From “Age-friendly” Cities to “Aging-friendly” Cities: Japanese Experience

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Japan is the **most rapidly aging country in the world**

**Age Ratio (people 65+ vs. total population)**

![Graph showing age ratio across different countries with Japan at 23% as of 2010.]

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Japan is on “The Frontier of Challenges” in Aging Societies
Japan is “Living Laboratory” in terms of aging society

You can imagine a future of your country
Age-friendly
= friendly (or comfortable)
for a specific age group

In many cases,
Age-friendly is equal to
elder-friendly or senior-friendly
Example of Age-friendly Cities
Sun City (Arizona, USA)
Example of Age-friendly Cities
Sun City (Arizona, USA)

All residents are over 60
Example of Age-friendly Communities
Senior Home (Japan)
Increase of senior homes in Japan

Number of Nursing Homes in Japan by year

NTT DoCoMo / Raku-Raku Phone
First “Age-friendly” cell phone in the world

楽楽携帯電話
Best-selling products

Over 17 million units as of Sep.2010
What are “Age-friendly” features?

The things that Raku Raku phone has continued to be loyal to.
Commitment & thought to allow use by everyone

**Easy videophone**
When using the videophone, even if the user is distanced from the handset their status can be accurately depicted by the image.

- Three buttons enabling transmission by only one-touch
  Transmission can be performed by one-touch to those who the user calls frequently.
- Round-shaped receiving/sending buttons
  Easy differentiation is enabled by the adoption of round-shaped buttons.

**Easy voice mail**
Even if text is not input, mail can be sent by voice.

**Separate ring tones**
Distinction of the receiver by the ring tone is enabled as different ring tones can be set for each Group.

**Soft sloping design**
The “Soft sloping design” takes ease of button pushing and ease of handset gripping into sufficient consideration.

**Voice calling functions**
- Address book
- Functions

1. See the caller
2. Use the phone
3. Use mail
4. Shoot/view photos/video

**Read aloud function**
- Reads aloud each input letter
- Supports real voice cadence
- Reads aloud the whole menu
- Reads aloud i-mode

**A very visible white/black reversible menu and handset color**
Creation of a menu and handset body color of good contrast and high visibility.

**A camera button with an easily distinguishable location**
The camera button has been designed on the side of the handset at a protruding level to enable easy distinction.

**Protrusion placed “above the Return button”**
A small protrusion has been designed to enable easy verification of the position of the button.
Why did older people choose Raku-Raku Phone?

High level of satisfaction regarding “Ease of use”

Satisfaction rating of all FOMA Raku Raku phone models:

- Text size: 91.7%
- Operational support: 90.9%
- Display: 90.0%
- Text input: 80.3%
- Handset design: 74.0%
- Menu format: 72.1%
- Key operation: 68.9%
- Camera function: 60.4%
- One-touch dialing: 100.0%
The demand for Raku-Raku Phone in early stage model

- Larger text size
- Clearer sound
- Larger button size
However, Age-friendly has a challenge

Friendly for a specific age group is not always friendly for other specific age group
Example of Challenge of Age-friendly Communities
Tama New Town (Tokyo, Japan)
Example of Challenge of Age-friendly Communities
Tama New Town (Tokyo, Japan)
Who was the target of Tama New Town when it was developed in 1970’s?

Baby Boomers!
Demography of Japan 2000

Baby Boomers (Born from 1947 to 1949)

Baby Boomers were 20’s when TNT was developed
Population structure of Tama New Town now

Population

Age

0~19
20~39
40~59
60+

Population
Limitation of Age-friendly Cities

- Most optimum for a specific age group at a specific time
- **Not** optimum for a specific age group at a different time
Why?

1. Individuals and societies are *aging as the time goes by*

2. Aging of the Individuals and societies will *change their nature*

3. This change of nature will *change the demands* of individuals and societies
“Aging-friendly” cities must be adaptive to the change of demands

1. Physical changes due to aging

2. Changes in each individual’s life stage

3. Changes in the life stage of their family

4. Changes in their tastes based on their generation

5. Change in the time or fashion

Demands of Individuals Societies
Example of Aging-friendly City

Yukarigaoka (Sakura, Chiba)
Yukarigaoka (Yukari’s Hill)

1. Location: Sakura, Chiba (near Narita Airport)
2. Development was started since 1971
3. Total area: 245 ha
4. Total population: 17,000
5. Number of households: 6,000
6. Developer: Yamaman Corporation
Comprehensive zoning from the beginning of the development

1. Transportation system
2. Residential Zone
3. Commercial Zone
4. Natural Environment Zone
5. Elderly Facilities Zone
Transportation system

1. Railway stations are located within 10 minutes from all residences

2. The developer constructed the railway and donated to Sakura City
Feature of “Aging-friendly” community

1. From child-raising generation to elderly generation
2. Short-distance multi-generational family living
3. Function of finding out resident's demands
4. Relocation system for the senior residents
   I. Developer buys a resident’s house by 100% of cost at the point of buying
   II. Developer sells the renovated house to the younger generation with lower price than market
5. Introducing electric bus transportation system throughout the residential zone
Electric Bus can stop at any locations if they are on the route
Population structure
Yukarigaoka vs. Tama New Town

- 60+
- 40~59
- 20~39
- 0~19

Yukari-ga-oka vs. Tama New Town

0 5000 10000 15000 20000 25000 30000
Lesson learned: Experience from Aging-friendly City

1. City is convenient to live from child-raising generation to elderly generation

2. Short-distance multi-generational family living can be affordable

3. Residents can choose optimum houses as they age with affordable prices

4. All generations can move among the city by public transportation
“Age-friendly” Cities vs. “Aging-friendly” Cities

“Aging-friendly” cities must be adaptive.
Thank you!

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