Digital citizens of the world

What makes a successful digital citizen? An international feel.

Towards tomorrow's successful digital citizens: A policy think tank.
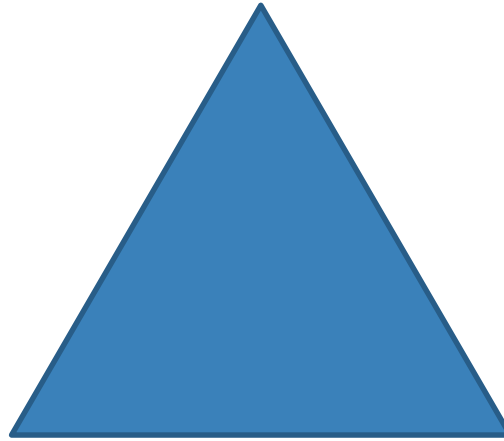**London Knowledge Lab, 24th Feb 2015**

Galactic Senate
(Star Wars – 1977)

Future politics still
face-to-face?

Triangle of issues

Demographics: 'born digital'
… 'die digital'…

World of glass or one-way mirror?

Power shift … from nation states to where?

1. Demographics

- The proportion of young people in the population is declining.
- 2050: proportion of 60+yo will be equal to 15-yo (~ 21% each) … and growing.
- *The 'Google Generation' will soon be 'Silver Surfers'*

Development issues

McKinsey: [Internet matters: The Net's sweeping impact on growth, jobs and prosperity.](#)
- 2 billion internet users worldwide
- In 13 countries examined Internet accounts for 3.4% of GDP
- 21% of GDP growth in mature countries
- 2.6 jobs created for 1 job lost
- 75% of Internet impact arises from traditional industries
- 10% increase in productivity for SMEs
- SMEs using web grow twice as much as others
- €20 per |Internet user per month of consumer surplus

2. Power shift

- The breakdown of the '*Westphalian System*'.
- The European 'export' of nation states more telling even than education?
- Power Shift thesis: Citizenship increasingly detached from national identity.
- *Threat: reversion to tribalism or feudalism?*

3. 'Transparency'

watching me …
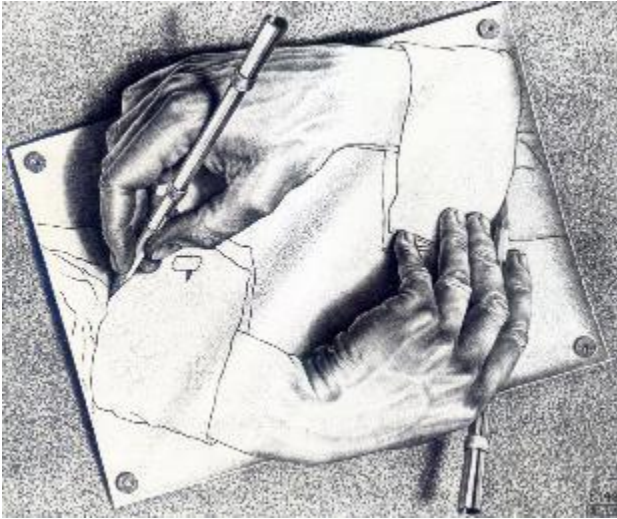
… watching you

A world of **data siphons**:

- Personal identity is a privately owned datagram (*but you are locked out!*)
- New bureaucracy: "The computer says …"
- Consequence: 'Snowdenism' is a civic duty.

The true digital citizen?

Appendices

1a. Indonesia example

Demographics – 50% pop^n under 29; a robust climate of political debate with strong 'affiliative' features. Cheap mobile phones increasingly ubiquitous. 40% penetration by 2017 (an increase of 40m users)

McKinsey Report suggests that a 10% increase in the number of internet users leads to a 1% rised in GDP **BUT** in Indonesia (as an example) structural challenges include poor state of infrastructure and poor integration with global infrastructure (e.g. survey said that 91% of young Indonesians spent less time online as they would have liked due to poor infrastructure). (Zuckerberg supposedly made a joke about this when he visited in Sept 2014 – *he has an attitude problem!*). But as an archipelago nation that is perhaps not too surprising given the geographical difficulties. Competition between telecom operators (of which there are 7) has driven margins very low (leaving little surplus for investment).

Thus surge in demand with reducing investment does not bode well. Add to this poor spectrum management (still mostly 2G) which is held on to even by weak or failing telcos. Similar problems pertain in India and Brazil.

Infrastructure, vested interests and poorly formulated public policy are the usual culprits. "…the number Twitter users in Jakarta will be something of an irrelevance as far as economic growth is concerned."

Ref: Indonesia's intractable deficit

Connecting Schools

World Economic Forum: [How to connect all schools to the internet](#) (Michael Trucano, Mar 2015)

So-called *Universal Service or Access Funds (USF) are* a levy mechanism by which a national regulatory authority mandates subsidies and fees designed to promote access to telecommunication services for all of a country's population. Telecoms licensees are required services to placer and groups where there may not be an immediate or compelling commercial incentive to do so. Schools have often benefitted.

Prototypical, example is the [e-rate program](#) in the [United States](#). A consequence of the U.S. Telecommunications Act of 1996, the e-rate has over the course of almost twenty years helped to raise the number of schools with Internet connections from 14% to effectively 100% today. Also [Portugal](#), [Morocco](#), [Colombia](#) and [Turkey](#).

In some countries private sector groups have voluntarily developed initiatives (e.g. [GILAS](#) in the Philippines). Usually however it is left to government education departments although these are often ill-equipped to carry out these projects and in countries where there is the greatest need they often have a weak, sometimes excluded voice. Consequently many schools remain unconnected usually those outside urban areas and/or underprivileged areas. (See e.g. [How many schools are connected to the Internet?](#) Dec 2014).

Worse perhaps, some countries may have a USF but it is not spent (see e.g. [GSMA Universal Fund Study](#), executive summary – more than one-third of USFs in the study have yet to spend any money) and Telecoms companies are resentful of what is in effect a pointless tax. It is therefore important that governments who administer USFs engage with the education sector in order to alleviate provate sector pressure ot end the subsidies. Accordinf to the ITU [Universal Service Fund and Digital Inclusion For All Study](#) while there are many potential area for the use of USFs in many countries but here is low activity.

While USFs may not be the most appropriate method (about which we may argue), there is nevertheless a lot of money sitting around unused. Education systems in countries where USFs exist need to take the opportunity to access these funds.

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