Meeting the information needs of parliamentarians

Bridie Nathanson

World e-Parliament conference 2008

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overview

- About EPRI: workshops, conferences, brains trust..
- Information needs of Parliamentarians

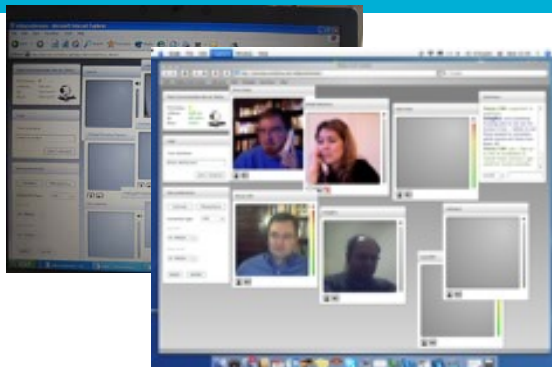# EPRI

European Parliaments Research Initiative

Study

- Survey: MPs, early adopters, across EU
- 3 Roles: Representative, party actor, legislator
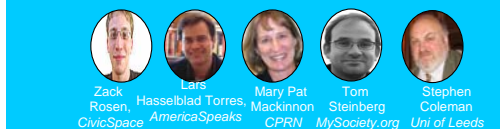- 3 Purposes: Democracy, publicity, efficiency

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH THE INTERNET

EPRI annual conferences

- 10 EPRI conferences, on ICT
- Hosted by a parliaments
- Latest: March 2008, Dublin

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4 x Web 'brains trust' for MPs & podcast

Listening Politicians

Zack Rosen, *CivicSpace*
Lars Hasselblad Torres, *AmericaSpeaks*
Mary Pat Mackinnon *CPRN*
Tom Steinberg *MySociety.org*
Stephen Coleman *Uni of Leeds*

Active Citizens

Ross Ferguson *Hansard Society*
Joseph Peters *Ascentum*
Glen Tarman *Trade Justice Movement*
Gez Smith *Delib*
Don Lennihan *Crossing Boundaries*

July 2006

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e-Campaigns

Alan Rosenblatt *Internet Advocacy Center*
Chris Casey *DGP Software*
Mark Pack *Lib Dem Party*
Steven Clift *Democracy Online*

Web 2.0

David Weinberger *Technologist, Cluetrain author*
Heather Holdridge *Care2.com*
Justin Oberman *mobile tech journalist*
Steven Lenos *Institute for Public Policy, NL*

February 2007

More info available on... Epri.org

Information needs of parliamentarians

Strategic context

Components of
e-democracy strategy

- Information
- Communication
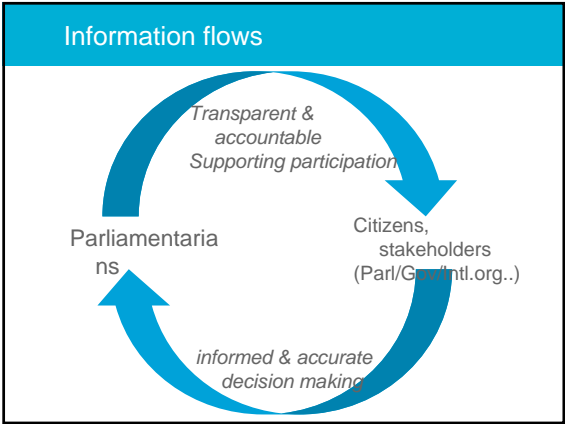- Participation
- Representation
- Accountability
- Evaluation

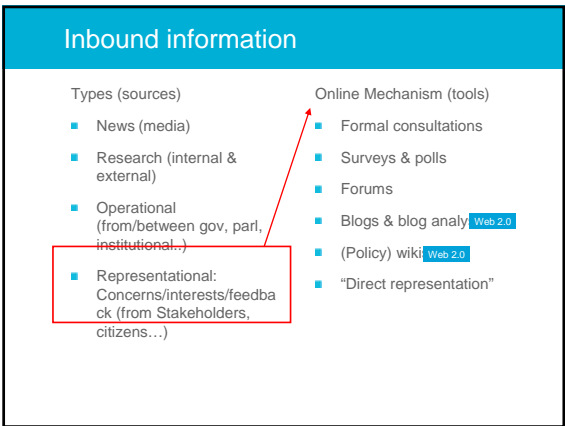Coleman & Nathanson (2003), 'E-coverage of Europe', *Europe, Parliament & the media*
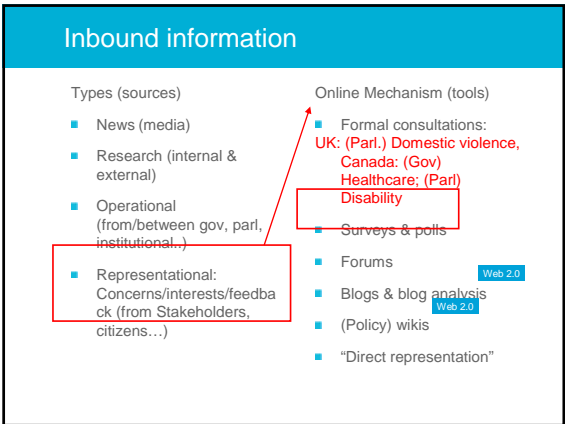
Strategic context

- Information
- Communication
- Participation
- Representation
- Accountability
- Evaluation

- Availability, accessibility, findability
- User-centric, customised (for different audiences)
- Develop & implement transparency guidelines
- Interoperability across institutions/levels
- Multi-channel push & pull delivery
- Information production (to support deliberative & participatory processes)
- Active dissemination & promotion

Coleman & Nathanson (2003), 'E-coverage of Europe', *Europe, Parliament & the media*

Information flows

Transparent & accountable
Supporting participation

Parliamentarians → Citizens, stakeholders (Parl/Gov/Intl.org..)

informed & accurate decision making

Inbound information

Types (sources)

- News (media)
- Research (internal & external)
- Operational (from/between gov, parl, institutional..)
- Representational: Concerns/interests/feedback (from Stakeholders, citizens…)

Online Mechanism (tools)

- Formal consultations
- Surveys & polls
- Forums
- Blogs & blog analysis `Web 2.0`
- (Policy) wikis `Web 2.0`
- "Direct representation"
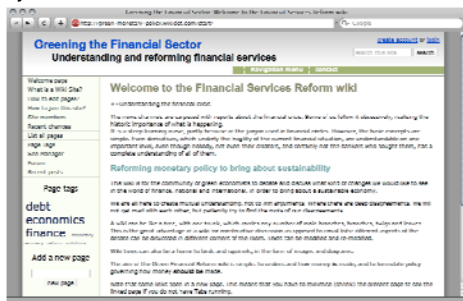

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Inbound information

Online polls

Inbound information

Types (sources)	Online Mechanism (tools)
■ News (media)	■ Formal consultations: *UK: (Parl.) Domestic violence, Canada: (Gov) Healthcare; (Parl) Disability*
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	■ (Policy) wikis
	■ "Direct representation"

`Web 2.0`

Inbound information

Policy wikis

Outbound information

Objectives

- Transparency & accountability
- Supporting participation
- Publicity, dissemination

Online Mechanism (tools)

- Websites & blogs (parliament, party, individual)
- Direct contact: email (mobile) newsletter, alerts…
- Online media
- Other info(inter)mediaries
- Distributed dissemination: Other Blogs, social networking platforms.. relevant wikis

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Outbound information

Websites & blogs

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  Dovetail with other info producers & publishers
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theyworkforyou.com

hearfromyourmp.com

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Web2.0

EU tube (youtube.com/eutube)

Outbound information

A quick few words getting your information
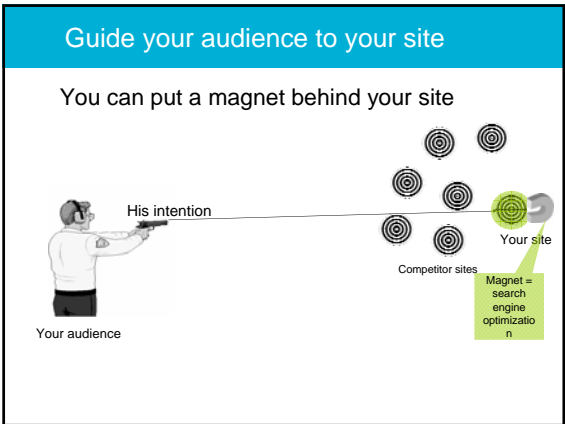out, successfully:

- Distributed dissemination strategies

About distributed dissemination

People find your site essentially via two techniques

- People search and find
  → google, msn, yahoo, yellow pages, …

- People discover and explore
  → while browsing a topic, a forum, a news
  article, …

- Traffic via search engines is about 40% (- varies
  depending on the research source).

- Remaining 60% is direct links (bookmarks) and
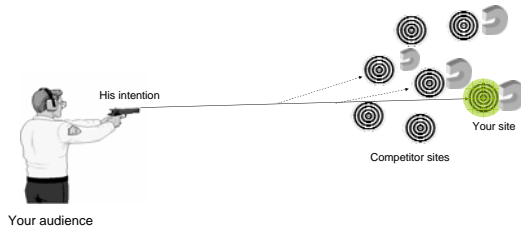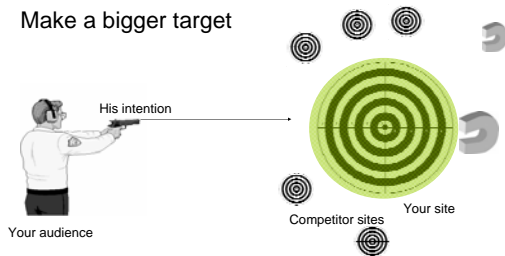 unintentional traffic.

The Problem

Your citizens

Your issue You

The big internet

Guide your audience to your site

This is your challenge:

His intention

Your site

Competitor sites

Your audience

Guide your audience to your site

You can put a magnet behind your site

His intention

Your site

Competitor sites

Magnet = search engine optimization
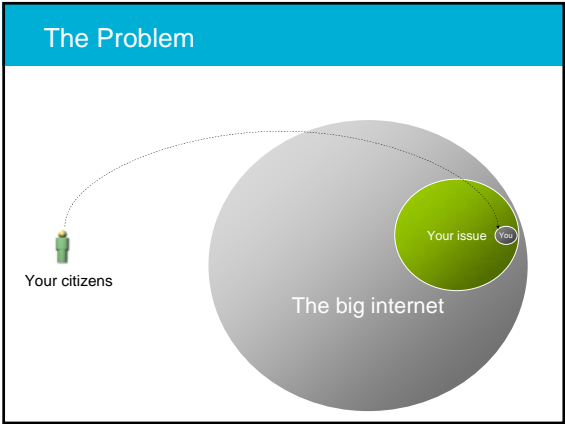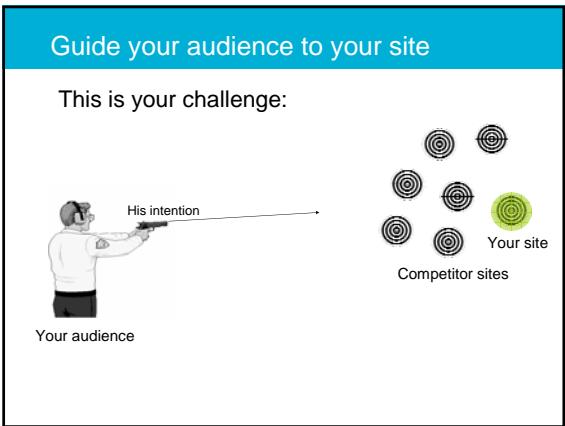
Your audience

Guide your audience to your site

But your competitors do this as well

His intention

Your site

Competitor sites

Your audience

The Solution?

Make a bigger target

His intention

Your site

Competitor sites

Your audience

Today's Facts

85% of content on the internet is written by non-professional people = USER GENERATED CONTENT

Only 15% is written by professionals (and shrinking every day)

Competitors

Your issue You

Competitors

The big inter

Your audience

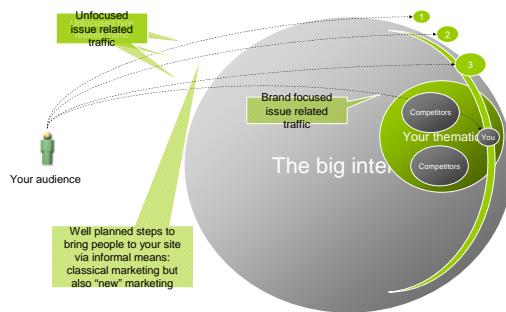The chances that a user lands on user generated content is far higher than on professional sites
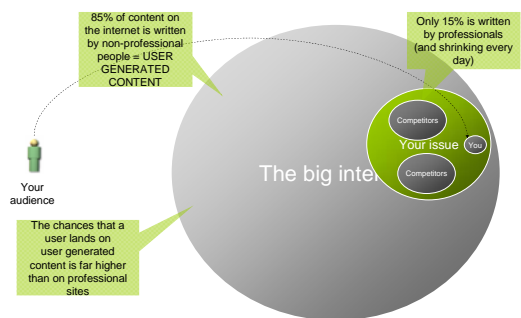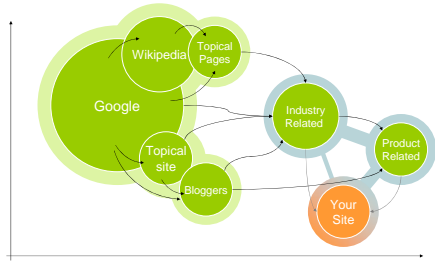
Capturing Traffic
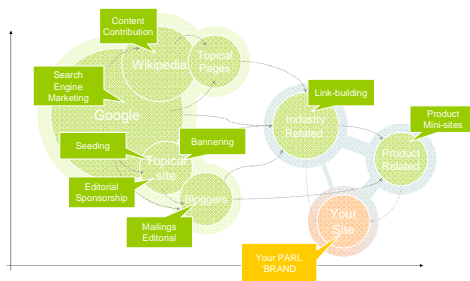

Driving Traffic

The Target

Site traffic strategy

Site traffic strategy

Further questions? Contact:
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Bridie@bridie.net