The future of the Internet: Schools of thought

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Presentation to the Research: Informing policy; supporting practice Conference

25 November 2005
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  • Legalco
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University Partners

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- Swinburne University of Technology
- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
- University of Melbourne
- University of Adelaide
- Griffith University
- University of Tasmania
2010: Research Questions

- What might the Internet be like in 2010?
- What positions do different people and institutional interests have about the future of the Internet?
- What are the possible outcomes for end users towards 2010?
Smart Internet 2010: Methodology

• Qualitative research - not statistical forecasting
• Not scenario construction- alternative or preferred
• Schools of Thought - i.e., a shared world view that distils bodies of expert opinion around complex subject matter within a field, and provides common thinking
• Involves rich insights of technologists, academics, journalists, entrepreneurs, policy makers, investors
Interviews

- Paul Boustead (DICE project, Smart Internet Technology CRC)
- Danah Boyd (University of California Berkeley, Social Networks researcher)
- Stowe Boyd (Corante Business Intelligence)
- Charles Britton (Senior Policy Officer, Australian Consumers Association)
- Roy Christopher (FrontwheelDrive.com)
- Tom Dawkins (Vibewire.net and ElectionTracker.net founder)
- Rachael Dixon (Massive Interactive)
- Cory Doctorow (Electronic Frontier Foundation)
- Mark Finn (Swinburne University of Technology)
Interviews

- Brian Fitzgerald (Queensland University of Technology, Head of Law School)
- Terry Flew (Queensland University of Technology)
- Robert Freiden (Pennsylvania State University)
- Martin Gibbs (Smart Internet Technology CRC)
- Cecily Gibson (Senior Action Group Eastern Shore)
- Kas Kalba (Kalba International)
- James A. Larson (Intel Corporation, W3C Voice Browser Working Group)
- Olof Lundberg (Former CEO Inmarsat and ICO)
- Richard Metzger (The Disinformation Company)
Interviews

• Kathy Mueller (University of Melbourne, Television Producer)
• Ernie Newman (Chairman International Telecommunications Users Group)
• Mark Pesce (AFTRS, VRML co-creator)
• Mark Poster (University of California)
• Howard Rheingold (US author & critic)
• Evelyn Richardson (Executive Director, Game Development Association of Australia)
• David Rooney (University of Queensland, ACRO)
• Douglas Rushkoff (New York University)
• Katie Salen (Parsons School of Design, GameLab)
• Christine Satchell (RMIT, Smart Internet Technology CRC)
Interviews

- Barry Saunders (IndyMedia, NewsLab)
- Stewart Smith (Linux Users Group of Australia)
- Richard Stallman (Free Software Foundation)
- Paul Turner (University of Tasmania, Smart Internet Technology CRC)
- Peter Waters (Gilbert and Tobin)
- Marcus Westbury (This Is Not Art founder, NextWave Festival)
- Eric Zimmerman (GameLab, International Game Developers Association)
- Con Zymaris (Open Source Industry Australia)
Four Schools of Thought

1) Adaptive User Environment
2) Not the Smart Internet
3) Rich Media
4) Chaos Rules
2010 Outcomes (1)

• In the year 2000 the Internet was seen as ushering in major business and social changes as the ‘father of all disruptions’ during the dot.com boom. Debates have now shifted from the Internet society to the Internet in society for 2010.

• Future an era of user-led innovation – unexpected ‘killer apps’ ie., Google, SMS, mail – will progress.

• The Internet by 2010 is likely to emerge as a more user friendly, more accessible, indispensable lifestyle communications tool.
2010 Outcomes (2)

• The user paradigm will shift away from people accessing professionally produced content to using the Internet as a platform for personal connectedness. Hence the context, rather than the content, takes on new significance.

• Important changes in the market place will continue to be driven by users’ preferences and create structural institutional disruption i.e., peer-to-peer services (music and film), Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), dis-intermediation (travel) and re-intermediation (financial services).

• We need ‘Internet for all’ policies – but a long way to go and will be beyond 2010.
Blogs, Wikis and Social Software

• A range of emerging Internet innovations are empowering users to collaborate, share information and meet up offline to engage in **collective action**.

• Groupware such as online **social networking** applications, **blogs** (Web diaries) and **wikis** (group-edited Web pages) have attracted millions of global users leading to the emergence of novel services that enable **ongoing user participation**.
MySpace.com

Rupert Murdoch is in your extended network

Rupert Murdoch's Latest Blog Entry [Subscribe to this Blog]
I own, Fox News... is 'outfoxed' right or wrong? (view more)
How do you feel about me buying MySpace? (view more)
Republicanism has become a cult. (view more)
I own own MySpace.com, what's next? (view more)

[View All Blog Entries]

Rupert Murdoch's Blurb
About me:
I just bought MySpace.com, soon I will own the rest of the internet.
I aspire to become the most powerful man in the world. I promote the efforts and conjunction between right wing conservatism and government. I encourage my television and radio stations to become Republican soapboxes.

There are many important benefits to fascism.
John Quiggin’s Blog

Bogus quote yet again

November 11th, 2005

Via Jennifer Manhary, I found this recoding of the infamous doctored Schneider quote, this time by Frank Furedi who writes in the Times Higher Education Supplement.

Appeals to a “greater truth” are also prominent in debates about the environment. It is claimed that problems such as global warming are so important that a campaign of fear is justified. Stephen Schneider, a climatologist at Stanford University, justified the distortion of evidence in the following terms: “Because we are not just scientists but human beings... as well... we need to capture the public imagination.” He added that “we have to offer up scary scenarios, make simplified statements and make little mention of any doubts that we have”.

Schneider’s statement was originally quoted in an article in Discover magazine (not available online as far as I can tell). Reading it in full...
Wikipedia
Real-time Social Infrastructure

• The active knowledge transfer taking place over the ‘Live Web’ is the foundation for a new type of real-time social infrastructure.

• Early adopters have begun a move away from traditional media sources to rely on trusted sources in their network of friends, family and fellow travellers for reviews, feedback, and advice about the latest product, service, or political party.

• Amazon, Epinions, Trip Advisor, Whirlpool, PhoneChoice, InfoChoice, MoveOn, Meetup.
Whirlpool

Find a broadband plan:
For the most accurate search, enter your landline telephone number:

[Input fields]

OK

For a generalized ISP search, select your state from the map:

Broadband News

Telstra announces Next-Gen Network
Telstra announced its Next-Gen Network today, with plans to provide 12Mbps ADSL2+ to four major cities.
whirlpool.net.au - 15 Nov 2005

Telstra to cut 12,000 jobs
Telstra will axe up to 12,000 jobs over the next five years, chief executive Eliot Head told analysts in Sydney today.
Australian IT - 15 Nov 2005

Discussions

Choosing an ISP
6 mins ago, Broadband Minimum Contract
6 mins ago, AAPT or Optus
59 mins ago, need a very reliable ISP

DSL General
39 mins ago, Eircom
Today, added from Ireland in a couple of weeks?
Today, ADSL Excuses, Bring 'em on.

Statistics

246 ISPs listed in detail
4009 plans in our database

Our members use:
01 Telstra
02 Optus
03 Telstra Broadband
04 DSL Inferno
05 Telstra Broadband
PhoneChoice

Welcome To PhoneChoice

PhoneChoice is Australia's most established and comprehensive site for all your telecommunications needs. You will find independent, unbiased advice and solutions.

- **Mobile:**
  Go here for all your information on mobile plans, mobile phones, dealers, network coverage and repairs.

- **Fixed Line:**
  Go here for all your information on local, international and national call rates and plans.

- **Broadband:**
  Find the broadband plan that's right for you here.

- **VoIP:**
  Find out the facts behind the hype on making voice calls over the internet.

Dated 25 November 2005
The Mobile Internet and Digital Lifestyles

- The growth of ‘texting’ and next generation mobile phones has created the space for a range of social practices to occur beyond the place-boundness of the home, office or school.

- Mobile digital lifestyles will create new forms of social interaction as fluid, network-enabled swarms of users exploit technology to coordinate group action, collaborate, create and exchange content at an unprecedented scale and speed.

- Key mobile Internet services will include location-based games, moblogging, peer-to-peer applications and content delivery.

Social Networks

• By incorporating location-based technologies users will be able to determine the proximity of friends, seamlessly exchange pictures, music and movies through mobile blogs and engage in ‘peercasting’ using novel combinations of these networked multimedia.

• The power of Social Networks enables users to embrace the collective intelligence of their surrounding social environment. By 2010 these empowered consumers will form ad-hoc lobbies with formidable power to influence the fate of brands, companies or products that fail to deliver value, quality and maintain ethical standards.

• Rheingold’s Smart Mobs: Early indicators include Flash Mobs, political mobilisation, Kryptonite Bike Lock video.
The Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Internet

- A range of simple Do-It-Yourself (DIY) media technologies have given any user with access the ability to become a producer in a variety of social fields.
- This has spawned an entirely new understanding of authorship and content production in film (machinima), games (player-producers), journalism (blogs), radio (podcasting), music (mash-ups) and knowledge production (Wikipedia).
- Raises debates over the Innovation Commons.
The Open Source Movement

- Free and Open Source Software provides no-cost alternatives to proprietary software.
- Beginning to make inroads into the desktop market.
- Success attributed to its vendor independence, cost benefits, security, and reliability.
- Firefox web browser is a major turning point.
- Software includes Open Office, Linux and Red Hat.
Creative Commons

- Lessig’s Creative Commons movement provides the legal and cultural mechanisms to expand the Open Source model beyond software, and provides opportunities for content producers to gain control over the use of their products in a variety of contexts.

- Creative Commons type initiatives could catalyse the birth of a parallel creative economy. This gives producers the ability to engage directly with each other’s material, and their audience, leading to new forms of collaboration and the development of innovative cultural products.

- Punitive IP and copyright regime threatens innovation.
The Future of Innovation

- **Open Source, DIY media, ‘remix culture’, Social Networking and p2p** will disrupt more areas of social life as users self-organise to form “communities of practice” and “knowledge collectives”.

- These highly adaptive swarms have potential to force media and entertainment monopolies to re-evaluate value creation, influence politics through blogs and Smart Mobs (Rheingold), impact business through boycotts and develop **new modes of user-led innovation** through what Benkler describes as 'commons-based peer production’.
Digital Homes

- Rich Media school of thought
- Digital Hollywood’s preferred vision
- New Broadband-enabled entertainment console (Microsoft Xbox 360 and Sony PlayStation 3)
  - ‘Always connected, always personalized, and always in high-definition’ (Microsoft, GDCA, 2005)
- Broader gamer demographics than ‘youthful’ stereotype
Digital Games Global Context

- Global industry revenues of $US30 billion annually
- Four major markets:
  - Arcade, PC (IBM compatible, Apple), Handhelds Nintendo, Sony, mobiles) and Console (Microsoft Xbox and Sony PlayStation)
  - Two tiers: game publishers and developers
- *Doom 3* sold 300,000 units in first week (August 2004)
- Sony’s *EverQuest*: Massively Multiplayer Online Games
- Popularity of mobile games and Digital Lifestyle products
New Games Console Platforms

- Sony PSP (September 2005)
- Microsoft Xbox 360 (Late 2005: Europe, Japan, Nth. America)
- Sony PlayStation 3 (2006)

- Support for Digital Media and High-Definition Games
- Wireless support (WLAN) and integration
- Adaptive User Environments insights for interfaces
- Integration of e-commerce and Player-Producer communities
- Opportunities to monetise new revenue streams
Australian Industry Context

- Generated $A100 million in exports (2002)
- Game Developers’ Association forecasts:
  - $A500 million (2005) and $A1 billion (2010)
  - Significant potential for jobs growth in near-term
  - Potential for Digital Media/Games clusters
    - Victoria’s GamePlan (Multimedia Victoria)
    - QUT’s Creative Industries program

Australian firms have won international contracts for game development (Auran, Atari Melbourne House)
Digital Games and Social Networks

• Underpins the growth of RPG and MMRPGs

  *Doom* pioneered user-created levels (‘mods’)

• The ‘cultural infrastructure’ for MMOGs (Sony)

  • South Korea’s *Counter-Strike* became one of the most highly successful games due to player communities

• Innovative designers in player communities are often hired by game publishers/developers

• Many MMOGs feature ‘clans’ of regular players

• ‘Virtual economies’ are an unforeseen effect
Digital Games: Regulatory Issues

- Videogame violence is ‘cyclical’ regulatory issue
- Influenced by media sound-bites and policymaker agendas
- Often framed using the ‘Chaos Rules’ school of thought
- OFLC has failed to adopt an ‘R’ rating for digital games
- Players avoid national regulations via downloads
- ‘Player-Producers’ as innovators and IP creators
- Genre-inclusive Design and Digital Culture as solutions
Innovation Lessons

- Forward-looking, creative, and execution-oriented
- The ‘Play Ethic’ as central to design and innovation
- Digital Culture as key to vibrant economy
- Shift from ‘information’ to ‘conceptual’ age (Daniel Pink)
- Siva Vaidhyanathan’s *Anarchist in the Library* (2004): online battles have real-world implications, legal rules, social norms
- Sanjiv Augustine’s *Managing Agile Projects* (2005)
- David Allen’s *Getting Things Done* (2003) and ‘life-hacking’ movement (‘Meet the Life-hackers’, *NYT*, 16 October 2005)
Access to the Report

- Officially launched by the Hon. Senator Helen Coonan, Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts on 1\textsuperscript{st} September 2005.

- 50,000 word report available at:

  \url{http://www.smartinternet.com.au}