

# A Structure of Co-creation in an Open Source Ecosystem: A Case Study of Eclipse

Kazunori Mizushima

School of Knowledge Science,  
Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology

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The word Ecosystem has high visibility in the media nowadays. In this background, success in the ecosystem comes to mean success in business. In a word, people who not only provide products and services but also build an ecosystem around them with stake-holders can lead their business to success by using a market creation and the penetration power of the ecosystem.

In this sense, the stake-holders who participate in the ecosystem share a common destiny. The ecosystem as the common destiny develops competition with other outside ecosystems. Inside of the ecosystem, participants compete and cooperate with each other simultaneously. Inside and outside of the ecosystem, complex relationships are constructed among participants.

On the other hand, it has been a long time since a software development activity called “open source” was widely noticed in the software industry. In an open source, a source code that is software intellectual property must be opened to the public and developers all over the world develop software by cooperating with each other. Originally, an open source activity started spontaneously based on researchers’ and developers’ volunteer

works. However, people has realized the power of open source that can build functions and qualities developed by volunteer developers equal to those of a business product and create new business opportunities since the success of Linux. It gathers momentum to leverage the open source community.

Eclipse, which this research targets, constructs an ecosystem by using the power of open source software. An aim of this research is to clarify the structure of co-creation in an open source ecosystem by investigating Eclipse as a case study. To investigate an essential co-creation structure of the Eclipse ecosystem, the approach of this research is to look into the historical background, architecture of Eclipse and Eclipse Foundation which is supporting venders, users and other participants of the ecosystem. Present research analyzes an economical community that already exists as an ecosystem, and don't clarify the co-creation structure.

The historical background is clarified by analyst's reports and articles in the software industry in 2001, which is the year Eclipse was born. Regarding the architecture, it is investigated by the structure of Eclipse as software, the license, the bylaw and the services that the foundation provides. To clarify the most important factor in the ecosystem, some venders who are members of the Eclipse ecosystem were directly interviewed about their motivation. Lastly this research proposes a co-creation process model of the open source ecosystem.

A theoretical implication of this research will be to clarify the key factor of open source ecosystem and propose the co-creation process model.

Regarding business implications, the result of this research will suggest to venders who try to build or participate in an ecosystem to become successful in which the importance of the business ecosystem increases.