field of international standardization and have helped in the ongoing development of ICT.
These Awards are also an embodiment of our sincere desire to encourage further contributions from these individuals in the future.
If you happen to run into these winners at another meeting in the future, please say hello to them.
But first, as part of the introductory series of Award Winners, allow us to introduce some of those remarkable winners.

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Proposal to Expand Automated Intelligent Management (AIM) Technology in BBF

I am extremely honored to receive the prestigious ITU Association of Japan Encouragement Award. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone involved at the ITU Association of Japan for their immense help on standardization activities to date.

Automated Intelligent Management (AIM) is a technology for automating network operation management. I have participated in BBF since 2023, and I have worked on proposals to broaden the targets for operation through discussions on expanding AIM (creating the second issue of the document) as well as to broaden the applicable use cases.

Proposals have included changes to the title and scope of the first issue of the document as well as to the reference architecture itself, which made a significant impact. While there were some challenges in the beginning from participants who opposed these changes, through repeated lobbying efforts, we were able to successfully reach consensus.

What I realized by participating in these standardization activities is the importance of understanding the other person and expressing thoughts appropriately. In standardization activities, if the background and importance of a proposal are properly communicated, it is often possible to gain support for the proposal, be it from another company or even another country. In the case of my proposals, there have been many times where, through cooperation with many others, agreement has been reached on a proposal that is even better than the original, and I feel this is the fun part of standardization activities.

Being recognized for my positive contributions to BBF and being involved at the center of this revision work has made this work rewarding for me. Although much unfinished work remains until the document is completed, I will continue to work toward early completion with the cooperation of other companies.

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Standardization Activities toward Zero-touch Network Management and Open RAN

I am extremely grateful to receive the very prestigious ITU Association of Japan Encouragement Award. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone at the ITU Association of Japan and to those from whom I have received support thus far.

I first got involved in standardization work in 2018 as a representative of NTT DOCOMO, when we began to see operators in multiple countries apply AI to their commercial networks, and it was at this exact time that ETSI ISG ZSM was established to standardize a framework for automating network management. As a founding member of this organization, NTT DOCOMO has been a proactive driver in discussions since the beginning and has thus been able to be involved in the fundamental specification work for ZSM, including use-case formulation as exemplified by AIOps (ZSM001), end-to-end network service lifecycle management from RAN (radio access network) to core networks (ZSM008), and operating specifications for the closed-loop ZSM architecture for optimizing network quality without human intervention (ZSM009-1～3).

From 2021, my activities shifted to the O-RAN Alliance, and we continue to contribute to Working Group 10, whose main focus is OAM (Operation, Administration and Maintenance) for RAN. While there has long been the problem of operators' RAN environments being inflexible and having difficulty connecting to equipment from different suppliers, the situation has changed thanks to the technological benefits of developments in virtualization technology. Taking advantage of them, we aim to realize a multi-supplier environment by making fault management, provisioning management, and performance management methods open between RAN equipment and OSS and by standardizing equipment alarms. In addition, we are promoting cross-collaboration between other working groups to which other DOCOMO members are participating in with the aim of making Open RAN even more practical.

I will continue to work toward further development of the telecommunications industry in Japan through contributions to international standardization.