

Designing successful digital humanities crowdsourcing projects

Digital Humanities 2013, Lincoln, Nebraska

Mia Ridge
<http://openobjects.org.uk>
@mia_out

While you're getting settled...

Download the exercise sheet and slides:

- <http://bit.ly/UijNZA>

Links for projects discussed, bibliography available at <http://bit.ly/1aMaII>

(Direct addresses via

<http://www.miaridge.com/category/crowdsourcing>)

- Wifi: Connect to UNL-Conference with name: dh2013 and pass: Dig1997

Overview

- 1pm Introductions, definitions, crowdsourcing examples. Exercise: review sample projects.
- 2:15 Break
- 2:30 Crowdsourcing participants, motivations. Exercise: devise your own crowdsourcing project
- 3:45 Break
- 4pm Emerging best practice (characteristics of well-designed projects). Exercise: re-visit your project
- 5pm Finish

Introductions

- My name is _____, I'm a _____ from _____. I'm interested in crowdsourcing because _____.

What is crowdsourcing?

Crowdsourcing (Jeff Howe and Mark Robinson, Wired, 2006):

'the act of a company or institution taking a function once performed by employees and outsourcing it to an undefined (and generally large) network of people in the form of an open call'

Or, 'the spare processing power of millions of human brains'

Humanities crowdsourcing

- ...And in GLAMs (galleries, libraries, museums, archives)
 - ‘leveraging public participation in or contributions to projects and activities’ including collection, digitisation, description, transcription, etc
 - Tasks undertaken by distributed, possibly anonymous participants
 - Participation possibly as ‘volunteers’, via games or own work.
 - Pleasure, not profit: appeals to intrinsic motivations; interest in subject; altruism; inherently engaging tasks

Crowdsourcing and related terms

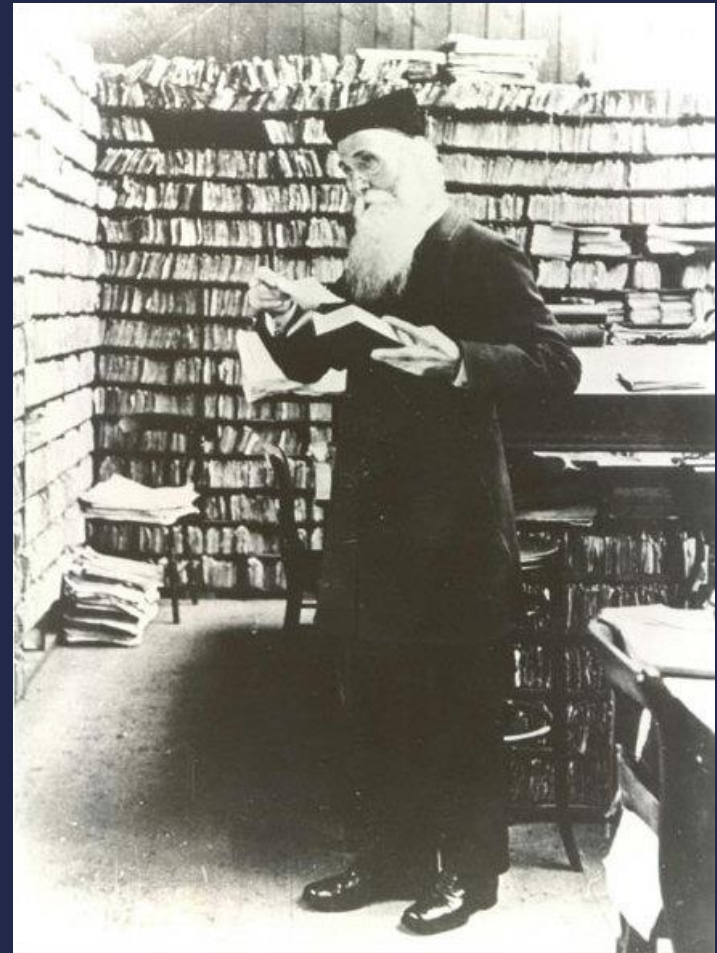
- User-generated content, including oral history
- Human computation
- Citizen science, citizen history
- Community-sourcing, nichesourcing
- Cognitive surplus
- 'the wisdom of crowds'
- Crowdfunding

Crowdsourcing as solution

- Fix the 'semantic gap', enhance discoverability
- Digitisation backlog: collections are big, resources are small
- Create engaging experiences for the public - form of public engagement through participation
- Support on-going needs of scholarly researchers e.g. collaborative transcription

Crowdsourcing before the web

- 19th Century natural history collecting
- 1849 Smithsonian meteorological observation project
- 1857, 1879 Oxford English Dictionary
- WWII Soldiers given a *Field Collector's Manual in Natural History* by the US Museum of Natural History



James Murray, editor, OED, with contributor slips
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:James-Murray.jpg>

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→ RESOURCES: DOCS & PLUGINS

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steamboat train, from New
this **morning** ran off the track
New-London. Four cars plunged



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National Library of Australia: Trove

Balwyn Teams

Balwyn A to meet Hawthorn East Melbourne
at **Balwyn** Park at 2:30 p.m. - Moncrieff, Tickle,
Smith, Douglas, Newton, Beach, Shelton, M
Haysom, Bray, Preiser, Padgham, Williams.
Balwyn B to play Hawthorn Footballers at
Illawarra Park Kooyong. Players to assemble
at **Balwyn** Park at 2 p.m. there - McDonald,
Le Coo, Howson, Clisold, W. Haysom, White
McInnes, B. Brown, K. Brown, Bolton, Allen,
Beashall.
Balwyn C to meet at **Balwyn** Park at 2:15
p.m. - Kilner, Swan, Doddington, Aquil, B.
Flynn, R. Flynn, Howell, Ruse, Lasee, Mon-
crieff, Hastings.

GIRLS' CRICKET BEGINS TO-DAY

Teams Announced

With a record number of teams com-
peting, girl cricketers will begin their
inter-club competitions to-day. Four teams
will have the advantage of being led by
girls who have just returned from England
after having played with the Australian

Donald Thomson, research fellow of
University of Melbourne, anthropologist
and explorer, returned to his home in Mel-
bourne yesterday. (Page 3.)

Substantial benefits for Australian pro-
ducers and exporters are announced in
new trade agreement which the Prime
Ministry has concluded with Canada.
(Pages 1 and 2.)

Monday marks the opening of the
election campaign of the Federal Ministry
in Victoria. (Page 3.)

A young man who was injured when
he fell on the steps at a railway station
in Sydney was awarded £1,000 damages.
(Page 1.)

Municipal health officers urged that
apartment-houses should be controlled by
legislation. They gave instances of
squalor in many Melbourne apartment
houses. (Page 4.)

The Rev. Dr. Roderick Macleod, a dis-
tinguished Scottish minister, has arrived
in Melbourne for the centenary of the
Presbyterian Church. (Page 5.)

A postal employee was committed to
the Third City Court for trial on a charge
of having stolen letters from the mail.
(Page 11.)

A stock and station agent of Epsom
was injured when a motor-car which
was driving was struck by a truck
at a level crossing in the town of

Trove Australia Digitised newspapers and more
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balwyn

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(about)


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of 42 ▶

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Balwin A. to meet Hawthorn East Melbourne at Balwyn Park at 2.30 p.m. Moncrieff, Tucker, Smith, Douglas, Newson, Beach, Shellen, M. Haysom, Gray, Preiser, Padgugan, Williams.

Balwin B. to play Hawthorn Footballers at Hawarra Park Kootung. Players to assemble at Balwyn Park at 2 p.m. where McDonald, L. J. G. Newson, Cleland, W. Haysom, White, McInnes, B. Brown, K. Brown, Bolton, Allen, Beashall.

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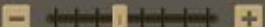
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ZOOM



Trove

Text corrections

[Balwyn Teams](#)

The Argus (Melbourne, Vic. : 1848 - 1956) Saturday 2 October 1937, page 16

Article

Changed	By	Old Lines	New Lines
2011-09-26 21:49:33.0	anonymous	Balwyn Ato meet Hawthorn Cost Melbourne at Balwyn Park at 2 30 p m -Moncrieff Tickle Smith Douglas Newton Beach Shelton M Haysom Bray Preiser Padgham Williams Balwyn B to play Hawthorn roolballers at Illawarra Park Koovong Players to assemble at Balwyn Park at 2 p m sharp -McDonald Le Leu Hewslon Clissold W Haysom White McInnes B Brown K Brown Bolton Allen Boxshall n in -Kilner Swan Dodgshun August B Hynn n riynn Rowell Race Lascelles Mon crieff Hiw kings	Balwyn Ato meet Hawthorn East Melbourne at Balwyn Park at 2:30 p m -Moncrieff, Tickle, Smith, Douglas, Newton, Beach, Shelton, M Haysom, Bray, Preiser, Padgham, Williams. Balwyn B to play Hawthorn Footballers at Illawarra Park Kooyong. Players to assemble at Balwyn Park at 2 p m sharp - McDonald, Le Leu, Hewslon, Clissold, W Haysom, White, McInnes, B Brown, K Brown, Bolton, Allen, Boxshall. pm -Kilner, Swan, Dodgshun, August, B Flynn, R Flynn, Rowell, Race, Lascelles, Moncrieff, Hawkings

FamilySearch

2026

STATE OF DELAWARE
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH

1 PLACE OF BIRTH
County of New Castle
Hundred of _____
Village of _____
City of Wilmington (No. 809 Street 3 Ward)

2 FULL NAME OF CHILD Frank Pierce Longhead (If child is not yet named, make supplemental report, as directed.)

3 SEX OF CHILD M 4 Twin, Triplet, or other no 5 Color or Race white 6 Legitimate yes

7 DATE OF BIRTH Feb 5 1919 11:20 A. M.
(Month) (Day) (Year) P. M.

ALTERED 8-8-46

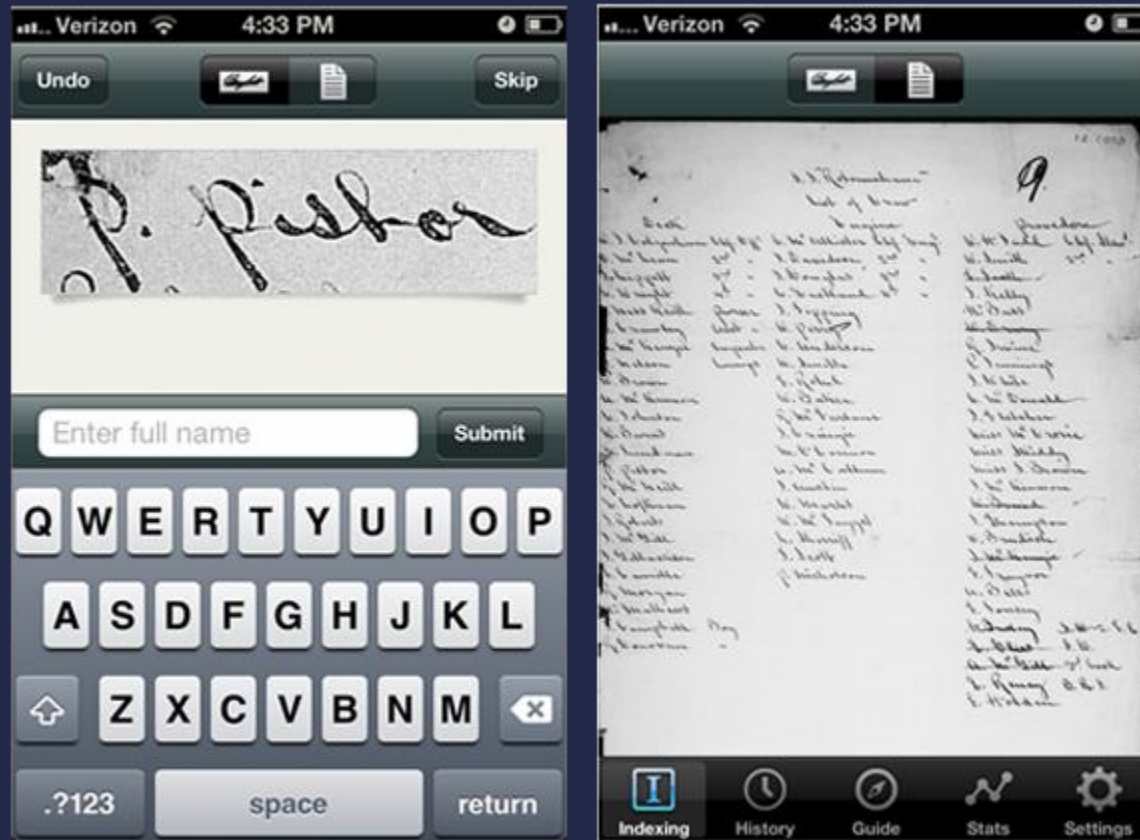
"Substitution made in reg."

Registered No. 1049

Field Name	Field Value	Answers	Field Help
Image Type	Normal		Image Type <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select Normal if the document appears to be a normal birth certificate. Select Blank if there is no data on the document. Select Unreadable if the you cannot read any of the data on the document.
State of Birth			
County of Birth			
City or Town of Birth			
Child's Given Names			
Child's Surname			
Gender			
Color or Race			
Month of Birth			
Day of Birth			
Year of Birth			

Done

...indexing goes mobile



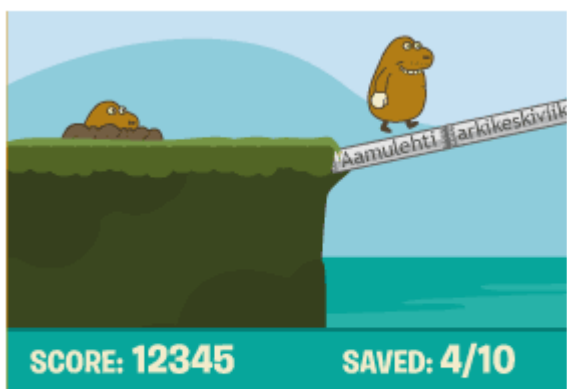
<https://tech.lds.org/blog/455-new-familysearch-indexing-app-now-available>

Digital Koot

In almost two years, nearly 110,000 participants completed over 8 million word fixing tasks

Volunteer top 10

Name	Tasks	Hours	Name	Tasks	Hours
1. Petri M	348 422	395	6. Timo H	96 838	48
2. Kari K	188 128	169	7. Tea R	90 346	76
3. Vesa S	176 519	209	8. Jukka N	73 476	61
4. Anja S	133 600	106	9. Mikko V	61 129	94
5. Kirsti K	98 533	50	10. Anne-Maarit J	40 763	51



In the "Mole Bridge" game players typed words not recognized by computers. Watch the video!



In the "Mole Hunt" game players identified which words the computers got wrong. Watch the video!

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Bentham
A Participatory Initiative



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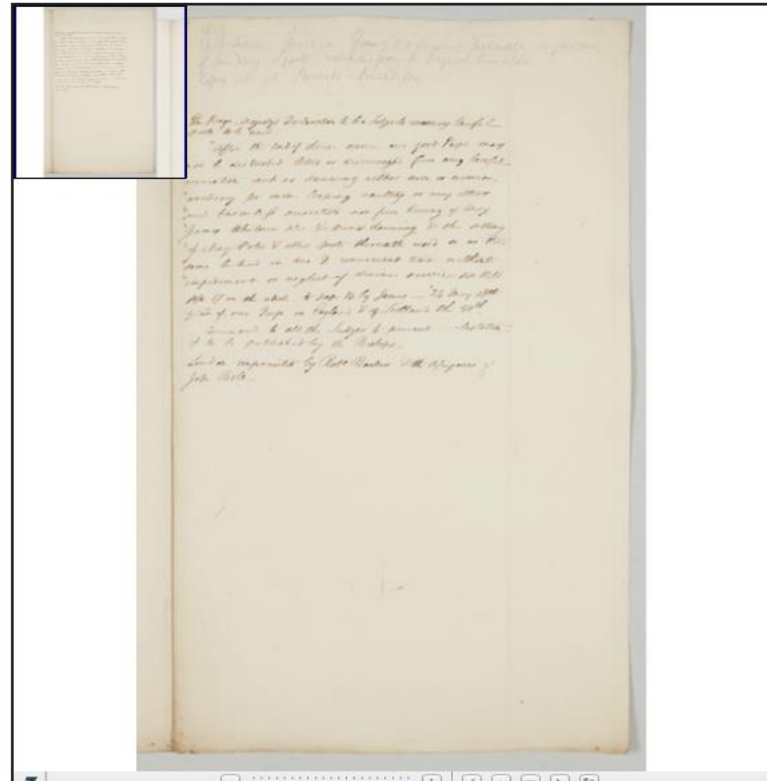
JB/097/172/002

[Click Here To Edit](#)

The King's Majesty's Declaration to his subjects concerning lawful sports to be used.

"After the end of divine service our good People may
"not be disturbed letted or discouraged from any lawful
"recreation such as dauncing either men or women,
"archery for men, leaping vaulting or any other
"such harmless recreation nor from having of May
"Games Whitsun Ales & Morris dauncing & the setting
"of May Poles & other Sports therewith used so as the
"same be had in due & convenient time without
"impediment or neglect of divine service pp 10,11.
pp 17 in the whole to page 14 by James - "24 May 10th
year of our Reign in England & of Scotland the 50th
command to all the Judges to prevent molestation & to be
published by the Bishops.

London imprinted by Rob^t Barker Xth[?] Assignees of John Bell.



old Weather

TRANSCRIBE

BLOG

ausernamellneverremember

0 weather reports on 0 pages contributed to this voyage. 30 weather reports more for promotion to Lieutenant

5. FINISH

Trent

HMS Trent

Map and timeline



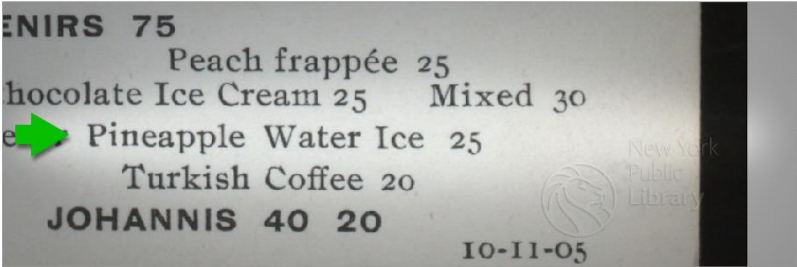
POSITION

I've finished with this page

NYPL 'What's on the Menu?'

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What does this say?

Please type the text of the indicated dish EXACTLY as it appears. Don't worry about accents.


Price (in Dollars): [See more than one price for this dish?](#)

Trouble reading the text? Type your best guess, then check this box -> ☐



[Delete this dish](#)

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A PROJECT OF NYPL LABS. WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM:



Reading Experience Database


    	Record Number: 16878
<hr/>	
Reading Experience:	
Evidence:	
'Sunday 3 October. I am reading "A Room of One's Own". Most delightful and profound - if I had the time I would write an essay about life in the WRNS'	
Century:	1900-1945
Date:	3 Oct 1943
Country:	England
Time	n/a
Place:	n/a
Type of Experience (Reader):	silent aloud unknown solitary in company unknown single serial unknown
Type of Experience (Listener):	solitary in company unknown single serial unknown
<hr/>	
Reader / Listener / Reading Group:	
Reader:	<u>Barbara Pym</u>
Age:	Adult (18-100+)
Gender:	Female
Date of Birth:	2 Jun 1913
Socio-Economic Group:	Professional / academic / merchant / farmer
Occupation:	Writer
Religion:	Church of England
Country of Origin:	England
Country of Experience:	England
Listeners present if any: e.g family, servants, friends	n/a

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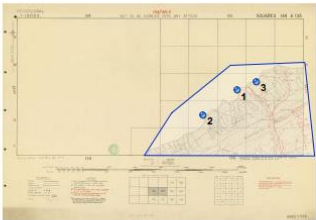
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[Georeference another map](#)

Georeference
Visualize
Accuracy
This map

Control points


Clip



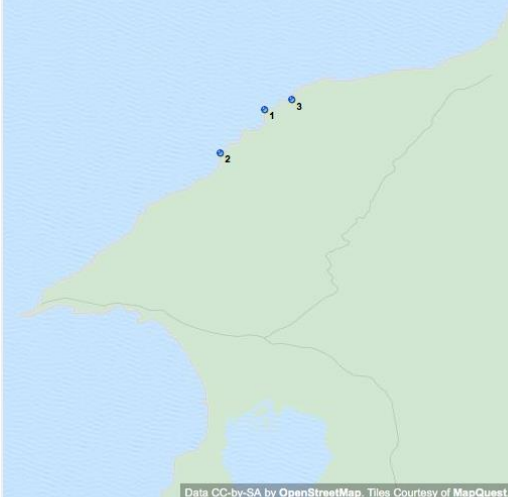


Find a place

SAVE



OpenStreetMap by MapQuest



Data CC-by-SA by [OpenStreetMap](#). Tiles Courtesy of [MapQuest](#)

Trench maps of Suvla (provisional) 1:10 000 series (Squares 134 & 135) – 1915
 – Great Britain. Army. Middle East Force. – [S.1] : G.H.Q. M.E.F. >>>

[Help Center](#)

Georeferencer © 2012 [Klokian Technologies](#) & [Moravian Library](#)

<http://www.bl.uk/maps/>

British Library Sound Maps

Sound map - UK Soundmap

The UK Soundmap, the first nationwide sound map, invited people to record the sounds of their environment, be it at home, work or play. Over 2,000 recordings were uploaded by some 350 contributors during the period July 2010 to July 2011. [Further information.](#)



Your accents <http://sounds.bl.uk/Sound-Maps/Your-Accents>
<http://sounds.bl.uk/Sound-Maps/UK-Soundmap>

Summing up: crowdsourced content

- Links between content (relationships)
- Ratings/Votes
- Tags
- Corrections
- Transcriptions
- Descriptions
- Geolocation
- Images, multimedia
- Game levels
- Research
- Object identification
- Family records
- Objects, documents
- Personal experiences, memories

Summing up: crowdsourced tasks

- Tagging (subjective, personal, factual)
- Transcription (including OCR correction)
- Moderating (debunking, flagging for review)
- Writing personal stories or memories
- Linking, relationships
- Stating preferences
- Categorising
- Creative responses
- Georeferencing
- Ideally 'microtasks' - one-off tasks, minimum effort - the atoms of crowdsourcing

Exercise 1: review a crowdsourcing project

- See handout for URLs and instructions

Break

Ethics

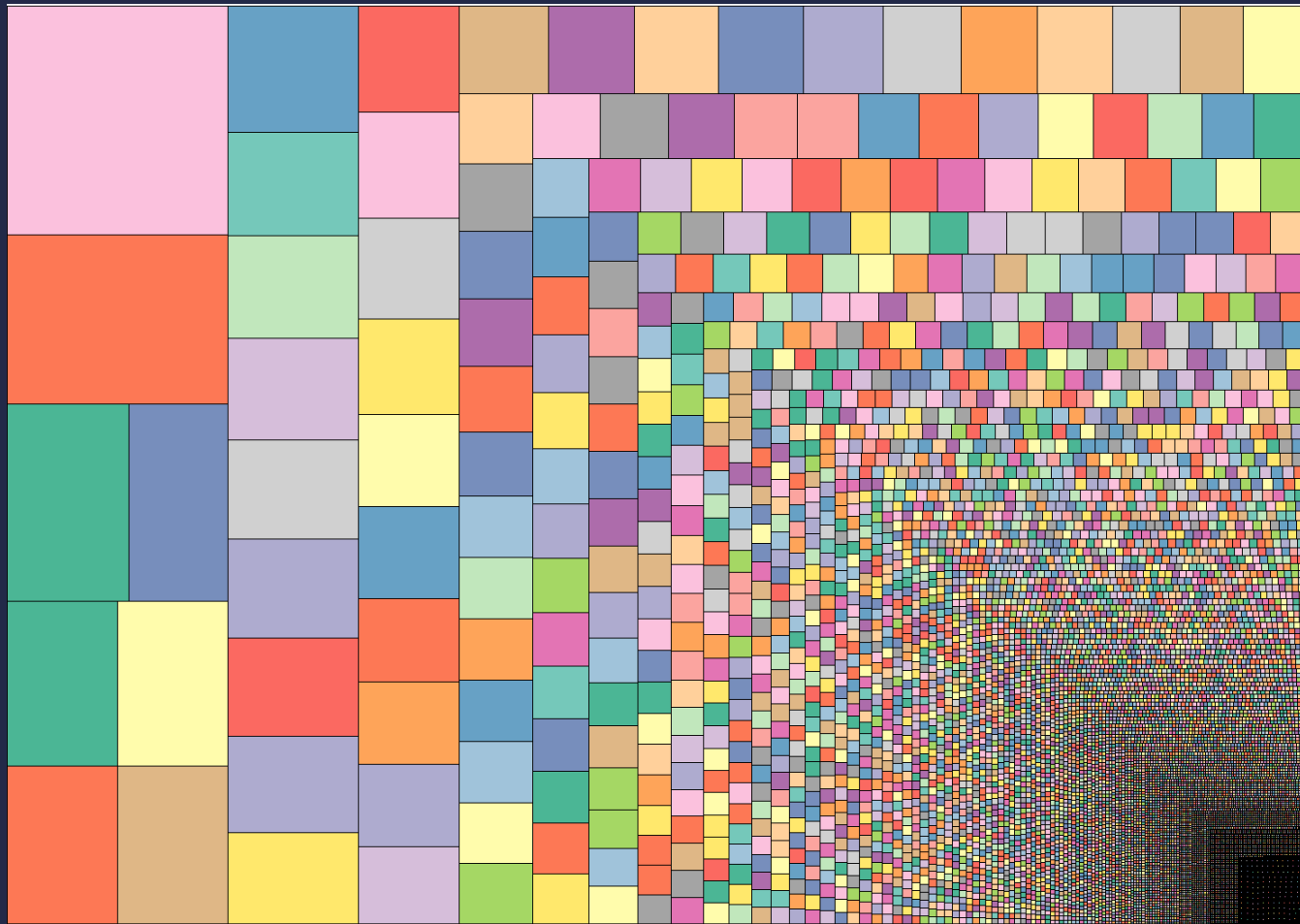


<http://xkcd.com/1060>

Who participates in crowdsourcing?

- People who are passionate about your subject
- People who like doing the task you're offering
- Super-contributors and lots of casual participants
- Amateurs, professionals and everything between
- People who can't volunteer in regular hours or at GLAM venues

Super-contributors and drive-bys



‘16,400 little boxes – one for each person who’s contributed to oldWeather. The area of each box is proportional to the number of pages transcribed, between us all we’ve done 1,090,745 pages.’

Motivations for participation

- Altruistic
 - helping to provide an accurate record of local history
- Intrinsic
 - reading 18thC handwriting is an enjoyable puzzle or they're interested in the subject
- Extrinsic
 - an academic collecting a quote from a primary source

Extrinsic motivations

gwap ESP Game Tag a Tune Verbosity Squigl Matchin logged in

Most Points Today

1	guest239251	31 k
2	Edros	21 k
3	krava	19 k
4	unforeseen	13 k
5	guest239250	12 k
6	lecharpe	6,800
7	krishuntoon	6,400
8	guest239255	6,300
9	sdot	6,200
10	guest239277	6,100

score 0

ESP Game
Concentrate...


time 2:43

What do you see?

taboo words

guy
elefant

guesses



Play Anonymously

+ submit → pass

BONUS!
5,000 PTS

<http://gwap.com>

Games with a purpose

- e.g. labelling images - visual tasks too complex for computers
- 'players perform a useful computation as a side effect of enjoyable game play'
- Data validation built into design
- Motivation is fun, not creating data

Intrinsic motivations for participation

- fun
- the pleasure in doing hobbies
- the enjoyment in learning
- mastering new skills, practicing existing skills
- recognition
- community
- passion for the subject

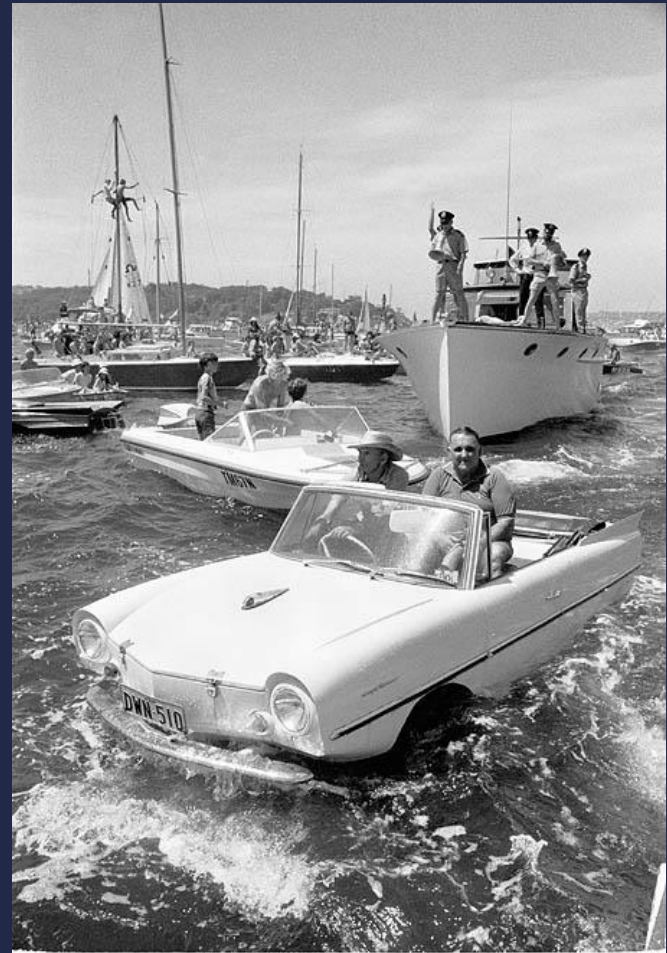


Intrinsic motivations

People crave:

- satisfying work to do
- the experience of being good at something
- time spent with people we like
- the chance to be a part of something bigger

(Jane McGonigal, 2009)



Exercise 2: design a crowdsourcing project

- See handout for instructions

Break

Some reasons projects fail

- Not enough participants
- Failure to retain participants
- Participants are not productive
- Results are not fit for purpose

Design tips for crowdsourcing

- Demonstrate a close match between the crowdsourcing project and the mission of the organisation running it - in interface, dialogue, across whole project
- Show, don't tell - let people see the impact of their contributions
- 'Validate procrastination' - give people an altruistic excuse to spend time on your tasks
- Design for 'super taggers' and for people who do just one or two tasks

Design for participation

- Make it easy for people to do the right thing
- Scaffold the experience - tightly defined tasks, remove uncertainty about quality of their contribution, provide feedback on progress
- Build any tests for skill or experience requirements into the interface
- Build tutorials for new skills into application at the point where its needed; provide good feedback on actions

Design inspiration from casual games

- Easy-to-learn game-play
- Simple controls
- 'Forgiving' game-play with low risk of failure
- Carefully managed complexity levels with a shallow learning curve, guidance through early levels, and inclusive, accessible themes
- Sense of rapid progress and achievement

Design for 'flow'

- Clear sense of goals
- Feedback on progress towards goals
- Skills matched to challenge
- Enable focused attention on the task, remove worries about external factors

Designing for motivation

- Match messages to motivation
- Match tasks and rewards to motivation
- Anticipate which motivations might change over course of a project, design progressions
- Don't replace intrinsic with extrinsic motivations, just make it easier for people to participate.

Bonus points: design for on-going participation

- Participants develop new skills, new roles within project
- Support emergence of a community
- Revise functionality to support emergent needs
- Share data with community to support their analysis

Crowdsourcing as 'stepping stones'



Botanical
Society of the
British
Isles

herbaria@home

recording historical biodiversity

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Herbaria@home

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- Message board
- Wiki

Links

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Search

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- [Collectors](#)
- [Taxon names](#)
- [VCCC match](#)

Harry Corbyn Levinge

Mr **Harry Corbyn Levinge** (1831-11/1896) of Knock Drin Castle, Mulligar, J.P., D.L. Spent many years in the Indian Civil Service [Bengal], where he collected ferns; particularly in Sikkim and Kashmir. Unfortunately much of his collection was destroyed in a fire. On his return, he interested himself in the Irish flora and contributed a number of important papers on this topic to the Irish Naturalist and the J of Botany (1892). Published "The plants of Westmeath" in 1894. The fern *Adiantum levinge* was dedicated to him by J G Baker. His herbarium is now housed in the National Museum in Dublin.



WESTMEATH PLANTS.

By E. F. AND W. R. LINTON.

THE plants here enumerated are most of them records for District VII. of the *Cybele Hibernica* (these have an asterisk prefixed), and were observed by us while enjoying the hospitality of Mr. H. C. Levinge at Knock Drin Castle last July. Some of them were detected by the Rev. E. S. Marshall, our fellow-guest for part of the time, and some were pointed out to us by Mr. Levinge himself, whose investigations have done so much to throw light on the Flora of Westmeath. A rainy season had set in, and hindered work during part of our visit; but, thanks to the long preceding drought, many wet localities were unusually accessible, and all the loughs had sunk below their normal level.



Further info : see

<http://www.botanicgardens.ie/herb/books/infotos.htm> and <http://www.archive.org/stream/journalofbotanyb34trim#page/240/mode/1up/search/leving>; <http://www.archive.org/stream/journalofbotanyb30londuoft#page/194/mode/1up/search>

<http://herbariaunited.org/atHome/>

Holistic design for a virtuous circle

- Ecosystem of crowdsourcing projects
 - Crowdsourcing tags or transcription to support discoverability and other crowdsourcing tasks
 - Validate data created in other projects
 - Help surface most interesting items
 - Help find most difficult items for advance challenges
- Supports different abilities, skills, types of challenge

Exercise 3: reviewing your ideas

- See handout for instructions

Final thoughts?

References and finding out more:

<http://bit.ly/1aMaII>

<http://bit.ly/UijNZA>

Thank you!

Mia Ridge, Open University

<http://openobjects.org.uk/>

@mia_out



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