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## **Community Vitalization through Regional Branding Strategies**

**- summary -**

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### **Regional Branding**

There are two approaches to regional branding, namely branding of regional products and branding of the regions themselves.

Regional branding in the broad sense includes branding of the regions themselves to enhance visibility and add value so that consumers will want to purchase local products, visit for sightseeing, or even take up residence in the region.

For example, local confectioners Taneya (Omihachiman City, Shiga) and Rokkatei (Obihiro City, Hokkaido) incorporate local culture in their shop spaces and surroundings, which are used as PR centers to enhance the impact of their regional brands.

### **Establishment of regional branding strategies**

In marketing methodology, perceiving promotion by business entities as a system to create, communicate and deliver value is also applicable to the process of regional vitalization. In other words, regional vitalization can be defined as converting local resources into regional value, and then communicating and delivering them to the market.

### **Vitalization effort in Kamiyama-cho, Tokushima**

Kamiyama-cho, with a population of 6000, is a forestry and agricultural community located in a mountainous area about 40 minutes from Tokushima City. The community has long been suffering from depopulation. Local volunteers in Kamiyama-cho have established an NPO and been proactive in regional vitalization activities. Their community is being invigorated by their extensive efforts to selectively attract those who will in turn attract further visitors and new residents. An example of such efforts can be found in projects such as "Artist-in-Residence" and "Work-in-Residence", where the community provides the option of temporary residence to longer term visitors. This balanced alternative to the conventional choice between sightseeing and permanent residence characterizes the Kamiyama-cho initiative and has attracted those pursuing creative lifestyles, enhanced local communication, and created a cycle of population growth.

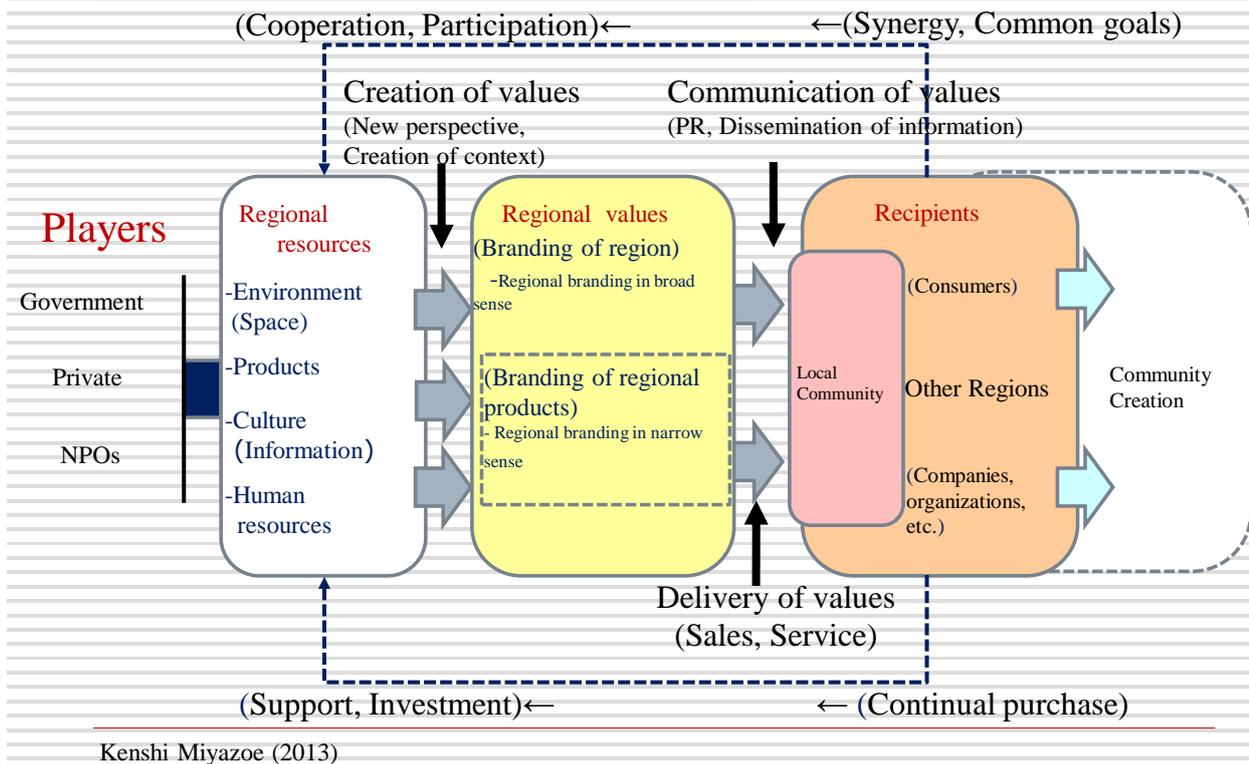
### **What this new view of regional vitalization requires**

Regional vitalization from the branding perspective requires a coordinator who sees the projects and

activities in the big picture and can facilitate interactions among leaders from the private sector, municipal government and NPOs.

A local government today should assume the new role of drawing up a medium/long-term grand design from a marketing perspective, based on which it should revisit local resources such as schools, libraries, gyms, public housing, parks, roads, bridges and infrastructures across organizational barriers and comprehensively coordinate value-adding plans, actions and management.

## Marketing Model for Regional Vitalization



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