

## Designing For a Civil Information Society

David Wilcox [david@partnerships.org.uk](mailto:david@partnerships.org.uk)  
 & Dave Greenop [david.greenop@agora-futures.co.uk](mailto:david.greenop@agora-futures.co.uk)  
 Presentation for meeting at Leeds Metropolitan University School of  
 Information Management Feb 6 2004  
 May be used for nonprofit purposes with attribution and reference to  
[http://partnerships.typepad.com/civic/2004/02/designing\\_for\\_c.html](http://partnerships.typepad.com/civic/2004/02/designing_for_c.html)

## Points for discussion

- 'Civil', 'information', 'society'
- Where technology may be driving us
- Who wants to go there - reality checks
- Where we should focus social design work
- What sort of models we need
- What sort of design processes
- What big questions emerge

## 'Civil' 'information' 'society'

Information and communication for...

- Access to civil services
- Participatory democracy
- Work of community and volorgs
- Associations
- Campaigns
- .... and a multitude of other informal activities operating beside government, commerce, personal, family, social activity.

## On the ground...

What's it really like for....

- The volunteer Board member of a charity
- Local residents running a campaign
- Agencies trying for e-participation
- UK online centres going beyond courses
- Groups trying to create community presence - local or interest or practice

## Our two perspectives

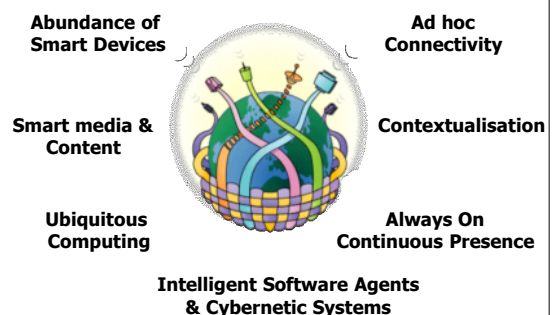
### People in 'places'

- Many conversations
- Formal, informal
- Many purposes
- 'Real' and 'virtual'
- Differing styles
- Different skills
- Hard to pin down

### Technology

- Moving fast
- Commercially driven
- ... plus
- E-government
- E-learning
- A bit of 'e-community'
- Little 'civil' design

## Technology Trends

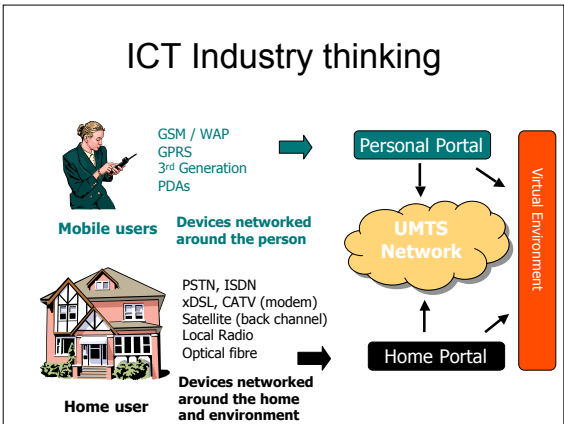


## The Smart Consumer Home

- Broadband connection
- Set-top boxes
- IDTV
- PC's, PDAs
- Games terminals
- Integrated entertainment centre
- Home networks
- Health monitors
- Robots
- Home Butler

## Smart City Planners

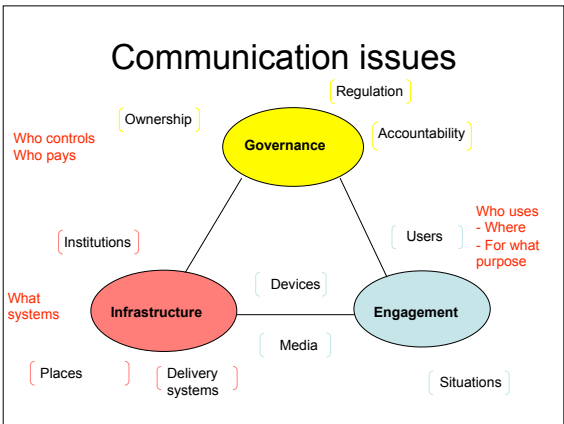
- Online city services
- Connected public places
- Transport & road management
- Citizen smart card
- Surveillance
- Environmental management
- Centralised city management



## Key issues

- How do people get the information they need, communicate, collaborate in many different situations
- What methods and devices do they use to do that - face-to-face, phone, print, ICTs
- What works best for whom, when, where
- Who controls what we can do

*Engagement, infrastructure, governance*



## Issues in practice....

- Should everyone have to use the Net for government services to cut costs?
- Who is in charge of the BBC?
- What media can users create?
- Do devices we use change our places?
- If so, who plans and controls?
- .... and what actually works?

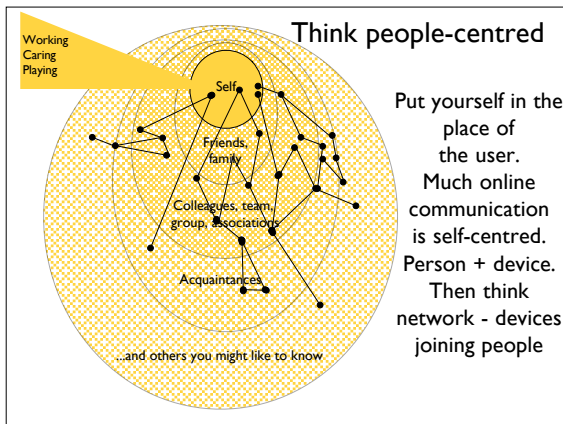
## Reality checks

- People's use depends on skills, preferences, motivation, situation
- Access is only one step on the ladder
- Few people use more than basic email and web
- Civil organisations are not well equipped
- Tech without culture change won't work

*Check: is it usable, authentic, rewarding*

## Design guidelines

- Design for who uses what, where - and who controls. Think systems.
- Mix technologies, old and new
- Take account of preferences.
- Understand how people organise - really.
- Recognise meaning involves trust
- .... and trust depends on relationships

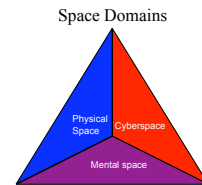


## Engineering Cyberspace

Cyberspace is simply the notional space where some kind of electronic transaction takes place. By this definition, a telephone call is simply a meeting in cyberspace.

Physical space is very diverse, but is entirely governed by laws of physics and as such is limited in extent and is highly geographical or time constrained

Mental space encompasses the fields of human knowledge and culture which are full of shared concepts and ideas



## From One Web to Many Webs

### Driven by:

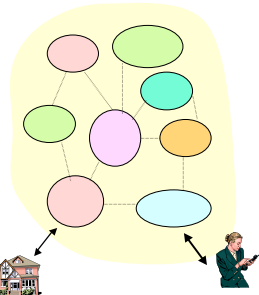
- ICT Industry Convergence
- Technology convergence
- Value networks
- Security & Trust
- Service Quality

### Consequences:

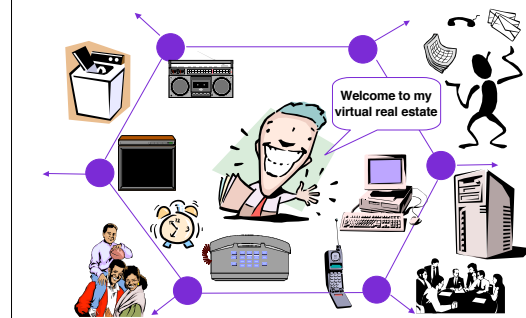
- Integrated portals
- Feature rich
- Personalised

### End Game

- Own Personal Network Place



## Personal Net



## Personal Net Model

Personal Net are a model for managing the collection of relationships we have with

- other people,
- the ecologies we live and work in,
- the businesses we deal with
- the objects and devices we employ
- the information we use and the knowledge that we generate.

This network of relationships is rich, dynamic and purposeful; it is also unique to each individual and provides a continuous personal network presence

## User Benefits of Personal Nets

User Needs	Technology design factors
Provides for control over one's life	Generates & implements applications across different devices with ease
Makes life easier	Synchronises information, communication & computing devices irrespective of source
Supports independence	Creates a personal and safe network space
Enhances a sense of belonging and safety	Community spaces for interactions with relatives, friends and work colleagues
Sustains and nourishes	Accesses media content unconstrained by commercial delivery channels
Is stress free and relaxing	Utilises effectively all available IT resources with minimal delay or wastage
Extends personal values such as caring and empathy	A personal platform that integrates services from different suppliers
Generates a sense of well-being	Not locked into one big service provider
Is stimulating and fun to use	Private information kept safe and access controlled