E-Democracy Design:
Citizen Consultation on Contentious Issues
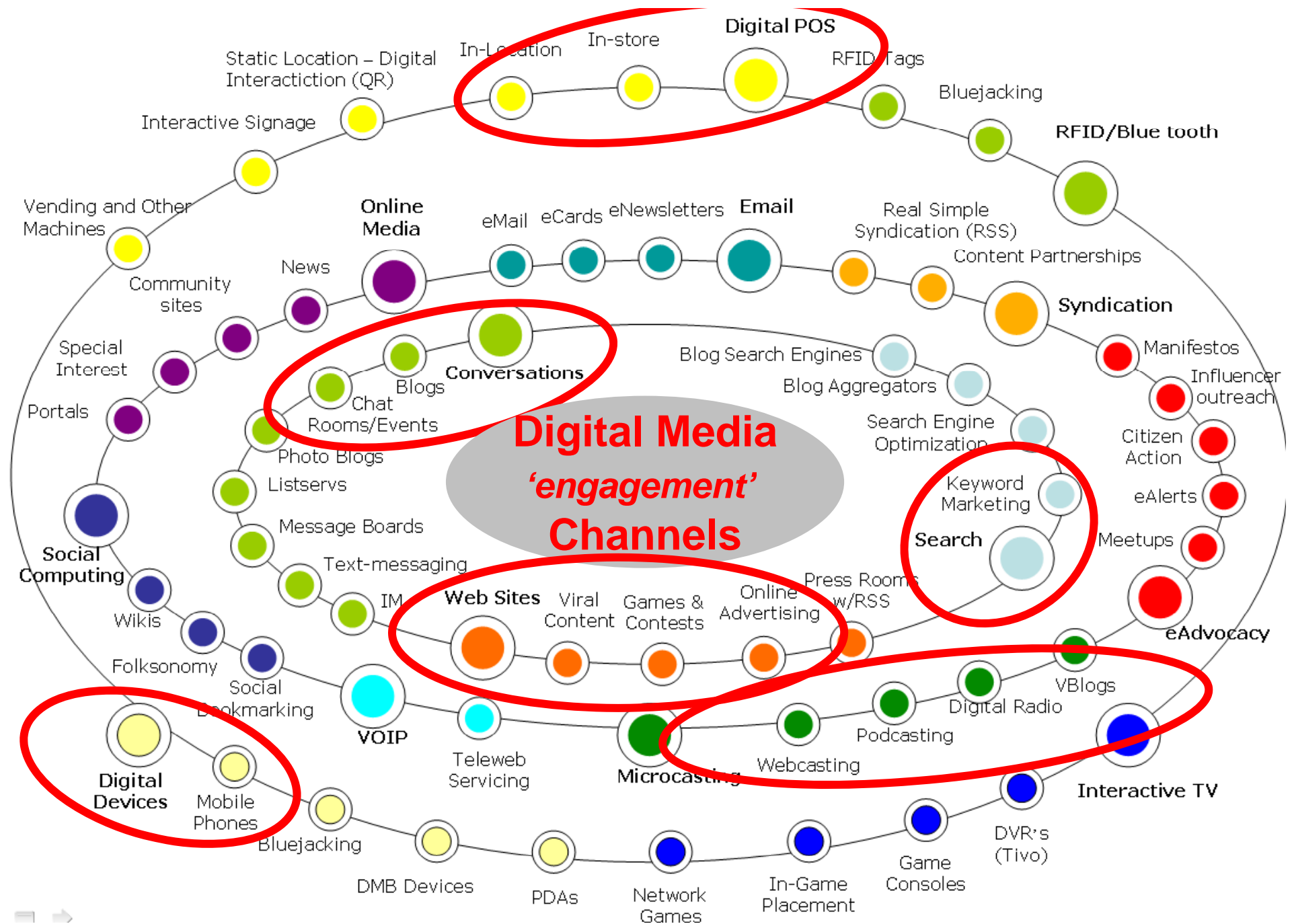

Discipline of Media
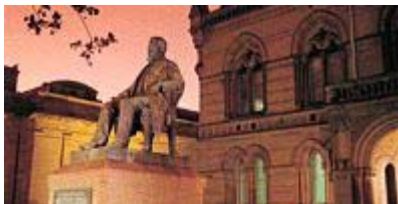
THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

M. Griffiths
EDEM, WU, Vienna, September 7-8, 2009

overview

- New means of participation: theories and claims

- Digital Economy Blog, Australia

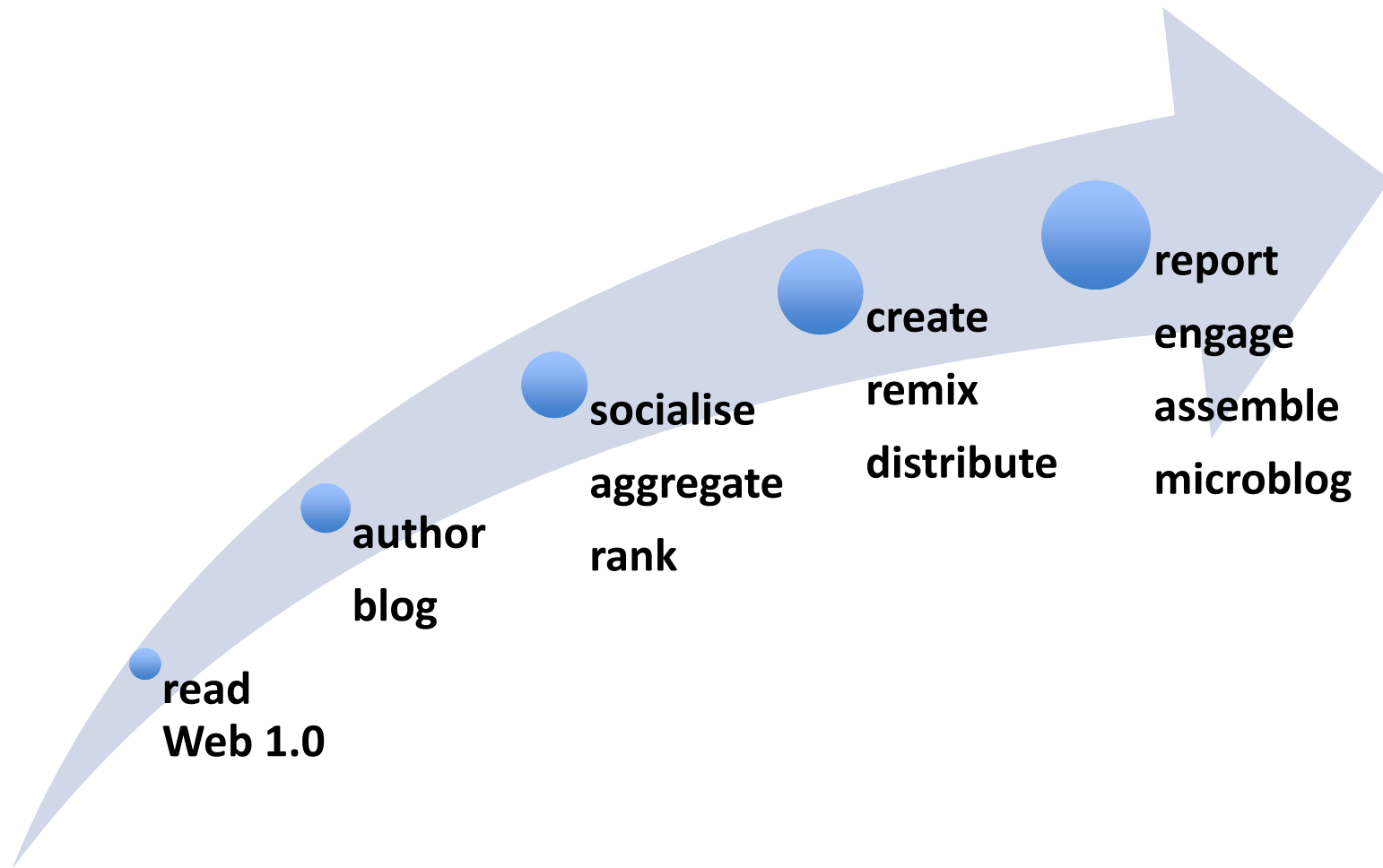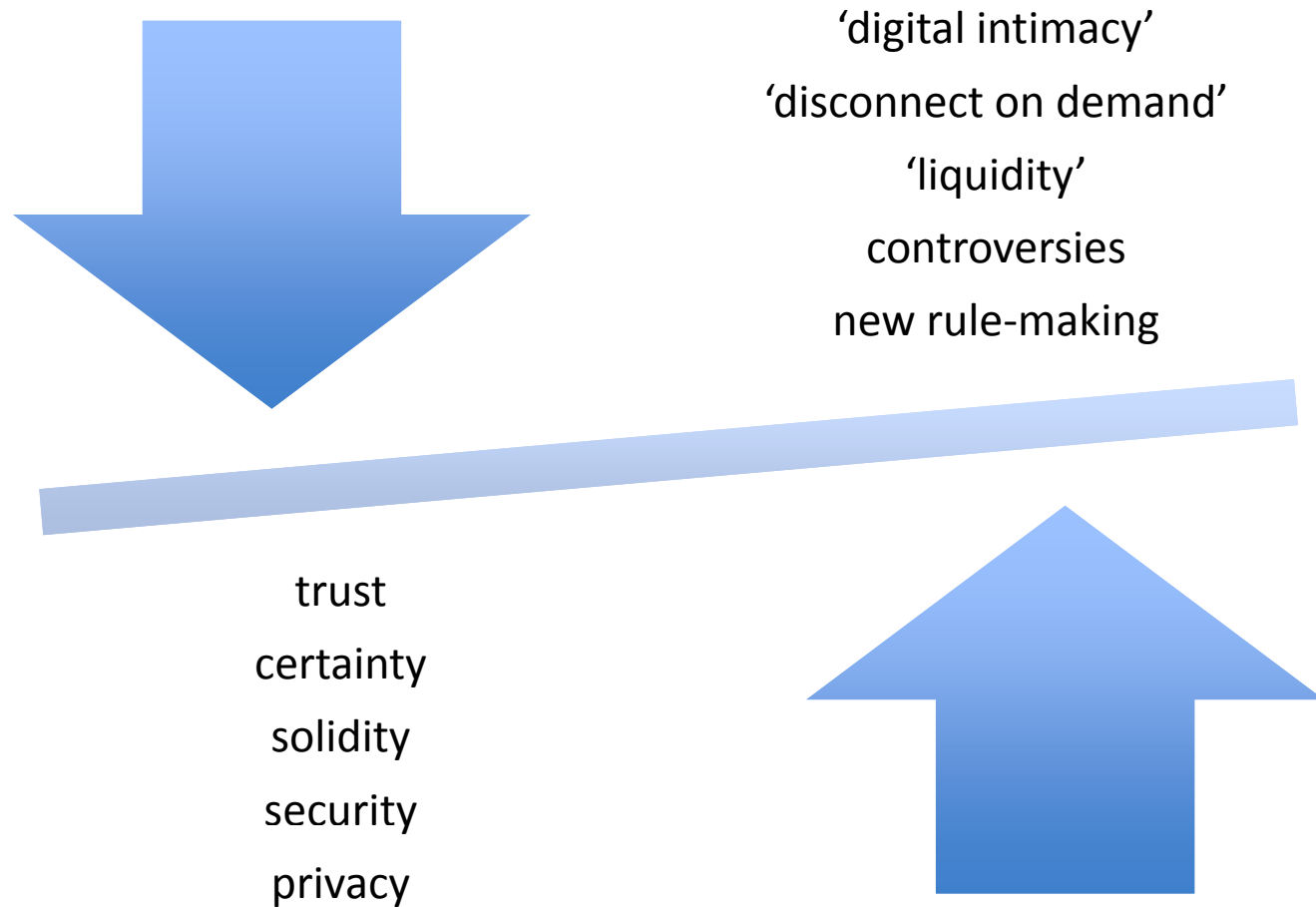- Designing for eDemocracy : *Digital Images of the Young: Space for Debate*

Digital POS

In-Location   In-store   Digital POS   RFID Tags   Bluejacking

Static Location – Digital Interaction (QR)   RFID/Blue tooth

Interactive Signage

Online Media   eMail   eCards   eNewsletters   Email   Real Simple Syndication (RSS)   Content Partnerships

Vending and Other Machines   Syndication

Community sites   News   Conversations   Blog Search Engines   Manifestos

Special Interest   Blogs   Blog Aggregators   Influencer outreach

Portals   Chat Rooms/Events   Digital Media 'engagement' Channels   Search Engine Optimization   Citizen Action

Photo Blogs   Keyword Marketing   eAlerts

Social Computing   Listservs   Search   Meetups

Message Boards   Web Sites   Viral Content   Games & Contests   Online Advertising   Press Room w/RSS   eAdvocacy

Wikis   Text-messaging   VBlogs

Folksonomy   IM   Digital Radio

Social Bookmarking   VOIP   Teleweb Servicing   Microcasting   Webcasting   Podcasting   Interactive TV

Digital Devices   Mobile Phones   Bluejacking   DMB Devices   PDAs   Network Games   In-Game Placement   Game Consoles   DVR's (Tivo)

Source : Anthony Coles. Adelaide

social media, change and eDemocracy

WEB 2.0

- journalism/new media
- political and social sciences
- business and the corporate world

Web 2.0 user literacies in interactivity, sociability and engagement

read
Web 1.0

author
blog

socialise
aggregate
rank

create
remix
distribute

report
engage
assemble
microblog

In turn, connective power creates different kinds of relationships, and communities

'digital intimacy'

'disconnect on demand'

'liquidity'

controversies

new rule-making

trust

certainty

solidity

security

privacy

'apprentices' in digital culture

We are still learning what it is like to operate within a knowledge culture. We are still debating and resolving the core principles that will define our interactions with each other. Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 249

citizen journalism/blogging – as a part of the democratic landscape

- 'We, the Media' (Dan Gillmour, 2004) - the active role citizens take in reportage whether trained as a journalist or not

- Roles include : 'media watchdog, newsmaker, story breaker' (Maguire 329); 'columnist, reporter, analyst, publisher' (Lascia, 2002, 4)

- One of the greatest by-products of citizen journalism is a sense of civic involvement for people who have felt left out of their own media and politics (Glaser, qtd in Maquire, 329)

- ….a little like painting in oil – you try out a shade of green, and if you don't like it, you just paint right over it, and make it blue. Or orange. Or whatever. Everything on the internet is instant, up-to-the minute, constantly changing and rearranging' (Kenneth Lerer, qtd in Huffington, xi)

US blogs making an impact
(comments adapted from practitioner, Adriana Huffington)

- boingboing.net (launched 2000, geek-oriented wonderful things)

- crooksandliars.com (relentless spin watchdog)

- dailykos.com* (blog epicentre, Democratic P central)

- deadlinehollywooddaily.com (unapologetic, take-no-prisoners in world of infotainment)

- ecofabulous.com ('sustainable meets sexy')

- pyjamasmedia.com/instapundit (libertarian, Blog Father)

- wonkette.com* (funny, intelligent profane commenator on Beltway politics)

Australian political examples

- Larvatus Prodeo
- John Quiggan*
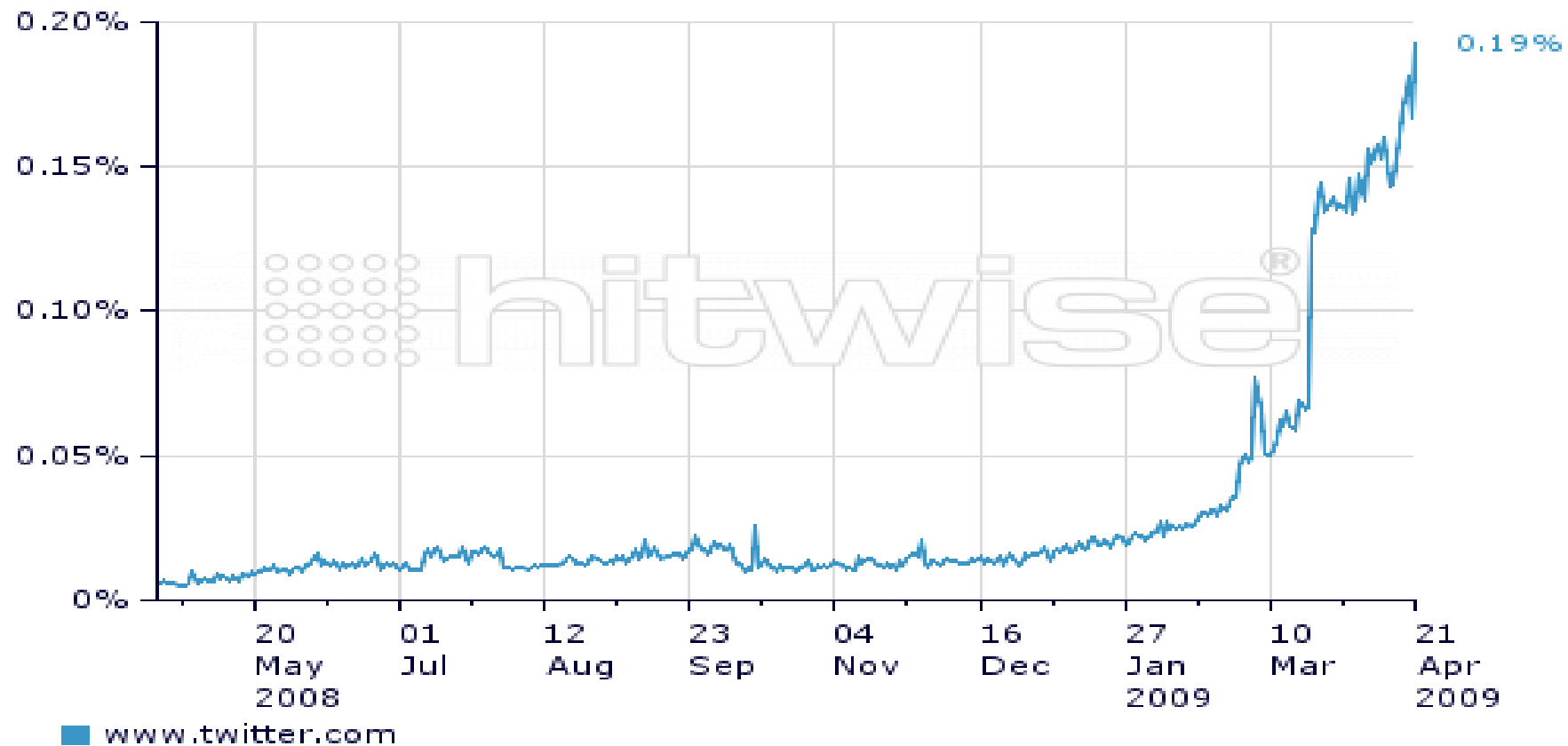- Bartlett's Blog
- Tim Blair
- http://blogs.crikey.com.au/firstblog/

Twitter Daily Traffic Growth YTD 2009
Australia · New Zealand · Hong Kong · Singapore · USA · UK
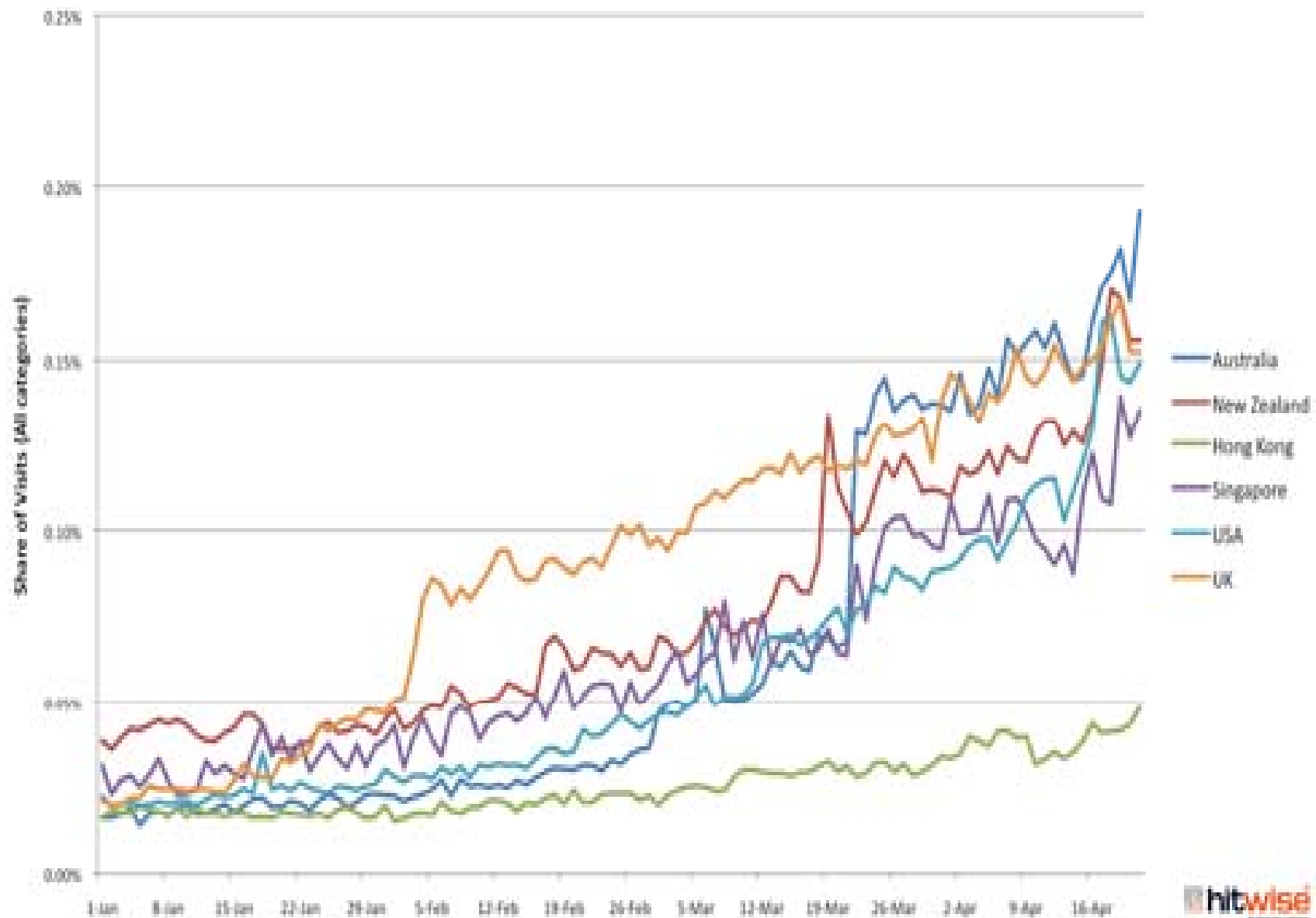
Twitter is an online winner?

Twitter Growth Trend – 12 months to 21/04/2009

0.19%

■ www.twitter.com

Daily market share in 'All Categories', measured by visits, based on Australian usage.
Created: 24/04/2009. © Copyright 1998-2009 Hitwise Pty. Ltd.

hitwise®
An Experian company

Flickr

- 4 billion queries per day
- 470 million photos in 4 and 5 sizes
- Over 400,000 photos added per day.

So, Hindman (*The Myth of Digital Democracy*) argues that: online winners already take all

1 _

‘Power-law patterns in the link structure of the web channel users to heavily linked sites’ ie, there is an online concentration which works against diversity and new start-ups.

2 _ ‘Yet where the Internet has failed to live up to its billing has to do with the most direct kind of political voice. If we consider the ability of ordinary citizens to write things that other people will see, the internet has fallen far short of the claims that continue to be made about it. It may be easy to speak in cyberspace but it remains difficult to be heard.’

the power/law of the web

What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention, and a need to allocate that attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it.

Herbert A Simon, *Computers, Communications, and the Public Interest* (1971), qtd in Matthew Hindman's *The Myth of Digital Democracy* (2009) 82.

The Rudd government's initiative

- http://www.dbcde.gov.au/communications_for_business/industry_development/digital_economy/future_directions_blog

- ...draws flack from everywhere –*a design issue of selected themes and moderation?*

- citizen bloggers go off topic – *a democratic literacy/argumentation issue?*

- immediate public concerns migrate across blogs – *the impact of moral panic after the Henson exhibit? Activism? Trolling?*

Digital Economy (E-Gov) Blog ：8-24 Dec, 2008
Hijack or feedback?

BLOG THEMES	TOTAL BLOGS (on topic)
1. Civil & confident online society *	502 (479)
2. Measuring success *	17 (3)
3. Digital skills *	21 (7)
4. The environment *	22 (11)
5. Regulatory framework *	35 (27)
6. Open access *	84 (72)
7. Digital economy benefit	288 (108)
8. We hear you…*	180 (180)

notable points

Across all 8 blog themes:

- – 206 posts were published on children and pornography

- – 449 on the related issues of the filter, and P2P

What can be learnt?

- Flexibility of approach to bloggers' key concerns was a missing element

- 'Blog' format was unworkable for many-to-many formal online discussion – carries too much 'genre baggage' with it.

- Development of democratic literacies requires shared protocols and information

- Controversial topics need different kinds of online deliberative space

3. *Digital Images of the Young: Space for Debate*

M.Griffiths and R.Cover

RESEARCH QUESTION

What knowledge, protocols and online formats would better enable a civil and confident online policy debate between citizens on this controversial topic?

Digital Images of the Young: Space for Debate

DATA COLLECTION: Qualitative Methodology

- tracing links between Australian media coverage of photographic practices involving children, and panics about digital distribution

- identifying community attitudes to representations of children and youth from the industry, art galleries, family photography, online media, personal online repositories

- on the usefulness to citizens of the recourse to the concept of the 'reasonable adult' when determining the status of an image.

Digital Images of the Young: Space for Debate

'citizens as partners'

DESIGN IDEAS

- Research archives
- Labs : 'thinking spaces'
- Multimedia 'expert knowledge' database
- Citizen juries deliberating on single issues: 'the bathshot', 'sxting'
- Newsfeeds/links to external sites
- Moderated videotaped trial debates
- Moderated online discussions
- Citizen draft policy wiki
- Online summaries

Thanks for listening, any questions?

mary.griffiths@adelaide.edu.au

Please leave me your details, or get in touch with after the conference if you or others use

WEB 2.0 COLLABORATIVE TOOLS in your ORGANISATION

and you would be willing to participate in a current research project