



Connecting Up Australia

Doug Jacquier, CEO [Connecting Up Australia](#),

Opening address at the [Connecting Up 09 Conference Sydney, 11 May 2009](#).

Good morning! My name is Doug Jacquier and I am the CEO of Connecting Up Australia. It's great to be here in Sydney and may I personally welcome all our delegates, speakers and sponsors, especially those who've travelled great distances and invested precious time and money to be here.

For those of you attending Connecting Up for the first time, here's some brief background. Our nonprofit organisation, CISA Inc, now trading as [Connecting Up Australia](#), has been operating for over 28 years and over the past six years we have been expanding our national profile in bringing information about technology to Australian nonprofits. Some of you will be familiar with our web-based ICT Resources, which you can link to simply at [ConnectingUp.org](#) where we will have podcasts, videocasts, photos and follow up from this conference.

And of course we hope that everyone here is aware of our [DonorTec](#) and [TechSoup New Zealand](#) technology donations programs, which we operate in partnership with US nonprofit TechSoup Global, bringing technology donations from global and local IT companies worth over \$40m to over 3,000 Australian and New Zealand nonprofits in the past two years.

This is the sixth annual [Connecting Up conference](#) and the second we have conducted outside Adelaide, as part of our continuing commitment to a national profile. For the past three years we've added the Australian Community ICT Awards to the conference program and we're delighted to see the number of entries double this year.

Last year we were delighted to see broadband emerge as a key Federal election issue and we awaited with great interest the universal roll-out promised. As you all know, we're still waiting but at least the National Broadband Network is now a funded plan, albeit with a less than satisfactory outcome for those in regional and remote areas.

On the optimistic assumption that we will eventually be 'Online and Off to the Future' via something other than the current fraudband, this year's program continues to be heavily weighted towards asking whether we are there yet when it comes to Web 2.0 or the social web.

I note in passing here that for the first time ever we have not had a single dollar of support from either the Federal or State Government for this year's conference. We've had a [Senate inquiry into regulating the sector](#), there's the [Henry review under way into the sector's tax arrangements](#) and now the [Productivity Commission is reviewing whether the Federal Government is getting sufficient bang for its buck from the sector](#). In amongst all that, a select group of not-for-profit agencies is negotiating a proposed Compact with the Government on our behalf. I encourage all organisations to have their say in these various processes.

The bottom line out of all of that is that if you are waiting for governments to help you develop your capacity then your funding strategy may as well consist of buying lottery tickets.

Couple that with the greatest economic crisis we have faced since the Depression, created by the greed of those least likely to want to pay their taxes, to say we have a challenge before us goes beyond the level of understatement.

So what can we do, especially when it comes to looking towards what technology might have to offer?

I've recently returned from visiting a number of nonprofits and companies serving nonprofits in the US and Canada, courtesy of funding from Equity Trustees, and I want to share with you some of the insights I gained there. I am doing so because I think it is likely that the trends we are seeing there will rapidly evolve here.

The headlines for me read something like:

1. We have to face a future where Software as a Service and cloud computing, where applications sit on someone else's server rather than in your office, will become increasingly prevalent. This will bring with it dilemmas of trust and privacy protection that will challenge the very foundations of what we understand to be the internet.
2. Online fundraising and campaigning will continue to grow in importance. If there was ever any doubt about that, Barack Obama's presidential campaign finished that debate forever
3. We need to become skilled purveyors of social web technologies and to employ and up skill accordingly.
4. Organisations can no longer rely on the support of passive lists of supporters and donors. They will need to create and nurture a genuine community of supporters, which will open them up to being 'steered' in directions they may never have imagined and which may be disruptive to their thinking.
5. We will need to build alliances with like-minded nonprofits and with business, rather than looking to governments for support.
6. The Boards and staff will need to broaden their vision of the possible and become far more entrepreneurial in their activities. Simply having a good cause will be far from enough.
7. We need to find ways to be constantly noticed and quoted in decision making circles and challenging to the status quo.
8. We need to get a whole lot better at assessing ROI, especially when it comes to measuring actual behavioural change from our interventions and providing tangible evidence of our value.

OK, so what does that all mean in practice? Let me share some of the goodies I brought back in my showbag.

- www.good2gether.com- a connect to cause widget that links media stories to relevant nonprofits in the local area
 - MaRS www.marsdd.com in Toronto, Canada, is a multi-disciplinary innovation centre housing innovation projects in health, technology, education, transport, finance etc, as well as social innovation.
 - Center for Social Innovation <http://www.socialinnovation.ca/about>
This social entrepreneurship incubation centre houses literally dozens of ventures and provides hot-desking and meeting facilities for a myriad of smaller operations. It has multiple funding sources and makes a modest surplus for re-investing in the sector.
 - Canada Helps www.canadahelps.org , the local equivalent of Network for Good in the US, in that they are a charitable giving portal. They have some 84,000 charities listed and around 6,000 are registered to access their services.
 - Scott Case, Chair and CEO, Malaria No More www.malariamore.org, and Chair, Network for Good www.networkforgood.org - New York
Essentially Malaria No More's objective is simply that, eradication of malaria as a disease affecting humans is achievable with current knowledge. Their biggest hurdles initially were setting the right ambition (measurable goal) and dealing with widespread ignorance of the issue, especially since it mainly occurs out of sight in Africa and Asia. They have had to engage heavily with key players in the medical, government and corporate fields, as well as actively fund-raising.
- Two key take-aways from our discussion were:
- Your web presence needs to be handled by a dedicated full-time 'evangelist' for your cause who is expert in social web strategies (not necessarily the technology behind them) and someone who can marshal a small army of similarly dedicated volunteers to help spread the word through their online networks e.g. Facebook.
 - All nonprofits (and indeed the sector overall) need to be researching their effectiveness (not efficiency), not just because that's what funders want to see but because it is our

responsibility to ensure we are not just creating feel-good jobs but actually making a difference.

Allison Fine, Senior Fellow at Demos, New York www.demos.org

Demos are a non-partisan public policy research and advocacy organization founded in 2000. Allison's work concentrates principally on building value through social networks. She is the author of *Momentum: Igniting Social Change in the Connected Age* and she is working on a new book with Beth Kanter.

She believes strongly in the need for greater accountability and transparency in the nonprofit sector and, like Scott, wants to see more concentration on measuring effectiveness. She also advocates the employment of staff with highly developed networking skills and, sees the need for a dedicated social media coordinator to ensure the 'weaving' of organisations' strategies into the broader sector's collective efforts.

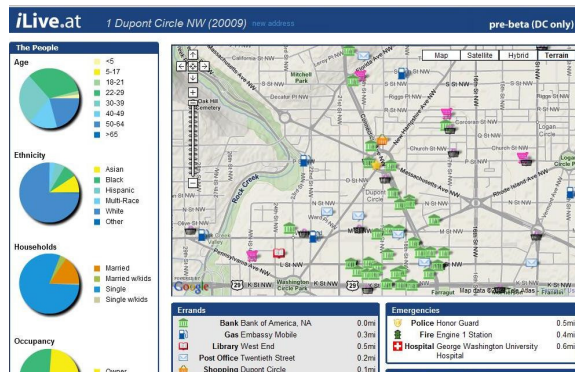
While we're discussing the web's ability to in fact enhance, rather than detract from, face to face local action, check out Meetup <http://www.meetup.com/about/> as a tool to assist in this process.

Jonathon Peizer, President, Internaut Consulting www.internautconsulting.com, Chair of AspirationTech <http://www.aspirationtech.org/> and one-man band behind Capaciteria, New York www.capaciteria.org

Capaciteria is Jonathon's heroic attempt to pull together the most comprehensive resource directory possible for the US nonprofit sector and he has done a magnificent job of encouraging others to constantly add to it to lighten his load.

www.missionfish.org - Washington DC

MisionFish vetts charities for ebay in US and UK and we're discussing bringing this to Australia.



ilive.at www.ilive.at – Washington DC
How neighbourhood maps should be.

SXSW (South By South West) Interactive conference – Austin, Texas

For anyone interested in social media and the breadth of what's on offer this is simply breathtaking, if not a little intimidating. <http://sxsw.com/interactive/talks/schedule>.

<http://www.lifehacker.com.au/> Part technology guide, part productivity tool, Lifehacker aims to help you organise your workday and maximise your playtime.

The Future of Social Networks – Charlene Li – Thought Leader (now there's a title) – Altimeter Group

Her paradigm is that in the future social networks will be like air. (Clouds and vapour kept springing to mind.) Essentially her thesis is that the future social web will centre on the individual, via something like Open ID, which will pull together all the various versions of 'you', which will be shared on a 'need to know' basis that you will control. She argues for a new social algorithm, mediated by levels of closeness and permissions. The most worrying aspect of this model is that she argues that ultimately we have no choice but to subscribe to 'In Google We Trust' as the search platform for this Brave New personalised World and it will happen because it will be driven by money. Yikes!

Social Media Nonprofit Return On Investment (ROI) Poetry Slam

Highly entertaining and instructive panel exercise on how to measure ROI on social web-based campaigns, based on nonprofit case studies, and judged by an expert panel, and all done in poetic form. The most original and effective workshops I've been to in many a year and achieved in the graveyard shift of 5pm. Chaired by Beth Kanter in grand form and case studies from Danielle Brigida - National Wildlife Federation, Wendy Harman - American Red Cross - National Headquarters, Carie Lewis - The Humane Society of the United States, and David Neff - American Cancer Society. Some brief notes from Carie's presentation should suffice here:

- An email address is worth \$3 p.a. to a fundraising org
- Therefore building long term loyalty is the ultimate measure of the success of a campaign.
- They set up systems to track from contact through to donation.
- They raised \$650,000 from one campaign alone that used social media exclusively.
- Key measurement tools used by all included [Technorati](#), [Feedburner](#), and blog back-end tools.
- a simple to use CRM system [Radiant 6](#)
- New social media sharing application to me: [Utterli](#).

Crowdsourcing: Why the Power of the Crowd Is Driving the Future of Business – Jeff Howe, Wired Magazine

Author of the book Crowdsourcing. He described how 'amateurs' have fuelled crowdsourcing and described phenomena like:

- www.istockphoto.com, with some 'amateurs' making up to \$20,000 per month
- www.ebird.org which has revolutionised ornithology
- www.innocentive.com which outsources scientific problem solving to the crowd with a 30% success rate. Best insight of the session: the person furthest removed from the expert area is the most likely to crack the problem.
- www.threadless.com where t-shirt designs are submitted, voted on, and then made available for sale if chosen.

How Social Networks Are Killing the Revolution – Panel

- Steve Swedler - Gangplank
- Jeremy Tanner - @Penguin
- Todd Huffman - BIL Conference
- Shannon Paul - Detroit Red Wings (professional hockey team)

At last, I thought, some dissenters, but relatively tame in the end. They defined 'the revolution' as changing actual behaviours rather than just building lists. They say simple Facebook, Twitter etc numbers don't necessarily translate to action because:

- It provides a false majority view, though sampling bias
- It simply creates bigger silos of people who already agree with each other
- It generates noise vs action

They noted that the Obama campaign brought people to the internet for the first time so they could help, not that the internet caused them to help. They warned in this context that the digital divide is far from closed, even in the US, and the internet is no different in that on the net some people are still more equal than others.

Their recommendations:

- Base your position on facts and information, not emotions
- Use feedback effectively, especially when it contradicts your view
- Keep a retro view of social networks in mind i.e. think real people doing real things – break the loop of mere conversation
- Use mobile applications
- Make the message actionable
- Make the intermediate steps transparent.

Elisa Camahart Page – CEO and co-founder of [BlogHer](#) Inc

Elisa's thesis is that blogs are mainstream, addictive and trusted. In fact more people are reading blogs than are downloading music and this has caused a measurable time shift in the way people are

using their reading/viewing time (at least in the US). Despite this, non-blog-readers remain generally distrustful of blogs. Obviously her examples come from their research on the perspective of women but she believes the following applies generally i.e. that blogs are changing the way people deal with life's pressures and challenges. She also believes it will change the way history is written because now the lives of ordinary people are there to be mined for their experience of events.

Using Social Media to Accelerate Sustainability

Panel:

- Emily Gertz - [Change.org](#)
- Jon Lebkowsky - [Social Web Strategies](#)
- John McElhenney - [Clear Green Technologies](#)
- Rob Reed - [Max Gladwell](#)

Their starting point is that sustainability depends on knowledge being facilitated by social media and gave the following examples:

- WorldChanging <http://www.worldchanging.com/>
- 350 campaign <http://www.350.org/>
- Bright Green Living Wiki <http://www.socialtext.net/brightgreen/index.cgi>
- My Herefordshire <http://www.myherefordshire.com/>
- World Date Center for Climate <http://www.mad.zmaw.de/wdc-for-climate/>
- Sustainable South Bronx <http://www.ssbx.org/>
- Max Gladwell <http://www.maxgladwell.com/>

All powerful stuff on saving the planet.

John Kenyon

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's "Strategic Technology Program" that he will be doing the workshops for this year [Nonprofit Support Program](#). Under this program, nonprofits can get grants of up to \$25,000 to have opportunity to participate in a Technology Strategies for Nonprofit Leaders workshop, have support from a Technology Circuit Rider/Technology Consultant to develop of a technology plan, and then be eligible to apply for a Strategic Technology Grant for technology needs established in the plan.

All exciting stuff, to be sure, but just more noise if it doesn't lead to action. So what is Connecting Up Australia going to do to adapt to these trends?

For starters we've already begun to re-vamp our web presence to make it much more your space than ours and to provide opportunities for you to create an online forum for networking, have a go with tools such as flickr (to share photos), blogs (to listen to and share ideas, information and have conversations), you tube channel – to share your stories – what your organisation is doing and online communities to create your own group with a common interest e.g. web fundraising OR regional youth services or, or or..... Each group can email members, has an [RSS](#) feed to alert members of new entries, has a blog to post ideas, conversation etc.

We've just completed our [second national survey](#) of how nonprofits are using technology and you can download the reports and use [Are We There Yet?](#) online benchmarking tool.

We've been a sponsor for [Genevieve Bell's Adelaide Thinker in Residence project](#) and we'll be sharing her anthropologist's view of web technologies in the near future.

We're investing significantly in a comprehensive online listing of nonprofit organisations and their resourcing organisations and ensuring its accessibility to an increasingly mapped and mobile world and to the social web's rapid evolution. This includes working with Google.

We're re-vamping our websites to make them inviting centres of ongoing dialogue and thinking - User Generated Content (UGC).

We're upgrading our skills in web usability, especially in mobile contexts

We're drawing on the considerable experience held within TechSoup Global in developing powerful online communities, including recruiting highly skilled volunteer moderators.

We'll become a high level adopter of Community First, a set of aggregation tools being pioneered at [TechSoup Canada](#) . This tool is an online social network, which acts as a de facto RSS feed of everything TSG is doing online (from YouTube channel, Friend feeds to Facebook to Flickr to Second Life to Twitter etc).

We'll be encouraging greater involvement from Australia and New Zealand developers in the [NetSquared conference and the various Challenge programs](#) leading up to it. This could include scholarships to attend the conference and/or a mini-Challenge series here leading up to the 'main event'.

We'll continue to grow the technology donation program in Australia and NZ and develop a strategy for engaging and supporting nonprofits in Pacific nations such as Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea etc

We'll serve up more greens. We'll be sourcing and offering environmentally responsible and sustainable goods and services suitable to the sector (as well as get our green act together internally).

The theme for all these moves is to listen and to build our community with you together. You will be shaping our future. You will be designing the next Conference. You will be driving the agenda on what information is important to you and your organisation. And you will be the ultimate arbiter of whether there is a place for us in your increasingly overloaded information world.

We don't intend to fail you and if we do it won't be for the want of trying.

Thank you