

Using push in a contract research organization

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Overview

- What is “Push”?
- What are the types of push?
- Why use push?
- Perspective
- Applications
- Results
- Push in the CSIR
- Acknowledgements

Definition

- Push is the automatic delivery of content, data or software to a desktop receiver, server receiver or storage system.
 - Through a persistent open connection
 - Through automated polling
 - Through multicasting, a one-to-many form of broadcasting

Types of push (1)

- Automated Pull
- Event-Driven Push

Types of push (2)

■ Automated Pull

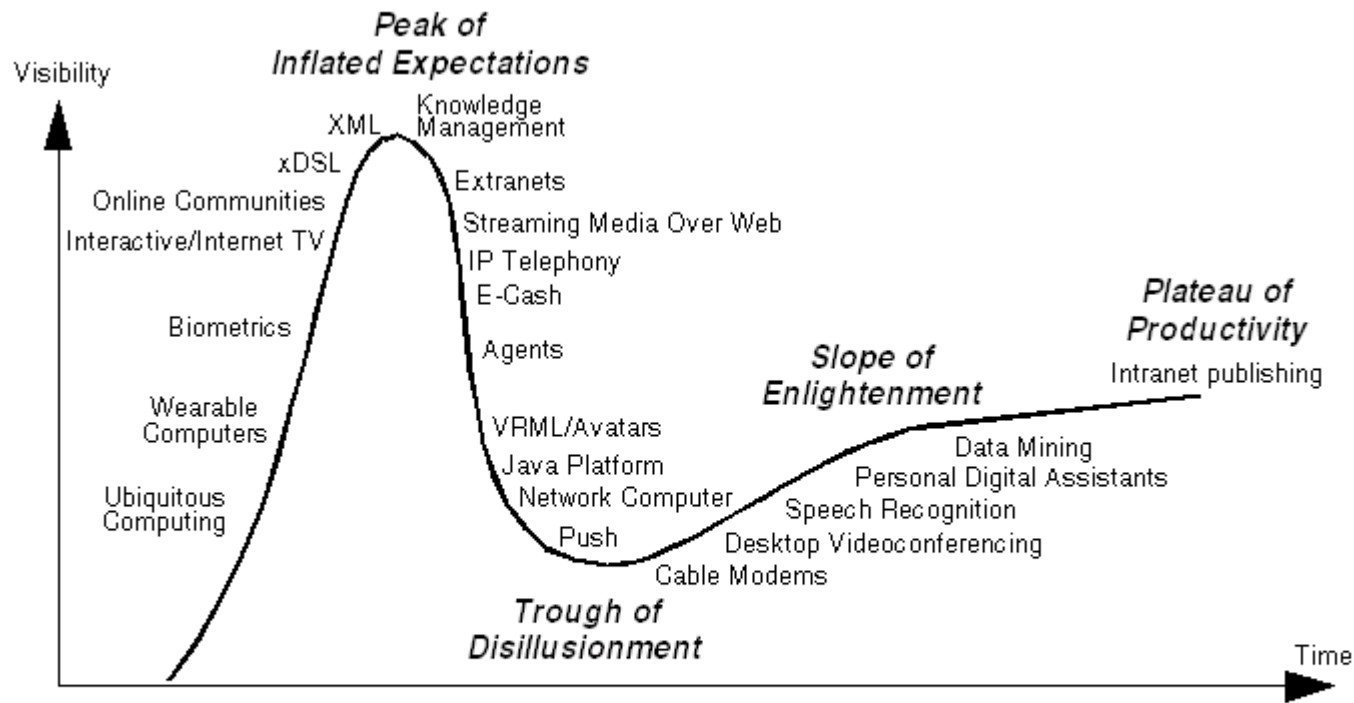
- End user instructs the software to go to specific web sites and look for new information.
- Works best for users who do not require instant notification of available content but gather content for possible future use

Types of push (3)

■ Event-Driven Push

- based on rules
- has a middle layer that establishes the relationship between content and rules
- should be reserved for extremely high priority events and treated with respect by content managers

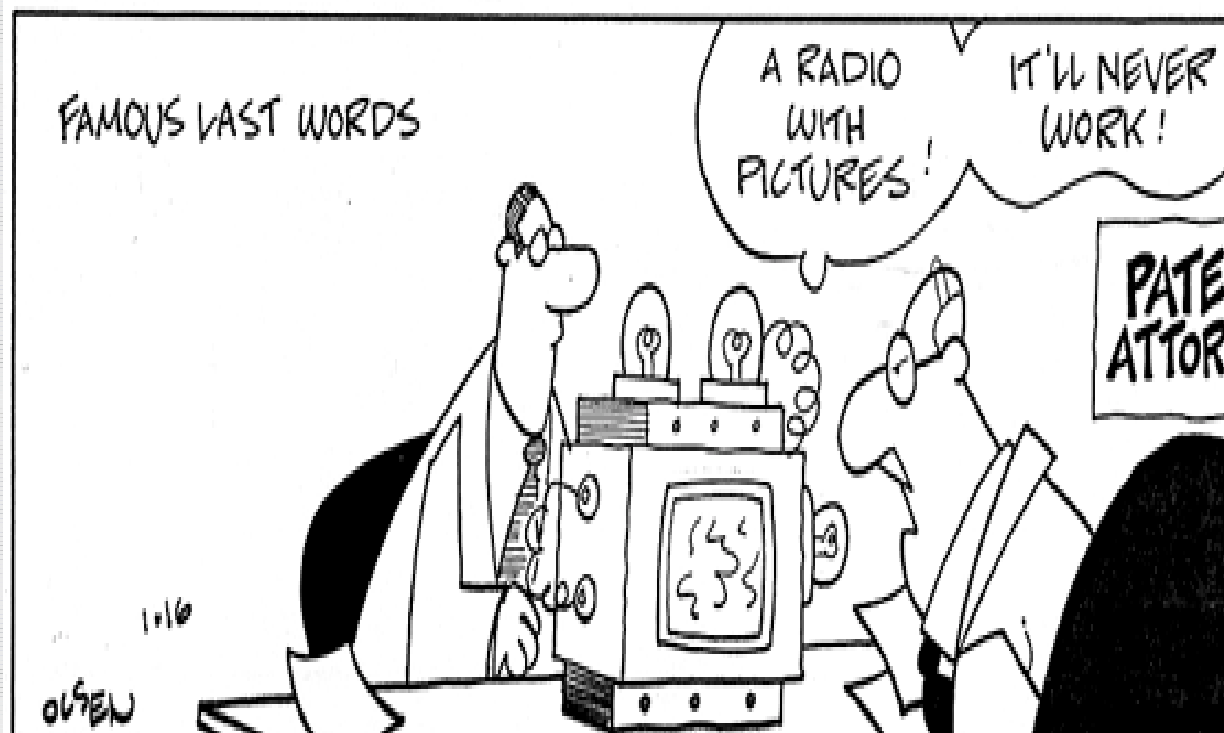
1998 Gartner Hype Cycle



Source: GartnerGroup

- E-Cash Electronic cash
- IP Internet Protocol
- VRML Virtual Reality Modeling Language
- xDSL Generic digital subscriber line
- XML Extensible Markup Language

Why push?



Survival in the face of information overload

- For our own individual well-being and for the welfare of our democratic society: we must act now to responsibly limit our exposure to information. To turn to the wisdom of Eli Noam: ‘almost anybody can add information. The difficult question is how to reduce it.’

Why use push?

- Librarians and information specialists had always been doing it
- Trend towards fewer staff serving more people
- Overload of information -make use of available technologies
- Overcome labour and time intensive ways of information provision

What did CSIR do?

- Investigate different technologies
 - Find out what is available
 - Find out what it can do
 - Get hands-on experience

Perspective (1)

- Intermediary (information specialist)
 - pull from information providers
 - push to staff/end users
- With a view to reducing the information overload to end users, and adding value to the information they receive
- Provide scientific & technical information

Perspective (2)

- Cost-effective services
 - concentrated on free services
- We needed alerting services!

Push in a research environment

- Table of contents alerting
- E-Newsletters, E-zines
- Agents
- Traditional 'Selective Dissemination of Information' alerting

Table of Contents Alerting (1)

■ What are they?

- Notices about the tables of contents of new issues or new articles, usually delivered by e-mail

■ Why use them?

- Convenient and economical.
- Ask about timeliness

Table of Contents Alerting (2)

- Carl Uncover: Uncover Reveal

- <http://uncweb.carl.org>

- Information Express

- <http://express.com>

- SwetScan

- <http://www.nrc.ca/cisti.html>

- Information Quest

- <http://www.eiq.com>

Table of Contents Alerting (3)

- British Library Inside
 - <http://www.bl.uk/online/inside>
- Institute for Scientific Information
 - <http://www.isinet.com>
- Carfax
 - <http://www.carfax.co.uk>

E-Newsletters, E-Zines (1)

- What are they?
 - Newsletters delivered by e-mail
 - Full publication on the Web
 - Professional associations
- Why use them?
 - Convenient and topical

E-Newsletter, E-Zines (2)

- I-net Bridge

- <http://www.inet.co.za>

- News24.com

- <http://livenews.24.com/Default.asp>

- Search Engine Watch

- <http://searchenginewatch.com/list.htm>

E-Newsletters, E-Zines (3)

■ Current Cites

- <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/CurrentCites>

■ First Monday

- <http://www.firstmonday.dk>

■ Mailing lists

- Liszt-Mailing Lists (<http://www.liszt.com>)
- L-Soft International
(<http://www.lsoft.com/lists/listref.html>)

Agents (1)

■ What is it?

- Programmes or routines that will do the work for you
- Can learn what you like from what you do
- Watch for new information on a subject

■ Why use them?

- Save time and get better results

Agents (2)

- BullsEye

- <http://www.intelliseek.com>

- NetMinder

- <http://www.thenetminder.com/index.htm>

- Alexa

- <http://www.alexa.com>

Traditional alerting services (1)

- What are they?
 - Runs personal profile against a database every time the database is updated
- Why use it?
 - Reliable information

Traditional Alerting Services (2)

- Dialog Corporation
- Inspec
- Chemical Abstracts

Results (1)

■ Oriented toward news items

- **Mainly American news**
- **Company advertisements**
- **Political & sports news**

Science and technology usually means medical

Lack of proper filtering technologies

Results (2)

- Not the main vendors who provide what we need.
 - E.g. not PointCast, Marimba, BackWeb, Microsoft or Netscape
- Focussed vendors like Defense Systems Daily, SearchEngineWatch and Scout Report

Technologies and techniques used within the CSIR

- Information specialist act as a filter
- Using print as well as electronic news sources to produce regular news services in specific areas of interest. Publish on the web but push to end users via email
- Use different technologies, such as News24.com, Defense Systems Data and The Scout report, and after filtering provide customized services

Recommendations around push

- If someone on the library staff can monitor the news and distribute via e-mail or an intranet a summary of pertinent news with links to complete articles, this is an ideal situation. The task must be performed by a person with a good knowledge of the interests of the organization and it is highly labor intensive.

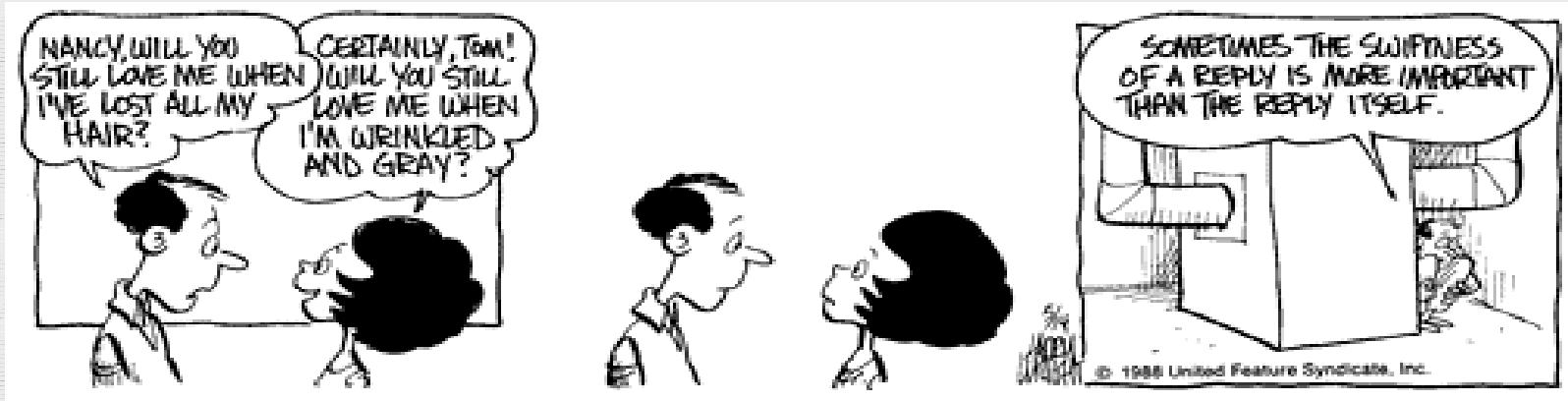
Recommendations around reducing information overload

- Be your own filter. Turn off the TV, leave the cell phone off, limit your e-mail. (At the very least, use mail filter.)
- Be your own smart agent. Judge what is noise and devise personal filtering mechanisms.

Recommendations around reducing information overload(2)

- Good filtering can only be provided via human judgement and that is based more on source selection than software.
- Take a data fast. Take a week away from the news feeds periodically. It will help rejuvenate the mind, and show which information bits are the most important!

The right information at the right time



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