

The importance of citizens' communities around museums for building new activities and science communication.

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## **Introduction**

Museums and their learning circumstances are not solely operated by curators or museum staffs, but helped and co-produced with guests, related organizations and museum's surrounding communities and so on. Many papers studied the relations between museums and guests, such as visitor's satisfaction (Harrison and Shaw 2004), diversity of visitors for more inclusive museums (Tili 2008). There are some studies museums and stake holders (Bhattacharya et al 1995). In this paper, I focused on communities of museums, as one of keystone factor, especially for small to mid size museums.

## **Diversity of museum communities**

Museums have wide range of guests. Occasional visitors, usually have weak interaction among visitors and tend to limited to temporal interactions with museums. The levels of interaction rise stronger and more firm if they become repeaters, or fans. Volunteers club members and supporters are obviously have strong interactions with museums in different way. SNS communities, such as Twitter, Facebook or Instagram followers are in another layer of communications. These are much younger communities but have strong influence to the societies. Many academic museums are engaged with scientist's communities, art museums with artists etc...

Museums communicate with these people via leaflets, newsletters, websites, email magazines and SNS. People react museums via questionnaire sheets, e-mail, blogs, SNS or face to face. As far as there are some communications and have some influence in each other, the group might be seen as a community. So, museums have very wide range of communities, which have difference in extent of communication, in media of communication, in network structure (hub-spoke or multi centered) and degree of interactivity. (see Table1.)

Museums have their own missions. For natural history museums, among many missions, making chances for people to engage with nature, and the value of them, is one of the most important for educational perspective. The science-communication activities are important measure for that. But many of natural history museums have only several staffs, including educators, they are insufficient condition to be an enlightener of biodiversity and natural history science. So, they need powerful influencers to help their outreach to the society.

The communities around natural history museums are potentially powerful influencers, to their neighbors, their co-workers, to their own followers via SNS. Museums send out many messages to the society. If the voices of educators are not loud enough, you should ask your fans to join the chorus together. Fig1. show the cases of SNS message. We need engage more with our fans, visitors, to send out our message to the society.

### **Case of Friends of Museums in OMNH**

Among them, in Osaka Museum of Natural History (OMNH), some of the groups are highly active and give some good results for citizen science activities, education, capacity building and so on.

Association of Friends of Museum in OMNH is an independent NGO, known as Osaka Natural History Center, operating communication programs with kids, museum shops, and many other outreach activities in relation with museum staffs. Sometimes, governmental organizations, like museums have difficult to renovate their own activities, or engage wide range of players. But, with NGOs those comes to much easier. OMNH has many kinds of citizens engagement programs, and in many of them this NGOs play the role of mediator between many players and museums. The role of “mediator” is not always scientific professional. They can be educators, amateur scientists, students, local leaders, etc., all kinds of players who connect museums and society.

“Mediators” are not a new story for the museum, since OMNH has a long history helped by numbers of talented amateur naturalists (citizen scientists) just from the beginning, for its collection making, research, and educational activities. This can be said the museum have a culture of welcoming citizen’s participation. The way of activities also affects in the way of science communication of the museum (Fig. 2). Communities engaged with museum to different extent mediate citizens in many ways. And in these communities, younger generations or new-comers are included for capacity building.

### **To connect with society, we need mediators.**

OMNH has several kinds of mediator organization. Osaka Natural History Center is more focused on regional activities, and Western Natural History Museums Network covers wider range of geographical area, but more focused in museum professionals. Kansai Organization for Nature Conservation is more scientific one.

With those mediating NGOs, OMNH can share its knowledge and value of nature in deferent kinds of activities in deferent needs of variety of people. Now, Osaka Natural History Center is seeking some partners of other fields, like welfare to achieve Sustainable Development Goals with museum .

## Reference

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Table1. Community around museums and their character

Category	Interest to museum	Time of interaction	potential mass	messaging from museum	reaction to museum	interaction between museum	community topology
<b>PASSERS-BY</b>	Low	Short	Large	Leaflet Mass media	questionnaire sheets	one way	-
<b>LOCAL RESIDENTS</b>	Low to Mid	Long	Mid	Local news	Face to face	one way	-
<b>SCHOOL-VISITS</b>	Low	Short	Large	Via teachers		one way	-
<b>DESTINATION HUNTERS</b>	Mid to High	Short	Small to Mid	Web site	blogs	one way	-
<b>REPEAT-USERS, MUSEUM-FUNS</b>	High	Long	Small	Web site, SNS	SNS e-mail	bidirectional	hub-spoke
<b>HEAVY USERS</b>	High	Long	Small	Web, SNS, Face to face	SNS Face to face	bidirectional	hub-spoke
<b>MUSEUM-COMMUNITY MEMBERS, VOLUNTARY STAFFS...</b>	High	Long	Small to Mid	News letter SNS, e-mail Face to face	SNS, e-mail Face to face	interactive	multi-core
<b>SNS FOLLOWERS</b>	Mid	Long	Mid	SNS, Web	SNS	interactive	multi-core
<b>MUSEUM STAFFS</b>	High	Long	Very Small	Face to face	Face to face	interactive	

# Messaging to Society from Museums and Their Communities

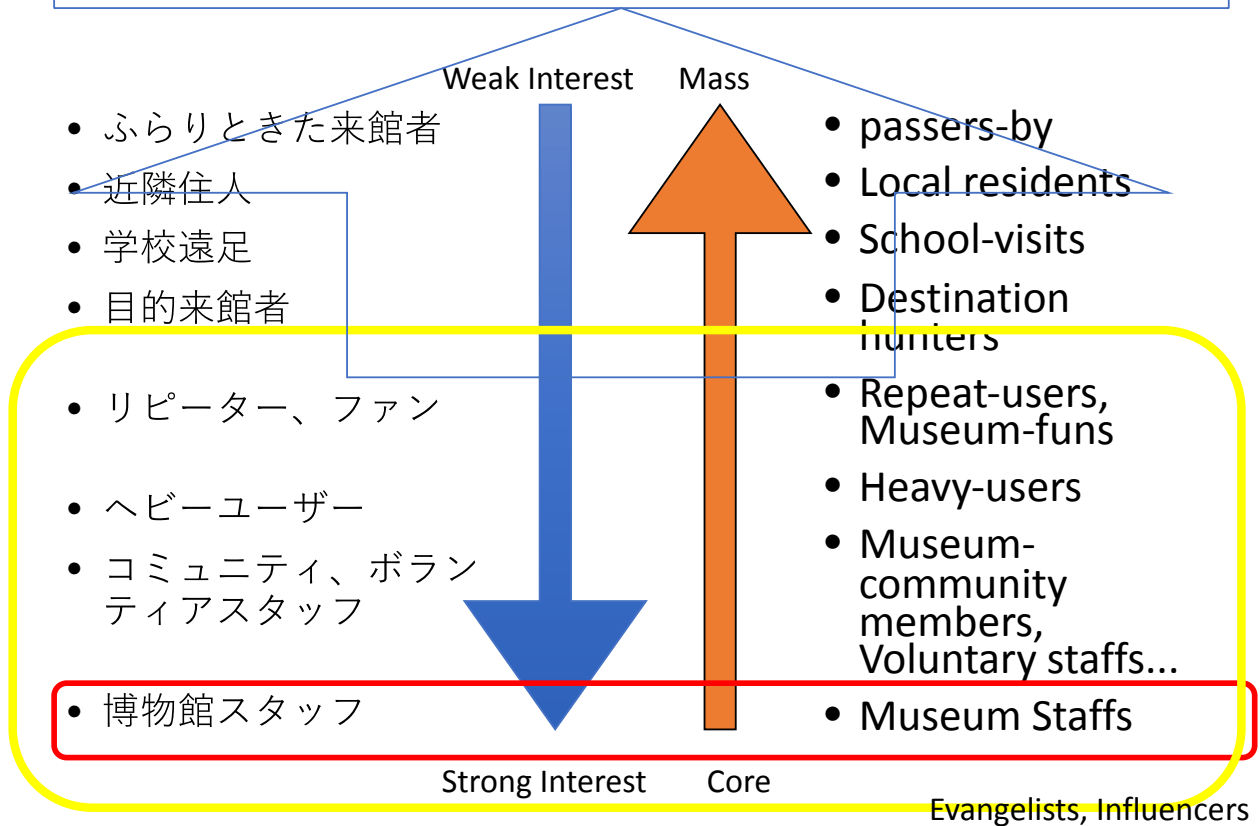


Fig.1 Messaging to the society from museums and their community

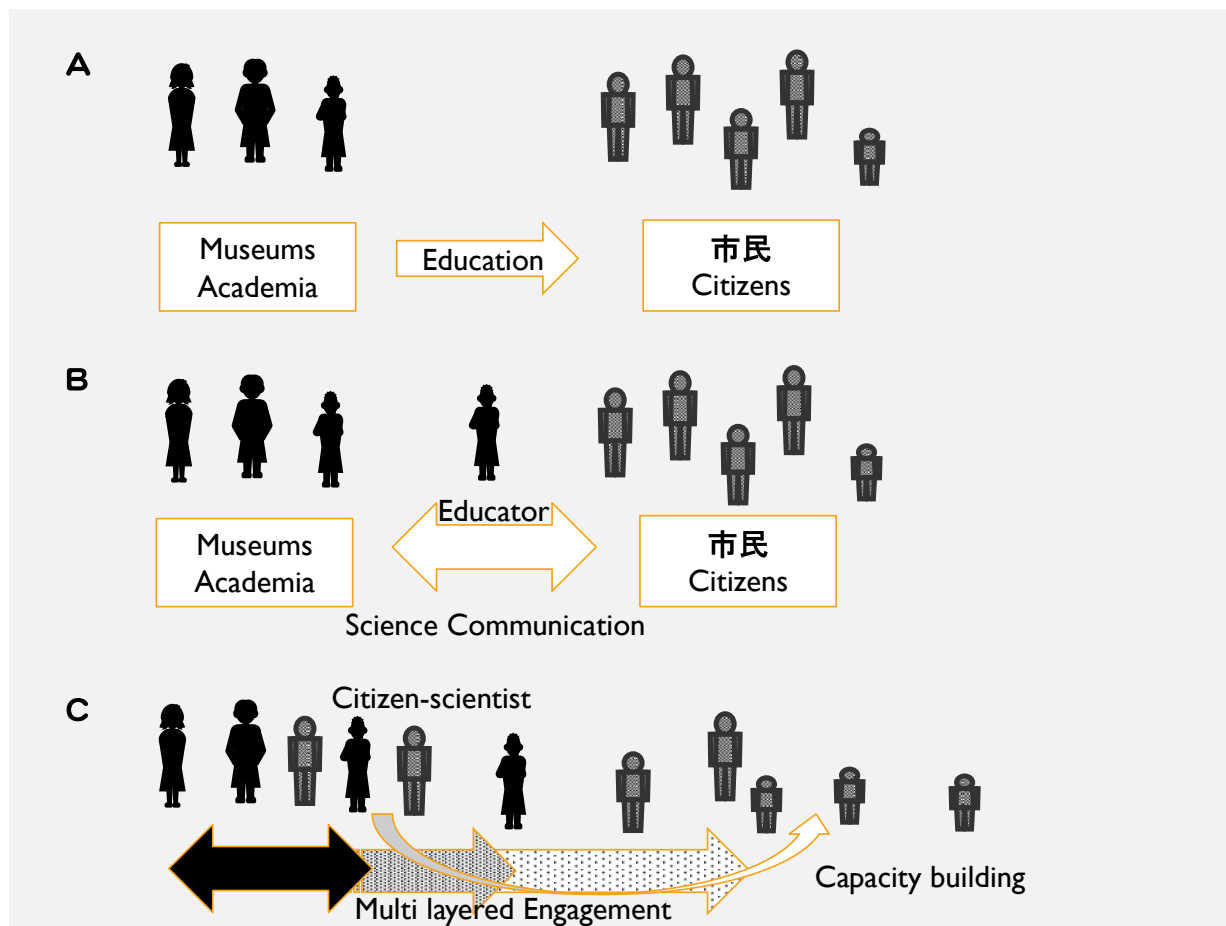


Fig 2. 3 patterns of scientific communication between ,museums and society.