

# WACOM VISION

from NOBUTAKA IDE

Allow me to indulge on the subject of Wacom

## A message from the company's No. 1 fan

Wacom President and CEO Nobutaka Ide (Nobu) considers himself the company's biggest fan. Ever since he made the decision to dedicate his life to Wacom, he has become intimately familiar with the depth that the company possesses—and he now sees the company as a sentient living being rather than a well-oiled machine. Nobu has long wanted to find a way to serve all humankind, and he is closer than ever to realizing that goal thanks to the support of his many Wacom colleagues—whom he considers team members rather than employees. Here, Nobu describes the value that Wacom offers and what the future holds for the company.

## Prologue

To you who have picked up this copy of *The Wacom Story Book*: This book represents a new undertaking by Wacom to allow more people to gain deeper insight into what we do and who we are. The pages are full of characters who make Wacom what it is today. They include customers who use the products that we as an instrument provider have refined over the years; partners who help us craft the life-long user experience; investors who continuously encourage us through both criticism and understanding; and our team members (the phrase I liked to use to call Wacom employees) who walk alongside each other towards the same goals. Each one of these characters is important to us; without them, we would not have the agility to transform our shape and appearance to adapt to changes in the world—just like a living being. The words written by each person in this book tell a small story. We want you to read these stories and find the spark that glows brightly deep within each tale. It is this wish that led us to title this book *The Wacom Story Book*. We hope to produce a new anthology on a regular basis and deliver more exciting adventures for you to enjoy. I would like to start off this first edition with a few words from myself to tell you about the timeless appeal of this company. After all, I consider myself Wacom's No. 1 enthusiast.

### How I became a Wacom fan

I'm not the founder of Wacom, nor did I receive any particular training at Wacom. The reason I became Wacom's No. 1 fan was because I fell in love with what Wacom as a living organism embodies, as well as with the company's boundless appeal. Wacom's mission is to continue

making instruments that allow people to *draw / write*. It's the promise of Life-long Ink—a concept that is inextricably linked to my life-long desire to support people.

What is a human being? What can I do to support all humankind? I've been thinking about these questions for a long time. *Drawing / writing* are two of our most human activities, and no two people *draw / write* the same way. Wacom's business is strongly intertwined with these two activities—in other words, our business is about humanity and human creativity. Perhaps by joining Wacom, I could serve all humankind by supporting them in their *drawing / writing* endeavors. It was this hunch that led me to join Wacom.

The reason that I became Wacom's No. 1 fan is that I recognized the infinite potential in Wacom's business. While my goal was to serve all humankind through Wacom technologies, I began my career at the company at Technology Solution Business. Here, I was involved in providing Wacom technologies with enterprise customers as a component manufacturer. Until then, I had assumed that the acts of *drawing / writing*—particularly with the use of digital pens—were unique to those involved in the production of creative work. But my time in this business made me realize that everyday life was overflowing with the act of inscription—imbuing various surfaces with pictures and words. By joining Wacom and actually working in the business, I was able to see the full scale of what Wacom represents.

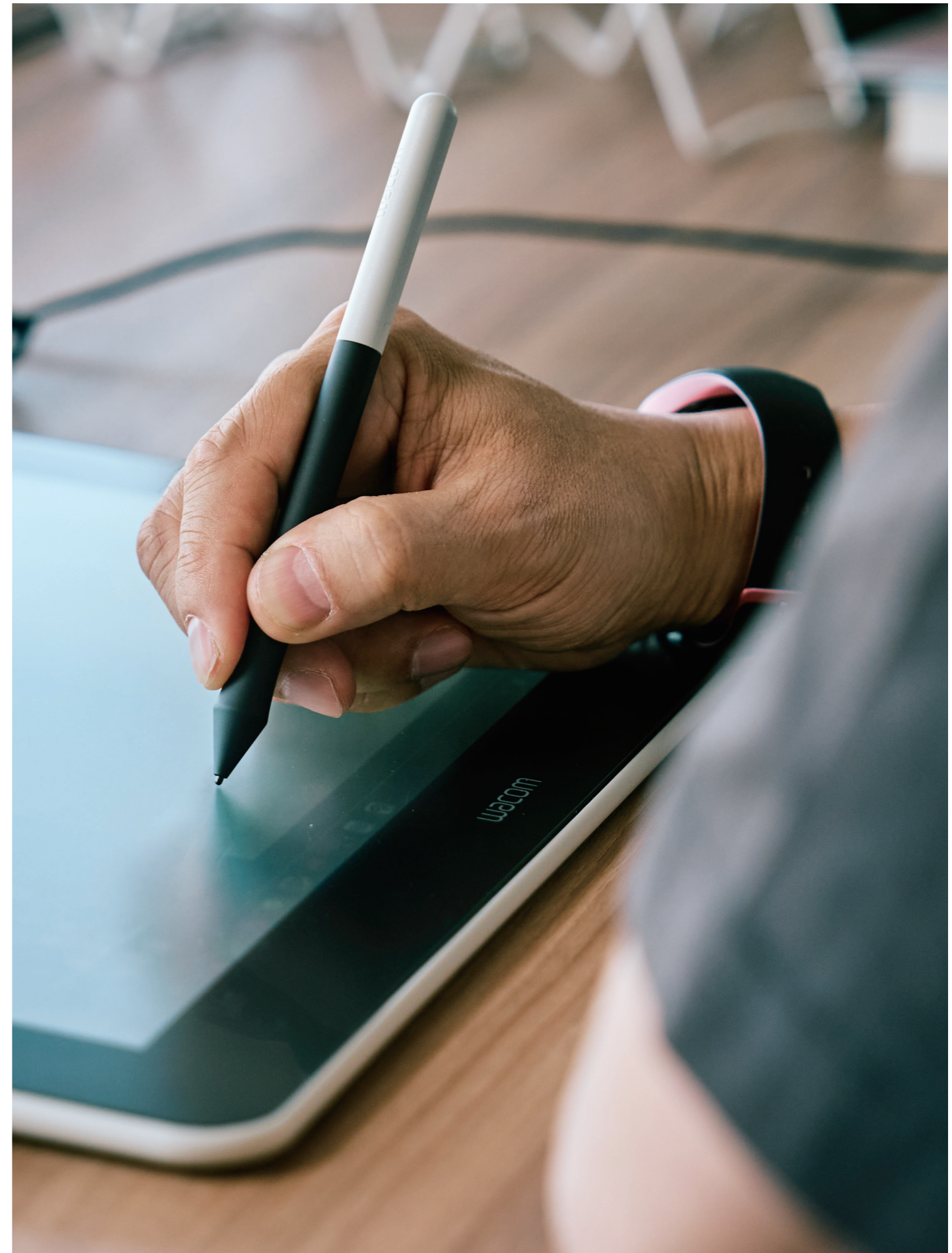
Wacom's appeal and complexity are mostly due to one factor: the deep bond the company enjoys with its customers. Our customers include individuals who use our pen displays and pen tablets, OEM customers who

incorporate our technologies in their products, and partners who help us explore how we can add more value to the customer experience. We enjoy a close relationship with all of them because we are driven to provide value based on a clear objective: to facilitate creation, recording, and learning through the acts of *drawing / writing*. Because our goal is clear, our place in the world is also clear. I am proud of the fact that Wacom technologies can directly help so many different customers achieve their goals.

I think of Wacom as a single living organism. The company has been around for 40 years, and I'm still excited about where it's going next. As CEO, I am in a position where I am supposed to lead Wacom. Yet, I feel like what I am actually doing is being nudged forward by Wacom itself in the direction it wants to go; I simply help the company get there.

I clearly recall feeling like this for the first time during 2019's Connected Ink (see "Connected Ink," pp. 68–69). Connected Ink provides an experimental space for exploring the future of creativity through discussions on topics related to "creative chaos," as well as new topics that arose from those discussions. I remember attending this 2019 event and thinking, "This is not just a Wacom event." I saw how everyone attending Connected Ink was moved by something important to leave an impact on society—and it made me feel as if Wacom was similarly moving me and my colleagues, drawing us into an enormous vortex of action. I felt as if we were creating new cultures. Out of a sense of duty, Connected Ink and the event's attendees were working to develop cultural ideas that would benefit the next generation. I feel that this notion of creating new cultures is increasingly taking hold in Wacom.

There is a promise to Wacom's





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customers: Life-long Ink (see "Life-long Ink," pp. 18–19). It is a promise that Wacom will provide its customers with a life-long journey defined by their experiences with its products. These experiences, of course, are provided via the digital technologies that Wacom is constantly refining. The promise is our way of saying, "We will walk with you throughout your life's journey, providing you with ink-based experiences that can be achieved with digital technologies." Digital technology is not bound by space or time. Life-long Ink is a declaration that Wacom is a provider of experiences delivered through products and technology. It is a promise that we will support those experiences for as long as our customers live—or even beyond, continuing their stories even after they have departed from this world.

### The four things I love about Wacom

Since there are too many things that I love about Wacom I'd like to focus here on four of them: its approach to technological innovation, its love-hate relationship with its customers, its ability to be both independent and collaborative, and its team members' care and pride for their work.

#### 01 A simple but honest pursuit of technology

Technology is the source of the value that Wacom provides. A rigorous pursuit of technological innovation is the most important contributor to our goal of providing new experiences via the pen. When I was appointed Wacom CEO, my first decision was to declare that "Wacom is a technology company." I even listed "technology leadership" as one of the five key

strategic initiatives in the Medium Term Business Direction: "Wacom Chapter 3." This is about concentrating business resources on technological development so we can provide astounding user experiences. In other words, it is not about developing technology per se, but about translating those technologies into experiences. We invest in technology so we can provide extraordinary experiences.

In the long term, we should perhaps think more about the future of *drawing / writing*. As long as humans exist, these acts will never stop being important. However, we must at least consider the possibility that some kind of disruptive technology will completely redefine these acts. The relationship we have with *drawing / writing* could transform into something we can't even begin to predict. Yet, this will not change the fact that the need to *draw / write* is one of our most primeval desires. What is important is that we continue refining our technology in preparation for such a disruptive event so we can ensure that these acts can be passed on to later generations.

But while we value technology, we must also pay heed to the dangers of digital technology. It promises us immediacy, efficiency, productivity, and reproducibility, but there is also a fear that it could destroy—some might say deliver a fatal blow to—the sense of humanity and human creativity that we have developed since the beginning of humanity. At Wacom, we are mostly interested in making information easier to move and allowing information to exist as both signal and noise. If we can somehow visualize these concepts, I believe we can create a set of brand-new digital experiences. We want to explore how to use digital technology to capture the kind of information that isn't bound by space or time—the almost-impossible-to-grasp thoughts and words—and find ways in which this

can benefit us. We are confident in our ability to achieve this goal, which is why we can confront the risks posed by digital technology and deal with them honestly.

Before I continue, I'd like to briefly talk about the three types of experiences that we provide our customers. The first is the experience of freely flowing *drawing / writing*. Creative Solution delivers the experience in the form of Wacom brand products. This is our ace in the hole, the one that allows us to provide creators and artists with the greatest pen-based experiences in the world. The second is the pen-based experience that seamlessly becomes a part of your lifestyle. Business Solution and Technology Solution Business are responsible for having our digital pen experiences permeate the world. The former does so by promoting the use of Wacom products in a variety of business settings. The latter's approach involves adding value to an OEM customer's products through Wacom's digital pen and ink technologies. To use another playing-cards analogy, the two teams allow us to hold all the cards, giving us the ability to cater to any business need or setting. The third is the experience that goes beyond that of simply using an implement. It's about unleashing the power behind the inscribed words or pictures and elevating it into a new kind of experience. This is the domain of Ink Division. The fact that we hold both an ace and all the cards puts Wacom in a very strong position.

#### 02 Having customers who can be overly passionate

Now, let's get back to my second reason for loving Wacom: its love-hate relationship with its customers. To me, love and hate are not in conflict but opposite sides of the same coin, because when you love something so much, even a small problem can easily

flip love into hate. Wacom's customers come in many shapes and sizes. There are creators and artists who use Wacom products like extensions of their bodies. There are casual users who use Wacom products on a daily basis as part of their studies or other activities. Then there are the OEM customers and corporate partners who work with Wacom to create new products and experiences through Wacom technology. Every one of these customers directs both love and hate towards us.

Those involved in creative work pour their souls into their creations. By choosing our products, they are, in a way, putting their lives in our hands. It's only natural for them to feel a strong mix of love and hate towards us and our products. The same is true with our OEM customers as well. After all, the livelihood of their businesses depends on Wacom technologies. But we at Wacom are equally driven by strong emotions. Creators and artists pour their hearts into creating something new; OEM customers are driven by a sense of duty to deliver the finest products to their customers; and we are inspired by our customers' passions to do everything we can to help them achieve their goals. It is because we and our customers are so emotionally vested in each other's successes that we have developed such a close relationship—one that goes beyond a simple commercial transaction.

Soon after I became CEO, a certain creative professional told me something that was very painful to hear. "Wacom doesn't understand how much we creators sacrifice to produce our work," they said. "There's a lot more I want to say, but I'm not going to even bother. I'm never using another Wacom product." I didn't have the words to respond. So instead, I launched development on the Wacom Cintiq Pro 27 (see "ETC - a new approach to product development,"

pp. 24–27). It is a flagship model developed with the ultimate goal of meeting our customers' demands. When we invited this same creator to give this new model a try, they responded: "What more can I say? This is exactly what I've been looking for. Thank you for creating such a marvelous product." I was so overwhelmed, I began to cry tears of joy.

We often experience something similar with our OEM customers, with whom we are constantly negotiating day and night over their technological and cost demands. There was an engineer in one of our OEM customers, who was something of a legend with an astonishing record of achievements. After retiring, he told me; "We gave Wacom a number of difficult requests along the way, but you always delivered, producing something new and innovative." I could not have asked for higher praise.

Wacom products and technologies are mission specific—in this case, *drawing / writing*. It only takes a second for a user to either love or hate them; the feedback is instantaneous. As a result, our R&D cycles tend to be quite rapid. Because *drawing / writing* are entirely subjective activities, a technology that completely satisfies every user for all the same reasons is like a dream. We could never craft something so perfect—but getting as close as we can is what drives us at Wacom.

03 A focus on both our own path and collaborations with partners

The third major reason I love Wacom is its ability to travel its own path as well as travel alongside others. We at Wacom have long walked down the path we believe in, fully prepared to deal with any obstacles along the way. You can see this in how we have

rigorously pursued digital pen and ink technologies. As a result, we have not only refined our technologies and products but also cultivated an entirely new market. But there are also things we can accomplish by traveling with others—like forging relationships and creating a community. Our ability to travel our own path as well as a path shared with others is something I consider to be one of Wacom's greatest strengths. It is also one of the things that make Wacom stand out.


It is because we have proven we can go our own way that we are able to partner so successfully with the world's pioneers. Our technology is unique, which is why it has attracted so many players in completely different sectors. We have developed technology that provides real value, and this is why we have been able to form alliances where we are on equal footing with some of the world's top companies.

Our partners fall under one of three categories: technology partners, business partners, and cultural co-creation partners (see "Wacom and its community," p. 60). These categories are not set in stone, and many of our partners fall into more than one category. What all our partners have in common is their ability to show us a world we would have never discovered on our own. There is much we have learned through our partnerships.

Digital technology's greatest attribute is the ease with which it can be combined with other technologies. This can be seen in the new products and services that are constantly being launched all across the world. Look around you, and you'll find a world brimming with technological innovations. Wacom is in a unique position of being able to spur innovations in digital pens and ink because their technologies can be combined with just about any technology. In theory, any technology company in the world could become

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04 The spark in every team member

The fourth main reason why I love Wacom is that every team member has a spark inside of them. After becoming CEO, I traveled to our offices around the world and talked to various team members. I felt that everyone I met approached their work at Wacom with a strong sense of mission, that they take pride in slowly but surely arriving at a solution that will meet their customers' expectations. Listening to these team members, I got the strong impression that they knew they were good at their jobs and were proud of it. Every office seemed to function like a collective of bright, skilled individuals—perhaps this is why Wacom itself feels to me like a living organism.

The Social Initiatives at Wacom represent our attempt to tap into the strong emotions—joy, anger, grief, excitement—located deep inside every team member to motivate them into action (see “Social initiatives,” p. 70). Such initiatives ensure that the team members are acting based on their own beliefs and passions rather than because someone is forcing them into action. These activities on their own are not particularly special; they won't surprise you by dramatically changing the world. Yet, I like to think of each activity as a little story about one person doing something they believe in—something that's within their own abilities—in their own unique way. The line between business and social contribution is blurring. In some cases, the line doesn't even exist, with social contribution firmly embedded in the business. In the future, we may be able to expand the reach of our Social Initiatives, allowing our spark to travel even farther out into the world.

### Never forgetting to be an instrument provider

Our promise to our customers is to deliver a life-long journey—one that is delivered via the instruments we make. We at Wacom never forget that we are an instrument provider responsible for supporting those who use our instruments. As an instrument provider, we are proud of our ability to ensure that our users can work without interruption, that their pens flow freely, and that their creativity is properly stimulated.

We at Wacom consider ourselves an instrument provider. We don't want to simply be a provider of core technology solutions. We want to be an instrument provider. It's not necessarily difficult to become a pure provider of technology; it's just that we want to be able to provide experiences that originate with our instruments.

As an instrument provider, we at Wacom feel a duty to ensure three things. The first is that our users can continue work uninterrupted. We don't want creators to have to pause their thinking and creativity because of a problem with the instruments we provide. We are constantly looking for new ways to prevent such a situation—for example, minimizing digital ink delay as much as possible and reducing parallax in the touch screen. The second is that users can let their pens flow freely. We want to ensure our users can simply let their pens dance all over their screens without thought or calculation. The third is that we can stimulate our users' creativity. There is nothing more we would like than for our users to find that their free-flowing pens help them deepen their thinking and enrich their creativity. We want to provide instruments that stir the imagination and lead the creator to great ideas.

But a digital pen which never crashes is desirable not just for creators. Therefore, we are constantly refining our technology so that our instruments do not affect productivity in business and educational settings as well.

Can an instrument provider also be a creator? Needless to say, the creator or artist plays the main role in any creative endeavor—and it is our duty at Wacom to support these talented people. However, I strongly believe that this act of supporting creative talent is also a very creative type of work.

### The future of Wacom

Although our mission is to continue making instruments that support the act of *drawing / writing*, it is not a permanent mission. As the world changes, technology evolves, and the nature of the competition transforms, we must reshape our mission. It is by doing so that Wacom has managed to survive for 40 years.

Wacom is in the middle of a transformation. It is evolving into a provider of wide-ranging experiences without losing its identity as an instrument provider. We have launched a number of exciting initiatives, such as KISEKI ART, which can provide new insights to creators (see “New possibilities in digital ink,” p. 48); Wacom Yuify, designed to protect the rights of creators (see “New possibilities in digital ink,” p. 49); and a service that provides children with better schoolwork feedback by using visualization to understand not just what they write in the answers but how they write it. What these projects have in common is that they all bring Wacom closer towards our promise of Life-long Ink. These projects form a giant mandala with technology at its core.

At Wacom, we see our financial records as proof of the life that Wacom has lived over the past 40 years. Whether they go up or down, they serve as evidence of the highs and lows that Wacom has experienced as a living organism. In the Medium Term Business Direction: "Wacom Chapter 3", we introduce our ROE and ROIC as guidelines for the efficiency of our investments and business operations. We then describe our envisioned growth through March 2025 and propose how we will pass on this growth to our shareholders. A growing number of companies around the world have begun adopting an ESG management. We are no different, but I do want to stress why it is important for us to adopt such a management. For us at Wacom, initiatives for Environmental, Social, and Governance are important parts of the process for realizing Life-long Ink. In April 2023, we announced our support of the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures and published a report that explained our decision. We described how we were motivated not by social pressure for companies to adopt an ESG management but by our belief that such a decision was necessary for us to be able to serve all humankind. This is why we intend to develop our initiatives for Environmental, Social, and Governance in a way that stays true to what Wacom stands for.

Wacom's mission is to continue developing instruments for *drawing / writing*. However, the nature of our mission is inextricably linked to the times and social mores. If the nature of our mission changes, then we will also need to transform our corporate strategy. I am proud of our current management, especially our outside board of directors. Each board member believes in Wacom's mission and fully applies their skills and expertise in their management roles. I fully trust them and know

that they envision the same goal for the company and are capable of having open, yet at times pointed, discussions.

It goes without saying that management's job is to calmly assess the company's current situation and then plan and implement the things that need to be done. However, this is not enough. We are living in an age when sudden, unexpected change occurs frequently. A management that is too rigid is a terrifying risk for a company. I am strongly aware that my time as an executive is not permanent. This is why I focus on envisioning Wacom's future and put all my energy into advancing projects that I believe will become key pillars of the company in the future. It takes time for technological development to produce results. Until the time comes for me to hand the baton to the next generation, I want to continue promoting projects that will both make Wacom stand out today and provide the company with a solid future foundation. I have seen the way Wacom team members lead these projects with a sense of individual duty and an incalculable level of passion. I firmly believe that their adventures will end on a wonderful note.

**Epilogue**

*The Wacom Story Book* is just about to begin. The story that starts when you turn this page will help you understand where Wacom finds itself today. It will shed light on the path that we intend to take towards achieving the dreams and future I mentioned above. There are things that Wacom can already achieve, things that Wacom is on the verge of achieving, things that Wacom has not achieved yet but is hard at work trying to achieve, and things that Wacom will someday like to achieve. All these ideas are swirling around in a vortex, waiting for their turn to leap out and

make an appearance in Wacom's journey towards achieving Life-long Ink. I can't wait to see where the story takes Wacom next.



**Nobutaka IDE**

President and CEO  
Wacom Co.

Nobutaka Ide (Nobu) was born in Tokyo in 1970. After earning a master's degree from the Division of Public Administration of the International Christian University Graduate School, he joined a Japanese home-appliance maker. Engaged in product planning and marketing in the U.S. as well as mobile phone market development in China, before joining Wacom in 2013. After serving in various positions including Senior Vice President of the Technology Solution Business Unit, he assumed the role of Representative Director, President and CEO in 2018. In February 2021, he was appointed Representative Director of Connected Ink Village as a general incorporated association, which supports various artists, creator communities and education communities. Nobu is an avid reader with extensive interests, where one of his favorite authors include Yukio Mishima. He also relishes and writes poem as well as enjoys playing musical instruments and loves Tchaikovsky and SION. Nobu also spends time in creative collaborations with his daughter, performing as a professional dancer, in his leisure time.

The CEO's message represents an elaboration of the five key strategic initiatives introduced in the "Wacom Chapter 3": Technology Leadership, Community Engagement, New Core Technology and New Core Value Propositions, Technology Innovation for Sustainable Society, and Meaningful Growth (see "Medium Term Business Direction" p. 87). We have defined our materiality that adheres to these strategies.

**Wacom's materiality**

- 1 | Expanding our technology, product, and service portfolios to create new value and new businesses as a technology company  
(For examples of technology innovation and new creative experiences, see pp. 24, 34, 42, 46, 48, 50)
- 2 | Forming communities with our partners to create value and implement our corporate social responsibility  
(For examples of community collaboration and co-creation, see pp. 60, 68)
- 3 | Contributing towards a sustainable society through our technologies and products along with our environmental initiatives such as our support of the TCFD and JCI frameworks  
(For examples of our sustainability initiatives, see pp. 72, 76)
- 4 | Providing an environment conducive to individual growth  
(For examples of the growth-conducive environment we provide our human capital, see pp. 24, 70)
- 5 | Building a high-quality governance system based on diverse perspectives  
(For an example of how our governance supports value creation, see p. 78)



## A Promise to Deliver an Experience Journey

Life-long Ink—the concept conjures images of a journey filled with exciting ink-based experiences; and now that Wacom is ready to unveil many of these experiences, the concept will begin to feel more tangible. Although newly coined, “Life-long Ink” could easily describe Wacom’s past work as well, particularly in the way the company has worked to support the creative output of its users. One might say that the company’s sense of purpose has simply been encapsulated into a memorable phrase. Wacom President and CEO Nobutaka Ide (Nobu) talks about what the Life-long Ink is.

“Life-long Ink” is a concept that closely relates to a question I have constantly pondered: What can I do to provide deep-rooted support to the life of every person? Even when I first entered through the doors of Wacom, I believed that the company had a mission to embrace the creative expressions of all people—not just the professional, richly conceived works of creators and artists working in animation, comics, and other fields. I have spent my whole life asking what it means to be human, searching for answers in both the beauty of humanity and the dark abyss that lies within us. I was at Shibuya Scramble Crossing when the term “Life-long Ink” hit me like a bolt of lightning. All of a sudden, I could clearly see the line of ink trailing out of the back of every person crossing that busy intersection—lines of every shape and color, each one tracing that person’s life.

### The meaning behind the concept

I will now try to explain what this phrase—Life-long Ink—means to me by separately exploring each of the two words. When I hear the word “life-long,” what comes to mind is not the general lifecycle of humans but my own life and the lives of the people to whom I am connected. Each of these lives has a bright side, as well as a dark side that we sometimes find difficult to express in words. Each of these lives is an amalgamation of moments—fragments of memories. “Life-long” is a term that encompasses all of this. It is not a concept applied to some anonymous life. It is about the specific stories of actual people: myself and everyone with whom I share a connection. Similarly, it is actual people we at Wacom have in mind when we create new experiences and products.

And now, “Ink.” The word “Ink” to me means more than just letters or lines. When I talk about writing or drawing, I like to say “draw in” and “write in” to emphasize that these are acts of transmission—of imprinting your thoughts and feelings into a medium to create something new (a concept that is given physicality in the acts of inscribing, etching, and carving). Ink contains thoughts and soul. When I talk about ink, I am talking about the “instruments” that Wacom

provides its customers so they can inscribe and etch their feelings and thoughts into a physical medium. This ink will be applied numerous times throughout a person’s life and then saved and passed on from person to person over time and distance. Perhaps this is the nature of kotodoma—the ancient Japanese concept of finding power in words.

### A life-changing drop of ink

I believe that a single drop of ink can add color to one’s life. It might be a vividly beautiful color; or it might be the opposite. Either way, that single drop of ink might change your life. This is what I pray for. I don’t expect ink to change the world; but I do hope it changes your life. Life isn’t all glitter and gold. There are ups, downs, and violent crashes; for every great moment, there is an equally bad moment. I want Wacom to be the kind of company that embraces all these moments as it works to change your life. Anything that adds even just a bit of color to your life—no matter what color—has meaning, wouldn’t you say? This is Life-long Ink: a person’s life-long story with Ink.

### A promise of an experience journey

Life-long Ink is neither the name of a Wacom technology nor the company vision. It is a promise. However, this is not some vague promise made to an indeterminate number of people. It is a personal promise made by Wacom to actual customers. What is this journey? It is the accumulation of all the experiences we deliver to our customers throughout their lives via the technologies we are constantly refining. Our promise is to provide our customers with experiences throughout their lives that can only be achieved through our Ink-related technologies. This idea is embodied by our ongoing KISEKI ART project, which involves visualizing the path that a creative work takes to completion. Our technology is our foundation—it is our medium for providing valuable new experiences to our customers. In the past few years, we have attempted to share our concept of Life-long Ink with our

customers not by explaining it in words but by producing tangible experience that embodies this life-long user journey. KISEKI ART is one example. Other examples include Wacom Yuify, which involves creating a visualized log of a creator’s creative process and the stories behind the works they create, and a service that allows teachers to provide children with better schoolwork feedback through visualizations that help them understand not just what the children write in the answers but how they write it. By getting hands-on experience with these projects, our customers have been able to intuitively understand what Life-long Ink is about. But Life-long Ink isn’t limited to the software-based services we provide. It also applies to our digital devices—touch and pen tablets and other products. For us at Wacom, they are not simply products but instruments that allow us to passionately support creators in their work for years and years.

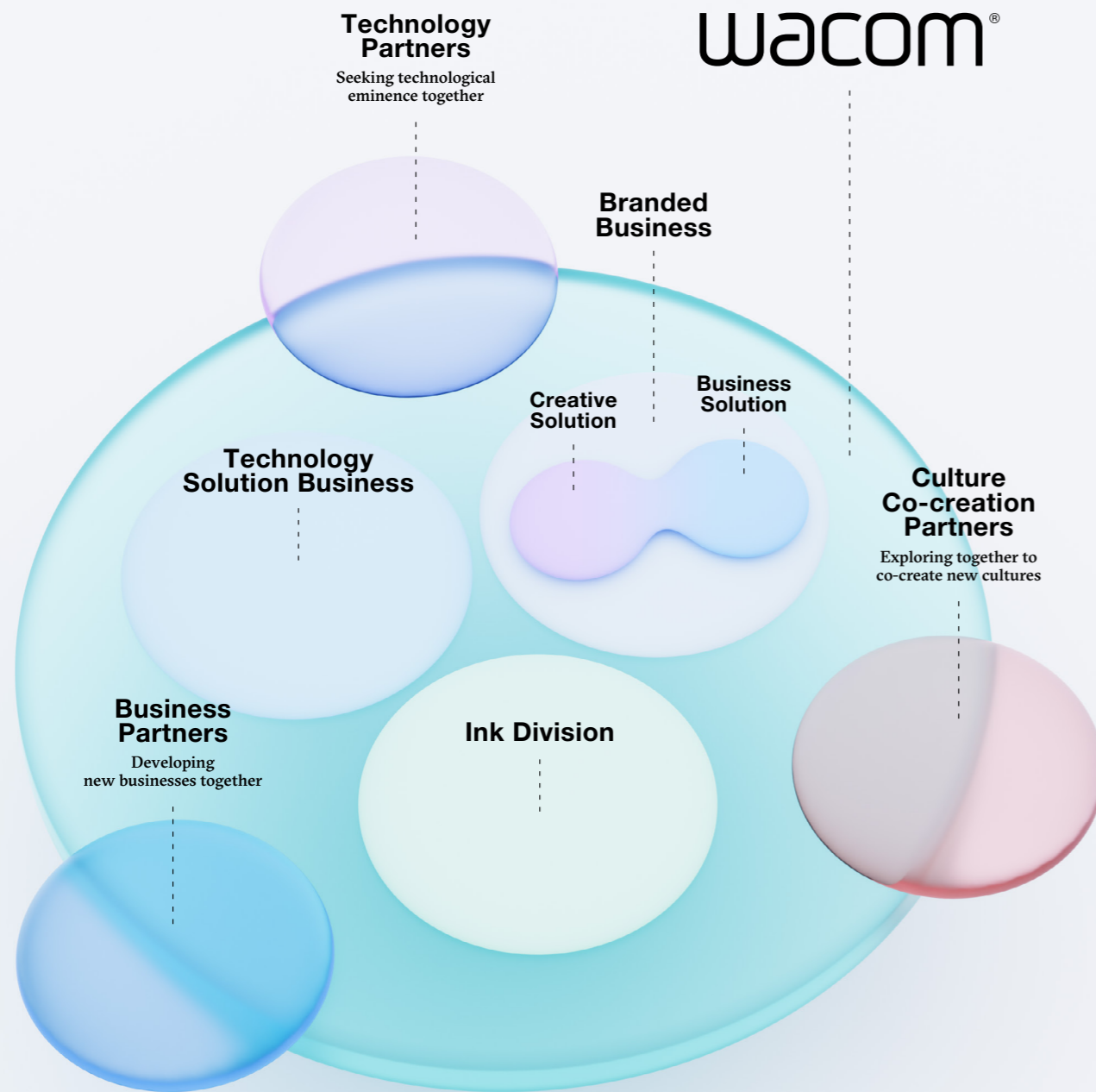
In my view, Wacom was offering Life-long Ink long before I came up with the concept—just look at how we have embraced our professional users in the creative and artist community. But the closer you become with a professional user base, the more you begin to see it as your singular purpose to respond to their every need. Eventually, the line between us and them may vanish entirely, making us more or less one and the same. Perhaps becoming too symbiotic with our users is not compatible with the idea of providing a service—which is at the heart of the concept of Life-long Ink. My point is that the reason I was so confident I was onto something when I came up with the idea of Life-long Ink is that I immediately realized that this was a service that Wacom was already providing.

### Memories filled with Wacom instruments

The word “journey” is very important to me. It is a very visual word, conjuring images of a long trip in which you know the general direction in which you want to travel and make your way there one step at a time, pushing past the various obstacles that get in your way. It is not about having a specific destination in mind and

getting there in the fastest and shortest way possible. It is about sharing a general goal with other people but making your way there in your own way and along your own route—choices that reflect your individuality. The pleasure and excitement of a journey is not just in reaching the destination but also in making new discoveries, forging unexpected friendships and having serendipitous encounters, and finding new sides to yourself. It is these small surprises that add spice to a journey. I want our customers—and maybe even our Wacom team members—to experience many such surprises. And every time they look back on their user journey to date, I fervently hope that the instruments we develop exist vividly in their memories.

# Life-long Ink story



# WACOM'S PROMISE

## Wacom's promise of delivering an experience journey

Wacom pursues the following three axes in driving its daily business forward: providing exceptional digital pen experiences to creators, contributing to a wide range of customers through Wacom's technologies, and refining the technologies that is Wacom's lifeblood. By exploring these axes and producing new experiential value, the realization of Life-long Ink awaits.

Every day, Wacom takes a few more steps toward realizing Life-long Ink: a promise to deliver an experience journey to customers. Three pillars of Wacom business—Branded Business, Technology Solution Business, and the Ink Division—are each contributing to the realization of this promise in their own ways.

Branded Business is composed of two areas: Creative Solution and Business Solution. While Wacom products play a central role in both areas, the two are focused on different aspects of Wacom's business, and leveraging each other.

Business Solution deals directly with businesses, who are service providers and not individual users. The decision whether to use Wacom's products is usually depends on how much it helps the business; often, the business chooses Wacom's pen displays and pen tablets based simply on their renown and reliability. This reputation—the main driver behind the permeation of Wacom products throughout the world—is the result of years of work by Creative Solution and Business Solution helps Creative Solution as well. For example, by increasing the number of businesses that incorporate Wacom products in their services, Business Solution can ensure that more people are using Wacom products in their daily lives. As a result, when one of these customers thinks about buying a digital creative tool, they are more likely to purchase one of Creative Solution's products.

While Branded Business deals with selling Wacom brand products, Technology Solution Business provides the technology with OEM customers who may potentially create competing products. One might think this would put the two businesses in conflict. However,

the record of reliability and performance that Branded Business has built up actually helps Technology Solution Business convince OEM customers to incorporate Wacom technology. Meanwhile, Technology Solution Business's successful history of selling the technology to a wide range of OEM customers helps Branded Business make the case for the superiority of their own products to artists and other creators.

The reciprocal relationship between the two businesses can be seen in other areas as well. For example, Branded Business has started sharing its own technologies with Technology Solution Business. On the other hand, Branded Business often benefits from the knowledge that Technology Solution Business acquires in the course of successfully meeting the toughest demands of its OEM customers. With a new initiative—Wacom KOB0—developing common technology sharing between the two businesses, we can expect Wacom's technology to rapidly evolve.

Both businesses are supported by the Ink Division, which handles R&D for digital ink technologies. Its primary responsibility is to propose the solutions that meet the technological demands of Wacom's customers, whether they are individual users purchasing Wacom products or OEM customers. It is not uncommon for the joint efforts of the Ink Division and Branded Business to end up having an impact on a Technology Solution Business project.

Sometimes, technology developed by the Ink Division becomes a starting point for an entirely new business. For example, the Ink Division has developed semantic ink, a technology that can

recognize the deeper meaning behind digital words and apply that meaning in a variety of ways. This technology has helped Technology Solution Business expand its involvement in the education field. So, the Ink Division primarily develops technologies to meet the business needs of Branded Business and Technology Solution Business; but sometimes, the Ink Division independently develops new technologies that would lead to the launch of new experience. This reciprocal relationship is expected to bear fruit in the coming years.

Wacom is currently in the middle of a transformation, using its years of knowledge and experience to transition from a product manufacturer into a provider of new experiences. These experiences can only be made possible through close collaboration between Branded Business, Technology Solution Business, and the Ink Division. They include three experiences that have already been made possible with Wacom products: delivering immersive experience in which creators can draw freely, digital pen experiences in everyday life scenes, and defining the way forward. None of these experiences are the sole domain of one business; they require the kind of synergy that can only come about when the three pillars are helping to enhance each other's work.

Wacom's goal is for Branded Business, Technology Solution Business, and the Ink Division to be able to work with each other even more organically so that they can heighten the Wacom experience. In the following pages, we would like to expand on the three experiences we mentioned above.