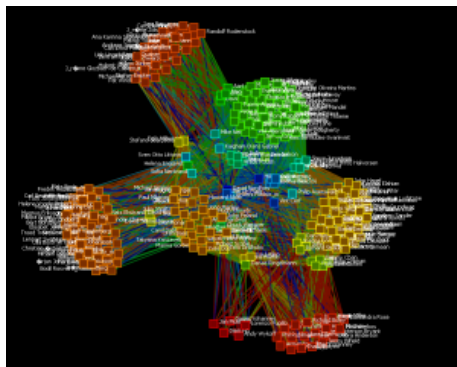


February 28, 2015

## The Innovation for Jobs Summit

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As we reflect on the Innovation for Jobs Summit that brought together some brilliant minds from around the world, it highlighted the fact that ecosystems form an important part of shaping new innovations. David Nordfors and Jay van Zyl embarked on a journey that is still in it's infancy, but resulted in this: Creating the first Innovation for Jobs Ecosystem. Our data collection process started off with a series of discussions around the meaning of ecosystems and ecologies, by defining the most important elements that would need to be represented. The jobs ecosystem is vast and basically include almost all elements you would find in the modern business, but we had to find a meta-definition. Essentially all the elements revolve around the role a human plays in it's setting to ensure survival. We did eventually settle on four constructs, that will be revisited and reviewed over the coming months:

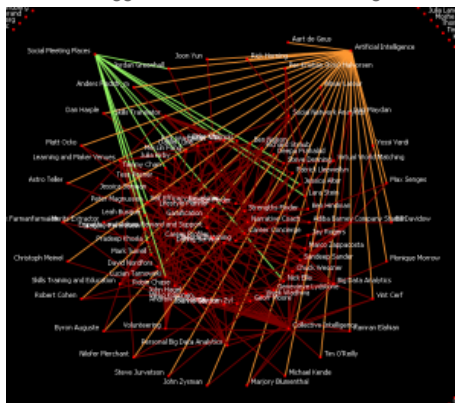


1. Person: David's work in the field of innovation journalism and the involvement in this jobs ecosystem community, has gives him a unique perspective on the problem. We identified around 160 people that have been involved directly and on the periphery of the i4j ecosystem as a starting point to outline the role of human and how interactions with the ecosystem are crafted.

2. Company: The meta-physical concept of a company is that it brings people together for mutual beneficial outcomes (well, most of the time). Companies, or groups of people, shape ideas and invest resources to implement those ideas that will eventually harvest benefit. Our list was vast! But, we decided on using a key number of companies that are

either directly involved in the new jobs world, or can contribute immediately. The conundrum is that all companies are job creation- or job destruction-ecosystems.

3. Idea: This is where the story gets complicated. What can realistically be defined as an idea? (yes, there are many academic definitions) How many ideas can realistically be implemented by people in a company? What's the role of a dominant idea? Leading ideas that involve new design constructs are much bigger than ideas to make changes to an already and existing ecosystem. We did not separate these completely, but worked off the basic design principle that the network view will show us the importance of ideas as we map them onto people and companies. We are searching for super-memes and the elements in the eco-system that will carry these ideas. In future posts we will unpack this more clearly and expose some of the constructs we're working on.



4. Event: Humans conglomerate when they have common interests or a common cause. For our purposes; this provided an anchor point to understand the way in which ideas are developed. People attending an i4j events will be exposed to new ideas, but importantly will have the stage to present their own views of the world. Extracting this data was tedious and required some real hard intellectual labour (well, almost). It's also an area that's the messiest and

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mostly qualitative as the narrative is imprecise and ambiguous.

We used all these inputs to construct a dataset that is representative of the intersection of these elements. This is where the real work starts; various network measurement approaches were applied to the data. We are finding that the existing approaches to analysis have shortcomings. Initial outcomes show that our new algorithms could expose different aspects of how to interpret the intersection of human and idea.



[Vint Cerf](#) and [David](#) are two of the key drivers behind this Innovation for Jobs community. They have been able to bring together some leading minds in the field and are shaping one of the most crucial conversations of our time.

Some notes on the graphs:

Graph 1, human network: The ecosystem is held together by strong and purposeful interaction centered around key individuals. It does show that interactions, even though mostly digital, are greatly enhanced by physical connections and interactions. When applying centrality analysis, the obvious appears, and that lead us to unpack the purpose of

interactions. Why would certain communities conglomerate, and take ideas further? Which ideas will appear in fragmented communities as narrative develops?

Graph2, prominent ideas graph: As ideas are developed, we use language to describe the idea. As conversations develop into concepts, we see that our everyday usage of terminology changes, even though the understanding is shallow. Finding evidence of keywords in digital media is tough, as we had to rely on public sources and certain notes from previous interactions amongst this group. The outcome was quite insightful as it showed that certain topics are prominent and also of concern to this community. The dichotomy is that the ideas and problems you care about addressing, are often the same ideas that will solve the problems.

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