

PCST in the knowledge based society: bringing global and local to interact in the virtual dimension

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As for most activities worldwide involving communication processes, organizations in charge of developing processes of Public Communication of Science and Technology (PCST) have to confront the consequences of globalization and the arrival of *virtual dimension* with the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Science, although developed locally, is global and in order to be efficient, its mediation need to be done locally taking into account cultural backgrounds. For surviving in this new context, PCST organizations may take advantage of local specificity and scientific human resources to propose specific ways and topics for communicating within the publics at a global level. The *interaction inherent to virtual dimension* makes possible that people of different cultural and knowledge backgrounds (physically dispersed) create bonds (virtual concentration) around common shared interests, as scientific topics and issues. Are shared and common interests enough for communicating between PCST actors? Information and Communication Technologies open up various possibilities allowing *local* (cultures) to appropriate *global* (science) for its own profit. How far will be PCST processes determined by ICT? It will depend, on PCST actors as 'clickers': they are the ones who give birth and maintain alive the virtual dimension.

To explore these changes and challenges, this communication will present some of the results of an international study about web sites of science museums and centers developed by the Labcis within the European consortium ISCOM (Improving Science Communication for Science Museums and Centers) animated by ECSITE (European Collaborative for Science, Innovation and Technological Exhibitions).