

Exclusive: A Talk with Bhutan's Leader

INTERNATIONAL Newsweek®

TRUE LOVE



Scientists who study **“canine cognition”** say your dog really does love you

26.05-02.06.2023

ISSN 2052-1081



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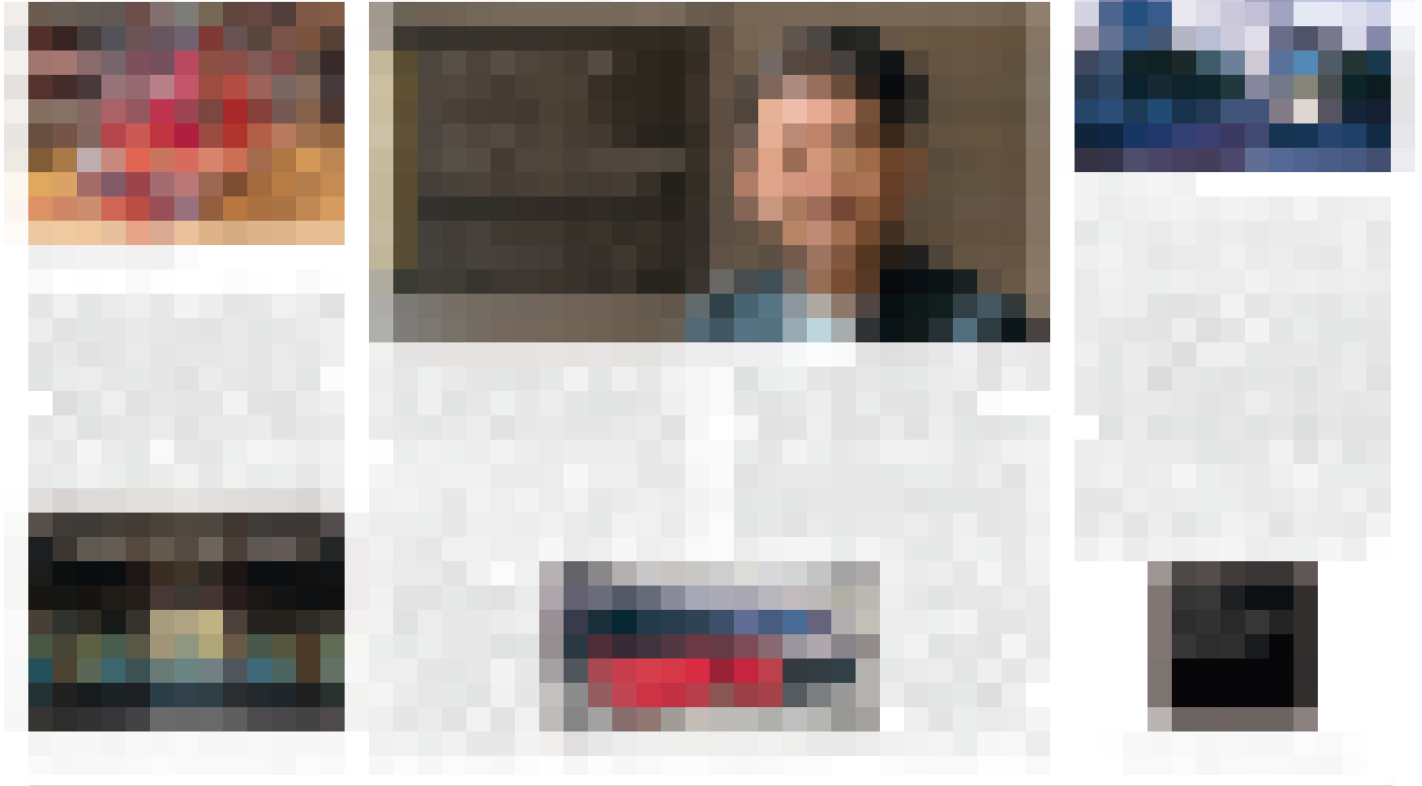
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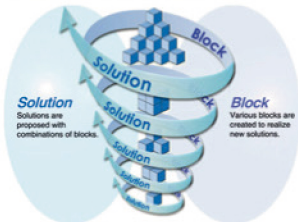


The block-building system for the future

Staying true to its BBS concept, NKE Corporation produces high-performance factory devices.

The thousands of individual parts which make up complex manufacturing systems are the building blocks of companies around the world. Japanese firm NKE has built its success through the creation of a system to seamlessly merge these individual blocks into tailor-made solutions for its customers.

Our solutions create new blocks, and combinations of the blocks create new solutions.



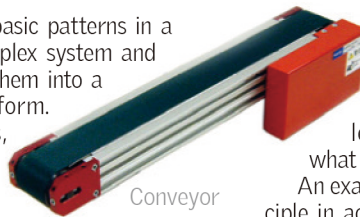
BBS concept

Founded in 1968, NKE's expertise is in factory automation devices and components. However, the company's true added value comes from its Block Building System (BBS) concept. This system develops "blocks" by identifying predictable, stable,

and common basic patterns in a seemingly complex system and standardizing them into a reproducible form.

These blocks, such as cylinders, conveyors, and air grippers, become NKE's "standard units" with a high degree of performance and reliability. The blocks are then used to create modular solutions and equipment for customers, lowering costs and increasing profitability. The BBS approach standardizes the response to any variable, ensuring a logical, coherent, and reproducible operational process.

NKE places its focus on the details of the *monozukuri* process to identify each customer's needs, and has people at the heart of its "Humanized Automation" principle, which has been key to the company's expansion into fields such as nursing and agriculture. Company president Michikazu Nakamura explains that humanized automation



Conveyor

seeks to "leave only meaningful tasks to human beings and let machines do what machines can do".

An example of this principle in action is the company's Airsapo back brace, which contains an artificial muscle built using the BBS concept and increases the wearer's physical mobility.



Airsapo

The innovative ideas NKE provides come from the freedom



"Our engineers have a passion to contribute to society and solve social problems using the technology they have."

Michikazu Nakamura,
President, NKE Corporation

given to the company's engineers and their passion for *monozukuri*. The company has expanded into China, Thailand and Vietnam, and Mr. Nakamura says NKE is always on the lookout for opportunities to grow in other countries where it can learn from the local market.

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