Can Buzzfeed revolutionize Japan’s news diet?

Profile
Photographer
Martin Hladik

Military Justice
A controversial killing & trial in 1957

The election
Feeling a little better?
Q: How many bearings does it take to move the world?
A: NSK makes 2.2 billion each year

From air conditioners to jet aircraft, inside anything mechanical that moves are bearings—dozens if not hundreds of them. But since we seldom see them, who knows how many of these essential devices surround us? Here’s one telltale measure: NSK, the world’s third-largest bearing maker produces an astounding 2.2 billion bearings each year—ranging from microscopic components used in nanotechnology to giant parts for heavy equipment. No matter how big or small, bearings comprise four basic components: an “outer ring,” an “inner ring,” a “ball” and a “cage.” And no matter what the application, bearings must be engineered with extreme precision in order to minimize friction and maximize reliability. That’s why, at NSK, attention to detail is our passion.

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Join the Film Committee/Tax deduction benefit/
Heard at the Club/New Members/New in the Library

Investigating a U.S. military killing in the ’50s

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Read the Number 1 Shimbun online: fccj.or.jp/number-1-shimbun/
Cover illustration: Andrew Pothecary
BIT RUSHED WITH THE column this month as I’m writing right after a bus trip from Narita and landing back in Japan from a trip to Australia. For those who have heard the stories of warmer oceans bleaching the Great Barrier Reef, I’m afraid that based on what I saw during a few scuba dives the stories seem to have some truth to them. I was an avid scuba diver about 25 years ago, but never got to dive the Reef. A reminder that if you have items in your life bucket list, don’t delay!

The news cycle is forcing a quick decompression from holiday mode, long road trips and days out on the ocean to issues related to Donald Trump, Pokémon GO, the attempted coup in Turkey and more. Our very own regular member Pio d’Emilia has been covering the events in Turkey, the latest in his distinguished coverage of the issues confronting Europe as more refugees flee to the continent to escape war in the Middle East.

It seems I’ve walked right into a controversy over the election of the Tokyo governor and whether all the candidates had the opportunity to air their views to the media. This touches the FCCJ directly as the Professional Activities Committee has to weigh the same question – resulting in heated debate among journalist Members around the question of the “news value” of the candidates.

For those unfamiliar with the inner workings of a newsroom, this question of news value agitates journalists every day, often causing intense disagreement over what story gets prominence. What do residents of the world’s most populated metropolitan area want from their leader? Well, according to a Kyodo News poll before the election, Tokyo residents have the same priorities as Japan’s electorate have been urging on Prime Minister Shinzo Abe: one of them being the need to fix child care. If Mr. Abe really wants to slow the population decline and get more women back into the workforce, he needs to solve the shortage of child-care facilities.

Perhaps the government didn’t see this coming as they expected grandad and grandmum to step in. Whatever the cause of the oversight, urging Japanese couples to have more children while not providing adequate childcare options for working moms and dads is a serious disconnect. The Kyodo poll also had “medical and nursing care” high on the list of priorities, so it seems care facilities at both ends of the age spectrum should be prominent on the to-do list of the new governor. And then there is the preparation for the 2020 Summer Olympics.

Finally, this magazine was to have a major feature on the October 2018 move of the FCCJ to a new location, with pictures and plans of the internal layout, including explanations of the different functions and services at the new Club. Unfortunately, deadlines forced us to delay the feature, but the good news is that it is due to be released in the next issue. We are also planning another in a series of Town Hall meetings to give all staff and members an update on the Club move and seek feedback. Members will be getting an email with the date and time of that event.

Like journalist arguments about daily news priorities, the House & Property Committee doesn’t expect to satisfy all demands for what the new Club should contain, but it’s trying. As of writing, childcare facilities are not on the list. (Full disclosure, I’m the chair of the H&P committee.)

Have a good August.

— Peter Langan

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**COLLECTIONS**

**7 YEARS AFTER HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries in the World Who Possess Nuclear Weapons ( Ranked from Most to Least: Russia, U.S., France, China, UK, Pakistan, India, Israel, North Korea)</th>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<th>Number of Russian Strategic Launchers Deployed</th>
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<tr>
<th>U.S. Tactical Nuclear Bombs Deployed at European Bases</th>
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<td>180</td>
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<th>China’s Total Inventory of Nuclear Weapons</th>
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<th>Total Number of Nuclear Weapons</th>
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<td>15,375</td>
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<th>Amount that Global Arsenals Have Shrunk Since Mid-1980s Peak</th>
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<td>2/3rds</td>
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**Enjoy nature’s grandeur throughout the year, including some great powder snow ski slopes right next door.**

Activities abound at the Urabandai Grandeco Tokyo Hotel. In the warmer months, sightseeing boats ply the mystic waters of nearby Lake Hibara, and visitors come to enjoy the scenic sights of over 20 volcanic lakes nestled among the mountains. From the Grandeco Resort just next door, a gondola offers a panoramic view of the area, and a superb beech forest and the seasonal flora of the Deida-marathlands lie only a short hike away. Of course, in winter the Grandeco Resort features exhilarating powder snow slopes, with 8 courses for everyone from beginners to the most advanced skiers.

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**Sightseeing around GRANDECO**

- **Kannenji River**
  30 min. by car
  Sumpur cherry blossom season is from the end of April through early May.

- **Tsurugajo Castle**
  50 min. by car
  The castle town of Tsurugajo is the hub of the Aizu Region, famous for its long history and for the Hakkoda group of mountains.

- **Grandeeco Resort**
  A short trip from TOKYO will take you to the greatest resort where you can enjoy amazing snow that is too powdery to even make a snow ball. This snow paradise will also captivate you with the magnificent view of Mt. BANDAI

- **Goshikinuma Ponds**
  20 min. by car
  The volcanic substances in the water inflame the ponds with mineralized hues, such as emerald green and pinkish blue.

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**Within BANDAI ASAH NATIONAL PARK**

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**The Tokyu Group supports Tohoku**
BuzzFeed is one of those things, like Snapchat, that older people just don’t seem to get. Ask anyone over the age of 35 what the site is about and they are likely to mention cats, lists, viral videos and not a lot else. But the young have gone to it in droves for news and entertainment.

The site has made a name for itself in the U.S. in a variety of segments, such as the Black Lives Matter protest movement, its staunch support for the rights of people in the LGBT community and opposition to the Republican candidate Donald Trump, with whom the company terminated an ad deal in July.

In January this year, BuzzFeed arrived in Japan after an agreement was signed between the company and Yahoo Japan. “Overseas – particularly in the U.S. – BuzzFeed’s brand is very strong and well known,” says CEO Mas Ueno, clad in a red sports jersey featuring the company’s “trend-setters” logo. Its technology, its editorial experience means the company has the knowledge of how to release content. “BuzzFeed has a platform that can bring traffic and influence to BuzzFeed here.”

Seven months into the company’s Japanese venture, the signs are promising. Politicians have been trolled in creative ways, and the company’s “trend-setters” section has also featured the company’s “trend-setters” section has also featured the Yomiuri Shimbun devot- ing column inches to such covers as game cards. According to founder, explained in an inter-

Digital news rivals

For instance, when we look at LGBT issues in Japan, the media was only looking at Kumamoto, but part of Oita was also badly hit. “The story ran with the sort of tagline that makes waves across social media: ‘Don’t forget about Oita’.” BuzzFeed also got a scoop on how food rations in Kyushu were withheld in order to ensure all evacues were treated equally. One rule, Furuta says, governs all stories: Do not sling mud. “There’s a message on Perretti’s public blog where he makes it very clear that the purpose of BuzzFeed is to create a positive impact. For instance, when we talk about financial news in our global editions, or the rights of women, we will release a variety of content [that is supportive of these communities]. In our editorial guidelines, we say neutrality is neutral. But where human rights or discrimination are concerned we do not write from both perspectives.”

And that brings us back to those cat photos that BuzzFeed is often linked with. “Having a positive impact brings about so many possibilities,” Furuta said. “Articles do not need to be provocative to create a positive impact. For instance, when we talk about financial news in our global editions, or the rights of women, we will release a variety of content [that is supportive of these communities]. In our editorial guidelines, we say neutrality is neutral. But where human rights or discrimination are concerned we do not write from both perspectives.”
The “Feeling a little bit better” election

by MICHAEL CUCCEK

Most elections are characterized as having smiling winners and crying losers. Though descriptions like “landslide” and “massive victory” have been bandied about, the 2016 House of Representatives election was about as far from that as it could be. The results gave everyone reasons to smile and reasons to wince.

To be sure, the Democratic Party lost. It shed 11 seats from what was an already significantly depleted total. With the DP clinging to only 32 seats while the LDP snatched up 55, Japan lost its last political arena where a competitive two-party system still existed on the national stage.

The unique four-party alliance of the DP, the Communists, the Socialists and the Liberal Party was able to achieve a two-thirds majority, though achieved, is unreliable. Most importantly, the coalition committed to revising the Constitution.

MEANWHILE, THE LESSER MEMBERS of the anti-revisionist alliance went into eclipse. The Socialists, in fact, lost the seat of its party leader, putting the party below the 1% threshold for public funding (it will continue to receive funds thanks to an alternate standard of public funding designed to destroy the power of the revisionists). The Socialists have always assumed true but never had the votes to make a government of the LDP only, without any coalition partners. If that had happened, the Democratic Party would achieve this result, with an immediate, obvious destabilizing effect on the government of Shinzo Abe.

I felt a little bit better – but only a little bit. At this writing, with an immediate, obvious destabilizing effect on the government of Shinzo Abe, I thought that for her he was. I went as far as to guarantee the LDP would achieve this result, with an immediate, obvious destabilizing effect on the party’s current coalition. In fact, the LDP faction was using a similar standard of union executives. Indeed, the DP’s top three proportional coalition parties have always had assumed true but never had the votes to make a government of the LDP only, without any coalition partners. If that had happened, the Democratic Party would achieve this result, with an immediate, obvious destabilizing effect on the government of Shinzo Abe. I felt a little bit better – but only a little bit. At this writing, with an immediate, obvious destabilizing effect on the government of Shinzo Abe, I thought that for her he was.

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Martin Hladík was born in Czechoslovakia in 1968, only a few months before the “Prague Spring” reformist movement was crushed under the tread of Soviet tanks. So when he grew up, it was under the restrictions of movement and thought of Soviet rule.

His father was a mechanical engineer and his mother produced exhibitions – middle class work that brought enough money only for everyday life. Even getting permission for travel was difficult.

The family once managed a trip to Yugoslavia, but only had enough money for gas and camp. Hladík’s mother prepared all food for the month’s trip in advance for the family of four.

He studied Mechanical Engineering at the Czech Technical University in Prague – “a way to avoid army service” – and spent a further two years taking selected classes in photography at the Academy of Performing Arts.

Like other Soviet-bloc nations, the state gave support to sport, and throughout his youth, weekend trips to the mountains for winter skiing and summer kayaking had led to Hladík joining sports clubs. After university, he turned to his sport full time – and in 1995 joined the national whitewater slalom team following the end of communist rule.

His love for photography, however – which had dated from his childhood – eventually led him to put his kayak aside for a camera. He knew the work of the exiled Joseph Koudelka, since prints of his photographs of the 1968 Soviet invasion had been illicitly available. He also had seen the work of Cartier-Bresson, Robert Capa and Douglas Duncan – the latter two known for their war photography.

Hladík had visited Japan in 1995 as a photographer. He had no accommodation, little English and barely enough money to buy food. He was arrested for sleeping in the park. A wedding photographer hired him, but fired him the same day after Hladík, in his hunger, couldn’t stop himself from eating the wedding food. But he got to assist the renowned Czech-born American photographer Antonin Kratochvil with his portraiture.

After returning home, he began his career as a photographer in earnest. With his girlfriend and brother he made a six-month bike trip around the eastern Mediterranean for a Czech motorcycle firm’s PR and found work on movie productions. When the Catholic charity Caritas asked him to work with them in war-torn Kosovo in 1999, the reality on the ground changed his perspective of war photography, and brought him to the realization that he was looking to shoot people in happier situations.

In 2000, he followed his Czech girlfriend to Japan after she got a scholarship for a PhD at Tokyo University, where she still works in water-related engineering. They have since married and have three children, aged 9, 6 and 4. Hladík had visited Japan in 1995 as a backpacker, but had never thought of returning. To make a career here, he would have to build up contacts and introductions from scratch. It’s been a long road. “I’m not there yet,” he says.

He offers still photography, video and production services for overseas photographers. “Recently,” he says, “I bought a drone for footage from the air.” But he prefers to get to know his subjects more closely – an approach used for his two books on Japanese tattoos. Back in the Czech Republic, tattoos were associated with crime or gypsies – “who did it with a fork” – so when he saw the full-body tattoos of Japan he was hooked. At the Sanja Matsuri he met the son of tattoo artist Asakusa Horikazu and later became close to the master.

Although tattoos are associated with criminal elements in Japan, too, things are changing. Hladík says: “It was never my interest to investigate who was a yakuza or not. I was under the wing of the master. I photographed for him and for my own interest.” In fact, in some ways he found the “underground” tattoo scene similar to the “underground” away from prying state powers, that he’d known in his youth – and always very friendly.

Hladík spent two months-long stints in Tohoku after the 3/11 disaster. The photos of two girls whose single mother had died in the tsunami, were among the powerful shots later exhibited at the FCCJ. He also used the exhibition to raise a collection for the girls. Now, after 16 years here, a return to the Czech Republic is “on the horizon.”

This is partly to bring his children up at least somewhat Czech, but he also has concerns about the life of teenagers in Japan – sexualized girls and game-immersed boys - and hopes to escape that in Europe.

But until then he is looking for a project to spend time and depth on – perhaps based around the changes in Tokyo as the city gears up for its second Olympics. Offering various services, however, can sometimes leave him torn. “It’s trying to find a balance,” he says. “If I did more production work you might have more money, but then my photography suffers!”

The “underground” tattoo scene was similar to the “underground,” away from prying state powers, that he’d known in his youth.

Andrew Pothecary is the art director of the paper / Shimbun.
Death by firing range

Some 60 years ago, the killing of a Japanese wife and mother threatened the U.S.-Japan agreement on the treatment of crimes by U.S. forces.

by MARK SCHREIBER

On June 30 this year, Kenneth Franklin Shimazu, a 32-year-old civilian working at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, was officially charged with the rape and murder of Rina Shimabukuro, age 20. It was the latest in a string of crimes committed by U.S. forces personnel in Japan that continues to cause some people to question the U.S.-Japan military alliance, which has permitted American forces to remain after the end of the Allied Occupation in 1952. And while it has led to American, and that the jurisdictional agreement between Japan and the U.S. was proper. The court also noted that Japan, as a sovereign state, had the right to try people who violated its laws.

For the rest of May and June, a veritable who’s who of For the rest of May and June, a veritable who’s who of Japan Time American servicemen and their dependents have rekindled the national rights would not be denied by a trial in a Japanese court and that the jurisdictional agreement between Japan and the U.S. was proper. The court also noted that Japan, as a sovereign state, had the right to try people who violated its laws.

The LDP and other parties that favor keeping the U.S. bases to remain after the end of the Allied base near his Illinois hometown, he was dishonestly discharged, charging any hopes of remaining in the military. In October the following year, weekly magazine Shukan Bungei ran a story about the couple, who had settled in Girard’s hometown of Ottawa, Illinois. In August, “Candy” had given birth to a girl. “Bill,” meanwhile, had bailed out of jail. The article hinted that Hara, as a foreign bird who spoke lit- tle English, led a lonely existence. But another woman’s mag- azine, the monthly Fujin Asahi, reported that she was happy. The couple had another daughter, born near his Illinois hometown. Girard died in 1999 at age 64. Hara lived until 2013, passing away around age 85.

Girard had tired of the attention. “Now that it’s over, me and Candy would both live quiet,” he told a U.S. inter- viewer shortly before he was to leave Japan. “I’ll be glad when the flashbulbs stop popping and we can live like other people. I don’t think that I need to live as a private person.”

On Dec. 6, Girard and Haru boarded a military transport ship for San Francisco. Prior to their departure, he was demoted to private, and after reporting for duty at an army installation in his hometown of Ottawa, Illinois. In August, “Candy” had given birth to a girl. “Bill,” meanwhile, had bailed out of jail. The article hinted that Hara, as a foreign bird who spoke lit- tle English, led a lonely existence. But another woman’s mag- azine, the monthly Fujin Asahi, reported that she was happy. The couple had another daughter, born near his Illinois hometown. Girard died in 1999 at age 64. Hara lived until 2013, passing away around age 85.

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TERRORISM

The brutal terrorist killings of the Japanese victims were conducted by spoiled youths whose larger goals remain unclear.

Lessons of the Dhaka tragedy
by MONZURUL HUQ

FEW COULD HAVE IMPLIED that a terrorist attack could happen in a country with such close bonds to Japan, one that has not been susceptible to any form of extreme fundamentalism. So what occurred on that fateful evening on the first day of July in the capital of Bangladesh shocked the Japanese and the global community.

Dhaka, with a population of almost 12 million, is a divided city in the sense that it is, in reality, a combination of localities formed by the strict sense of social divisions in accordance with the status and material well being of its citizens. Those at the upper end have their heavenly enclaves, guarded heavily after a fatal attack on an Italian ten years ago. The area is also known as the diplomatic enclave of the city, as it hosts all the foreign embassies and diplomatic residences. Among the homes of the wealthy locals and foreign nationals, including those with diplomatic immunity, are posh restaurants and dining places that are with diplomatic immunity, are posh.

The brutal terrorist killings of the Japanese victims were conducted by spoiled youths whose larger goals remain unclear.

The financial fanatics’ goal seems to have been to hit the economy with the larger aim of destabilizing the moderately secular government – and the unaware foreigners national provided a soft target. But was that their ultimate goal or was it to declare their solidarity with the mad mullahs of the Islamic State? Or was it to demand that Bangladesh declare an Islamic country with the full implementation of Sharia law?

But what is clear now is that they have failed miserably to reach anywhere near any of those targets. The attack also showed the early ground on which they stood. Holding guns and explosives does not guarantee winning over the hearts of the people if the cause is vague and unclear.

The dead bodies of the perpetrators of the Dhaka terrorist attack have been reposing in the cold morgue since they were gunned down in the early morning of July 2. That they are still there illustrates how much more convincing was the manner of the action of those spoiled youths. No one has come forward to claim the dead bodies for formal burial, even not their parents, who have said they could not forgive the crime their sons had committed.

So the bodies continue rotting, perhaps offering the greatest lesson that we can take from the whole incident. Young people can become easily spoiled by misguided religious teachings that can take them from healthy and equate barbaric acts with heroism in the public’s mind. They need to understand that there are opposite extremes and have completely different consequences.

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The victory of Shinzo Abe’s Liberal Democratic Party in the July 10 election for the Upper House of the Diet will serve as the prelude for revisions to the Constitution within the next 10 years, believes Tadae Takubo, chairman of Nippon Kaigi, or the Japan Conference.

And that, he told a well-attended press conference at the FCCJ on July 15, will turn Japan into “a normal nation.”

“The fact that those who are in favor of constitutional amendments have two-thirds majorities in both houses means this is the best chance to go ahead with revisions to the Constitution,” he said. “And if I were in Prime Minister Abe’s position, I would be making every effort during my term to achieve that.”

Takubo, a former head of the foreign news department of Fuji Press and a member of Diet since 1975, has committed Nippon Kaigi to helping the prime minister to do precisely that. “We have promised within our conference which have very much welcomed this result and we have released a statement to that effect,” he said. “So Nippon Kaigi will from now on be considering various different actions that we can take to move forward.”

Set up in May 1997 as a merger of two similarly minded organizations, Nippon Kaigi has around 38,000 members, including an estimated 39 percent of politicians in the Diet. Abe is listed as a special advisor to the group’s parliamentary liaison committee.

In its mission statement, Nippon Kaigi says it intends to “change the postwar system which has very much worsened the way the constitution was framed and which has very much won the hearts of the people.”

In the early decades of the postwar era, the Diet was a victim of the cold war. They were gunned down in the early morning of July 2. That they are still there illustrates how much more convincing was the manner of the action of those spoiled youths. No one has come forward to claim the dead bodies for formal burial, even not their parents, who have said they could not forgive the crime their sons had committed.

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Seeking to create a “normal” nation
by JULIAN RYALL

The head of a controversial political action group explains their agenda for the future.

GROUP ACTION

Not being able to make its own decisions on security and defense issues for more than 70 years means that Japan has been on the extreme left of the political spectrum ever since the war. Abenomics has therefore made many people question what the country has been through and why.

Takubo also took issue with the characterization of Abe as a nationalist in foreign media reports. “I believe that the kind of reporting that is made in Japan has made its own mistakes in the way. “In regard to the 10-year vision, I believe the Constitution will be revised in this time and we will progress towards being a normal country,” he said.

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Kao: photographs by Shintaro Shiratori

ONE DAY I FOUND a book of portraits entitled Who’s who in Shinano by my great grandfather Itaru, which was published in 1908. When I turned the pages, I was impressed by his ingenious lighting technique. I realized that it was all about light and shadow. My encounter with this old book affected my portrait works. It made me feel impressed by his ingenious lighting technique. I realized that it was all about light and shadow.

Recently I published a sequel to his book KAO, a book of portraits entitled Who’s who in Shinano ONE DAY I FOUND a book of portraits entitled Who’s who in Shinano by my great grandfather Itaru, which was published in 1908. When I turned the pages, I was impressed by his ingenious lighting technique. I realized that it was all about light and shadow. My encounter with this old book affected my portrait works. It made me feel impressed by his ingenious lighting technique. I realized that it was all about light and shadow.
“The rallying point which brings together disparate groups to join the Nippon Kaigi or participate in this movement is their common interest in calling for women and children to just shut up.”

Tamotsu Sugano, author of A Study of Nippon Kaigi, at the FCCJ on July 19

Where does the path to the future begin? Right outside your door. Who can show where it leads? The children who will walk that path decades from now – because it will be their path not ours.

Visionaries they may well be, but the researchers at Ricoh’s largest R&D center, located in Ebara, 30 kilometers southwest of Tokyo, realize they can only imagine the future. It’s the children outside their gate who will actually build it.

This was one key insight behind the RICOH Future House that opened in August 2015, three minutes from the West Exit of JR Ebara Station. It’s a welcoming space where kids come to discover the wonders of science and technology. More than that, it’s a place where people of all ages come to learn, celebrate, relax...and use Ricoh’s latest products. It’s one way we give back to a community that has supported our success over decades.

You’re welcome to come visit – and bring the family.

To learn more, see: http://ricohfuturehouse.jp
"I JUST FLOAT ALONG."
Pat M, USA, LEAF Owner

100% ELECTRIC NISSAN LEAF.
ELECTRIFY THE WORLD.

Model may vary by country.